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Attitudes of Junior High Teachers Towards Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities in Inclusive Classes in Public Schools in New Providence, Bahamas

Virginia Alicia Romer
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ATITUDES OF JUNIOR HIGH TEACHERS TOWARDS TEACHING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN INCLUSIVE CLASSES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEW PROVIDENCE, BAHAMAS

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

by

Virginia Alicia Romer

November 2004
ATTITUDE OF JUNIOR HIGH TEACHERS TOWARDS TEACHING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN INCLUSIVE CLASSES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEW PROVIDENCE, BAHAMAS

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Virginia Alicia Romer

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<td>Basis Academic Skills Survey</td>
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<td>IDEA</td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Act</td>
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<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individualized Education Program</td>
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<td>IQ</td>
<td>Intelligence Test</td>
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<td>LD</td>
<td>Learning Disabilities</td>
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<td>MAS</td>
<td>Mainstream Attitude Survey</td>
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<td>NELS</td>
<td>National Education Longitudinal Study</td>
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<td>ORM</td>
<td>Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming Scale</td>
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me to reach this point in my educational journey, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.
ABSTRACT

ATTITUDES OF JUNIOR HIGH TEACHERS TOWARDS TEACHING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN INCLUSIVE CLASSES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEW PROVIDENCE, BAHAMAS

by

Virginia Alicia Romer

Co-Chairs: Candice Hollingsead and Rudi Bailey
ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University
School of Education

Title: ATTITUDES OF JUNIOR HIGH TEACHERS TOWARDS TEACHING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN INCLUSIVE CLASSES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEW PROVIDENCE, BAHAMAS

Name of researcher: Virginia Alicia Romer

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Problem

The implementation of inclusive programs has met disapproval and concerns from many general educators regarding the presence of students with learning disabilities in their classes. The purpose therefore of this study was to survey junior high teachers in New Providence, Bahamas, to determine their attitudes toward teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes; to investigate the type of instructional methodology used in general classes and to determine if instructional delivery is modified to assist students with learning disabilities; examine whether general educators collaborate with special educators when planning their instruction; and to identify if
there are differences between educators’ attitudes on the basis of age, gender, training, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment.

Method

Participants in this study included 122 teachers, both general and special education, from seven public junior high schools in New Providence, Bahamas. A survey instrument was used to collect the data in determining the attitudes of educators and to determine if general and special educators collaborated when planning instruction. Ten percent of lesson plans from the respondents were perused to ascertain if any and the type of modifications were made to instructional methodologies to assist students with learning disabilities in general education classes. The analysis of the data was done using descriptive statistics and analysis of variance.

Results

Educators in New Providence, Bahamas, both general and special, do not support the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general classes in current or ideal practices. Some modifications were made to assist students with learning disabilities, but on a small scale. In current practice, there is very little collaboration and minimal support for collaboration of general and special educators when planning instructional interventions. Finally, there was no significant difference in attitude on the basis of age, teaching experience, and teaching assignment. However, difference was found regarding gender and training. Males were more favorable to inclusion than females. Additionally, educators who received special education training in three or more courses were more favorable to inclusion.
Conclusion

Junior high public-school general and special educators of New Providence, Bahamas, do not support the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes currently or in an ideal practice. Hence, education officials are faced with a mammoth task of determining how to change the attitude of junior high educators if the inclusive program implemented is to be effective.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The Bahamian educational system, like many other countries, upon recognizing the existence of students with special needs, made the decision to make the necessary provisions for these students. Although this recognition was made, Hall (1994) from his research discovered that in most Caribbean countries, there were no government policies regarding special assistance in educating students with learning disabilities in the Education Acts. Additionally, it was discovered by Hall (1994) that there were not enough trained educators in Caribbean schools to provide remedial assistance for these children, even though students were streamed according to abilities. In many instances, a child remained in self-contained classes throughout schools.

In examining the Bahamian Education Act within the Statute Law of the Bahamas (1987), the following was found in Section 21 (2):

Arrangements made by the Minister for special educational treatment of pupils in so far as the resources of the Minister permit, provide for the education of pupils with serious disabilities in special schools, or where the disability is not serious, the arrangements may provide for the giving of such education in any school maintained by the Minister:

Provided that, in cases where facilities for special educational treatment do not exist, the Minister shall not be obliged to accept into any maintained school a pupil with a disability of body or mind, where the acceptance of such pupil would, in the view of
the Minister, adversely affect the education of other pupils attending at the school. (p. 518)

In relation to this Act, special schools were established for students with severe disabilities such as the deaf, blind, and mentally retarded. Students with "special needs," that is, with a learning disability, were placed in remedial classes (self-contained classes) in the general school system. From about 1981, remedial (special education) classes were established for students with "special needs," and these classes remained in existence until approximately 1994 when the decision was made to discontinue homogeneous grouping and formulate heterogeneous coordination.

According to Rea, McLaughlin, and Walther-Thomas (2002), the field of special education has evolved to serve more students with increasingly complex needs. However, data on pullout special education programs for students with learning disabilities have revealed unsatisfactory results in school achievement or long-term benefits. Andrews et al. (2000), identified the following factors as barriers to the success of students with learning disabilities: lower expectations, uninspiring and restricted curricula focused on rote or irrelevant tasks, disjointedness from general education curricula, and negative student attitudes resulting from school failure and stigmatizing segregation.

Ollymae Knowles, Assistant Director of Education with the Ministry of Education, with responsibility for Special Services (personal communication, May 13, 2002), revealed similar factors for the discontinuance of remedial classes and the implementation of inclusive classes. The idea of implementing inclusive classes for students with learning disabilities came as a result of (a) the stigma attached to students
in remedial classes, (b) the attitude that educators who taught remedial classes were weak educators, (c) the need for special education students to be covering the same material as general education children, and (d) to prevent the continuous widening of the gap between ‘normal’ students and students with learning disabilities in their social development, as well as academic performance on national examinations such as the Bahamas Junior Certificate Examination (BJC) and the Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE).

In 1994, after holding an educational conference with principals and administrators, officials of the Ministry of Education made the decision to discontinue remedial classes and incorporate inclusive classes for students with learning disabilities in reading, comprehension, and mathematical computations (Ollymae Knowles, personal communication, May 13, 2002). Hence, the Bahamian public educational system, like many school districts throughout the United States, agreed to develop inclusive programs for students with learning disabilities, thus placing them in general education classes.

The question arose, however, regarding the measurement criteria for diagnosing a student with a learning disability (LD). According to Drummond (2000), the diagnosing of learning disabilities has often been assessed using an intelligence test (IQ). From the test, a discrepancy may be noted between apparent ability (IQ) and demonstrated achievement, which provided part of the evidence for a learning disability. On May 13, 2004, the US Senate approved S. 1248, a bill to reauthorize the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). The passing of this bill opened the door for a non-scientifically research-based response to intervention process as a means for identifying children with
learning disabilities (Counsel for Exceptional Children, 2004). In essence, it is possible IQ testing will no longer be needed to diagnose a student with having a learning disability. This holds potential for many students to be incorrectly labeled as there will not be a defined criteria for identifying students with learning disabilities. Rather, it will be left to each educator. Such has been the case in the Bahamian educational system for quite some time, as classroom educators to a large extent, by observation and class assessment, were left to identify students with learning disabilities. In a few instances, school psychologists may have had the opportunity to test the child.

Hall (1994) stated:

Education Acts in the Caribbean do not give detailed descriptions with regards to slow learners. It is left up to teachers and school administrators to formulate their own policies. Since this seems to be the trend in the Caribbean, teachers and administrators, in dealing with children who are identified as having learning difficulties, must take great care to have a well thought out form [plan] of helping for whatever is underdeveloped [in a child]. (p. 3)

In November 2002, a memo was sent from the Special Services Section of the Ministry of Education for educators to identify students with learning disabilities and to specify their problem(s). Mrs. Paula Darcy, Education Officer for Special Education (personal communication, November 19, 2002), stated:

The Special Services Section is planning to implement more special education programs in the schools. But we need your help in gathering the statistical data needed to implement these programs.

Teachers[,] you have expressed your concerns about the number of students in your classes with special needs. Please complete the enclosed form “Identification of Children with Special Needs,” and return to Special Services as soon as possible.

This afforded educators the task of diagnosing and labeling students without accepted definition testing. From the information gathered, the officer responsible for Special
Education hoped to develop programs to help educators better assist the students identified.

Presently, public junior high schools in New Providence operate both “responsible inclusion” and “full inclusion” in that some students with learning disabilities spend some time in a separate resource room placement—mainly for reading and comprehension instruction and some time in general education, while others are taught totally in general education classrooms by general educators. Factors contributing to the placement decisions have included the significant amount of students identified by educators and school psychologists as having learning disabilities, the need to limit class size, and the shortage of special educators to meet the demand.

A review of literature revealed that elementary educators reported more positive views for inclusion than their secondary counterparts (Chambers, 1991; Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001; Rodgers, 1987). Since general educators at the junior/secondary levels appeared to be less supportive in their attitude toward including students with learning disabilities in general education, such students were likely to be disadvantaged in the educational system the further they progress.

There has been a significant amount of concern from general educators regarding the presence of students with learning disabilities in their classes. R. Rolle, Head of the Resource Department at a Bahamian Junior High School (personal communication, March 12, 2002), stated that the introduction of inclusive classes at her present school of employment has not benefitted students with learning disabilities. This could be because it was not an appropriate setting or because modifications were not made in the general
classroom. Additionally, she indicated that little to no collaboration between general and special (resource) educators was taking place despite the efforts made by members of her department to make themselves available to general educators.

Research tells us collaboration is important to the success of an inclusive program. According to Williams and Fox (1996), the most basic ingredient required for successful inclusion programs is the need for general and special educators to work together as equal partners in teams that solve problems, develop innovative program options and curriculum, and implement instruction for both students with and without disabilities. However, successful collaboration among general and special educators according to Wallace, Anderson, and Bartholomay (2002) has called for: (a) having a shared vision for student learning and teaching; (b) an enduring and shared commitment to collaboration; (c) school communities of caring (e.g., high regard, value, respect for each other); (d) frequent, extended, and positive interactions between teachers and administration; and (e) administrative leadership and power sharing. In essence, there should be a partnership between general and special educators and between educators and administrators, both at the building and district level. The support of administration is crucial for setting up the environment and providing collaboration skills in-service training, which would help educators to be more effective in implementation. In fact, school administrators can assist educators by providing them with guidelines as to what is expected or actually lead them in developing a workable plan that clearly defines the roles and responsibility of each educator. In a study conducted by Wolery, Werts, Caldwell, Snyder, and Lisowski (1995), educators rated themselves as successful or
unsuccessful in inclusion efforts due to having adequate or inadequate resource, training, and personal support. Without this support, the best intentions of educators might be thwarted (Mamlin, 1999; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2001; Stanovich, 1999).

Purpose of the Study

The discontinuance of remedial or special education classes and the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes in the Bahamas have created concerns for special and general educators. It would appear, in the United States, that elementary and secondary educators tend to have different attitudes toward educating students with learning disabilities (Chambers, 1991; Rodgers, 1987). Research conducted by Vaughn and Schumm (1994) and Zigmond, Levin, and Laurie (1985), in the United States, suggested that middle- and high-school educators’ emphasis on covering the content area of the curriculum may not have been compatible with a positive attitude toward students with mild disabilities, who required educators to modify their instructional strategies.

The attitude toward inclusion and willingness to accept its implementation has undergone a huge amount of research within the United States, but appeared not to have been investigated in the Caribbean in general and the Bahamas specifically. I worked at a junior high school where educators have voiced their disapproval regarding the teaching of students with learning disabilities in general education classes, but could not conclude that it was the attitude of the majority of junior high educators.

One purpose of this study, therefore, was to survey public junior high educators in New Providence, Bahamas, to determine their attitudes toward teaching students with
learning disabilities in general education classes. A second purpose was to investigate the type of instructional methodology used in general classes to determine if instructional delivery was modified to assist students with learning disabilities. A third purpose was to examine whether general educators collaborated with special educators (resource teachers) when planning their instruction. The fourth purpose of the study was to identify if there were differences between educators’ background (demographics) and their attitudes toward inclusion. It is anticipated therefore that the results will be interesting and beneficial to officials at the Ministry of Education to discover from the investigation the attitudes of those providing educational services to students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes. Inquiry into the attitudes of educators regarding the teaching of students with learning disabilities can be critical to the educational success or failure of such students.

**Research Questions**

The research investigated the attitudes of junior high public-school teachers toward teaching students with learning disabilities. The following questions guided the research:

1. Are Bahamian public junior high educators supportive of the inclusion for students with learning disabilities in general education classes?

2. What modifications are made to instructional methodologies to assist students with learning disabilities in general education classes?

3. Do general educators collaborate with special educators (resource teacher) when planning instructional methodologies?
4. Do differences exist in educators’ attitudes on the basis of age, gender, training, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment (general or resource)?

In addressing question 4, the following research hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1. Younger educators are likely to have a more favorable reception to teaching students with learning disabilities than are older educators.

Hypothesis 2. Female and male educators are likely to have the same attitudes toward teaching students with learning disabilities.

Hypothesis 3. Educators with special education training of three or more courses in special education are likely to favor teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes.

Hypothesis 4. Educators with 11 years or more of teaching experience are less likely to favor teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes.

Hypothesis 5. Special (resource) educators are likely to have a more favorable reception to teaching students with learning disabilities than are general educators.

**Rationale**

From recent educational trends, it has appeared that more and more educational systems within and outside the United States have been proponents of inclusion. As a result, much research has been done on the effect that implementation of inclusive classes has had on students with learning disabilities. With inclusive classes came a need for supportive attitudes from educators, a willingness to make instructional modifications, and the collaboration of general and special educators. The majority of
research done on the attitudes of educators toward teaching students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes has focused on elementary educators. Although many studies have been completed on the attitudes of educators in middle schools, insufficient studies have been done on the attitudes of junior high (middle school) Bahamian educators who instruct students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes, their ability and willingness to make instructional modifications, and to collaborate with others. Therefore, the findings from this investigation will be beneficial to the Bahamian educational system to ascertain the attitudes of Bahamian educators regarding these issues.

**Theoretical Framework**

The implementation of inclusive classes appeared to be grounded in the perspectives of postmodern-era philosophies. Postmodern-era philosophies could not accept exclusion, separation, or labeling of children within the educational system. According to Young (1990), the existence of excluded groups such as “disabled” has resulted in individuals classifying, labeling, and stigmatizing them. Hence, there should be no discrete class of people deemed disabled (Meekosha & Jacubowicz, 1996).

In recent years, the educational system has undergone intense scrutiny. Public schools and boards of education have been called upon to respond to the challenges of diversity and difference by ensuring that educational practices offer equality of opportunity and fair outcomes for all students (Dei, James, Karumanchery, James-Wilson, & Zine, 2000). The concept of normalization (life similar to others in a normal setting) and integration (experiences with people who are not labeled disabled)
are the goals and objectives of an improved special education system today (Ysseldyke, Algozzine, & Thurlow, 1992). With this in mind, schools chose to discontinue their remedial programs and implement inclusive classes for students with learning disabilities. Proponents in support of inclusive classes argued that we live in a post-modern era; thus, schools needed to change to reflect this era because “society has changed so dramatically . . . and . . . schools can’t possibly be expected to keep up without substantial changes” (Royal Commission on Learning [RCOL], 1994, p. 3).

Indeed, the Bahamian system of education has shown support for this trend of thought by discontinuing discrete ‘remedial’ classes and implementing inclusive classes, thus alleviating the stigma and a sense of not being ‘normal’ that many children experienced. Despite being considered a Third World country, the goal of the Bahamian educational system was to remain current with educational trends and implement them as much as possible.

Significance of the Study

Research documented a plethora of educational investigative literature on the attitude of educators toward inclusive classes; however, not enough attention was given to the attitude of junior high (middle school) educators, particularly educators in the Caribbean. If a true assessment of educators’ attitude toward teaching students with learning disabilities, modification of instruction and collaboration between general and special educators to meet the needs of students with LD was to take place, the research had to be broadened to include the attitude of junior high (middle school) and senior high schools both in and outside of the United States.
To date, no other study of this kind has been attempted within the Bahamas and possibly within the Caribbean setting. It was the intention that the long-term results of this study may contribute the following end results:

1. Ministry of Education officials, in an attempt to become sensitized to the true feelings of educators, need to recognize the importance of consulting with classroom educators before implementing change to the educational system. This is valuable as research revealed volunteerism of the educators as critical to the success of inclusion, which requires collaboration. If a general educator is not volunteering to be an "inclusive" classroom educator, which goes to attitude, then the collaborative inclusive experience will fail. According to Gartner and Lipksy (1987), the success of the merger between general and special education relies on educators' willingness to accept and make modifications for students with special needs.

2. It is important that Ministry of Education officials be sensitized to the importance of inservice training and having the necessary resources and personnel in place to assist educators making adjustments within the educational system (i.e., collaboration skills and planning time). According to Smith, Polloway, Patton, and Dowdy (2001), inservice training is necessary in helping to create a positive attitude about working with students with diverse needs and allaying concerns teachers might have about their competence to address the needs of these students.

3. There is a need for more resources to be allocated by administration at both the school and district level to provide special education training for general education teachers, aimed at promoting improvement in educator and student performance.
Resources are necessary if educators are going to engage in collaborative planning time (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham, 2000).

4. General and special educators need to realize the importance of collaborating (willingness to plan together, share and learn from each other) to enhance their instructional techniques and to better assist students with learning disabilities. This relationship is crucial to the success of an inclusive program.

5. General educators need to realize the importance and accountability of modifying their teaching methods to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. This is another essential success element.

6. The Education Department of the College of the Bahamas and other Caribbean institutions need to incorporate in the training of general educators, more courses geared toward teaching students with learning disabilities at elementary, junior, and secondary levels in all subjects, thus encouraging understanding and modifying learning.

**Definition of Terms**

**Adaptive Instruction:** Modification of the learning environment to accommodate the unique learning characteristics and needs of individual students, and provision of direct or focused intervention to improve each student's capabilities to successfully acquire subject-matter knowledge and higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, to work independently and cooperatively with peers, and to meet the overall intellectual and social demands of schooling (Wang, 1989, p. 183).

**Full Inclusion:** Is based on the premise that students with mild disabilities—learning disabilities, behavior disorders, or mild mental retardation—are placed full time
in general education classes, with the classroom teacher having primary responsibility for educating students with disabilities (Taylor & Justen, 1996, p. 108).

**General Education:** A classroom setting(s) in which a typical, non-disabled student is placed for instruction (Wanzenried, 1998, p. 10).

**Inclusion:** The physical placement of students with disabilities in general education classrooms (Cook, 2001, p. 203). My experience in the Bahamas defines inclusion to be the placement of students with learning disabilities in general education classes to be taught by general educators.

**Inclusive School:** One that educates students in the mainstream, providing them appropriate educational programs that are challenging yet geared to their capabilities and needs as well as any support and assistance they and/or their teachers may need to be successful in the mainstream (Stainback & Stainback, 1990, p. 3).

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** An educational plan, developed for each student, based upon information gathered from assessment. It is a road map for special education instruction, telling where students are going and how they are going to get there. It describes what the student needs and what will be done to address those needs (Olson & Platt, 1996, p. 38).

**Integration:** An educational placement procedure for exceptional children, based on the conviction that each child should be educated in the least restrictive environment in which his or her related needs can be satisfactorily addressed (Canadian Teachers' Federation, 1981, p. 2).

**Junior High School:** An educational institution consisting of Grades 7, 8, and

**Learning Disability (LD):** A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations (IDEA amendments of 1997, P.L. 105-17, June 4, 1997, 11 stat 37 [20 USC 1401 (26)]). In my experience in the Bahamas, the term *learning disabilities* is used as a blanket statement to include students with various learning disabilities other than mental retardation, deafness, dumbness, and blindness; these are students who are failing normal instruction not due to the above exclusions.

**Least Restrictive Environment:** Means that special education students should be educated in environments that are as much like normal—least restrictive—as possible (Ysseldyke & Algozzine, 1990, p. 25).

**Mainstreaming:** Selectively integrating exceptional students into general education classrooms on a case-by-case basis, depending on the needs of each student and the demands of the general education classes. For some this may mean full-time general class placement; for others, it may mean an hour or less each day with nonexceptional peers (Murphy, 1996, p. 472). From my experience in the Bahamas, mainstreaming holds the same definition.

**Perception of Teachers:** The attitude of teachers toward inclusive education; degree of positive or negative acceptance of students with learning disabilities into the general classroom environment (Brown, 1998, p. 7).
Public Law 94-142: Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975), and its subsequent amendments, Individual with Disabilities Education Act (1977), ensures that all children with disabilities have access to a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (Leyser et al., 2001, p. 751).


Resource Room: A classroom where students with mild to moderate disabilities spend a great part of the day in a regular classroom and part with specially trained staff in a separate special education classroom (Bartlett, Weisenstein, & Etscheidt, 2002, p. 125). My experience defines resource room as a classroom where students with learning disabilities will spend a few class periods per week with a special education (resource) educator, for instruction in reading.

Responsible Inclusion: Calls for schools paying attention to what happens to students after they are placed in general classes, to determine whether or not schools realize true inclusion. Responsible inclusion will result in: satisfaction of parents, students, and teachers with the outcomes of the learning situation; students being integral members of the learning community and not singled out for special treatment; and students’ achievements are commensurate with average or above average classmates, and they do not receive passing grades as gifts (Schumaker & Deshler, 1994/95, pp. 50-51).

Self-contained Classes: A special education environment where students with disabilities are segregated from their non-disabled peers for most or all of the school day (Smith et al., 2001, p. 21). My experience defines self-contained classes (remedial
classes) as a special education environment where students with disabilities are taught by a special education (resource) educator for most or all of the day. Students may be taught by general educators for subjects such as music, art and physical education.

**Team Teaching:** General and special education teachers jointly plan and present content to all of the students. At times, one teacher takes the lead for some aspect of instruction, while at other times, the other teacher takes the responsibility for part of the lesson (Olson & Platt, 1996, p. 169).

**General Methodology**

A quantitative and qualitative study was conducted, using a questionnaire instrument developed by Wanzenried (1998). The questionnaire was used to survey the attitude of junior high educators toward teaching students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes; to assess if and to what extent educators modified their instructional methodologies to assist students with learning disabilities; to determine if general educators collaborated with special educators when planning instructional methodologies; and to determine if differences existed in teachers’ attitudes on the basis of age, gender, training, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment. Respondents responded to both current practices (the way things are now) and ideal practices (the way they would like for things to be). Additionally, lesson plans from 10% of the teachers surveyed were perused to determine if modifications to instructional methodologies were planned to accommodate students with learning disabilities.
Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

A delimitation of the study was limiting the population to that of public junior high school educators located in New Providence, Bahamas. These educators were selected because it was at this level that the discontinuance of remedial classes and the implementation of inclusion was crucial to the academic performance of students as they advanced to high school. The study was delimited to educators in New Providence (the capital) due to the Bahamas being an archipelago of islands and the largest portion of the population living on this island. Time constraints and cost considerations also delimited the scope of this study to the attitude, modification, and collaboration of junior high public educators in New Providence.

A number of limitations were noted for this study. First, data was based on self-report by general and special educators and may have involved some self-reporting inaccuracies. Second, results were based on a 30.12% response rate. Third, many participants did not provide information for further contact regarding lesson plans. Therefore, a random selection of respondents to provide lesson plans could not occur as exactly 10% of respondents provided the requested information. All lesson plans returned were perused, in determining the extent to which teaching methods were modified to accommodate students with learning disabilities. Although on paper modifications were indicated, there was no assurance the modifications were actually implemented as no teaching episodes were observed. Finally, self-reporting by educators was used to determine if and the extent to which collaboration took place. No interviews or observations took place to confirm whether collaboration took place or not, nor to
ascertain the depth and effect of collaboration on both participating educators and their students.

Summary

The Bahamas, like other countries, have kept abreast of changing trends within the educational system. However, it has been important in staying current with change, that adequate preparation take place to ensure positive outcomes for the good of the students. The implementation of blanket government-imposed inclusive classes may not be the preferred teaching arrangement for educators within the public system. This investigation conducted a quantitative and qualitative research to investigate the attitudes of junior high public educators relative to teaching students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes, to discover the instructional modifications employed, and to examine whether general educators collaborated with special educators when planning their instruction.

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 was a brief introduction to the study about inclusive classes and the attitude of educators regarding the teaching of students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes. The statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, and a statement about the significance of the study were included in this chapter, as well as a brief description of the general methodology.

The review of literature pertaining to inclusive classes and the attitudes of educators toward inclusion is the core of chapter 2. It examines the construct definition of learning disabilities, the inclusion movement, the rationale for full inclusion, the
attitudes of educators from previous studies, collaboration and resources, and
modification of instruction for students with learning disabilities.

Chapter 3 is a comprehensive description of the methodology used in this
quantitative and qualitative study. It includes participants, sampling procedures, and data
collection techniques. Chapter 4 gives the results from the study. The investigation
concludes with a summary, conclusions, and recommendations in chapter 5.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

At the school level, while an inclusive environment is being designed, it is important to get input from all the staff, to give them a license to make decisions, and to have strong administrative support at the building and district level. Without this support, the best intentions of educators might be thwarted. Therefore, how principals work toward building that support and how teachers' input is solicited and received becomes a key to the success of inclusion at a school. (Mamlin, 1999, p. 37)

The topic of inclusion and the benefits of educating students with learning disabilities in general education classes has been debated by professional educators for many years. Since the passage of P.L. 94-142 (Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975), there has been a dramatic increase of children labeled as having special needs who have been mainstreamed or placed in the general classroom setting. With the recent update of US federal laws, schools are burdened with justifying a noninclusive placement. In fact, school districts are mandated to explain in writing why they are not offering the child with disabilities a placement in a general classroom (Coughlin, 2000). Although the integration of students with disabilities has increased in schools in the United States (Rea et al., 2002), barriers to total acceptance have appeared to remain.

Many educators have developed an attitude regarding inclusion and appear reluctant to accept students with learning disabilities in general education classes. Their attitudes are closely related to their beliefs and opinions, and are based on their
experiences. A positive attitude in the workplace can be seen as an important factor to initiating success whereby a negative attitude may often generate failure, regardless of an individual’s competence. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that the attitude of individuals in the workplace is detrimental and can contribute to the initiation or the ultimate success of new programs. However, research has shown that the attitudes of educators toward students with disabilities have been varied (Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001; Rea et al., 2002).

Attitude can be defined as predilections toward behavior. According to Reusen, Shoho, and Barker (2001):

A person’s attitude or belief about something is thought to affect that person’s behaviors, actions, and efficacy. Likewise, the attitudes and beliefs that teachers, administrators, and other school personnel hold toward inclusion and the learning ability of students with disabilities may influence school learning environments and the availability of equitable educational opportunities for all students. (p. 8)

Overall, educators’ attitudes of attachment, concern, indifference, and rejection have been found to directly and differentially impact students’ educational experiences and opportunities (Cook, 2001).

Smith (2000) concluded:

Teachers’ attitudes toward their subject matter, their vocation in general, and toward their students influence their performance and success with students. Positive perceptions and feelings encourage the establishment of appropriate policies and supportive integration of students with disabilities; whereas, negative attitudes sustain low achievement and expectations and unacceptable behaviors, which limit acceptance. (p. 1)

In their study, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) pointed out that educators’ attitude was one of the most important variables in determining the success of innovative inclusive programs. Since the effects of reform in essence depend on those who carry
them out, it seems logical to ascertain and focus on the responses from them (Galis & Tanner, 1995). Research studies continue to stress the importance of allowing educators to be involved in determining needs and developing methods for implementing effective change in schools (Glasser, 1990; McLeskey & Waldron, 2002; Putnam, Spiegel, & Bruininks, 1995).

Middle-level education is crucial to the lives of young adolescents. It has been described as having a unique opportunity to affect “the education and personal trajectory” (Jackson & Hornbeck, 1989, p. 831) of early adolescents. Because of this pivotal time in the lives of adolescents, it is important to ascertain the attitude of educators in middle-level education regarding the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes.

This chapter reviews the literature regarding inclusion. Sections of the review examine the construct definition of inclusion, the rationale for full inclusion, the inclusion movement, and the attitudes of educators toward teaching students with learning disabilities. Studies include support and disagreement to inclusion, collaboration between general and special educators and the resources needed, and modification of lessons in instructing students with learning disabilities in general education classes. The chapter concludes with a summary.

**Construct Definition**

One of the central issues to be determined is an agreement upon the Learning Disabled definition. The term Learning Disabled (LD) means divergent perspectives to different populations. Kirk (1962) offered the first formal definition, which was further
disseminated by Kirk and Batemen (1962). The definition reads:

A learning disability refers to a retardation, disorder, or delayed development in one or more of the processes of speech, language, reading, writing, arithmetic, or other school subjects resulting from a psychological handicap caused by a possible cerebral dysfunction and/or emotional or behavioral disturbances. It is not the result of mental retardation, sensory deprivation, or cultural and instructional factors. (Kirk, 1962, p. 263)

With the recognition of learning disabled by the United States (US) federal government, it became necessary to provide a definition for legislation to establish a special education category of learning disabled. The National Advisory Committee on Handicapped Children (NACHC, 1968) gave the following definition, which became the basis for the legislative definition:

Children with special (specific) learning disabilities exhibit a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken and written language. These may be manifested in disorders of listening, thinking, talking, reading, writing, spelling, or arithmetic. They include conditions which have been referred to as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, developmental aphasia, etc. They do not include learning problems that are due primarily to visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, to mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or to environmental disadvantage. (p. 34)

The US Office of Education’s (1977) definition of learning disabilities is an intrinsic disorder in basic psychological processing—basic reading skill, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, oral expression, written expression, mathematics calculation, or mathematics reasoning. Simply put, students with learning disabilities are those lacking academic success in general education classrooms (Holloway, 2001). Most school districts have established a working definition that identifies students as learning disabled if there is a severe discrepancy between ability (IQ) and school achievement (Bateman, 1992) as one of the major determining criteria.
IQ examines one’s ability to acquire or use knowledge or skills and may be used by schools in identifying students with learning disabilities. At least 68% of individuals have an IQ of 85-115, which is considered average, and persons with an IQ of 130-145 are considered to be above average (Slavin, 1994).

The many definitions primarily describe learning disabilities as deficits in academic achievement (reading, writing, and mathematics) and/or language (listening or speaking). However, children with learning disabilities may have significant problems in other areas, such as social interactions and emotional maturity, attention and hyperactivity, memory, cognition, metacognition, motor skills, and perceptual abilities. Since learning disabilities are presumed to be a central nervous system dysfunction, characteristics may be manifested throughout the lifespan, preschool through adult (Mercer, 1997).

**Inclusion Movement**

The need to enhance the social and academic achievements of students, while eradicating the stigma attached to students deemed learning disabled, has made many schools examine the idea of incorporating an inclusive education. Inclusive education, according to Avramidis and Norwich (2002), “implies a restructuring of mainstream schooling that every school can accommodate every child irrespective of disability and ensures that all learners belong to a community” (p. 131). In essence, students with LD will attend neighborhood schools and be placed in age-appropriate grades and classes. Within the context of an inclusive education program, special education and related services are to be implemented within general education classes. Cook (2001) defines
inclusion as “the physical placement of students with disabilities in general education classrooms” (p. 3). The concept of inclusion, according to Yatvin (1995) is related to three factors. These factors are:

1. All children learn best in regular classrooms when there are flexible organizational and instructional patterns in place and human and material supports for those with special needs.
2. A child’s belief that he or she is entitled to a place in a community of peers is a precondition for learning.
3. Pull-out programs that impose the extra burdens of academic discontinuity, poor-quality instruction, social anxiety, and low status on special-needs children deprive them of the opportunity for the education they are entitled to and thus violate their civil rights. (p. 484)

Mainstreaming defined by Salend (1998) is the carefully planned and monitored placement of students in general education classrooms for their academic and social educational programs. In the Bahamian educational system, mainstreaming also includes responsible inclusion. According to this definition, the primary responsibility for the mainstreamed student’s academic program lies with the general education educator. The environment of the general education classroom must be modified to address the instructional needs of the included student. Inclusion has been rooted in the principal of normalization and the concept of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), which is part of Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). The normalization principle sought to provide social interactions and experiences that paralleled those of society to adults and children with disabilities (Wolfensberger, 1972). LRE requires educational agencies to educate students with their peers who are not deemed disabled (Elliott & McKenney, 1998).
Rationale for Full Inclusion

A United States Supreme Court ruling in a landmark case, Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka (1954), that “separate is not equal” began the catalyst for inclusion. This case along with other subsequent legislation has had a profound effect on special education. In the 1950s and 1960s, parents of children with disabilities began campaigning for changes in the educational services being provided for their children. Prior to the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142), students with learning disabilities were provided little or no academic and social support, hence the establishment of special education classes. Dunn (1968) questioned whether the special education setting was justifiable for such students. Davern and Schnorr (1991), proponents of inclusion, stated that when ‘regular’ students are separated from students with special needs, they are being denied the opportunity of getting to know children of disabilities and view them as a part of the community. Contrary to this was the general belief that students with disabilities could learn more in segregated classes because of fewer students per educator, resulting in increased individual attention from the educator (Sullivan, 1964).

In the late 1970s and into the 1980s, students with mild or moderate disabilities were attending general classes for at least part of the school day, not experiencing full inclusion. Although there was controversy as to whether separate class placement was beneficial for students with mild disabilities, there were those who agreed that students with mild disabilities should spend most, if not all, of the school day with peers without disabilities (Baker, Wang, & Walberg, 1994-1995; Madden & Slavin, 1983; Waldron & McLeskey, 1998). Hence, a trend was developing whereby those considered having
disabilities of various types, regardless of whether considered mild or moderate, were increasingly being educated in general education classrooms and schools (Knoblock, 1982; Stainback & Stainback, 1985).

Madeline Will, Assistant Secretary in the U.S. Department of Education, saw the need for restructuring the relationship between general, special, and remedial programs (Salend, 1998), hence she proposed the Regular Education Initiative (REI). Will’s reasons for the proposal were that: (a) pull-out services for students with learning disabilities had in many instances failed to meet the educational needs of students with mild disabilities; (b) students in special education were stigmatized and segregated from their peers; and (c) special programs addressed failure rather than prevention (Westby, Watson, & Murphy, 1994). Her philosophy caught the attention of educators and parents, and grew to become the inclusion movement of the 90s.

According to Rea et al. (2002):

Lack of satisfactory academic performance by students with disabilities, combined with growing demands for social equity and civil rights, increasing identification of students requiring services, and ballooning costs of special education, prompted a radical reconsideration of the special education delivery system of the mid-1980s. (p. 203)

Stainback and Stainback (1984), in examining the merger of special and general education, cited the instructional needs of students not warranting the operation of a dual education system and the inefficiency of operating such a system. They supported the view of Telford and Sawrey (1981) that all students differ along the continuum of intellectual, physical, and psychological characteristics. All individuals are uniquely different, therefore there are not two distinctly different types of students. Because all
students are unique, their individual differences can influence their instructional needs. As a result, tailor-made instructional programs should be provided for all students (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). The dual system approach has placed barriers across cooperative efforts. In fact, it has fostered competition and alienation between special and general educators. This breakdown of professional relationships, has contributed to inefficiency. As Stainback and Stainback (1984) explained:

This breakdown of profession relationships, and the resulting inefficiency, occurs on multiple levels. . . . The poor professional relationships not only reduce the potential benefits of pooling expertise and resources, but also encourage detrimental, counterproductive advocacy attempts. . . . In short, a dual system creates artificial barriers between people and divide resources, personnel, and advocacy potential. (p. 104-105)

By the end of the 1980s, the Regular Education Initiative (REI) died because general education was against it, and it was discarded. Proponents insisted that students with disabilities had the legal right to be educated with typical peers in age-appropriate settings (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin, & Williams, 2000). This culminated in a movement driven by parents of students in special education which impacted Public Law 94-142 and its amendments; thus, case litigation for the movement toward more inclusion schools grew in the 1990s.

There appears to be several research groups and professional organizations that strongly support inclusion (Mamlin, 1999), advocating an immediate and complete movement of children from special education to general education setting (Gartner & Lipsky, 1989; Stainback & Stainback., 1984; The Arc of the United States, 1995). The concern has been the lack of evidence that self-contained class placement improves the academic achievement of these students. Cartwright, Cartwright, and Ward (1985)
reported students in special education classes did not achieve any better than their counterparts in general education classes. On the other hand, a child with minor learning problems may gain much more from interactions with peers in general education classroom than from a segregated program (Zigmond & Baker, 1996). It seems the severity of the disability plays a major role in determining whether a child may benefit more from an inclusive or self-contained program.

Proponents of full inclusive education claim that inclusive education programs increase performance toward Individualized Educational Program (IEP) goals, increase motivation to learn, expose students to appropriate peer models, and increase a student’s success as an adult functioning in society (Davis, 1992). Proponents further contend that poor social, academic, and employment outcomes for students with disabilities are reflective of restricted experiences available outside general education (Tapasack & Walther-Thomas, 1999). Finally, proponents say that once included in classrooms with higher expectations, appropriate role models, and true opportunities for generalization of skills, students with disabilities will experience improved outcomes (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin, & Williams 2000). McCabe (2000) stated that some school districts have endorsed inclusion as a viable delivery option for educational services. They view inclusive programming as a means of allowing students with learning disabilities to learn more academic and functional skills in less time than when they were in pullout programs, and they do not see any negative effects on the learning rate of students who do not have learning disabilities.

The literature revealed that it is the view of proponents of inclusion that separate
classes for students with LD are most likely to create a social stigma for them. This can be particularly difficult for middle-school students to deal with. Additionally, if students of learning disabilities and "normal" students have no chance to interact, the chances of the students with learning disabilities becoming socially accepted are greatly reduced (Kolstad, Wilkinson, & Briggs, 1997). They further maintain their view that the needs of special students and those of "normal" students can be accommodated within the general classroom. According to Banerji and Dailey (1995), inclusion brings about improved self-esteem and a sense of belonging. Evidence from the past 15 years has shown that segregating students with disabilities is actually detrimental to academic growth and social adjustments (Baker et al., 1994-1995).

Despite the vast support for inclusion, be it full or responsible inclusion, it is still the view of many that educating students with learning disabilities in general classes may create an instructional dilemma. Students at the lower end of the achievement continuum may be unable to adapt to instruction and a curriculum that moves too fast and demands too much in relation to their existing skills (Simmons, Fuchs, & Fuchs, 2001).

While researchers are cautious in their conclusions, there are some positive signs in integrating the two groups of students in inclusive classes. According to Vaidya and Zaslavsky (2000), these changes include:

1. A reduced fear of human differences accompanied by increased comfort and awareness

2. Growth in social cognition
3. Improvement in self-concept of non-disabled students

4. Development of personal principles and ability to assume an advocacy role towards their peers and friends with disabilities

5. Warm and caring friendships.

These are important to proponents of inclusion as they look beyond the students' boundaries of the school environment. Upon completion of their education, students must be prepared to positively interact with all types of people.

**Educators' Attitudes Toward Inclusion**

The literature has revealed that many school districts have opted for inclusive classes. As a result, one must examine the impact this would have on general educators. How do they feel about teaching students with learning disabilities in the general classroom? Early investigation into the attitudes of educators found many general educators to be against inclusion. According to Jones (1984), this was because children with learning disabilities were seen as having more academic and personality problems than normally achieving children. Unfortunately, this stereotype persisted even when the behavioral evidence was contrary. Larrivee and Cook (1979) and Stoler (1992) found general classroom educators' attitudes toward inclusion tended to become less positive as the grade level increased. Larrivee and Cook (1979) stated, “It appears that the most negative attitude toward mainstreaming is exhibited by junior high school teachers” (p. 317).
Studies Against Inclusion

Since the studies of Larrivee and Cook (1979), Stoler (1992), and Chamberlin (1995), educators' views on inclusion have been surveyed with varied results (Bergen, 1997; Cochran, 1997; Johnson, 1993; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991; Wilczenski, 1992). Separate survey research studies completed by Coates (1989) and Semmel et al. (1991) implied that most educators did not agree with the general assumptions of inclusion. For example, educators felt that resource rooms were an effective way to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. Additionally, they were skeptical about the belief that students with special needs could be fully included in general education classes. It is important to note that the majority of educators surveyed by Coates (1989) and by Semmel et al. (1991) perceived themselves as lacking the skills to modify instruction for students with special needs. However, these same educators perceived themselves as more competent and comfortable in modifying curriculums and in team-teaching with special educators.

Baines, Baines, and Masterson (1994), in their study of middle-school general educators of students with learning disabilities, found general educators to be frustrated. In fact, 20% of the respondents stated they considered leaving teaching because of the increased stress. Educators from the study by Machado (1996) did not believe that inclusion benefitted all students. In fact, it was suggested that inclusion should be one of several alternatives in meeting students' educational needs.

Zigmond et al., (1995), critics of inclusion, conducted research to examine the impact of an inclusive program on students with learning disabilities over the course of a school year by comparing the progress of these students in reading to that of general
education students in six schools. Their findings were that 34% to 54% of the 145 students (Grades 2-6) with learning disabilities made 'significant progress' (gains in excess of 1 standard error of measurement associated with the test), progress similar to the gains made by general education students, while 46% to 63% of the students failed to make meaningful progress. Based on these findings, the researchers felt that students who did not make significant progress should be educated in separate, special education classrooms. One delimitation to this study was the lack of a comparison group as a standard of progress for the students with LD who were educated in inclusive programs. Additionally, no rationale was given as to why the students with learning problems should perform better in self-contained classes.

Bender, Vail, and Scott (1995) conducted a study to obtain educators' attitude toward increased inclusion and the type of instructional interventions offered in general education classes. The study looked at general educators in Grades 1 through 8 from 11 participating schools. The sample, totaling 127 participants, was from eight elementary and three middle schools. Educators were to complete a questionnaire consisting of the Bender Classroom Structure Questionnaire (40-item Likert scale questions concerning the use of instructional strategies) and Mainstream Attitude Survey (6-item Likert scale that measured educators' beliefs about mainstreaming). The results revealed that 13% of the educators did not support the concept of inclusion, while another 23% felt no strong commitment to the concept. With one third of the general educators having indicated a lack of support for mainstreaming, there must have been problems in successful implementation of an inclusive program. A limitation of the study was failure to
differentiate the attitude of the middle-school educators from that of elementary teachers. Further needed research would reveal what percentage of the 13% and 23% were middle-school educators.

Anderman (1998) conducted a study examining the achievement gap between 296 (15%) adolescents with disabilities and 1,608 (85%) adolescents without disabilities. The data for the study came from the base year of the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS). Its purpose was to examine the achievement progress and development of eighth-graders. This study used a subsample from the NELS data set that included 1,946 eight-grade students from 78 schools. This research sample was formed by including students from all schools that contained at least three students in the NELS sample. Criteria for selecting a student with a learning disability in the study were being classified as a student with LD by the school, and that the student received some special education services during the day. Hierarchical linear modeling was used to examine school effects on these achievement gaps. A significant gap in achievement between the groups at Grade 8 was found. As a result, Anderman concluded that the programs of a typical middle school were incompatible with the educational needs of students with disabilities. This is important to note as the junior high school level is where students are preparing for the academic demands of secondary school.

A study directed specifically at middle-school educators was conducted by DeBettencourt (1999). This study used the Mainstream Attitude Survey (MAS) to determine the attitude of the general educators toward inclusion. In this study, 71 educators at the middle-school level (all core content general educators) were targeted.
The results revealed that 37% of the educators did not support the concept of inclusion, and another 24% felt no strong commitment to the concept. More than 50% did not feel that inclusion had been successful in improving social and academic skills for students with disabilities or did not have strong feelings about this issue. Limitations were noted in this study. The researcher chose an instrument that used the word *handicap* rather than learning disabilities, in an attempt to discover the attitude of general educators toward students with learning disabilities. Currently, educators refer to inclusion of students with learning disabilities and do not use the word *handicap*. Although an explanation of the term was given, it is still possible that individuals’ responses may have been different. Another limitation was that the MAS used dated terminology.

Mainstreaming and inclusion refer to different models of service delivery. Although teachers completing the survey were provided with an explanation of mainstreaming, the survey should have been altered from the original form to include the term *inclusion*.

From the studies presented, it would appear that educators’ lack of support for inclusion were due to (a) the lack of skills to modify instruction for students with LD; (b) the fact that students with LD failed to make meaningful progress in general education classes; and (c) the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. Hence, it was felt that resource rooms would more effectively meet the needs of students with LD.

**Studies Supporting Inclusion**

In contrast to the findings of the studies just presented are studies where educators are supportive of inclusion. Davis and Maheady (1991), from their study
found general educators to be supportive of the implementation of inclusive classes, although they were the least accepting of the implementation of the goals of the Regular Education Initiative (REI), which called for the reconstructing of special and general education to create a partnership to better serve students. Villa, Thousand, Meyers, and Nevin (1994) found that survey responses from educators indicated a basic agreement with inclusion, but administrators were more favorable. The study sought to obtain the views of both educators and administrators. The results are understandable, as administrators are no longer in the classroom having to educate students with learning disabilities.

Waldron and McLeskey (1998) conducted a similar investigation to that of Zigmond and Baker (1995) in the hope of expanding upon the work previously done by them. Their investigation addressed the effects of an inclusive school program on the academic achievement of students with mild and severe LD. Unlike the focus of the study presented in this dissertation, elementary students were the focus of their study. The academic progress of students in reading and mathematics was compared using a curriculum-based measure (the Basic Academic Skills Samples - BASS). Seventy-one students from three elementary schools made up the Inclusive School Program group, while 73 students from three elementary schools in the same school system made up the non-inclusion group. The results of the study indicated students with LD who were educated in inclusive settings made significantly more progress on a reading curriculum-based measurement than students who were educated in noninclusive, resource settings. In contrast, students from both groups made comparable progress in mathematics. There
appeared to be small to nonsignificant differences of academic achievement for students with mild disabilities in inclusive settings, when compared to students who were placed in more traditional special education classes. Overall, the investigation indicated that effective inclusive student programs resulted in student academic progress that is as good as or better than students placed in separate settings. It is important to note that this was a study of an inclusive program regarded as "good" (effective) because the academic progress of students was as equal to or better than students placed in self-contained classes. However, there are, more than likely, "bad" (ineffective) inclusive programs which do not meet the needs of students with disabilities. The question arises as to whether opponents of inclusion investigated more schools with a "poor" (lacking in some areas) inclusive program than those with "good" inclusive programs.

Since the studies mentioned took a look at elementary educators and this research focused on junior high schools, it was important to obtain a more accurate picture regarding junior high (middle schools) educators. Hence, studies directly related to junior high educators were also examined. Farley (1991), in studying middle-school personnel in Virginia, found principals had a more favorable attitude toward inclusion than the educators. Factors contributing to the attitude included educational preparation, special education course work, and prior experience in working with students with disabilities. Linscott (1996) conducted a US national survey of middle-school personnel. The results indicated that students with disabilities should be included in the general classroom environment as far as possible. The integration of students was seen as an effective procedure.
Stanovich (1999) conducted a qualitative focus-group study using four general educators, one special education classroom educator, and one special education resource educator of Grades 7 and 8, as a means of finding ways of helping general education teachers who were already including students with special needs in their classroom. Educators of the focus-group supported inclusion as they saw it as an opportunity for students with disabilities to model appropriate social behavior displayed by their general education peers. They also believed it to be a motivation for students with special needs to perform at a higher level, so that they would fit in better with their peers. The view of the educators that inclusion resulted in higher performance by students with special needs was perceived as a positive support for inclusion. It is important to note that three of the four general educators had completed an introductory one-semester professional development course in special education, which may have made them more receptive to inclusion of students with learning disabilities. The question arises, Would the response have been similar if the majority of the educators interviewed had no exposure to special education courses?

A more recent study, quantitative in nature, was conducted by McLean (2000) in New York State to ascertain middle-level educators’ attitudes of inclusion. In total, 1,000 educators were mailed surveys, approximately 250 from each grade level 5-8. Surveys were sent to 900 general educators and 100 special educators. The overall return rate was 34.7% or 324 interpretable surveys. Survey results indicated that educators at the middle level, overall, moderately agreed with their district’s policies and procedures regarding inclusion. It is important to note, however, that this study looked at inclusion
of students with varying disabilities and was not limited to students with learning disabilities. A limitation of the study was failure to differentiate the attitude of the general educators from the special educators. Needed data upon future research should reveal what percentage of the 34.7% were general educators and special educators. Another limitation involved in this type of study was the inability to determine the validity of responses. Some inaccuracies may have been given by the respondents.

Smith (2000) examined the attitudes of middle-school educators in Tennessee toward inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom, using a 6-point Likert-type rating scale survey, consisting of 20 items. Of the 300 surveys distributed, 47.66% responded to the survey, or 143 educators from 50 schools; 98 were general educators and 45 were special educators. The results showed that the majority of middle-school educators in Tennessee favored an inclusive environment. However, special educators demonstrated a slightly more positive attitude toward inclusion than the general educators. A limitation to the study was the small sample size used, as only six educators in each of the 50 schools chosen were given surveys. In future research, the sample size needs to be larger in order to obtain a more accurate picture. Since the findings of this study were based on responses from educators at the middle-school level in Tennessee, generalizability of the findings should not extend to elementary or high-school educators or even middle-school educators in other states due to level differences of institutions and effectiveness of inclusive programs. Educators may or may not share the same view. The literature has revealed that the higher the education level, the more negative the attitudes toward inclusion (Jobe, Rust, & Brissie, 1996). The interpretation
of the results should be made with caution due to only self-reporting responses which may have some inaccuracies.

The attitude of educators was not always clearly defined in support of or against inclusion in the studies reviewed. In a review of literature regarding more than 20 inclusion programs, Salend and Duhaney (1999) concluded that inclusion programs effectively meet the education needs of only some students, providing they had mild disabilities. They felt other students performed better academically when they received instruction through such traditional special education models as resource rooms. This conclusion was made after a close examination of several studies that incorporated the use of surveys, interviews, and observations.

Obviously, there has been mixed research regarding the impact of inclusion on the academic performance of students with disabilities. Nearly every professional education organization has given a position statement regarding inclusion. They range from enthusiasm for full inclusion, to the concern that inclusion practices do not provide appropriate services for students with learning disabilities.

Although there is no substantial evidence to show that placing students with learning disabilities in general classes results in positive academic outcomes, professional organizations continue to pressure educators to operate inclusive schools. As a result, the question is puzzling. Are advocates of inclusion truly concerned with the academic performance and improvement of students with learning disabilities?

In addressing the attitudes of educators, many studies sought to determine if there was a correlation between the attitude of educators toward inclusion and the variables:
gender, age, training, years of experience, and teaching assignment.

Gender

Jobe et al. (1996) used the attitude scale entitled Opinions Relative to the Integration of Students With Disabilities (ORD) to examine the attitude of 500 general educators of elementary, middle, and high schools from 44 states toward inclusion of students with disabilities into general classes. One hundred and sixty-two participants returned the survey instrument. The study showed no significant difference between gender total score. Male teachers, however, were slightly more positive toward inclusion than female teachers. Additionally, males were significantly more confident than females in their ability to teach students with disabilities.

Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2000) conducted a quantitative study of 23 mainstream schools (12 primary and 4 secondary) in the UK to determine if variables such as gender, age, and years of teaching experience affected the attitude of educators in any way. One hundred primary-school educators and 60 secondary-school educators were surveyed. Forty-eight primary educators and 33 high-school educators returned the surveys, an overall return rate of 50.6%. The variable gender was not found to be significantly related to the attitude of respondents. Likewise was the findings of a study by Reusen et al. (2000-2001). The attitudes of 191 suburban high school educators (Grades 9-12) in San Antonio, Texas, were examined. One hundred and twenty-five educators (65.4%) completed and returned the surveys, and the data were analyzed using analysis of variance. The gender variable was found to be an insignificant factor in the attitudinal responses of the educators. Similar were the findings of Reusen et al. (2000-
2001) who conducted a study using 125 high-school educators. Participants had to respond to a 4-point Likert-type scale. The results of their study found no relationship between gender and attitude. This study did not examine the attitude of junior high educators.

In a quantitative study conducted by Leyser and Tappendorf (2001), 91 general and special education educators (elementary, junior, and high school) from two small school districts were given the Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming Scale (ORM), an attitude scale composed of 12 items. Educators were to rate each item on a 6-point scale. Female educators were found to be more receptive to teaching students with learning disabilities. In fact, female educators reported using modified instructional practices more frequently than their male counterparts. Avramidis and Norwich (2002), in their overview of more than 10 studies from 1984-2000 of educators’ attitudes toward inclusion, found inconsistent evidence with regard to gender. Some researchers noted that female educators had a greater tolerance for inclusion than the male educators, while other studies showed no relation to gender and attitude. These studies, however, did not separate students with disabilities and learning disabilities. Additionally, not just junior high educators participated.

A review of the studies revealed one study which indicated males with a more positive attitude toward inclusion, while another indicated females to be more receptive. However, the majority of the studies reviewed indicated no difference in attitude toward teaching students with disabilities on the basis of gender.
Age and Years of Experience

In a study by Jobe et al. (1996) addressed earlier under gender, 138 participants indicated that they had more than 6 years' teaching experience. No difference in attitude was found between those with less than 6 years' teaching experience and those with more than 6 years' teaching experience. The study surveyed elementary, junior, and high-school educators regarding teaching students with disabilities. No distinction was made regarding the responses from educators or the type of disabilities students were experiencing. Bender et al. (1995) in their study also found no correlation between years of experience and attitude. This study did not examine age and gender in relation to attitude.

Wanzenried (1998), in her study of elementary teachers in Nebraska, found educators with 1 to 8 years of teaching experience to demonstrate a more significant positive attitude than veteran teachers with 20 to 54 years of experience. In this study, gender was not examined in relation to educators’ attitude as it was considered “irrelevant” due to an overwhelming number of female educators in comparison to male educators in the state of Nebraska. Contrary to the findings of Wanzenried (1998) was the findings from Brown’s (1998) study of middle-school educators. From his study, educators with the highest number of years experience (16+) had the most positive attitude, while educators with the least positive attitude had the lowest number of years of experience in education (1 - 5 years).

Smith (2000), in her study on the attitude of middle-school educators in Tennessee toward inclusion of students with disabilities, found no significant correlation between the educators’ attitudes and their years of teaching experience or experience
with students with special needs. This study did not examine the variables gender, teaching assignment, and training in regard to educators' attitude. Leyser and Tappendorf (2001), however, found a significant correlation between educators' attitude and experience toward inclusion of students with disabilities, including learning disabilities. In their study, educators with more years of teaching experience (13 and more years) obtained significantly lower scores on the Benefits Factor than teachers with less experience.

In a more recent study (Avramidis & Norwich 2002), it was found that younger educators and those with fewer years of experience were more supportive of inclusion for students with various disabilities. The most experienced educators (greater than 11 years of teaching) were the least accepting. However, in an earlier study by Avramidis et al. (2000), it was reported that neither age nor teaching experience was significantly related to educators' attitudes. Likewise were the findings of Reusen et al. (2000-2001).

The studies presented findings that did not clearly reveal an ongoing correlation between attitude, age, and experience. As a result of the variation in years of experience and the few studies that examined age, no clear position could be taken to say that there was a correlation. Further studies are needed to truly determine if there is a correlation between attitude, age and experience.

**Teacher Training**

The importance of training in the formation of positive attitudes toward inclusion was supported by studies conducted in the US (Bender et al., 1995; Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001; Reusen et al., 2000-2001) and the UK (Avramidis et al., 2000).
Findings from these studies tend to reinforce the view that educators with special education training (pre- or in-service courses) were more receptive to inclusive classes. Bender et al. (1995) in their study of eight elementary-school and three middle school educators found that attitudes toward inclusion did correlate positively with the number of courses taken on teaching children with disabilities. In fact, educators with more course work had more positive attitudes. Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) found that educators with extensive training in inclusive classes (at least three, and up to six or more courses), as compared to those with no training or only 1-2 courses, used differentiated instruction more frequently. DeBettencourt (1999) and Reusen et al. (2000-2001) also found that general educators with higher levels of training were found to hold more positive attitudes toward inclusion. DeBettencourt (1999) studied middle-school (junior high) educators, while Reusen et al. (2000-2001) studied high-school educators.

Reusen et al. (2000-2001), in their quantitative study, examined whether high-school educators’ attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities (including learning disabilities) were affected by experience level, amount of special education training or experience, content, or subject area taught. Some major findings were discovered. First, significant difference was found between the overall attitudinal responses of educators who reported high levels of special education training or experiences and those who reported little to no special education training or experiences. Second, significant differences were found in two of the four domains between the attitudinal responses of educators who reported high levels of special education training or experiences and those who reported little to no special education training or experiences.
experiences. The two domains were academic content/educator effectiveness and educator preparation.

Contrary to the findings of the previous studies was the study by Jobe et al. (1996). In their study where 162 elementary-, middle- and high-school educators responded, 29 had received special education training, while 72 had in-service training on inclusion. Additionally, 138 had taught for more than 6 years. The findings revealed no significant difference in the attitude of educators towards the inclusion of students with disabilities, as a result of training. However, the interaction between inclusion in-service training and special education teaching experience was significant, modestly predicting a positive attitude toward inclusion. Overall, the findings revealed that the attitude of general educators was rather neutral.

All but one study presented significant difference in the attitude of educators toward inclusion of students with disabilities, as a result of training. Educators who had received special education training had a positive attitude, while those who attended 3-6 courses had a more positive attitude than those having taken fewer than three courses. From the review of studies, it would appear that special education training was pivotal in generating a positive attitude toward inclusion from educators.

Teaching Assignment

Davis and Maheady (1991) surveyed the attitudes of 605 general elementary educators, special educators, and principals toward the REI. In response to specific questions regarding educating special-needs students in general education settings, only 32% of general educators and 53% of special educators were in favor of this goal. In
contrast, 64% of principals were in agreement with this goal. General educators were found to be the least accepting. Educators sampled believed that the largest impediments to full inclusion were factors such as lack of appropriate planning time, the limitations of existing rules and regulations, and inadequate institutional support.

Additionally, a study by Chamberlin (1995) found general educators exhibited proportionately higher negative attitudes about inclusion than special education educators. This can be seen as realistic, as special education educators have opted to teach in this area and have undergone special training as opposed to general education educators who may not have undergone the necessary training, and therefore may not be as adequately prepared to face the challenges that come with teaching students with learning disabilities.

In 1998, Wanzenried conducted a quantitative study in Nebraska using a Likert-type scale questions to ascertain the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms. This study was limited to 50 elementary administrators, 75 elementary special educators, and 546 general elementary educators. The findings were based on a 47% response rate (318 completed surveys). In general, administrators and special educators perceived that students with learning disabilities improved their academic achievement in general classrooms and therefore supported inclusion. However, general elementary educators, who made up almost 76% of the survey respondents, were unconvinced that such improvement took place and did not support inclusion. In contrast, Reusen et al. (2001) in their study at the high-school level found educators who taught students with
disabilities held more positive attitudes toward inclusion.

Previously mentioned studies such as Avramidis et al. (2000), DeBettencourt (1999), Jobe et al. (1996), Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) and Reusen et al. (2000-2001) did not consider the variable teaching assignment in determining the attitude of educators. However, DeBettencourt (1999) and Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) indirectly did examine teaching assignment. The investigation by DeBettencourt (1999) surveyed 71 middle-school (junior high) general educators regarding inclusion of students with disabilities, receiving response from 56. Thirty-seven percent did not support the concept of inclusion, while 24% felt no strong commitment to the concept. Thus, 60% of general educators felt no strong commitment or support for the concept of inclusion. The limitation to this study was the inability to compare the response of general and special educators. However, the purpose of the study was to investigate the attitude of general educators. Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) on the other hand examined teacher certification—general versus special education of elementary and junior high educators, which can be looked at indirectly as teaching assignment. Teaching certification was not found to be significantly related to the attitude of educators.

One can conclude from the studies reviewed that addressed the issue of teaching assignment, special educators were more receptive to the inclusion of students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, than were general education educators. However, not all studies examined the attitude of educators and teaching assignment. This is an area that can be researched further.
Collaboration and Resources

Throughout the literature, collaboration was recognized as another important variable of an effective inclusion program. It is critical that general and special educators routinely meet to engage in collaboration, solving problems that may emerge in the inclusion process.

According to Villa and Thousand (2003):

For inclusive education to work, educators must become effective and efficient collaborative team members. They must develop skills in creativity, collaborative teaming processes, co-teaching, and interpersonal communication that will enable them to work together to craft diversified learning opportunities for learners who have a wide range of interests, learning styles, and intelligences. (p. 22)

Smith et al. (2001) and Villa and Thousand (2003) highlighted a number of collaboration models that general and special educators could implement. They included consultation, parallel teaching, co-teaching, teacher assistance teams, and peer support systems. Despite having these models, the questions arise, Do educators see the need for collaboration and are they engaging in it? What effect is collaboration having on students with learning disabilities and teacher performance? What resources are needed to enhance collaboration?

According to Wendt (1999):

Regular education teachers demonstrate strong agreement for the need to work collaboratively with special education teachers to develop interventions and lessons for included students. Teachers emphasize that both parties must be actively involved in the process of developing and implementing adaptations and modifications. (p. 20)

Research, however, has indicated that general educators do not always feel prepared to teach students who have learning disabilities, and special and general educators often lack the skills in teaming and collaboration needed to teach students with
learning disabilities. Additionally, many school systems are not offering continuing in-service to help teachers with these needs. How is this affecting students and educators in inclusive programs? Few have investigated educators' perceptions of collaboration and the effects of collaboration on student learning and educator performance. The following research studies examined collaborative programs and their effect on students and educators.

Salend and Duhaney (1999) reported the findings from four studies on actual collaborative efforts. The first study conducted in the mid-Atlantic region surveyed 318 elementary educators (185 general educators in traditional classrooms, 64 special educators in inclusive settings, 69 general educators in inclusive settings) of students with mild disabilities. It was found that general and special educators working collaboratively in inclusive settings had higher levels of personal efficacy and higher self-ratings of competence and satisfaction in teaching students with disabilities than general educators who taught in traditional classroom arrangements.

In the second study, six general and four special educators (K-5) from Northern Kentucky were interviewed regarding their experiences in working as a collaborative team to teach students with mild disabilities in elementary general settings (Salend & Duhaney, 1999). Educators indicated experiencing some anxiety in the beginning but eventually they evolved into a unit engaging in shared planning, curriculum development, and enjoying their teaching partnership. Their benefits included the opportunity to teach students with a full range of learning abilities, feeling less isolated, and the opportunity to observe positive changes in students with and without disabilities.
However, due to the inability to communicate with each other and resolve teaching style differences, two of the collaborative teams were unsuccessful.

The third study reported by Salend and Duhaney (1999) focused on 18 elementary and 7 middle-school co-teaching teams from eight Virginia school districts. Classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, relevant school documents, and informal contacts were used to study the experiences of these educators. The 25 teams consisted of 119 educators and 24 administrators who worked in inclusive classrooms. In reference to the students, respondents reported both social and academic benefits for students with and without disabilities. Benefits for the educators included greater professional satisfaction to explore and expand their professional capabilities, to receive personal and professional support, opportunity to share their expertise with others, and to collaborate on a building and district-wide basis. However, there were problems noted such as scheduling planning time for teachers, maintaining appropriate caseloads, obtaining administrative support, and receiving staff development.

The fourth study conducted by Salend et al. (1997) investigated the perceptions and experiences of a cooperative teaching team consisting of elementary general and special educators, by analyzing journal entries. The general educator had 20 years' teaching experience but had completed no courses in special education. The special educator had 25 years' teaching experience with students who were labeled LD in self-contained classes and resource rooms. Initial journal entries indicated that each member had concerns regarding teaching space, role delineations, teaching styles, and philosophical differences. However, subsequent journal entries indicated that
collaborative teaching enabled educators to try new teaching methodologies, make their teaching more enjoyable and stimulating, and to overcome isolation when they had to work alone.

A study on general educators from middle schools in a rural school district in a southeastern state was conducted by DeBettencourt (1999). A total of 71 educators from three middle schools were surveyed. Fifty-nine (83%) responded to the survey. In response to consulting (collaborating) with special educators about students, 19% did no consultation, 32.8% consulted less than 1 hour per week, 39.7% consulted 1 to 2 hours per week, while 8.6% consulted 3 or more hours per week. The concern arises as to why general educators did not make use of the expertise of special education educators regarding students with learning disabilities. Was the issue one of time, or lack of desire to accommodate students?

Daane et al. (2000) conducted a study on one school district which had implemented inclusion for the last 2 years but which had not provided any in-service in inclusion or collaborative teacher efforts. A survey was used to collect the data from 324 elementary general educators, 42 elementary special education educators, and 15 administrators. In addition, individual interviews were conducted with 12 of the participants: 4 elementary general educators, 4 elementary special educators, and 4 administrators. The findings revealed that although collaboration was taking place between special and general educators, all three groups indicated that they were not comfortable with collaboration. Reasons given were conflict of personalities, lack of planning time, and limited time in the classroom by the special educator. Both groups of
educators disagreed with the view that the inclusive classroom was the most effective environment for students with disabilities. Special educators felt it was necessary to use pull-out services for some students.

One hundred thirty-nine collaborative educators from nine school districts in northern New Jersey (K-12) participated in a study conducted by Austin (2001). The study investigated the perceptions of collaborative educators and the effect of collaboration on student learning. A survey was used to ascertain information regarding the current state of inclusive collaborative teaching within their respective districts, along with a follow-up interview for respondents who indicated a willingness to participate. The findings revealed that a majority of special and general educators agreed in theory that they should meet daily to plan lessons. However, those who actually met daily disagreed about the effectiveness of such a practice. It was felt, however, that the collaborative teaching strategies used were effective in educating all of their students. Students without disabilities were able to gain some understanding of the learning difficulties experienced by many students and were able to develop a tolerance for differences and sense of acceptance. However, there was concern regarding the disruptive effects of some students with disabilities on the academic performance of classmates with disabilities.

The studies on collaboration reviewed were primarily elementary with the exception of Austin (2001), who looked at all levels; Salend and Duhaney (1999), who looked at both elementary and middle schools; and DeBettencourt (1999), who looked specifically at middle (junior high) schools. Additionally, all of them focused on
“disabilities” and not specifically on learning disabilities. Nonetheless, the collaboration was done for students with LD in mind. The studies revealed that many educators had anxiety and were uncomfortable with collaborating. After some time, many seem to have adjusted and experienced great benefits. Nonetheless, the studies revealed collaboration was done, but on a small scale, and many who participated benefitted.

There appeared, however, to be a need to promote more collaboration between general and special educators.

Resources, in conjunction with collaboration, are critical to the implementation and continuance of an effective inclusive program. In fact, a lack of resources is perceived as a barrier to inclusion. It was the view of Zigmond and Baker (1995) that special education for students with learning disabilities would require more resources in the future, not fewer. These resources can be divided into material resources (money), human resources, and access to information and knowledge (Miles, 2000).

Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormick, and Schear (1999), in gathering data as a part of a needs assessment for a mid-Atlantic state in the US, distributed surveys to elementary and secondary educators. Two hundred and two (70%) of the surveys were returned from general educators, while 87 (30%) were returned from special educators. The majority of general educators reported not having the necessary supports and resources needed to successfully integrate students with special needs in the classroom. Seventy-nine percent reported needing, but not having, adequate class size, 78% needing, but not having, in-service training, and 73% needing, but not having, time to meet with families. Forty-nine percent of special education educators indicated needing, but not
having, adequate class size, while 48% indicated the need for in-service workshops. Hence class size, in-service training, and the need to meet with the family of students were seen as important resources needed by the educators for an inclusive program.

Because of the lack of or limited resources that some schools may have for the implementation of inclusive programs, classroom educators must integrate the special needs of students with resources available through advance planning, if a successful inclusion program is to be the end product. Collaboration and planning take time and call for additional material. Therefore a substantial block of time in the school schedule for planning and collaboration between general and special educators must be provided. Additionally, provision must be made for formal training, on-going professional development in meeting the needs of students with disabilities, and modifying curriculum and instruction, workable class size, orientation, conferences, in-services, continuous assessment, computers in classrooms, peer assistance, increased personnel/trained paraprofessionals (such as special education counselors and teachers' aides), and user-friendly communications systems. These are resources that must be considered and provision made by administrators at both the school and district levels (Daane et al., 2000; Esperat, Moss, Roberts, Kerr, & Green, 1999; Shea, 2000).

Since collaboration is imperative in an inclusion program, general and special educators need some type of intervention to help them feel more comfortable in collaborative efforts. Hence, professional collaboration may need to be an integral part of any teacher education program and resources must be provided by administration at
both school and district levels to provide ongoing training and planning time (Danne et al., 2000). Additionally, “successful school-wide inclusion requires the commitment of school administrators and school personnel who are willing to make strong policy statements” (Hay & Courson, 1997, p. 98). Finally, parents and the community are resources that must be utilized. An ongoing partnership must be encouraged between educators and parents and the school and community at large (Kisanji, 1999). The involvement of parents and the community, and incorporating the resources mentioned can only lead to effective inclusive programs.

**Modifications of Instructional Techniques**

Throughout the literature, advocates for inclusion strongly voiced their conviction that students with learning disabilities can achieve in general education classes as the needs of the individual learner can be met with modified instruction and support (Whittaker, 1996). According to Gartner and Lipsky (1987), the success of the merger between general and special education relies on educators’ willingness to accept and make modifications for students with special needs. Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) stated that the success of inclusion depends on the quality of instruction offered to students. They found that quality instruction may call for educators’ use of instructional practices and modifications to accommodate for student diversity.

It is the view of Stanovich (1999) that the type of instruction educators and students engage in will have a direct effect on the success of the integration effort. Educators from the study (Stanovich, 1999) shared student-centered activities, cooperative learning, guided discovery, and inquiry-based projects as good instruction
methods to use with inclusion programs. Additionally, they shared curricular modifications that they used in their classrooms. These curricular modifications included:

1. Print materials of differing reading levels
2. Graphic organizers and visual aids
3. Alternations in length, time, or complexity of assignments
4. The chance to redo an assignment
5. Breaking assignments down into smaller, more manageable units
6. Individualized reinforcement schemes
7. Use of rubrics that allow for differing expectations
8. Grouping techniques
9. Allowing choice in final format (e.g., oral vs. written).

Upon recognizing the need for adjustment, the question arises as to whether general educators are modifying their instructional methodology to meet the needs of students, and if students with learning disabilities are reaping the benefits. The findings from a few studies are presented in an attempt to answer the question.

Baker and Zigmond (1990) examined the instructional methods used by elementary educators in an effort to explore what changes would be necessary to successfully implement a full-time inclusive program for students specifically with learning disabilities. They concluded that the majority of instruction was directed to the whole class with little consideration given to individual differences. Additionally, assignments and expectations were not adjusted based on student needs. They suggest
that in order for IDEA to be effective in schools, many changes in inclusive or general education instruction must take place. Baker and Zigmond (1990) concluded that educators must spend more time teaching, using a variety of instructional techniques.

Vaughn and Schumm (1994) conducted a study to understand middle-school educators' planning for students in inclusive classes. A case study design was selected. Three educators who were identified by the principal and special educator as "effective" with students in inclusive classes were selected. Each educator was paired with a university-based researcher (three educator/university researcher teams) for all aspects of data collection. Data were collected by observations, educator interview, and teaching episodes. The study reported that the educators already working in inclusion programs did not take the needs of students with learning disabilities into account when planning or teaching their lessons. The study further revealed that two principles were missing from educators' planning—knowledge acquisition and planning/modifying instruction to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Rather, general educators focused on content coverage, student interest, and planning for the class as a whole. It is important to note that the educators perceived that there were external pressures on them to cover content. Thus, the curriculum guidelines and pressure from administration had a powerful influence on the direction of their teaching. This was unfortunate and inappropriate for students with special needs, thus defeating the purpose of inclusion according to Vaughn and Schumm (1994).

Further studies were conducted by Vaughn and Schumm (1995) to evaluate the extent to which general elementary-, middle-, and high-school educators effectively plan
and make instructional modifications for students with learning disabilities. Through surveys, interviews, and classroom observations, the findings revealed many educators did not feel they had the knowledge or skills to appropriately plan for and instruct students with learning disabilities, and classroom educators made few or no modifications to meet the special needs of students with learning disabilities.

Darling-Hammond (1996) stated:

> If we want all students to actually learn in a way that new standards suggest and today’s complex society demands, we will need to develop teaching that goes far beyond dispensing information, giving a test, and giving a grade. We will need to understand how to teach in ways that respond to students’ diverse approaches to learning, that are structured to take advantage of students’ unique starting points, and that carefully scaffold work aimed at more proficient performance. (p. 7)

Supporters of inclusion maintain that general educators can accommodate their students and special students within the general classroom. However, Cawley, Hayden, Cade, and Baker-Kroczyński (2002) and Fritz and Miller (1995) found junior high educators who have a less positive view of inclusion made fewer modifications for the included child. In the study conducted by Bender et al. (1995) on educators of Grades 1 through 8, it was discovered that general education teachers did not utilize certain interventions that research overwhelming supported and that were known to facilitate academic achievements for students with LD. Interventions such as a specialized grading system, the use of behavioral contracts, and advance organizers were seldom used. Bender et al. (1995) found it difficult to understand why educators did not make use of the various interventions.

In the study conducted by DeBettencourt (1999), all middle-school general educators in a rural school district in a southeastern state were surveyed. Each educator

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was surveyed using the Bender Classroom Structure Questionnaire consisting of 40-item Likert scale questions, to determine if they used numerous instructional methodologies. However, an analysis of their responses revealed that only 40% used behavioral contracts with students to improve behavior, only 32% used advance organizers to assist students in comprehension or difficult concepts, only 45% varied the instructional material for students with LD, only 16% individualized their instruction when necessary, and 40% reported occasionally varying materials. However, 74% provided several test options, while 65% varied the difficulty level of assignments for students. It was discovered that those who had taken special education courses used different types of instructional strategies more frequently. A limitation to this study regarding the use of instructional methodologies was that the data were based on self-report by general educators and may have involved some self-reporting inaccuracies. Educators may have reported that they employed a certain strategy when in reality they did not, or vice versa. Two of the interventions highly recommended by Bender et al. (1995) were used by a small percentage of educators. DeBettencourt’s (1999) study found that many of the educators had taken special education courses, and should have been aware of the methodologies for students with learning disabilities. In analyzing the data, the variables gender, training and teaching experience were not considered.

Vaidya and Zaslavsky (2000) conducted a study in Pennsylvania, Grades K-12. It revealed that 11 - 12% of all students were identified as having a disability. Their disabilities included learning and emotional or behavior disorders. Unfortunately, high-school educators were often unwilling or unable to recognize students with learning
problems. In fact, some high-school faculty did not consider it their responsibility to modify curriculum and educational methods to accommodate students with LD. Nonetheless, to ensure effectiveness for students with LD, the researchers pointed out that modifications should be made to general education inclusion classroom instruction and curricula.

Cawley et al. (2002) conducted a study consisting of 114 junior high students from an inner-city neighborhood school. They selected 2 Grade 8 general education classes, 2 Grade 7 general education classes, and 2 special education classes for the study. One general education science classroom at each grade level was chosen for inclusion and the other was used as a comparison group. One purpose of the study was to examine the science achievement of students with disabilities and students without disabilities in general education science classes that enrolled students with disabilities and science classes that did not enroll such students. It was observed that the special education students were assigned the same work as the general education students. When it came time for testing, however, test modifications such as the use of alternate test sites, extended time, and the reading of the test to the student as stated in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) were allowed. No changes were made in the test or the scoring. The academic success of the students in special education was comparable to the passing rate of the general education students. Sixty-nine percent of the students in special education passed the district exam, which was equal to the rate at which the general education students passed the exam. It was noted in the article that the general education students who failed were consistently doing poorly all year. The study also
looked at the social adjustment of the students in special and general education. The claim that students with disabilities adversely affect the general education students and that they do not make academic progress on their own was not supported by the study.

The literature has revealed a number of effective instructional modifications that can be used by educators, yet the results of the studies presented revealed that many general educators are continuing to prepare lessons and teach to meet the needs of the “normal” students, ignoring the needs of students with LD. However, some educators have incorporated instructional modifications, although not on a large scale. Table 1 summarizes the modifications that were found to be effective and highly recommended from the literature and Table 2 presents those that were actually used by educators from the studies presented. Lewis and Doorlag (1995) reported that nearly 50% of the school population is either disabled or “at risk” of school failure. Therefore, if students in general and those with learning disabilities specifically are to succeed in the general education setting, it is imperative that general educators engage in instructional modifications and find ways to individualize instruction to meet the needs of the diverse student population, thus enabling students to show more accurately what they actually know. It is obvious that much more could be done by general educators to ensure that students with learning disabilities experience a level of academic success.

**Summary**

The review of literature revealed that inclusion is based on the premise that students with learning disabilities should be educated with their peers in general classrooms. Despite the varying definitions for inclusion, researchers acknowledge the
Table 1

*Effective Instructional Modifications Recommended*

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<th>Studies recommending modifications</th>
<th>Instructional modifications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bender, Vail, &amp; Scott, 1995</td>
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<td>Use of behavioral contracts</td>
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<td>Advance organizers</td>
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<td>Hay &amp; Courson, 1997</td>
<td>Putting books on tape</td>
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<td>Having note-taking strategies</td>
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<td>Test modifications</td>
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<td>Providing hints and prompts</td>
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<td>Incorporating hands-on activities</td>
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<td>Utilizing alternative assignments</td>
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<td>Scott, Vitale, &amp; Masten, 1998</td>
<td>Use alternative textbook or material</td>
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<td>Simplify curriculum</td>
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<td>Make modification to tests</td>
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<td>Modify grading system</td>
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<td>Provide peer tutoring</td>
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<td>Shorten assignments</td>
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<td>Bryant, Dean, Elrod, &amp; Blackbourn, 1999</td>
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<td>DeBettencourt, 1999</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inquiry-based projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alternation in length, time,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>complexity of assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chance to redo assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modification of curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grouping techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allowing choice in final format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(e.g., oral vs. written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cawley, Hayden, Cade, &amp;</td>
<td>Extended time for test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker-Kroczynski, 2002</td>
<td>Redoing of test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
fact that inclusion can include a child with special needs attending special education classes for a portion of the school day and returning to a general education setting for the remainder of the day, called responsible inclusion. In essence, the philosophy of inclusion is that all students are entitled to be full participants in the school community (Friend & Cook, 1993).

Considering the many proponents for inclusion, the question arises as to whether there is sizable evidence to show that inclusion of students with learning disabilities results in improved academic achievement. Despite these proponents, the literature indicates that general educators do not necessarily have a positive attitude toward this service delivery model (Wendt, 1999). While the majority of educators indicate they believe in the concepts of inclusion, general educators also express concerns. They perceive they have not had the training to acquire the knowledge and skills to teach and modify instruction for students with disabilities and also have insignificant instructional planning and delivery time (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). However, despite their lack of knowledge and skills, a significant number failed to utilize the assistance of special education educators. The majority of the findings in the various studies cited in this review of literature were limited mainly to the United States. As some of the studies presented in the review were limited to a particular state, this study was limited to junior high public school educators on the island of New Providence. I received answers to the following questions regarding these educators: How do Bahamian junior high educators truly feel about inclusion? Do they think they have the training to plan for and instruct
students with learning disabilities? What modifications, if any, do Bahamian educators make for students with learning disabilities?

The literature revealed support and opposition for inclusion by teachers, while modifications of teaching methods (such as modifying materials, adjusting course content, or modifying scoring or grading criteria) (Baker & Zigmond, 1990; Leyser & Tappenjdorf, 2001) were identified as paramount to ensuring an effective inclusive program. Although a number of the studies sought to discover the attitudes of educators toward inclusion, many of them failed to address the teaching methods used by educators to ensure a successful inclusive program, while others showed general education educators choose to teach in their usual manner, addressing the "norm group" or non-disabled students. Through this study, I hope that findings from the respondents as to whether modifications in teaching methods such as the ones mentioned earlier in the chapter are utilized. Unless modifications in teaching methods, such as those presented earlier in the chapter, occurs regardless of the legal requirements or educational trends of inclusion, students with learning disabilities will fail to gain the academic benefit that should be the ultimate goal of inclusion.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of the research was to determine the attitudes of public junior high educators toward teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this study.

Description of Population

The population for this quantitative and qualitative research was the teaching staff of all seven public junior high schools in New Providence, Bahamas. The population consisted of 470 junior high general and special educators from all seven schools who are employed by the Ministry of Education. At least five of the seven schools had a teaching staff population of approximately 75. One had a teaching staff population of 50, while the smallest school had a teaching staff population of 46. Junior high educators were selected because it was at this level that the discontinuance of remedial classes and the implementation of inclusion were crucial to the academic performance of students as they advanced to high school. Additionally, it was at this level that encounters of concern from educators regarding the teaching of students with learning disabilities surfaced. Since my goal was to ascertain the attitudes of all public junior high educators in New Providence, no additional sampling method was employed.
I expected 50 to 60% of the total public junior high teacher population in New Providence to answer the questionnaire. However, 30.12% responded, which was an acceptable response rate for questionnaires (Alreck & Settle, 1995).

**Instrument Description**

In an attempt to ascertain the attitudes of educators regarding teaching students with learning disabilities, a questionnaire instrument along with perusal of lesson plans was used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire was developed by Wanzenried (1998). Permission was requested and received from Dr. Wanzenried to use her questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section contained a cover letter and instructions for responding to the questionnaire statements. The second section consisted of 39 questionnaire items. Participants were instructed to indicate their agreement or disagreement to each item, using a five-choice Likert scale. I added the last three items to address specifically, instructional modifications for students with learning disabilities. These items addressed areas significant to the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms. The Likert-scale items were designed to assess educators' specific attitudes toward inclusion. Each item focused on one of the following issues: teacher training, modifications, teacher reward, academic or social gains, or collaboration (support or influence). Section 3 was comprised of 15 demographic questions on gender, age, training, years of teaching experiences, and teaching assignment (general or resource).
Credibility of Instrument

To ensure validity to the findings upon administration of the instrument, a questionnaire was selected that had been used in a prior study. Wanzenried (1998), developed a questionnaire instrument based on an examination of the literature. An initial draft of the questionnaire was submitted to fellow research students by Wanzenried (1998) for review, and further revised. A pilot study was conducted by Wanzenried (1998) with 18 educators in the Westside Community Schools in Omaha, Nebraska, and from the feedback, further changes were made and the final questionnaire was developed. After the researcher took the necessary steps to ensure content validity, the instrument was ready for use. The study for which the instrument was developed was similar to this investigation as they both sought to discover attitudes toward inclusion. Thus, the instrument was seen as applicable.

In determining content validity of the instrument for this study, an analysis of the content was done to ensure that statements in the questionnaire instrument addressed questions to which the study was seeking answers. From the analysis, a need for additional statements addressing instructional modifications was noted, hence the last three statements were added. The questionnaire instrument was then approved by committee members. To ensure reliability, the instrument was tested using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient reliability analysis. Reliability coefficients were checked to ensure coefficients fell in the range of .70 (considered adequate for research purposes; Groth-Marnat, 2003). As a result of this check for reliability (resulting in an alpha of .8189), the items relating to attitude were considered reliable, and were treated as a scale, hence values were totaled.
Distribution and Collection

To ensure the support of principals and educators of participating schools, a letter was sent to the Director of The Ministry of Education to inform her of the study and to solicit her help in ensuring cooperation from participating schools. Once this had been achieved, letters were sent to each principal explaining the study. The purpose of this letter was to seek an opportunity to speak with each about addressing their staff during a staff meeting, and to have an administrator identified to whom questionnaires were to be returned. Informed consent forms and questionnaires were hand delivered to all seven of the public junior schools in New Providence and distributed to educators on staff, including special (resource) educators during a staff meeting. Two schools did not allow me to address the staff during a staff meeting, resulting in my approaching educators individually. Questionnaires were number-coded for tracking purposes as to the number of questionnaires distributed and returned. Individuals were asked to write their names and telephone contact on the back of the envelope in which their questionnaires were to be returned, for future contact regarding lesson plans. Participants were given 2 weeks to complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed envelope to the designated administrator at each school. The return of the questionnaire was inadequate to complete the research; therefore, subsequent follow-up letters were distributed, reminding participants to complete and return the questionnaires, giving them an additional 2 weeks.

An independent person, unrelated to the study, was responsible for the collection of the questionnaires and to assign each respondent with a code for future contact regarding perusal of lesson plans. Many of the respondents chose not to write their
names and phone numbers on the envelope, thus preventing the random selection of 10% of the respondents for the perusal of lesson plans. The independent person made contact with respondents who had written their name and telephone number on the envelope regarding the perusal of lesson plans. Each were asked to turn in at least two lesson plans. They were not to place their names anywhere on the lesson plans but were to use their code number, which was given to them by the independent person when they were contacted. I remained blind at all times to the codes. The process of administering the questionnaires was conducted during the first term of the school year. The collection of questionnaires and the perusal of lesson plans went into the second term as the response to the questionnaires was slow, despite the reminders.

Data Analysis

Analysis of information collected in this research study was mainly quantitative. A limited amount of the data was qualitative in nature. The process used in this study was receiving, organizing, and entering of data into the statistical software program, SPSS. Reverse coding was required on questionnaire items 5, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 23, 27, 29, 31, 38, and 39 because of their negative presentation.

In determining which questionnaire items were to be used in addressing the attitude of educators toward inclusion of students with LD, modification and collaboration, three fellow graduate students and two graduate professors were given a copy of the questionnaire and were asked to identify the items that they felt spoke to each. Those questionnaire items that were selected by two or more persons were retained. This was done to determine which items would be used in obtaining the answer
to each research question. An inter-item correlation reliability test was conducted on the 20 questionnaire items identified for attitude. Items that did not have at least one inter-item correlation of .30 or higher were eliminated. At the end of the exercise, 13 of the 20 suggested items were retained for determining the attitude of educators toward inclusion of students with LD in general education classes. No inter-item correlation reliability was conducted on the items identified for modification and collaboration because there were so few identified. Questionnaire items were identified for answering each of the four questions. The questionnaire gave respondents the opportunity to respond to current and ideal practices. Current practices referred to the way things were at the time of the research, while ideal referred to the way they would like things to be. Since I wished to clearly discriminate the responses of those who agreed and disagreed, each item identified was collapsed and classified in the categories of agree, undecided, and disagree. The degree of agreement or disagreement was not vital in obtaining the answers to the research questions.

Further, the items for each research question were totaled prior to conducting the analysis. The following question items, 1, 2, 7, 11, 13, 19, 24, 27, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38, and 54, were geared to obtaining the answer for research question 1: Are Bahamian public junior high educators supportive of the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes? Questionnaire items 17, 23, 37, 52, and 53 were used to answer research question 2: What modifications are made to instructional methodologies to assist students with learning disabilities in general education classes? Questionnaire items 6, 12, 28, and 30 were geared to answering research question 3: Do general education educators collaborate with special educators (resource educators) when
planning instructional interventions? Questionnaire items 40, 41, 45, 47, 48, 49, along with all attitude questions used in question 1, were used to determine the answer to research question 4: Do differences exist in educators' attitudes on the basis of age, gender, training (special education courses taken), years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment?

In order to answer the last question, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

*Hypothesis 1.* Younger educators are likely to have a move favorable reception to teaching students with learning disabilities than older teachers.

*Hypothesis 2.* Female and male educators are likely to have the same attitudes towards teaching students with learning disabilities.

*Hypothesis 3.* Educators with special education training or three or more courses in special education are likely to favor teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes.

*Hypothesis 4.* Educators with 11 or more years of teaching experience are less likely to favor teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes.

*Hypothesis 5.* Resource educators are likely to have a more favorable reception to teaching students with learning disabilities than are general education educators.

The data for each hypothesis were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (Univariate ANOVA) to determine if there were any significant differences. The 13 questionnaire items used to answer question 4 were treated as a scale and totaled, and ANOVA was done in relation to the variables of age, gender, training, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment. Cronbach's alpha coefficient reliability analysis
was done on the 13 questionnaire items for both current and ideal practices. Results revealed an alpha of .6608 for the current practices and .8189 for the ideal practices. Current practices refers to the way things were at the time of the study, while the ideal practices allowed respondents to indicate how they would like things to be. A correlation of .70 or more is generally considered adequate for research purposes (Groth-Marnat, 2003). Since responses from ideal practices will be the main focus of this research in determining the attitude of educators and the correlation alpha was acceptable, the 13 questionnaire items were treated as a scale, and values were treated as total scores. All other research questions were answered using descriptive statistics. Additionally, in an effort to ascertain if educators were in deed modifying their instructional methodologies and to discover what methodologies were being utilized (research question 2), lesson plans of 10% of the respondents surveyed were perused.

The independent person, upon contacting respondents concerning lesson plans, issued code numbers that enabled me to match questionnaire and lesson plans submitted by the same individual. This gave the researcher the opportunity to take note of the various modifications indicated by respondents on their questionnaire and then see if and how many of the modifications indicated were incorporated in the actual lesson plans. Hence, the lesson plans provided a built-in validity component.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of junior high public teachers in New Providence Bahamas regarding the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms.

Research Questions

The research was guided by four questions:

1. Are Bahamian public junior high educators supportive of the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes?

2. What modifications are made to instructional methods to assist students with learning disabilities in general education classes?

3. Do general education educators collaborate with special educators (resource teachers) when planning instructional interventions?

4. Do differences exist in educators’ attitudes on the basis of age, gender, training, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment?

Survey Sample Size

Educators from all seven of the public junior high schools in New Providence,
Bahamas, were surveyed. Although the population size for all seven schools was approximately 470, only 405 surveys were distributed, as some educators chose not to participate in the study. No reason was given for their nonparticipation. The number of questionnaires returned was 130. Eight questionnaires were unuseable due to incomplete responses. Therefore, the sample size was 122, giving a usable return rate of 30.12%. Respondents were asked to write their names and telephone numbers on the envelopes for future contact by someone independent of the researcher regarding the collection of lesson plans. Thirteen respondents, exactly 10% of the returned surveys, did as instructed. However, only 8 of the 13 respondents (6.55%) of the total number of respondents actually sent in copies of their lesson plans for perusal.

Respondent Demographics

In an attempt to ascertain a profile of the 122 respondents to the questionnaire, an analysis of the demographic data was done. The analysis revealed 91 (74.6%) of the 122 respondents were females, while 31 (25.4%) were males. General educators constituted 109 (89.3%) of the respondents, while 13 (10.7%) were special educators. When asked whether respondents had experience teaching students with learning disabilities, 115 (94.3%) indicated ‘yes’, while 7 (5.7%) indicated having no experience teaching students who were labeled LD. Response to the number of students labeled learning disabled within their school resulted in a mean of 331.81, the statistical average across all the responses. This meant respondents felt that, on average, 331.81 students at their individual schools had a learning disability. However, the standard deviation on the mean of 331.81 was 230.99, which indicated the variability in responses from the mean.
Further, response to the number of students labeled learning disabled within a class yielded a mean of 81.52 ($SD = 115.64$). These results indicated a vast difference in the views of the respondents regarding the number of students within a class having learning disabilities. There appear to have been a misinterpretation of the question. It would appear that responses were given to the number of students with LD within the respondents' classes combined, rather than just one class. Respondents who indicated that they had taught students with LD were asked to indicate the type of setting in which they had taught such students. Pull-out classes, contained or segregated classes, and general education classes were sited by the respondents as the classes in which they had taught students with LD. However, four respondents indicated they had taught students with LD in both general and contained classes rather than one or the other; hence I added the additional classification of setting in which students with LD were taught. Table 3 shows the frequency in percentage to the type of setting respondents taught students with LD.

Table 3

Setting in Which Students With Learning Disabilities Were Taught

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No experience</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contained/Segregated classes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education classes</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>69.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General &amp; Contained classes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pull out</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The questionnaire sought to obtain information on the teaching experience of the respondents. The responses revealed years of experience teaching general education classes ranged from 1 to 47 with a mode of 5.00; years of experience teaching special education ranged from 0 to 20 with a mode of 0; while years teaching students with learning disabilities ranged from 0 to 33, with a mode of 2.00. The mode of 5.00 indicated that 5 years was the most frequently occurring amount of years given by respondents for teaching general education classes; 0 years was the most frequent amount of years cited by respondents regarding teaching experience in special education classes; while 2 years was the most frequently occurring amount of years given by respondents who have taught students with a learning disability. Responses indicated that most respondents had not taught students with a learning disability in special education (remedial or contained) classes. Rather, most respondents had taught students with learning disabilities for at least 2 years in general education classes. See Table 4.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Teaching</th>
<th>Number of Years</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General education</td>
<td>1 to 47 years</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>0 to 20 years</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching students with LD</td>
<td>0 to 33 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. The mode indicates the most frequently occurring number of years given by respondents.*
Responses regarding special education training revealed 50 (41%) respondents had no special education training, while 72 (59%) had some training. In response to the number of courses taken in Special Education training, 39 (32%) respondents had taken 1-2 courses; 18 (14.8%) had taken 3-4 courses; 3 (2.5%) had taken 5-6 courses; while 12 (9.8%) had taken more than six courses. The mode regarding the courses taken was 0, meaning that the larger number of respondents had not taken any special education courses. The findings are summarized in Table 5. Crosstabs were done to ascertain the number of courses taken in special education according to gender and age. See Tables 6 and 7 for results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of courses taken</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 courses</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–2 courses</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4 courses</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–6 courses</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 6 courses</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6

*Crosstabulation of Gender and Number of Courses Taken in SE Training*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of courses taken in SE training</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 courses</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 courses</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 courses</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 courses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than six courses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
<td><strong>122</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7

*Crosstabulation of Age and Number of Courses Taken in SE Training*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of courses taken in SE training</th>
<th>&lt; than 25 yrs. old</th>
<th>25-35 yrs. old</th>
<th>36-50 yrs. old</th>
<th>&gt; than 50 yrs. old</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 courses</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 courses</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 courses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than six courses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>122</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents were given the opportunity to indicate the subjects they are certified to teach. Table 8 shows the subjects and the number of educators for each subject. One observation made was that although 13 respondents had indicated that they were special educators, only 7 indicated that they were certified special educators. Eight respondents indicated that they were certified general educators, which meant they were certified elementary educators. The majority of respondents were certified to teach the core subjects in the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Studies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Drawing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodwork</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>122</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
curriculum, namely English, mathematics, science, and social studies. The final area of the demographics to be examined was the age of respondents. Fourteen (11.5%) respondents were less than 25 years old, 51 (41.8%) respondents were 25-35 years, 46 (37.7%) were 36-50 years, while 11 (9.0%) were more than 50 years old. See Table 9

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 35</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 50</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey Responses

The survey consisted of 39 questionnaire items and 15 demographic questions that were designed to measure educators' attitudes toward inclusion, modification to instructional methods, and collaboration of general educators with special educators in relation to the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes. Public junior high educators were asked to respond to the questionnaire items by rating their reaction to each of the 39 items using the scale Strongly Disagree, Disagree,
Undecided, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Before each research question could be addressed individually, questionnaire items related to each question were identified. The items answering each of the questions were totaled. Questionnaire items associated with each of the questions are given in Table 10.

Table 10

*Questionnaire Items Associated With Each Question*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Cluster of Statement Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are Bahamian public junior high educators supportive of inclusion of students with LD in general classes?</td>
<td>1, 2, 7, 11, 13, 19, 24, 27, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38, 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What modifications are made to instructional methods to assist students with LD in general education classes?</td>
<td>17, 23, 37, 52, 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do general education educators collaborate with special educators when planning instructional interventions?</td>
<td>6, 12, 28, 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do differences exist in educators’ attitudes on the basis of age, gender, training, years of experience, and teaching assignment?</td>
<td>1, 2, 7, 11, 13, 19, 24, 27, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 45, 47, 48, 49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Items 11, 17, 23, 27, 31, and 38 were reverse coded to analyze data.
Question 1

The following presentation of results is organized around the research question:

Are Bahamian public junior high educators supportive of the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes?

The questionnaire consisted of 13 items that addressed attitude, to which respondents were to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to current practices at their institution and what they perceived as ideal. A collapsed frequency distribution was done to determine the amount of respondents in agreement, disagreement, or undecided relating to the 13 items on attitudes for both current and ideal practices. Responses were examined, and responses for both current and ideal practices were presented. Current practices looked at the way things were at the time of the study, while the ideal practices allowed respondents to indicate how they would like things to be. More attention was paid to the ideal responses, a better indicator as to whether educators have a positive attitude toward inclusion or not.

Table 11 shows the frequency distribution of agreement, disagreement, and indecision for each questionnaire item for both current and ideal practices. The numbers indicate the following: responses to the current practices yield clear agreement for two questionnaire items (27, 31), clear disagreement for six items (1, 2, 19, 33, 34, 35), and undecided for five items (7, 11, 13, 24, 38), while responses to the ideal practices received clear agreement for five items (1, 2, 19, 27, 31), clear disagreement for two items (11, 38), and undecided for six items (7, 13, 24, 33, 34, 35).
Table 11

*Frequency Distribution to Research Question 1 (Percentages Given With Parentheses)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Current Agree</th>
<th>Ideal Agree</th>
<th>Current Disagree</th>
<th>Ideal Disagree</th>
<th>Current Undecided</th>
<th>Ideal Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The educational needs of students with learning disabilities are met in general classrooms.</td>
<td>6 (4.9)</td>
<td>77 (63.1)</td>
<td>93 (76.2)</td>
<td>32 (26.2)</td>
<td>23 (10.7)</td>
<td>13 (10.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. General education teachers have the skills and knowledge to teach students with learning disabilities.</td>
<td>10 (8.2)</td>
<td>89 (73.0)</td>
<td>102 (83.6)</td>
<td>28 (23.0)</td>
<td>10 (8.2)</td>
<td>5 (4.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general classes improves their academic achievement.</td>
<td>21 (17.2)</td>
<td>63 (51.6)</td>
<td>71 (58.2)</td>
<td>31 (25.4)</td>
<td>30 (24.6)</td>
<td>28 (23.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes generally has an adverse effect on the education of classmates.</td>
<td>57 (46.7)</td>
<td>21 (17.2)</td>
<td>38 (31.1)</td>
<td>78 (63.9)</td>
<td>27 (22.1)</td>
<td>23 (18.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Students with learning disabilities who are included in general education classes are more likely to graduate from high school.</td>
<td>14 (11.5)</td>
<td>67 (54.9)</td>
<td>64 (52.5)</td>
<td>18 (14.8)</td>
<td>43 (35.2)</td>
<td>37 (30.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11—Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Current Agree</th>
<th>Ideal Agree</th>
<th>Current Disagree</th>
<th>Ideal Disagree</th>
<th>Current Undecided</th>
<th>Ideal Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19. Students with learning disabilities make adequate academic progress in general education classrooms.</td>
<td>17 (13.9)</td>
<td>86 (70.5)</td>
<td>78 (63.9)</td>
<td>22 (18.0)</td>
<td>27 (22.1)</td>
<td>14 (11.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Students without disabilities benefit from the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes.</td>
<td>24 (19.7)</td>
<td>64 (52.5)</td>
<td>63 (51.6)</td>
<td>21 (17.2)</td>
<td>35 (28.7)</td>
<td>37 (30.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. The academic needs of students with learning disabilities are met in separate resource settings taught by special education staff.</td>
<td>86 (70.5)</td>
<td>108 (88.5)</td>
<td>26 (21.3)</td>
<td>6 (4.9)</td>
<td>10 (8.2)</td>
<td>8 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Students with learning disabilities make more progress when they receive academic instruction in a resource/special education classroom setting</td>
<td>104 (85.2)</td>
<td>105 (86.1)</td>
<td>8 (6.6)</td>
<td>10 (8.2)</td>
<td>10 (8.2)</td>
<td>7 (5.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements</td>
<td>Current Agree</td>
<td>Ideal Agree</td>
<td>Current Disagree</td>
<td>Ideal Disagree</td>
<td>Current Undecided</td>
<td>Ideal Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. The student with learning disabilities attains better reading skills when reading is taught and learned in general education classrooms.</td>
<td>12 (9.8)</td>
<td>42 (34.4)</td>
<td>93 (76.2)</td>
<td>47 (38.5)</td>
<td>17 (13.9)</td>
<td>33 (27.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. The student with learning disabilities attains better writing skills when writing is taught and learned in general education classrooms.</td>
<td>15 (12.3)</td>
<td>39 (32.0)</td>
<td>95 (77.9)</td>
<td>51 (41.8)</td>
<td>12 (9.8)</td>
<td>32 (26.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. The student with learning disabilities attains better math skills when writing is taught and learned in general education classrooms.</td>
<td>14 (11.5)</td>
<td>39 (32.0)</td>
<td>90 (73.8)</td>
<td>54 (44.3)</td>
<td>18 (14.8)</td>
<td>29 (23.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Grading should be the same for special education students as general education students.</td>
<td>63 (51.6)</td>
<td>18 (14.8)</td>
<td>49 (40.2)</td>
<td>91 (74.6)</td>
<td>10 (8.2)</td>
<td>13 (10.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 122*
Themes Shared by Questionnaire Items

Questionnaire items were examined to determine if those receiving similar responses shared a theme. Items that received a clear agreement in the current practice shared the common theme of training and teaching students. It would appear that respondents felt that, with training, general educators can provide appropriate instruction for students with learning disabilities. However, it seemed to be the view of the respondents in the current practice that general educators are lacking the necessary skills. Thus, the academic needs and the making of more progress for students with LD would be better met with special education educators in resource settings.

The theme training and teaching students was also found among three of the five questionnaire items obtaining agreement in the ideal practice. Responses indicated that general educators would have the skills and knowledge to provide appropriate instruction to teach students with LD, meet their educational needs, thus helping them to make adequate academic progress in general education classes. Contrary to the implication of the three questionnaire items addressed are the responses to the items that students with learning disabilities make more progress when they receive academic instruction in a resource classroom setting and the academic needs of students with LD are met in a resource classroom taught by special educators. These questionnaire items were agreed to by 105 (86.1%) respondents and 108 (88.5%) respectively.

Similarly, a common theme was noted among current practices items to which clear disagreement was evident. Four of the questionnaire items receiving disagreement addressed teaching skills, learning, and making academic progress. Respondents did not think that current general educators had the skills and knowledge to teach students with
learning disabilities. Therefore, this position followed through with items pertaining to academic progress and obtaining various skills in general education classes taught by general educators.

Two distinct themes could be seen among the disagreement with ideal practices questionnaire items. The theme of same grading received a high disagreement response. However, in the current practices, responses were evenly divided thus no clear position was taken. The second theme was that of adverse effect of students with LD in general education classes on students without learning disabilities. This item yielded a clear position of disagreement in the ideal practice, compared to indecisiveness in the current response.

There appeared to be no one common theme among items of current practices where no clear decision was apparent. One of the questionnaire items addressed grading, regarding whether it should be the same for all students. The academic achievement was addressed in two questionnaire items looking at academic improvement of students with LD and whether they were more likely to graduate. The final two items addressed whether teaching students with LD in general classes would have an adverse effect on students without LD.

Three of the five questionnaire items that received undecided responses in the current practice (7, 13, 24) also received undecided responses in the ideal practice. Responses to the three questionnaire items appear contradictory to the responses of the questionnaire items that received agreement in the ideal practice. For example, respondents were not sure if inclusion of students with LD in general education classes
improved their academic achievement, whereas earlier respondents agreed that students with LD make adequate academic progress in general education classes. Respondents appeared not to be clear regarding their position of whether students with learning disabilities attained better reading, writing, and math skills if taught and learned in general education classrooms. Responses changed from disagree (current practice) to undecided (ideal practice).

In terms of current practice, items in the scale addressing question 1 ranged from 18-44. However, 13 was the most negative possible attitudinal score, while 65 was the most positive attitudinal score toward inclusive classrooms. Current practice responses obtained a mean of 29.90, median of 30.00, and a standard deviation of 5.84, indicating a clear negative attitude by educators toward inclusion in current practices. Combined responses of questionnaire items in the ideal practice resulted in a mean of 39.93, median of 42.00, and a standard deviation of 7.53. The mean score of 39.93 indicated indecision but a slightly more positive attitude by the educators in an ideal practice. It must be pointed out, however, that overall there was a significant level of indecision that cannot be overlooked. This indecision appeared to have affected the results. Undecided responses ranged from 5 to 37, with as many as 6 of the 13 questionnaire items receiving as much as 28 or more undecided responses in an ideal practice. The undecided responses were even greater in the current practice responses area.

Respondents’ Comments on Students with LD in General Education Classrooms

In addition to the questionnaire items, question 54 from the demographic section
was also examined as it related to answering question 1. In response to the question of whether students with learning disabilities should be taught in general education classrooms, 80 (65.6%) of the respondents said ‘no’ while 41 (33.6%) said ‘yes’. One respondent answered both yes and no with the explanation that it depended on the severity of the disability. A total of 9 respondents when answering the question, added explanations regarding their responses. Two respondents, although indicating ‘no’ as their response to the question, believed that whether or not to place students with learning disabilities in general education classes should depend, in the final analysis, on the degree of the disability. Three other respondents, who had also indicated ‘no’, gave the following comments: “Students could be taught in general classes for subjects such as physical education and music, but generally they should not be included; allowing students with LD in general classes should depend on the topics and methods used, the amount of exposure (familiarity) the student has had with the topic and his/her self-confidence”; and “Students with learning disabilities would gain more in general education classes only if the setting accommodated individual help, movement at their own pace and a curriculum designed to meet their needs.”

Three respondents who had indicated ‘yes’ to the same question also added comments. Two of them felt that placing a student in a general education classroom should depend somewhat on who is teaching the class because not every educator wants to deal with students who have learning disabilities. The third respondent, although having indicated yes, explained that the response was dependent on the nature and extent of the learning disability. It was further pointed out that the lack of resources hindered
the ideal aim of inclusion. The respondent felt that the inclusion of students with LD in general education classes is a good idea only if adequate resources were allotted, and presently, they were not.

Taking into account the responses related to the ideal practice, it appears that even in an ideal practice respondents did not clearly support inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general classes. Too much indecision was evident.

**Question 2**

What modifications are made to instructional methods to assist students with learning disabilities in general education classes?

Questionnaire items 17, 23, and 37 along with two questions from the demographic section addressed the issue of modifications to instructional methods used to assist students with learning disabilities in general education classes. A collapsed frequency distribution was done to determine the amount of respondents in agreement, disagreement, or undecided relating to the three statements on instructional modification for both current and ideal practices. Findings were presented for both current and ideal practices, indicating the way things were at the time of the study and the way they would like for things to be.

Table 12 shows the frequency distribution of agreement, disagreement, and indecision for each of the three questionnaire items for both current and ideal practices. Questionnaire items 17 and 23 of current practices yield clear agreement, while item 37 was undecided. Responses to the ideal practices received clear agreement for all three
Table 12

Frequency Distribution to Research Question 2 (Percentages Given Within Parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Current Agree</th>
<th>Current Disagree</th>
<th>Ideal Agree</th>
<th>Ideal Disagree</th>
<th>Current Undecided</th>
<th>Ideal Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Students with learning disabilities in general education classes require extra time and attention from the general education teacher.</td>
<td>108 (88.5)</td>
<td>13 (10.7)</td>
<td>102 (83.6)</td>
<td>19 (15.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes requires instruction and classroom management changes.</td>
<td>92 (75.4)</td>
<td>25 (20.5)</td>
<td>116 (95.1)</td>
<td>1 (.8)</td>
<td>5 (4.1)</td>
<td>5 (4.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. General education teachers have a responsibility to focus on student interest.</td>
<td>71 (58.2)</td>
<td>38 (31.1)</td>
<td>104 (85.2)</td>
<td>10 (8.2)</td>
<td>13 (10.7)</td>
<td>8 (6.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 122
questionnaire items. Indecision for both current and ideal practices was insignificant ranging from 0 to 13, hence having little impact on the overall results. The combining of responses of the three items for current practices revealed a mean of 7.42, a median of 7.00, and a standard deviation of 1.81. The combining of responses addressing modification in the ideal setting achieved a mean of 7.79, a median of 8.00, and a standard deviation of 1.59. There was clear agreement that the teaching of students with learning disabilities in general education classes would call for extra time and attention, would require change in instruction and classroom management, and that the interest of students must be taken into consideration, thus resulting in possible changes to the curriculum.

Modifications Made to Instruction

In addition to the questionnaire items on modification, respondents were given the opportunity to indicate if changes were made to their instruction to assist students with learning disabilities. Sixteen (13.1%) indicated 'no' while 106 (86.9%) indicated 'yes'. Respondents were further given the opportunity to indicate methods used in the classroom. A perusal of the lesson plans was done to help determine if and the extent to which methods indicated on the questionnaires were actually used by respondents. The use of visual display as indicated in their questionnaire responses was found to be used by all eight respondents who turned in lesson plans. Although 6 of the 8 respondents had indicated the use of cooperative learning and student-centered activities, only 3 respondents actually incorporated cooperative learning in their lesson plans, while only 1 incorporated student-centered activities.

Five respondents indicated the use of the same textbook and assignment, 3
indicated the use of simpler textbooks, and 1 indicated different activity sheets for students with LD. However, from perusal of lesson plans, it appeared all students used the same textbook as each respondent only named one textbook and no indication was given to the use of any additional textbook. Likewise, the same information and assignment appeared to have been given to all students. Only 1 respondent specifically indicated the use of activity sheets for students with LD. Finally, at least 2 respondents spoke of working with the students one on one and the use of practical activities despite not being indicated by them in the questionnaire response. Although respondents in the questionnaire indicated anywhere from 7 to 11 different methods used, most lesson plans addressed the use of only 2 to 4 methods. The more frequently cited teaching methods used by respondents were the opportunity to redo work, the use of visual aids, and the use of same textbooks. Table 13 shows the various methods indicated by respondents and the number of them using the methods. In most instances, two statements were given, one toward attitude and the other to indicate actual practice. A view of frequency for the two statements yielded some interesting results.

In response to the redoing of work, 9 (7.4%) respondents felt that redoing was unfair to the bright students, while 103 (84.4%) actually allowed students to redo their work. Contrary to the high percentage (86.9%) of respondents who indicated that they made changes to their instruction to assist students with learning disabilities was the actual percentage regarding the use of each method. The following results appeared contrary to the overall high percentage of respondents who indicated that they make changes to their instruction: 75 (61.5%) gave all students the same information; 62
Table 13

*Teaching Methods Used in the Classroom by Teachers (N=122)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special grading system that rewards the effort of students with LD</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading all students the same</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test administration options such as oral test vs. written test or extended time test</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students given the same opportunity to demonstrate their achievement</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of visual displays/transparencies to aid in comprehension</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>73.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture is the main approach to teaching</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative learning is used regularly</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance organizers are given to students with LD</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students are given the same information</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some students are given the opportunity to redo work</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redoing is unfair to the bright students</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-centered activities</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-centered activities are given to students with LD only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different activity sheet or assignment for students with LD</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students are given the same assignments</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Simpler textbook for students with LD</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students are given the same textbook</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other methods</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(50.8%) graded all students the same, while only 47 (38.5%) had a special grading system to reward the effort of students with LD; 67 (54.9%) gave test administration options, while 61 (50%) gave students the same test opportunity; 70 (57.4%) used student-centered activities, while 3 (2.5%) gave student-centered activities to students with LD only; and only 34 (27.9%) used a simpler textbook for LD students, while 83 (68%) give the same textbook to all students.

Respondents were given the opportunity to indicate other methods used that were not among the list provided. A total of 20 (16.4%) respondents indicated the use of other methods. This is important as it gives an indication of the number of respondents who used additional methods to assist students with learning disabilities. The use of individual attention was the most popular, cited by 13 (10.7%) of the 20 respondents. Table 14 highlights the additional methods cited by respondents and their frequency.

Table 14

*Other Methods Used in the Classroom*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discovery/KWL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual attention</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical reinforcement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills acquisition</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Given the mixed results and low to average percentage of responses to teaching methods used by educators and the perusal of lesson plans, it looks like some modification is done to assist students with learning disabilities in general education classes. However, the responses indicate a more willingness to make modification in the ideal practice than in the current practice. Currently, there appears to be a deficiency in the modifications cited by respondents in actual lesson plans.

**Question 3**

Do general education educators collaborate with special educators (resource educators) when planning instructional interventions?

The collaboration between special and general educators was addressed in four questionnaire items. A collapsed frequency distribution was done to determine the amount of respondents in agreement, disagreement, or undecided relating to the four questionnaire items 6, 12, 28, and 30 addressing collaboration of general and special educators when planning instructional interventions. Table 15 shows the frequency distribution of agreement, disagreement, and indecision for each of the four questionnaire items for both current and ideal practices.

The four questionnaire items addressing current practices regarding collaboration achieved a clear disagreement response regarding having time within the school day to collaborate (item 6) and three indecisive responses regarding support from SE educators, team teaching, and support from Assistance Team (items 12, 28, 30), whereas responses to the ideal practice achieved clear leaning toward agreement for all four questionnaire items. A mean rating of 4 or greater indicated clear agreement on a statement, while
### Table 15

**Frequency Distribution to Research Question 3 (Percentages Given Within Parentheses)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Current Agree</th>
<th>Ideal Agree</th>
<th>Current Disagree</th>
<th>Ideal Disagree</th>
<th>Current Undecided</th>
<th>Ideal Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. General and special education teachers have regular time within the school day to collaborate on the education of the student with a learning disability.</td>
<td>8 (6.6)</td>
<td>106 (86.9)</td>
<td>100 (82.0)</td>
<td>12 (9.8)</td>
<td>14 (11.5)</td>
<td>4 (3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. General education teachers who teach students with learning disabilities receive adequate support from special education staff.</td>
<td>20 (16.4)</td>
<td>116 (95.1)</td>
<td>73 (59.8)</td>
<td>1 (.8)</td>
<td>29 (23.8)</td>
<td>5 (4.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Having general and special educators team or co-teach the general class meets the needs of all students in the general education classroom.</td>
<td>43 (35.2)</td>
<td>95 (77.9)</td>
<td>44 (36.1)</td>
<td>11 (9.0)</td>
<td>35 (28.7)</td>
<td>16 (13.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. The building Student/Teacher Assistance Team provides support to general educators in making accommodation to meet the academic needs of students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms.</td>
<td>15 (12.3)</td>
<td>86 (70.5)</td>
<td>51 (41.8)</td>
<td>5 (4.1)</td>
<td>56 (45.9)</td>
<td>31 (25.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 122*
clear disagreement would yield a mean score of 2 or less. As shown in Table 15, regarding current practices, 100 (82%) respondents disagreed with having regular time within the school day to collaborate regarding the education of students with a learning disability. The questionnaire item achieved a mean of 1.83 ($SD = .93$) showing a clear disagreement as there is only a .93 possible variation from the mean. However, in an ideal practice, 106 (86.90%) agreed that they should have regular time within the school day to collaborate. This questionnaire item achieved a mean of 4.10 ($SD = 1.09$), indicating a clear agreement with a possibility of 1.09 difference from the mean.

In the current practice, 73 (59.8%) respondents disagreed with the statement that general educators with students with LD are receiving adequate support from special education staff; while 20 (16.4%) agreed, and 29 (23.8%) were undecided. A mean of 2.35 ($SD = 1.04$) was achieved indicating indecisiveness. The significant number of undecided responses contributed greatly to the indecisive result. However, responses to the ideal practice achieved a clear agreement from 106 (86.9%) respondents resulting in a mean of 4.27 ($SD = .62$), clearly indicating that general educators who had students with LD should receive adequate support from special education staff.

In current practices, responses to the final two questionnaire items on collaboration indicated indecisiveness for both. Forty-three (35.2%) respondents agreed, 44 (36.1%) disagreed, and 35 (28.7%) were undecided regarding general and special educators team or co-teaching in general classes and meeting the needs of all students. The response achieved a mean of 2.99 ($SD = 1.03$). The questionnaire item, the building Student/Teacher Assistance Team provided support to general educators in making
accommodation to meet the academic needs of students with LD in general education classrooms resulted in 51 (41.8%) in disagreement and 56 (45.9%) as undecided. The response achieved a mean of 2.62 ($SD = .921$) due to the significant number of undecided responses.

Ninety-five (77.9%) respondents agreed that in an ideal practice general and special educators team or co-teaching general classes would meet the needs of all students in general education classes. The responses achieved a mean of 3.95 ($SD = .98$), indicating a leaning toward a clear conclusion of agreement. The questionnaire item, that the building student/teacher assistance team could provide support to general educators in making accommodation to meet the academic needs of students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms, resulted in agreement from 86 (70.4%) while 31 (25.4%) were undecided. The average mean was 3.92 ($SD = .88$), indicating a leaning toward a clear conclusion of agreement.

In an attempt to determine the general consensus on the four questionnaire items that were targeted for answering question 3 on collaboration, responses from the items were totaled. Current practices responses together achieved a mean of 9.80, a median of 10.00, and a standard deviation of 2.52. With 4 being the most negative possible attitudinal score and 20 the most positive, the mean score of 9.80 indicated indecision with a slightly more negative attitude than positive. However, the totaling of ideal practices responses of the four questionnaire items yielded a mean of 16.24, median of 16.00, and standard deviation of 2.35, indicating a substantially positive attitude by educators in an ideal practice toward collaboration.
Given these results, it looks like, currently, there appears to be little collaboration and support with general and special educators when planning instructional interventions. However, in an ideal practice, educators’ responses indicated a positive attitude toward support and collaboration of general and special educators.

**Different Perceptions of Current and Ideal Practices**

Respondents were given the opportunity to respond to the questionnaire items in relation to the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in current practices and ideal practices settings. Table 23, Appendix 3, gives an overall presentation of the responses in percentages for both the current and ideal settings in regard to the 39 questionnaire items respondents were asked to consider. A close look revealed a difference in responses of current versus ideal responses for 23 questionnaire items, while responses remained the same for 16 items. However, although some respondents maintained the same view, the percentage in most instances increased in the ideal setting. For example, respondents to both current practice and ideal practice were in agreement that the inclusion of students with LD in general education classes required significant changes in instruction. Responses to the current practice yielded an agreement of 57.30% while responses to the ideal practice yielded an agreement of 95.10%. There is a difference in agreement between the two practices by 37.8%. Such a vast difference in percentage, even though maintaining the same position, could also be seen in the responses for items 23, 29, 33, 34, 35, and 37.

A significant difference was noted in items 28 and 39. In both instances, the current practices response percentages were evenly shared, indicating no clear position.
for either of the two items. However a clear position was stated in response to the ideal setting. For example, 77.90% of respondents agreed that in the ideal setting having general and special educators team or co-teach the general class would meet the needs of all students in the general education classroom. In regard to item 39, in the ideal setting, 82% of the respondents disagreed with the view that the same assignments should be required of all students no matter their abilities.

**Question 4**

Do differences exist in educators’ attitudes on the basis of age, gender, training, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment?

In an attempt to answer the question, Univariate Analysis of Variance was conducted on the demographic variables with $p$ set at < .05 for statistical significance. Five hypothesis, one for each demographic variable, were tested. Univariate ANOVA was conducted on both current and ideal practices. However, more attention was paid to the ideal practice, which is more cogent for educators’ true attitude.

**Age**

Before Univariate ANOVA was run on attitude and age, a clear distinction had to be made pertaining to younger and older educators. Studies such as Avramidis et al. (2000) and Avramidis and Norwich (2002), used the expression younger and older when referring to age and attitude, but made no distinction in age categories. Smith (2000), in her study on attitude and inclusion, although not examining age and attitude, used in her demographics the age categories presented in this study. In determining the attitude of
younger and older educators, responses were recoded into two groups with older
educators being 36 years or more, while younger educators were identified as 35 years or
less. Originally, age was in four categories: less than 25 years old (14 respondents), 25-
35 years old (51 respondents), 36-50 years old (46 respondents), and over 50 years (11
respondents). Since the groups were so unequal and “younger” and “older” had been
used before in studies, the decision was made to group the first two categories together
and the last two categories together, presenting more equal groups for younger and older.
All 13 questionnaire items used in addressing question 1, dealing with attitude, were
totaled. Current practice revealed an outcome of $F(1, 078) = 3.17, p > .05$, no
statistically significant difference. In the ideal practice, $F(1, 154) = 2.05, p > .05$
revealed there was also no significant difference. The results for both current and ideal
practices (see Table 16) revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in
attitude toward inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education
classes based on age.

Table 16

*Univariate ANOVA: Attitude by Age Differences*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Younger</th>
<th>Older</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>29.0308</td>
<td>5.8335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal</td>
<td>40.8462</td>
<td>7.0738</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Gender

A similar test on gender was conducted. Current practice revealed $F(1, 669) = .184, p > .05$ indicating no statistically significant difference, thus no difference in attitude on the basis of gender. However, the ideal practice revealed $F(1, 013) = 6.30, p < .05$, indicating a statistically significant difference. This result indicated that there was a difference in the attitude of educators on the basis of gender. A look at the descriptive statistics for each gender revealed that male educators, having a mean of 42.80, had a more positive attitude toward teaching students with learning disabilities than female teachers, a mean of 38.96. Results are presented in Table 17.

Table 17

*Univariate ANOVA: Attitude by Gender Differences*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Male Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Female Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>30.2903</td>
<td>5.7399</td>
<td>29.7667</td>
<td>5.9057</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>.669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal</td>
<td>42.8065</td>
<td>5.3443</td>
<td>38.9560</td>
<td>7.9357</td>
<td>6.305</td>
<td>.013*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.

In an attempt to determine why males had a more positive attitude toward students with learning disabilities, crosstabulation was done on gender and subjects certified to teach. The results revealed that 15 (48.38%) of the 31 male educators taught
subjects such as art, music, physical education, technical drawing and woodwork, while only 12 (13.18%) of 91 females taught the same subjects. Female educators heavily taught the core curriculum subjects while male educators were almost evenly divided among technical and core subjects. This finding may have an impact on the more positive attitude males have toward students with learning disabilities.

Further test of the two independent variables was done to determine if there was a difference in attitude when gender and age interacted. The significant values for both current and ideal practices were > .05, indicating that there were no statistically significant differences, hence no difference in attitude as a result of the interaction of gender and age.

Training

Univariate ANOVA was conducted to determine if there was a difference in attitude on the basis of having received training in special education and the number of courses taken in special education training. Responses pertaining to the number of courses taken in special education were recoded into two groups—1 to 2 courses and 3 or more courses—because of the hypothesis that teachers with special education training or with three or more courses in special education favored teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes.

Each variable was looked at individually for both practices. The current practice indicated there were no statistically significant differences regarding the attitude of respondents with special education training and those without, nor the amount of special education courses taken. In the ideal practice, when looking at attitude in relation to
having received some special education training, statistically significant differences were noted with $F(1, 020) = 5.52, p < .05$. This indicated that there was a difference in attitude on the basis of whether one received special education training or not. Respondents who received special education training were more favorable to teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes, as they obtained a mean of 41.27, while those with no training obtained a mean of 38.08. Statistically significant differences $F(1, 048) = 4.07, p < .05$ were further noted in regard to the number of special education courses taken. An examination of the descriptive statistics for the number of special education courses taken revealed that educators having taken three or more courses have a more positive attitude toward teaching students with LD than those with fewer courses. Results for SE training and number of SE course taken are presented in Tables 18 and 19 respectively.

Table 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Some Training N=71</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>29.7000</td>
<td>5.6578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal</td>
<td>41.2676</td>
<td>6.4740</td>
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</table>

* $p < .05$. 

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Table 19

Univariate ANOVA: Attitude by Number of Special Education Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>29.5128</td>
<td>5.8843</td>
<td>30.0313</td>
<td>5.3851</td>
<td>.147</td>
<td>.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal</td>
<td>39.7436</td>
<td>6.8161</td>
<td>42.7879</td>
<td>5.8297</td>
<td>4.065</td>
<td>.048*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05.

Given the results, there appeared to be a difference in attitude of respondents with special education training. In ideal practices, respondents with special education training have a more positive attitude to teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes, and there is a difference based on the number of special education courses taken. Persons with three or more courses had a more positive attitude toward teaching students with LD. The current attitude supports earlier referral of the lack of training and teaching skills to teach students with learning disabilities. However, in the ideal practice, respondents felt they should receive training and with this training be able to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities in general education classes. Hence, a more favorable attitude was shown toward teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes.

Years of Teaching Experience

Respondents' years of teaching experience were examined to determine if this had an effect on attitude regarding the inclusion of students with LD in general education
classes. Before Univariate ANOVA was conducted on teaching experience, responses were recoded into two groups. A distinction had to be made between those who had 10 years or less and those with 11 years or more teaching experience because of the hypothesis that educators with 11 or more years’ teaching experience are less likely to favor teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes. The results presented in Table 20 revealed no statistically significant differences for both the current and ideal practices.

Table 20

Univariate ANOVA: Attitude by Years of Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>10 yrs. or &lt;&lt;br&gt;N = 57</th>
<th>11 yrs. or &gt;&lt;br&gt;N = 65</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>28.9649 5.9730</td>
<td>30.7344 5.6435</td>
<td>2.805</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal</td>
<td>40.9123 7.1521</td>
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<td>1.815</td>
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Teaching Assignment

Finally, a test of between-subjects of general and special education educators revealed no statistically significant differences for both the current and ideal practices, as the significant value for each was > .05. The results in Table 21 indicate that there was no difference in attitude between resource and general education educators.
Table 21

*Univariate ANOVA: Attitude by Teaching Assignment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>General $N=109$</th>
<th>Special Education $N=13$</th>
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<tr>
<td>Current</td>
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<td>5.9037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal</td>
<td>39.5321</td>
<td>7.5260</td>
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</table>

Given these results, it would appear that four of the five research hypotheses were rejected, and one (hypothesis 3) was accepted as:

1. There was no difference in attitude on the basis of age.
2. Female and male educators did not have the same attitude towards teaching students with a learning disability, but rather males were more favorable.
3. There was a difference in attitude based on educators receiving special education training, and the number of courses taken. Educators with special education training or three or more courses in special education were more favorable to teaching students with LD in general education classes.
4. There was no difference in attitude based on the number of years’ teaching experience.
5. There was no difference in attitude between special (resource) educators and general education educators.

Table 22 displays the sum of squares, $df$, $F$ statistic, and probability for the univariate ANOVA relative to the variables.
Table 22

Analysis of Variance Results for Each Hypothesis—Research Question 4

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<td>Age &amp; Gender Interaction</td>
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<th>F</th>
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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to determine the attitude of junior high teachers toward teaching students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes in public schools in New Providence, Bahamas. The research was guided by the following questions:

1. Are Bahamian public junior high educators supportive of the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes?

2. What modifications are made to instructional methodologies to assist students with learning disabilities in general education classes?

3. Do general educators collaborate with special educators (resource teachers) when planning instructional interventions?

4. Do differences exist in educators' attitudes on the basis of age, gender, training, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment?

Summary and Discussion of the Findings

Six of the 13 questionnaire items that addressed the attitudes of educators regarding the inclusion of students with LD in general education classes in the current practice section received disagreement responses, while 2 items received clear agreement responses and 5 items received undecided responses. Responses to the ideal practice section resulted in disagreement for 2 questionnaire items, agreement for 5 items, and
undecided for 6 items. Although responses for both current and ideal practices disagreed with the statement that the educational needs of students with learning disabilities could be met in general education classrooms, responses to other related questionnaire items in current practices indicated that students with LD could be successful in general education classes. However, a significant percentage of respondents were undecided. The responses indicated that currently most educators involved did not have a positive attitude toward inclusion because they felt general educators lacked the skills, thus the academic needs of students with special education would be better met with special educators in resource settings. A similar attitude was found in studies by Coates (1989), DeBettencourt (1999), and Semmel et al. (1991). In response to the ideal practice, however, a number of respondents felt that general educators would have the skills and knowledge to provide appropriate instruction to teach students with LD, meeting their educational needs and helping them to make adequate academic progress in general education classes. It is important, however, to note that a number of respondents were undecided. In view of this, it would seem that even in an ideal practice, respondents do not clearly support inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general classes.

It is the view of many experts that the acceptance of students with disabilities will occur only following modifications to teaching methods and teacher training (Avaramidis & Norwich, 2002). In both current and ideal settings, respondents indicated that the inclusion of students with learning disabilities would call for significant changes in instruction and classroom management. Although responses indicated that general and special educators do not use the same instructional interventions in teaching students
with LD currently, in an ideal setting it was projected that they would be able to use the same instructional interventions. Current response to grading and assignments being the same for all students indicated no clear position, and a number of respondents were undecided. However, respondents in an ideal setting indicated strong disagreement to the same grading and assignments, and supported modification. Overall, the results revealed that currently general and special educators do not use the same instructional interventions, therefore the academic needs of students with LD would be better met in resource classes. However, in the ideal practice, both would be able to use the same instructional interventions. No doubt respondents are expecting training to have taken place for this to be achieved successfully.

The success of the merger between general and special education relies on teachers' willingness to accept and make modifications for students with special needs (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). Additionally, the success of inclusion depends on the quality of instruction offered to students (Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001) and the use of a variety of instructional techniques (Baker & Zigmond, 1990). A significant number of respondents indicated currently, changes are made to their instruction to assist students with learning disabilities. However, the perusal of lesson plans indicated in most instances students used the same textbook and were given the same information and assignments.

Most respondents had indicated anywhere from 7 to 11 different teaching methods that they used, yet most lesson plans appeared to only use 2 to 4 methods. The lesson plans failed to show any instructional modifications specifically for students with learning disabilities. Despite responses from educators that instructional modifications
do take place, there appeared to be some contradictions as the lesson plans did not include much modification, if any, and even in the ideal setting, it was still felt that special educators continue to have specialized knowledge and skills that they use with students with LD.

Collaboration has been recognized as an important variable of an effective inclusion program. There is a need for general and special educators to work collaboratively to develop interventions and lessons for included students (Villa & Thousand, 2003; Wendt, 1999). Despite the findings in the literature on the importance of collaboration, responses for the current practice indicated no collaboration between special and general educators. Lack of time within the school day to collaborate was cited by a large percentage as a major problem. This was also the case in one of the studies examined by Salend & Duhaney (1999). Additionally, general educators felt they were not receiving adequate support from special educators. However, respondents felt that in an ideal practice, the opposite could occur as collaboration would be incorporated in the planning and thus adequate time should be provided. Additionally, there would be team and co-teaching and support of general education classes by both general and special educators.

The literature has revealed inconsistencies regarding the attitudes of educators based upon age, gender, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001). There appeared to be no evidence of significant statistical difference in the attitude of educators based upon the demographic grouping of age, years of teaching experience, and teaching assignment
when each was looked at individually in the study. However, the ideal practice revealed
a significant statistical difference in gender and training. A closer look revealed that
male educators had a more positive attitude toward teaching students with learning
disabilities in general education classes than female educators. The result was consistent
with the findings of Jobe et al. (1996), but contrary to the findings of Reusen et al. (2001)
and Leyser & Tappendorf (2001), who found no relation between gender and attitude,
and female teachers to be receptive to teaching students with learning disabilities, in the
other respectively. The results of the Reusen et al. (2001) study came from high-school
educators, while Jobe et al.'s (1996) and Leyser & Tappendorf's results (2001) were
from elementary, junior, and high-school educators.

Training was seen as important to the formation of positive attitude toward
inclusion (Avramidis et al., 2000; Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001; Reusen et al., 2000-
2001). Respondents who received special education training in this study were more
favorable to teaching students with learning disabilities in general education classes. The
same was the finding of Reusen et al. (2001) in their quantitative study. Educators,
having received special education training in three or more courses, were found to have a
positive attitude toward teaching students with LD in general education classes.
According to DeBettencourt (1999); Leyser & Tappendorf (2001) and Reusen et al.
(2000-2001), educators with a higher level of training were found to hold more positive
attitudes toward inclusion, and those with training of three or more courses used
differentiated instruction more frequently (Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001). This study also
found educators with three or more special education courses to have a more positive
attitude toward inclusion than those with less than three courses. Hence, the study supported the findings of the studies previously mentioned that educators with a higher level of training have more positive attitudes toward inclusion.

**Implications**

Implications of this study derived from the findings can be directed to three groups of people: Ministry and school officials, professors of teacher education division of colleges and educators. Research (Glasser, 1990; McLeskey & Waldron, 2002) has indicated that educators must be incorporated more in decision-making policies if effective changes in schools are to take place. The discontinuance of remedial classes in New Providence, Bahamas, was discussed with principals, administrators, and Ministry officials (Ollymae Knowles, personal communication, May 13, 2002). No indication was made concerning consultation with educators prior to implementing inclusive classes. Hence, it is important that in future undertakings, Ministry and school officials incorporate educators more in decision-making policies. The findings can assist education officials in realizing the true feelings of educators and to realize the importance for a needs assessment in order to better equip educators for interacting with students with learning disabilities. The findings can also assist education officials in realizing the need for inservice training and the importance of having the necessary resources and personnel in place to assist educators in making adjustments within the educational system (i.e., collaboration skills and planning time on individual timetables). Additionally, the findings can assist officials in realizing the need for more allocation of resources for the provision of special education training for general
educators, aimed at promoting improvement in educator and student performance. Finally, the study itself would encourage further investigation and evaluation of the Bahamian educational system to bring about a positive restructuring process.

The results can also suggest to educational institutions the need to incorporate into their teacher education program more courses and practical experiences geared toward teaching students with learning disabilities at elementary, junior, and secondary levels in all subjects, thus encouraging understanding and adaptation learning. Additionally, teacher education programs can develop a partnership with public schools to provide preservice educators field experience in collaboration, and establish a school-university partnership and/or professional development seminars.

Finally, as a result of the findings, general educators may realize the importance of seeking assistance from co-workers. General and special educators may develop a partnership, collaborating and modifying their teaching methodology with special educators to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities, which should be their foremost concern.

Limitations

Limitations to the study occurred in a number of areas. First, there was a limit as to the scope of the study. The population for the investigation was limited to public junior high school educators located in New Providence, Bahamas. Thus, there is a limitation to the generalization of the findings, which should not extend to all public junior high educators within the Bahamas, nor can it extend to include elementary- or high-school teachers. As a result, further investigation is needed to include all public
junior high educators within the Bahamas and the attitudes of elementary- and high-
school educators.

The collection of data was done near the end of the first semester, a time when
educators were beginning to focus on preparation for the end-of-term examination. This
may have been a factor as to why some educators refrained from participating in the
study. With preparation for examinations, educators may not have been prepared to
spare moments to complete the survey. Additionally, the instrument (according to
respondents) was too lengthy. These factors, along with the lack of interest by some
educators to participate in the study, may have contributed to the low response rate of
30%. Such a response rate limits the interpretation and affects the generalizing of the
findings as a significant number of public junior high educators were not included in the
findings. With their responses, the results might have been different.

Finally, the interpretation of the results should be made with caution due to self-
reporting responses which may have some inaccuracies. Examples of this weakness are
found in the variation of responses to the number of students within one’s classes with
the label of “learning disabled” and the indication of methods used in the classroom.
Some respondents took into account all their classes and then gave a number, while
others reported on the amount found within a single class. Additionally, the number and
variation of methods indicated by respondents as used in the classroom, which acted as a
built-in validity test, were not found within the limited number of lesson plans perused.
The sample of lesson plans perused does not give a true picture as to whether
instructional modifications are used or the various modifications used by public junior
high educators. Therefore, the findings should not be generalized. Finally, contradiction in responses places in question the validity of self-reported responses.

**Recommendations**

The recommendations from this research adhere to issues regarding inclusion of educators in decision-making policies, staff development (training), and meeting the needs of students with LD. Critical to the implementation of change is having the support of persons who are to implement the change. Research has indicated that volunteerism (support) and feedback from the individuals expected to implement change are vital to the success of the change. Results from this study indicated that presently educators are against the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes and feel that they lack the training to effectively deal with such students, implicating their lack of support from the inception of inclusion. It is important, therefore, that in future undertakings a partnership be established between education officials and educators in the decision-making process and to ensure that the necessary steps needed are taken to achieve positive outcomes. Subsequently, it is recommended that feedback be elicited from educators regarding the current inclusion practice to assist in the improvement process, thus moving the field in a restructuring process from current to ideal practice.

Training is essential to effective change. Responses from the study indicated that in changing to inclusion, the necessary training for educators was not in place. The need for training to better assist educators with teaching students with learning disabilities was acknowledged by respondents. The lack of training appeared to be the
key reason for the results of this study and as such seriously needs to be addressed by administration at both the school and ministry levels. Provision, therefore, must be made for continuous professional training and development in areas such as curriculum and instruction modification and adapting of instructional materials. Betancourt-Smith (1994) concluded that if inclusion was to work, educators had to receive preservice and inservice training in order for strategies to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. According to Kolstad et al. (1997) and Weller & McLeskey (2000), time to plan and collaborate was a key ingredient in successful inclusion programs. Therefore, it is recommended that a substantial block of time in the school schedule be provided for planning and collaborative activities between general and special educators. Although the need for immediate implementation of inservice training is apparent, it is recommended that a needs assessment be conducted initially to identify the more critical areas pertaining to inclusion that should be addressed prior to the commencement of inservice training. Daane et al. (2000) indicated administrators should conduct a needs survey if they are to perceive what is important to the successful inclusion of students with disabilities. Subsequently, from the needs assessment, an ongoing training and staff development should occur.

Many educators indicated they lacked the training to address the needs of students with learning disabilities. Hence, it is imperative that teacher education programs through their preservice training do more to prepare general educator candidates for accommodating diverse students. Collaboration appears to be a difficult exercise for many according to the literature and lacking on the part of the respondents in this study.
It is therefore recommended that the component of professional collaboration be an integral part of any teacher education program. Visits should be made to exemplary inclusion classrooms where preservice educators can observe firsthand how other educators collaborate and plan effective instruction. Through their training and the opportunity to have quality fieldwork experiences where collaboration takes place, some of the ambivalence toward inclusion among future educators might dissipate.

One of the most important components of any inclusion program is the soliciting of feedback to determine whether the needs of students with learning disabilities are being met; to determine if students are improving; and to determine what steps are needed to better assist them. The results of the study indicate that currently the educational needs of students with learning disabilities are not being met in general education classes and that their chances of graduating from high school will not improve as a result of the inclusion. However, the ideal practice received a more favorable response. In this regard, education officials need to ascertain from educators suggestions to bring about an "ideal" practice for the betterment of educator and student performance if inclusion is to continue and be effective. Upon receiving the suggestions, officials need to allocate the necessary resources so that provision can be made to enhance the already existing inclusion program.

It is important to examine the academic progress of students with learning disabilities in general education classes in order to determine if and the extent to which the implementation of inclusion has brought about academic progress. Additionally, responses to the questionnaire indicated that respondents are varied in their estimation of
the amount of students with learning disabilities at their institution. Therefore, it is important that each institution should determine an accurate number of students with learning disabilities receiving educational services, in order to assist them in planning to address the needs of these students. This may call for the establishment of uniform criteria to be used by administrators and educators in identifying students with learning disabilities.

The study revealed that currently Bahamian public junior high educators do not support inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes. Additionally, there appears to be no clear support for inclusion in an ideal practice as many are undecided. The question arises, “Would the attitude be different if more consultation with and preparation of educators had taken place?” Nonetheless, it seems unrealistic to engage in new instructional practices without first researching the support and preparation of educators. Therefore, it is highly recommended that preliminary research be done with both educators and students before initiating new instructional policies and practices in the future.

**Future Research**

The findings of this study implicate the need to improve and extend the research. Further research calls for an investigation whereby the attitude of respondents could be compared with other public junior high educators throughout the Bahamas. A replicate of this study could be done to determine the attitude of both elementary and secondary educators, public and private, regarding the inclusion of students with learning disabilities. Further, a more thorough research could be done to determine if and the
extent to which the attitude of general and special educators toward inclusion may differ.

This study focused on the attitude of educators. However, the views of administrators and education officials are also important. Hence, research could be conducted to ascertain the attitude of administrators regarding inclusion. More importantly, an assessment from education officials regarding the implementation of inclusion, to ascertain whether they have seen improvement in the academic performance of students with learning disabilities since the inception of inclusion, would be valuable as well as the tool by which programs were evaluated.

Research on effective strategies used by educators in an inclusive setting could be conducted as a means of compiling and comparing strategies as a collaborative exercise to assist educators in teaching students with learning disabilities. From this exercise a support system for educators could be established, facilitating collaboration and sharing with the objective of assisting educators.

Since the lack of training was cited as a key component for the negative attitude toward inclusion, it is recommended that a similar study be conducted after initiating a period of ongoing training of educators, to determine if and the extent to which their attitudes might have changed toward inclusion as a result. After a period of ongoing training, a qualitative study can be done to examine the actual methods used by educators to teach students with learning disabilities, the effectiveness of the methods, whether and how often collaboration occurs, and the impact on both educators and students.

Finally, the implementation on inclusion has impacted the lives of general education students in some way, possibly cognitively, affectively, or both. Research in
this area could be conducted to determine the effects and how general education students have been affected—positive and/or negative.

Education is important to the future of all children. Hence, prior to the implementation of new instructional policies and strategies, a thorough investigation must be conducted to ensure that the education of children is not short-changed. The adoption of new trends in education from neighboring countries or from individuals within the educational system calls for the support of administrators and educators if they are to be effectively implemented. Therefore, education officials at the school level or Ministry of Education must ensure that educators are consulted, informed, and properly prepared before implementing new programs. It is important to remember that without the support of teachers, the best intentions of educators might be thwarted (Mamlin, 1999).
APPENDIX 1

LETTERS
Virginia A. Romer  
P.O. Box GT-2194  
Nassau, N.P.,  
Bahamas  

April 7, 2003  

Dr. Linda “Kelly” Wanzenried  
Kayser Hall 115B  
University of Nebraska at Omaha  
60 & Dodge Streets  
Omaha, Nebraska 68182  

Dear Dr. Wanzenried,  

I am in the final stages of preparing my dissertation proposal and would like to use your Inclusion Perceptions Survey. It will be used to collect data in Nassau, Bahamas from junior high (middle school) teachers. With your permission, I would like to replace the word ‘regular’ with the word ‘general’ to reflect the term used by educators in the Bahamian educational system. Additionally, I would like permission to delete or add questions or change the wording of questions in the demographics, as not all of the questions are applicable to my study. On the survey itself, acknowledgement will be given you for having developed it.  

I would appreciate an affirmative reply to my request to use your Inclusion Perceptions Survey and to make the changes as stated above. Thank you for your assistance.  

Sincerely,  

Virginia A. Romer
April 11, 2003

Miss Virginia Romer
P.O. Box GT-2194
Nassau, N.P.,
Bahamas

Dear Ms. Romer,

I am happy to know that my Inclusion Perceptions Survey instrument can be of assistance to your study. I grant you permission to use the instrument, and to replace the word 'regular' with the word 'general'. Feel free to make the necessary changes to the demographics. I wish you all the best with your study.

Sincerely,

Linda "Kelly" Wangenried

Dr. Linda "Kelly" Wangenried
Kayser Hall 115B
University of Nebraska at Omaha
60 & Dodge Streets
Omaha, Nebraska 68182
August 18th, 2003

Mrs. Iris Pinder
Director of Education
Department of Education
P.O. Box N-3913/4
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Mrs. Pinder,

I presently serve as a Guidance Counselor with the Ministry of Education and am pursuing my doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction with Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. I am in the final phrase of my studies and have chosen as my dissertation topic "The Attitudes of Junior High Teachers Towards Teaching Students With Learning Disabilities in Inclusive Classes in Public Schools in New Providence, Bahamas". In this study, I wish to survey all teachers at each of the public junior high schools to obtain their views on this topic.

This letter serves a dual propose. Firstly, it is to inform you of my study and to solicit your help in ensuring cooperation from participating schools. I plan to approach the principal of each junior high school early October, regarding the distribution of the surveys. A letter of authorization in this matter may help to make the process much easier in the schools.

Secondly, I take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Education for its support in my studies over the past three summers by granting me study leave early June of each summer. Your assistance in this regard is most appreciated.

Since my study will be on the Bahamian educational system, I will ensure that you receive a copy of the study, as no doubt you would be very interested in my findings.

Thank you for your attention regarding this matter, and I look forward to your assistance.

Sincerely,

Virginia A. Romer (Ms.),
Guidance Counselor
A. F. Adderely Jr. High School
Dear Ms Romer

RE: RESEARCH PROJECT

Reference is herewith made to your communication on the above captioned.

I am directed to advise that permission has been granted for your survey of teachers in the Public Jr. High Schools.

Best wishes in your studies.

Yours sincerely

Cecil B. Longley
Director of Education

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October 15th, 2003

Mrs. Keturah Wright
Principal
L W Young Jr. High
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Mrs Wright,

I presently serve as a Guidance Counselor with the Ministry of Education and is pursuing my doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction with Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. I am in the final phrase of my studies, and have chosen as my dissertation topic "The Attitudes of Junior High Teachers Towards Teaching Students With Learning Disabilities in Inclusive Classes in Public Schools in New Providence, Bahamas". In this study, I wish to survey all the teachers at each of the seven junior high schools to obtain their views on this topic.

I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you regarding my addressing your staff for ten minutes, during a staff meeting between now and the end of November, regarding the study. I truly feel that the response to the survey would be considerably higher if the staff had the opportunity to meet me and hear first hand about the study. I can be contacted at A. F. Adderley Jr. High at 325-6179 or 323-6808 or at home at 328-4082.

Your assistance regarding this matter would be greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Virginia A. Romer (Ms.),
PhD student
Andrews University
October 23, 2003

Virginia Romer

P. O. Box QT—2194

Nassau

Bahamas

Dear Virginia

RE: APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

IRB Protocol #: 03-090
Application Type: Original
Dept: Curriculum & Instruction
Review Category: Exempt
Action Taken: Approved
Advisor: Candice Hollingsed

Proposal Title: Attitudes of Junior High Teachers Towards Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities in Inclusive Classes in Public Schools in New Providence, Bahamas

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) I want to advise you that your proposal has been reviewed and approved. You have been given clearance to proceed with your research plans.

All changes made to the study design and/or consent form, after initiation of the project, require prior approval from the IRB before such changes can be implemented. Feel free to contact our office if you have any questions.

The duration of the present approval is for one year. If your research is going to take more than one year, you must apply for an extension of your approval in order to be authorized to continue with this project.

Some proposal and research design designs may be of such a nature that participation in the project may involve certain risks to human subjects. If your project is one of this nature and in the implementation of your project an incidence occurs which results in a research-related adverse reaction and/or physical injury, such an occurrence must be reported immediately in writing to the Institutional Review Board. Any project-related physical injury must also be reported immediately to the I.R.B. physician, Dr. Herald Habermicht, by calling (269) 471-3940.

We wish you success as you implement the research project as outlined in the approved protocol.

Sincerely,

Michael D Pearson

Graduate Assistant

Office of Scholarly Research

Andrews University

Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0555

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MEMO

TO: ALL TEACHERS

FROM: VIRGINIA ROMER

RE: COMPLETION OF SURVEYS

THANK YOU, IF YOU HAVE ALREADY COMPLETED AND RETURNED YOUR SURVEY.

THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE NOT DONE SO AS YET, I JUST THOUGHT TO REMIND YOU TO COMPLETE AND RETURN THE SURVEY TO THE HEAD OF YOUR GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT BY FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2003.

REMEMBER YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VITAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS STUDY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.
February 9th, 2004

Dear ________________________________,

In case you have forgotten, just thought to remind you of the two lesson plans that would assist Ms. Virginia Romer with her Doctoral Dissertation. Remember not to place your name on them, but rather the following code number ___________.

Please turn them into ________________________________, who is in the Guidance Department at your school.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Elsa McDonald

Independent Person for the Research
APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE
September 29, 2003

Dear Educator,

You can provide vital information on the attitudes junior high public teachers ideas about the process and outcomes of the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms. This survey should take you between 7-10 minutes to complete.

I have selected teachers of junior high public schools in New Providence, Bahamas to survey on their views about the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms, how it operates in their schools, and how they think it should operate ideally. Your input is important to this study; therefore I hope that you will take the opportunity to participate.

All responses are completely confidential. Your survey has been given an identification number for tracking the number of returned surveys in relation to the number of surveys distributed. Upon completion, the survey is to be returned in the enclosed envelope. At the back of the envelope, you are to write you name and telephone number. This information will assist with the qualitative part of my research instrument where lesson plans from 10% of the respondents will be perused. To achieve this and maintain confidentiality, an independent person will collect the surveys and give each respondent a code number. The randomly selected individuals will be contacted for lesson plans to be sent in. You are not to write your name on the lesson plans but rather the code number assigned to you by the independent person. Your return of this completed survey serves as implied consent to participate in the study.

If you want a summary of the results of the study, indicate by writing, “Results of study requested” on the back of the return envelope, printing your name and address below it. Please do not write this information on the survey.

If you have any questions about the survey or the study, please contact me by phone or fax at 328-4082 or email vromer40@hotmail.com. Please return your completed survey in the enclosed envelope within two (2) weeks to the designated administrator at your school. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Virginia A. Romer
Ph.D. Student
Andrews University
INSTRUCTIONS

This survey investigates current and ideal practices relating to the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classroom settings. The statements refer only to students with specific learning disabilities, which, for the purposes of this study, shall mean a student verified as having a learning disability - a significant discrepancy between ability and achievement in understanding or using language - reading, writing, listening, speaking, thinking, and reasoning - and/or performing math calculations and mathematical reasoning.

Indicate the response, which most closely reflects your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements in terms of:

A: Current - how it is in your building now - the practice in the school in which you currently work with regard to the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes

B: Ideal - how it should be - your concept of the ideal educational setting, the practices and beliefs with regard to the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes which you view as ideal

There are no right or wrong answers to the survey statements. Please read each statement carefully and circle the letter abbreviation, which corresponds to your response. Your return of this completed survey serves as implied consent to participate in the study.

RESPONSE KEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>U</td>
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**Current - how it is in my building right now**

1. SD D U A SA
2. SD D U A SA
3. SD D U A SA
4. SD D U A SA
5. SD D U A SA
6. SD D U A SA

**Ideal - how it should be - the ideal educational setting**

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3. SD D U A SA
4. SD D U A SA
5. SD D U A SA
6. SD D U A SA

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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>7. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes improves their academic achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>8. General education teachers participate in In-service training to prepare them for teaching students with learning disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>10. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes is being promoted mainly to reduce special education costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>11. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes generally has an adverse effect on the education of classmates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>12. General education teachers who teach students with learning disabilities receive adequate support from special education staff.</td>
</tr>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>13. Students with learning disabilities who are included in general education classes are more likely to graduate from high school.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>14. General and special education teachers use the same instructional interventions in teaching students with learning disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>15. General education teachers who successfully teach students with learning disabilities are usually assigned more of these students in their classrooms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>16. Parents of students with learning disabilities have more influence than professional staff in the placement of their children in general education classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>SD D U A S A</td>
<td>17. Students with learning disabilities in general education classes require extra time and attention from the general education teacher.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The principal regularly checks on the need for support for the education of the student with learning disabilities who are receiving their educational services in general education classrooms.</td>
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<td>19. SD D U A SA</td>
<td>Students with learning disabilities make adequate academic progress in general education classes.</td>
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<td>20. SD D U A SA</td>
<td>Special education teachers have specialized knowledge and skills they use in educating students with learning disabilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. SD D U A SA</td>
<td>The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general classes usually results in more resources and support for the general education teachers.</td>
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<td>22. SD D U A SA</td>
<td>The principal has influence in the decision to include students with learning disabilities in general education classes.</td>
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<td>23. SD D U A SA</td>
<td>The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes requires instruction and classroom management changes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. SD D U A SA</td>
<td>Students without disabilities benefit from the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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Linda "Kelly" Wanzenried PhD. 1998
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PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

40. Your gender: _____Male
    _____Female

41. Your age: _____less than 25 _____25 - 35 _____36 - 50 _____over 50

42. Have you taught students with learning disabilities? _____Yes
    _____No

43. If the answer to question #42 is Yes, in what type of setting? (majority of your work week)
    _____general education _____pull out _____contained/segregated classes

44. If the answer to question #42 is Yes, for how many years? ________

45. Describe your current teaching assignment:

46. What subject are you certified to teach? __________________________

47. How many years of experience do you have in teaching general education? ________in special education? ________

48. Did you receive any special education training? Yes _____No _____

49. If the answer to question #48 is Yes, please indicate with a tick (✓) the number of courses you have taken.
    _____1-2 courses
    _____3-4 courses
    _____5-6 courses
    _____more than six courses

50. Please estimate the number of students in your school __________________

51. Please estimate the number of students with the label of "learning disabled" in your school ________and in your classes ________

52. Do you make changes in the way you instruct to assist students with learning disabilities? Yes _____No _____
53. Indicate with a tick (✓) methods that are used in your classroom.

_____ Special grading system that rewards the effort of students with learning disabilities
_____ All students are graded the same
_____ Test administration options such as oral test vs. written test or extended time test are given to LD students
_____ All students are given the same opportunity to demonstrate their achievement
_____ Use of visual displays/transparencies to aid in comprehension
_____ Lecture is the main approach to teaching
_____ Cooperative learning is used regularly
_____ Advance organizers are given to LD students
_____ All students are given the same information
_____ Some students are given the opportunity to redo work
_____ Redoing is unfair to the bright students
_____ Student-centered activities are given to all students
_____ Student-centered activities are given to LD students only
_____ Different activity sheet or assignment for learning disabled students
_____ All students are given the same assignments
_____ Use of simpler textbook for LD students
_____ All students are given the same textbooks
_____ Other ________________________________

54. Do you think students with learning disabilities should be taught in general education classroom?

Yes ____    No ____

You have reached the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your assistance.
TITLE OF STUDY:
The Attitudes of Junior High Teachers Towards Teaching Students With Learning Disabilities in Inclusive Classes in Public Schools in New Providence, Bahamas.

PURPOSE:
Insufficient studies have been done on the attitudes of teachers toward teaching students with learning disabilities in inclusive classes on junior high teachers and Bahamian teachers in particular. The purpose of this study is to determine the attitude of Bahamian teachers towards teaching students with learning disabilities and to investigate the type of instructional methodology used.

PROCEDURE:
I have been told that I will be given a survey that should take me 7 - 10 minutes to complete and I will be given two weeks to return it. I have also been told that from the returned surveys, 10% of the participants will be randomly selected and contacted for copies of lesson plans to submitted for perusal.

RISKS:
I have been told that there is no known risks for participating in this study as there will be an independent person who will collect the surveys, randomly select, make contact with, and collect lesson plans from the 10% respondents randomly selected, to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

BENEFITS:
I have been told that I may not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study. I have been told that the results may benefit the Ministry of Education and Education Division of colleges and universities within the Bahamas and the Caribbean. I have been told that the information collected during this study will be included in a Doctoral Dissertation, and may be presented or published in professional meetings or journals.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:
I have been told that my participation in this study is voluntary. I have been told that I may discontinue my participation in this study at any time without any penalty or prejudice. I have been told that there is no compensation in return for my participation.
I have read the contents of this consent form and have listened to the verbal explanation given by the investigator. My questions concerning this study have been answered to my satisfaction. I hereby give voluntary consent to participate in this study. If I have additional questions or concerns, I may contact the investigator, Ms. Virginia Romer by email vromer40@hotmail.com or by phone 328-4082 or her advisor Dr. Candice Hollingsed by email hollingc@andrews.edu

I have been given a copy of this consent form.

Participant’s Signature: _______________________ Witness: _______________________

Dated: ___________________________ Witness: ___________________________

At: __________________________________________________________
THINGS TO BE ADDRESSED TO TEACHERS DURING STAFF MEETING

The following is a list of issues critical to this investigation that were addressed during the staff meeting visits to each of the seven schools:

1. Introduction of researcher and the degree the researcher is pursuing
2. The title of the research and why this topic was chosen
3. The benefits of such a research to the Bahamian educational system
4. Methods of collecting data - survey and perusal of lesson plans
5. Purpose for the return of surveys in the enclosed envelope with name and telephone number written on the back of the envelopes
6. Maintaining confidentiality through the independent person, ensuring researcher is blind at all times to the identity of individuals
7. The 10% selection of the teachers to be contacted for the perusal of lesson plans
8. Sending in of lesson plans using the code numbers assigned
9. Identifying administrator at the school to whom the surveys are to be returned
10. Informed consent forms
APPENDIX 3

TABLES
Table 23

*Responses in Percentages to Statements – Current and Ideal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Current Agree</th>
<th>Current Disagree</th>
<th>Ideal Agree</th>
<th>Ideal Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The educational needs of students with learning disabilities are met in general classrooms.</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>76.20</td>
<td>63.10</td>
<td>26.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. General education teachers have the skills and knowledge to teach students with learning disabilities.</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>83.60</td>
<td>73.00</td>
<td>23.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A student with a learning disability is weighted as more than a single student for purposes of determining class size.</td>
<td>22.10</td>
<td>62.30</td>
<td>75.40</td>
<td>15.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The special education teacher determines how much the student with a learning disability is included in the general education classroom.</td>
<td>32.90</td>
<td>55.80</td>
<td>84.50</td>
<td>9.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The inclusion of a student with a learning disability in the general education class requires significant changes in instruction.</td>
<td>57.30</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>95.10</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. General and special education teachers have regular time within the school day to collaborate on the education of the student with a learning disability.</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>82.00</td>
<td>86.90</td>
<td>9.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23—Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Ideal Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes improves their academic achievement.</td>
<td>17.20</td>
<td>58.20</td>
<td>51.60</td>
<td>25.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. General education teachers participating in In-service training to prepare them for teaching students with learning disabilities.</td>
<td>14.70</td>
<td>72.20</td>
<td>92.60</td>
<td>7.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. General education teachers who successfully teach students with learning disabilities receive recognition or extra compensation.</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>90.90</td>
<td>68.80</td>
<td>17.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes is being promoted mainly to reduce special education costs.</td>
<td>51.60</td>
<td>13.90</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>62.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes generally has an adverse effect on the education of classmates.</td>
<td>46.70</td>
<td>31.10</td>
<td>17.20</td>
<td>63.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. General education teachers who teach students with learning disabilities receive adequate support from special education staff.</td>
<td>16.40</td>
<td>59.80</td>
<td>95.10</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23—Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Ideal Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Students with learning disabilities who are included in general education classes are more likely to graduate from high school.</td>
<td>11.50</td>
<td>52.50</td>
<td>54.90</td>
<td>14.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. General and special education teachers use the same instructional interventions in teaching students with learning disabilities.</td>
<td>23.80</td>
<td>59.90</td>
<td>61.50</td>
<td>32.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. General education teachers who successfully teach students with learning disabilities are usually assigned more of these students in their classrooms.</td>
<td>45.10</td>
<td>29.50</td>
<td>59.00</td>
<td>22.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Parents of students with learning disabilities have more influence than professional staff in the placement of their children in general education classes.</td>
<td>22.10</td>
<td>62.30</td>
<td>23.80</td>
<td>63.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Students with learning disabilities in general education classes require extra time and attention from the general education teacher.</td>
<td>88.50</td>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>83.60</td>
<td>15.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The principal regularly checks on the need for support for the education of the student with learning disabilities who are receiving their educational services in general education classrooms.</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>81.10</td>
<td>89.30</td>
<td>10.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<td>19. Students with learning disabilities make adequate academic progress in general education classes.</td>
<td>13.90</td>
<td>63.90</td>
<td>70.50</td>
<td>18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Special education teachers have specialized knowledge and skills they use in educating students with learning disabilities.</td>
<td>90.10</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>91.10</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general classes usually results in more resources and support for the general education teachers.</td>
<td>11.50</td>
<td>77.00</td>
<td>90.20</td>
<td>6.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. The principal has influence in the decision to include students with learning disabilities in general education classes.</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>30.40</td>
<td>54.10</td>
<td>24.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. The inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes requires instruction and classroom management changes.</td>
<td>75.40</td>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>95.10</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Students without disabilities benefit from the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in general education classes.</td>
<td>19.70</td>
<td>51.60</td>
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<td>17.20</td>
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<td>12.30</td>
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<td>31. Students with learning disabilities make more progress when they receive academic instruction in a resource/special education classroom setting.</td>
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<td>45.10</td>
<td>12.30</td>
<td>82.00</td>
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REFERENCE LIST


Hall, W. M. (1994). Teacher attitudes and school policies regarding exclusion, retention and slow learners can impact negatively or positively on the education of learners in difficulty (Course ED27L). Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami, Department of Education.


Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997. 11 stat. 37 (20 U.S.C. 1401[26]).


VITA
VITA

Virginia A. Romer

EDUCATION

2004 Andrews University
  Berrien Springs, Michigan
  PhD in Curriculum and Instruction

1998 Andrews University
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  MA in Educational and Developmental Psychology

1994 Andrews University
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  BA in Elementary Education

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CERTIFICATION

Teaching Certificate - Country of the Bahamas and the West Indies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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1985-1988 T. G. Glover Junior High School; Teacher (grades 7-9)