

ATTITUDES OF ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE,
AND SENIOR HIGH TEACHERS
TOWARD THE INTEGRATION OF
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN INTO
THE REGULAR CLASSROOMS

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ATTITUDES OF ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND SENIOR
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HANDICAPPED CHILDREN INTO THE REGULAR CLASSROOMS

An Abstract
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree
Education Specialist

by
Diana McKinney Farrar

August, 1982

ABSTRACT

Two hundred fourteen public school elementary, middle, and senior high teachers were surveyed to determine their attitude toward handicapped students who are mainstreamed into their regular classroom settings. The extent to which these attitudes were correlated with other variables was measured. Nine institutional variables and thirty attitude questions composed the Likert-type scale on the attitude questionnaire. An item analysis of the thirty attitude questions yielded a reliability coefficient of .91. Correlations were drawn between the institutional variables and the total attitude score. Results indicated the highest correlation (.363) between a positive attitude and the availability of additional support services. There were also significant correlations between attitude and the teacher's perception of the degree of success in dealing with special-needs students (.283) and the level of administrative support received (.190). There were no significant correlations between attitude and years teaching experience, the number of special education courses taken, or the grade level taught.

It was concluded that it is the amount, type, and quality of additional support services and administrative support that determine whether a positive attitude exists

toward handicapped students. Teachers appear to agree with the concept of mainstreaming and are willing to support it if they are given the necessary assistance to work with the mainstreamed students.

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In Partial Fulfillment of
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Education Specialist

by
Diana McKinney Farrar
August, 1982

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Field Study written by Diana McKinney Farrar entitled "Attitudes of Elementary, Middle, and Senior High Teachers Toward the Integration of Handicapped Children into the Regular Classrooms." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Education Specialists, with a major in Curriculum and Instruction.

Harland E. Blair
Major Professor

We have read this field study
and recommend its acceptance:

Lamilla B. Deard
Second Committee Member

Jean Gustafson
Third Committee Member

Accepted for the
Graduate Council:

William H. Ellis
Dean of the Graduate School

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Significance

The Education for All Handicapped Act of 1975 has been a controversial issue since its inception. Educators and legislators alike have been concerned with the implications and implementation of P.L. 94-142. The purpose of the act was to provide a free, appropriate education for all handicapped students in the least restrictive environment. The term "least restrictive environment" provided the impetus for the concept of mainstreaming.

Mainstreaming was not intended to be a panacea for special education; it was intended to enable the handicapped student to learn and associate with regular students as much as possible according to his abilities. However, although mainstreaming has been successful in many situations, it has not been successful in many others. The reasons for the failures are numerous: inadequate teacher training, lack of support personnel, inadequate funding and materials, a lack of cooperation among professionals, and teacher attitudes. The most serious of the above reasons appears to be teacher attitude since it is the teacher with whom the handicapped child is most directly associated. The ramifications of this problem are serious

according to Palmer (1980): "Few will argue the principle of mainstreaming. However, implementation of this principle is a different matter. While it was professors in universities, lawyers in courtrooms, and legislators in Washington, D.C. and various state capitals who press for mainstreaming, it will be teachers in regular classrooms who will have to live with it daily" (pp. 167-168). Teacher attitude toward these mainstreamed students is also a concern of Mitchell (1976) for as she stated: "The attitude of the teacher regarding the exceptional student and his skill development, the adjustment of content of instruction, and the classroom environment or ecology which will include exceptional students may be a far more potent and important variable in the successful integration of exceptional students into regular classrooms than any administrative or curricular scheme" (p. 302).

How do regular classroom teachers feel about handicapped students in their classrooms? The answer to this question is not a simple one due to the diversity of the variables that can influence attitude. Though the nature of the handicap and its degree of severity are obvious considerations, many classroom variables influence attitudes such as the ratio of handicapped and regular students in the class or the type of subject matter taught. The teacher may feel inadequately prepared with materials or

resource personnel to assist in helping these students. The feeling that administrators are not supportive can also foster negative attitude. Characteristics of the individual teacher should also be considered. How much experience has he/she had with handicapped students? How much training has he/she had in the area of special education? Does he/she really agree with the concept of mainstreaming? All these variables combine to produce the climate in the regular classroom in which the mainstreamed child must function. Whether the child is successful and is enriched or becomes even further handicapped from the experience is largely dependent upon the teacher.

The Purpose and Rationale for the Study

The purposes of this study were twofold. First, it surveyed the attitudes of regular classroom teachers toward special-needs children in their classrooms. Second, it determined if a relationship existed between attitude and these variables: grade level, number of students in the school and class, the teacher's perception of his/her degree of success with special-needs children, level of administrative support received, availability of additional support services, years teaching experience, the number of special education courses taken, or the number of mainstreamed students in the teacher's class this year.

Recent research indicates such relationships exist

although there is no agreement as to which variables correlate the highest with a positive attitude toward mainstreamed children. Further research was needed to determine which variables influence teacher attitude. The results of this study will serve as a source of information for special education teachers and administrators in working with regular classroom teachers who receive mainstreamed children.

The Literature

Previous studies have dealt with the effects of teacher attitude on teacher behavior and student self-concept. Good and Brophy (1972) conducted a study to determine if teacher behavior related to teacher attitude. They found teachers do behave differently toward students, especially low achievers, for whom they felt either concern or rejection as opposed to indifference or attachment.

Larrivee and Cook (1979) administered an attitudinal survey to regular classroom teachers and found the teachers had varying degrees of acceptance based upon a variety of institutional variables. The variable yielding the highest correlation with positive attitude was the teacher's perception of his/her degree of success in dealing with the special-needs children.

The attitudes of administrators in the schools in which mainstreaming occurs have also been studied. Neumann

and Harris (1977) conducted a survey comparing attitudes of administrators, teachers, and parents. The administrators' attitudes toward mainstreaming were more favorable than both the teachers' and parents' attitudes. Payne and Murray (1974) found suburban principals' acceptance of the concept of integration of the handicapped significantly greater than urban principals. Of the principals surveyed, 40.3 percent of the urban principals and 71.4 percent of the suburban principals accepted the concept of mainstreaming.

Guerin and Szatlocky (1974) reported attitudes of administrators and teachers within the same school tend to be similar. They concluded the administrators' attitudes were crucial in the formation of positive attitudes of their staff. Likewise, the special teachers' attitudes were crucial in establishing positive acceptance levels on the part of the regular classroom teachers.

Although attitudes of teachers affect attitudes of other educators, there is conflicting evidence as to the impact that these attitudes, if negative, have on the handicapped students. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) found teacher expectations affected the progress of the students. Richmond and Dalton (1973), however, compared teachers' perceptions and the students' perceptions of their self-concepts and found no significant relationship.

The presence of the handicapped student in regular classrooms is seen by some teachers as a threat to the progress of the other students (Graham et al., 1980; Williams and Algozzine, 1979) and to the overall learning environment (Feldman and Altman, 1978). Shotel, Iano, and McGettigan (1972) found only 37.3 percent of the teachers from schools in which an integrative approach was used and 7.3 percent of the teachers from schools in which some self-contained rooms were still in existence favored the regular class placement.

Guerin (1979) found teachers' levels of comfort or discomfort with the handicapped student correlated with the type of activity which was occurring. The teachers were most comfortable in activities involving mere supervision but uncomfortable when involved in verbal or leadership activities. Guerin also found teachers were less comfortable with the retarded students than with the educationally handicapped.

The effects of labeling have been studied by several researchers. Normal students were rated significantly higher on attitude scales than learning disabled or remedial students in a study conducted by Cohen (1980). Combs and Harper (1967) found when the label "mentally deficient" was used, a more negative perception was evident. The learning disabled child's acceptance level in the regular

classroom was significantly higher than that of the retarded child's in studies by Moore and Fine (1978) and Shotel, Iano, and McGettigan (1972). Similarly, Hirshoren and Burton (1979) found the retarded are less preferred than the behaviorally disordered.

Panda and Bartel (1972) found the crippled, mentally retarded, and speech impaired were rated significantly lower on attitude scales by teachers than the blind, deaf, epileptic, culturally deprived, emotionally maladjusted, delinquent, gifted, and normal students.

The Educable Mentally Retarded (EMR) label itself was found to be a more significant tool used by teachers to prescribe instruction than the student's actual grade level performance (Palmer, 1980). In earlier research, Palmer (1979) had found, ". . .that teachers may make different instructional prescriptions for regular-class pupils and mildly handicapped pupils integrated into their classroom despite similarity in current performance. Thus, despite the placement of mildly handicapped pupils into the regular classes, a 'de facto' form of segregation may exist for these mainstreamed pupils--instructional segregation" (p. 335). However, West (1980) and Boucher and Deno (1979) gained contrary results from their studies. They found labels did not influence expectations or programming.

Tringo (1970) discovered a similar hierarchy of acceptance. Of twenty-one disability categories, ex-convicts, mental retardates, alcoholics, and the mentally ill were ranked lowest. Warren and Turner (1966) found a consistent pattern of preferences, in order, for the academically talented, anti-social, sight handicapped, mildly retarded, hearing handicapped, brain injured, and severely retarded.

Expectations of physical education teachers toward the labeled child as opposed to the non-labeled child were found to be significantly different. The teachers' stereotypic perceptions of the labeled children, specifically the mentally retarded, were significantly lower than the non-labeled or physically handicapped children (Aloia et al., 1980).

Foster, Ysseldyke, and Reese (1975) conducted a study using observation of "labeled" emotionally disturbed children who were actually normal. They found teachers hold "negative stereotypical expectations" based on the label alone.

Several studies indicated teachers are receptive to handicapped students and are receptive to their needs. MacMillan, Meyers, and Yoshida (1978) found the majority of teachers felt no impact on the inclusion of handicapped students. They did, however, perceive preparation and instruction time as hardships.

A Nationwide Teacher Opinion Poll collected by the National Education Association in 1979 (Cortright, 1980) asked teachers to what extent handicaps should be mainstreamed for none of their education. The results were as follows: mental retardation - 49%, deafness or serious hearing defects - 23%, severe speech impairment - 13%, serious visual impairment - 21%, emotionally disturbed - 43%, seriously socially maladjusted - 44%, physical disability seriously affecting mobility - 17%, and specific learning disability - 8%. Sixty-six percent of the teachers polled felt their school systems were doing a good or excellent job in meeting the needs of handicapped children. Feitler and DuBasik (1978) gained similar results. They found teachers have realistic concepts of special students.

Smart, Wilton, and Keeling (1980) compared the attitudes of two types of regular classroom teachers: those who seek special placement for low-IQ students and those who do not. The researchers found teachers who do not refer students to special classes are those who perceive themselves as capable of meeting the needs of the special students in the regular classroom and who feel mainstreaming is an advantageous practice. Hirshoren and Burton (1979) also found the degree of severity was the criteria teachers used for recommending a student for special class placement.

Two researchers found relationships between attitudes toward mainstreaming and grade levels taught. Larrivee and Cook (1979) found as grade level increases positive attitudes decrease. The junior high school teachers had the most negative attitudes. Similarly, Hirshoren and Burton (1979) found elementary teachers more positive toward handicapped students.

The attitudes of regular classroom teachers have been found by three studies to be more positive than special education teachers'. Flowers (1979) found the attitudes of classroom teachers toward exceptional children as "significantly more positive" than the special education teachers'. Jordan and Proctor (1969) found special education teachers did not have more "realistic" attitudes toward mainstreaming than regular classroom teachers. Graham et al., (1980) found, "Classroom teachers felt that mainstreaming was an effective educational alternative for handicapped students, while resource teachers did not. Furthermore, resource teachers did not believe that handicapped students gained more academically by staying in the mainstream while regular teachers possessed adequate mainstreaming skills. Of the two groups, resource teachers were less confident of regular classroom teachers' mainstreaming skills" (pp. 131-132).

The effects of experience with handicapped students

and its relationship to positive attitudes toward mainstreaming has been studied extensively. Results have varied widely. Some studies found teachers were more favorable toward handicapped students and mainstreaming following experience with the handicapped (Neumann and Harris, 1977; Harasymiw and Horne, 1975 and 1976; Wechsler, Suarez, and McFadden, 1975; Mandell and Strain, 1978; Feitler and DuBasik, 1978; Williams and Algozzine, 1979; Brooks and Bransford, 1971; Schwartz, 1980; and Rumble, 1978). Other studies found no relationship between experience and attitude or found negative attitudes had formed following experience. Dyson and Kubo (1980) found that teachers with experience were "more reserved toward integration" than those teachers with no experience. Experience did not affect attitude in a study by Pittman and Stadt (1979). Similar findings were reported by Jordan and Proctor (1969), Panda and Bartel (1972), and Combs and Harper (1967). Teachers' attitudes were less favorable at the conclusion of an experimental integrative program rather than at the beginning in a questionnaire administered by Shotel, Iano, and McGettigan (1972). Bradfield et al., (1973) noted a change toward negative attitudes following the administration of pretests and posttests during an integrative process in one school system.

The amount of education and/or number of special education courses received had a relationship on attitude in some studies. Coursework in special education had a positive effect on attitude in studies by Mandell and Strain (1978), Stephens and Braun (1980), and Jordan and Proctor (1969). Harasymiw and Horne (1975), however, found teachers who had less education felt more positively toward handicapped students than those teachers with more advanced degrees.

Regular classroom teachers are more accepting toward handicapped students if resource personnel and assistance are available. Gullotta (1974), Shotel, Iano, and McGettigan (1972), and Moore and Fine (1978) found teachers' degrees of acceptance comparable to the degree of support and assistance they are given. However, in the National Education Association Opinion Poll in 1979 (Cortright, 1980), two-thirds of the teachers polled felt their schools did not provide enough assistance to the regular classroom teachers. One-sixth of those teachers felt they received enough support.

A review of the literature indicated there are many factors which contribute to the attitudes of regular classroom teachers toward handicapped students. No single variable such as type of exceptionality, labeling, experience, or the amount of education can be attributed to

attitude. Further research is needed to determine which factors, if any, contribute most to teacher attitude.

Definitions of Terms Used

The following is a list of terms and their definitions as will be used in discussing the study:

Elementary school teachers - teachers of students in grades K through 5.

Middle school teachers - teachers of students in grades 6 through 8.

High school teachers - teachers of students in grades 9 through 12.

Mainstreaming - the process of integrating the special-needs child into the regular classroom.

Special-needs child - any child in the school system who is identified as having a handicap or as being handicapped either mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, or educationally. This child may also be referred to as a handicapped child or student or as a mainstreamed child.

EMR - educable mentally retarded.

Resource classroom - the classroom in which a certified special education teacher is the instructor and in which remediation is the primary focus.

Regular classroom - the classroom in which the instructor

is not dealing solely with exceptional students or with remediation. It will contain students who are functioning normally academically.

Hypotheses

The purposes of the study were to survey teachers' attitudes toward mainstreamed children and to determine which variables, if any, correlated with a positive attitude. A review of the literature established that the teacher's perception of the child's ability and the severity of the disability had effects on teacher attitude. The grade level taught was found to have varying degrees of relationship with attitude. Discrepancies exist in the effects that experience with handicapped children has on attitude. Surveys correlating the number of special education courses taken with attitude yielded conflicting results. Although research proved acceptance of handicapped children improved with additional services and assistance, an opinion poll found most teachers did not receive enough assistance. Based upon these findings, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant correlation between teacher attitude and grade level taught, class size, school size, or number of mainstreamed students in the class.

2. There is no significant correlation between

teacher attitude and the teacher's perception of his/her degree of success experienced with special-needs children, the level of administrative support received, or the availability of supportive services.

3. There is no significant correlation between teacher attitude and years teaching experience or the number of special education courses taken.

Scope and Limitations

This study was designed to measure attitude toward handicapped children as perceived by the subjects themselves. The subjects were drawn from nine public schools in Montgomery County, Tennessee.

There were two major limitations of this study. First, the survey was administered to only nine of the nineteen schools in the school system polled. Caution should be used in generalizing the findings to the entire school system or to other populations not included in the sample. Randomization was not used due to the anonymity of the responses. Second, due to the nature of the questionnaire, teachers were required to respond to statements which, in some cases, could be interpreted in various ways depending upon the nature of the handicap or the type of class.

Chapter 2

METHOD

The Subjects

The subjects were 214 regular classroom teachers from nine public schools. There was a total of 89 elementary school teachers (representing 4 elementary schools), 66 middle school teachers (representing 2 middle schools), and 59 high school teachers (representing 3 high schools).

The subjects used were those teachers who presently had mainstreamed students in their classes. Any teacher classified as a resource teacher, teacher of the handicapped, or special-programs teacher (e.g., Title I) was excused from participating. Each subject read and signed a consent form for participating in the research.

The Instrument

The instrument used to determine teacher attitude was an opinion survey devised by Barbara Larrivee, Ed.D., Rhode Island College and Linda Cook, Ed.D., Educational Testing Service. The survey was devised in 1972. It consisted of nine institutional variables to which the teacher responded according to his/her particular teaching status and opinion. Following the institutional variables were thirty statements regarding mainstreaming and handicapped children to which the teacher responded using a

five-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The subjects were asked to use the five-point scale to indicate their extent of agreement with each statement. A copy of the survey is appended.

The Procedure

The purposes for and the intended uses of the survey were discussed at each school prior to its distribution. The surveys were distributed and collected at each of the nine schools during after-school faculty meetings. Subjects were given a consent form, a copy of the survey, and a computer response card. Instructions were given to exclude a name on the response card, to mark only one answer for each item, and to answer each item according to his/her opinion. Total anonymity was insured.

Statistical Treatment

The statistical procedures used were an item analysis of the thirty attitude questions, a frequency count on the distribution of total scores on the questionnaire, a distribution of tallies for the institutional or categorical variables, and a correlation of each of the variables with the total score.

Chapter 3

RESULTS

An item analysis of the thirty attitude questions yielded a reliability coefficient of .91 which compared favorably with the .92 reliability coefficient yielded by Larrivee and Cook. The frequency count on the distribution of total scores was relatively symmetrical with a slight negative skew.

Analysis of the tallies for each of the institutional variables and the total score indicated the following results. The greatest percentage of the teachers (45%) had 26-30 students in their classes while 26% had over 31 students. There were 901-1200 children in the entire school population in the schools of 58% of the teachers. The degree of success in dealing with special needs students was considered average by most teachers (54%) while 18% considered it to be low. The level of administrative support received relative to special-needs students was average to most teachers (44%) while 21% considered it high. The availability of additional support services for accommodating special-needs students, such as resource room, resource teacher, remedial reading teacher, counseling, appropriate instructional materials, etc., was found to be average according to 41% of the teachers surveyed

and high according to 27%. Of the 214 teachers surveyed, 29 had 0-3 years teaching experience, 54 had 4-7 years, 61 had 8-12 years, 35 had 13-17 years, and 35 had more than 18 years teaching experience. In addition, 40% of these teachers had no courses in special education, 42% had 1-3 courses, and 11% had 4-6 courses. There were 1-5 mainstreamed students in the classes of 48% of the teachers and 6-10 students in 18% of the classes.

A correlation matrix was used with a significance level of .05 as the criteria. The variable correlating the highest with the total attitude score was the availability of additional support services (.363). Teacher's perception of the degree of success in dealing with special needs students correlated .283 with the total attitude score. There was a .190 correlation between attitude and the level of administrative support given. There were no significant correlations between attitude and years teaching experience, number of special education courses taken, number of mainstreamed students in the class, grade level taught, or the number of students in the school. There was a negative correlation between attitude and the number of students in the class (-.184). The teacher's perception of the degree of success correlated highly with the level of administrative support (.259) and the availability of additional support services (.321). The

level of administrative support and the availability of additional services correlated highly (.471). There was a high negative correlation (-.273) between grade level taught and the number of special education courses taken. A negative correlation (-.143) was also found between grade level and degree of success. The number of mainstreamed students in the class correlated positively with grade level taught (.347).

An examination of the total responses given for each item on the questionnaire revealed a significant number (112) of the 214 teachers polled strongly agreed with the statement: "A special-needs child's classroom behavior generally requires more patience from the teacher than does the behavior of a normal child."

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION

Summary

An attitudinal survey was administered to 214 regular classroom teachers. The purposes of the survey were to determine to what extent mainstreamed special-needs children are accepted by these teachers and the variables that influence this acceptance. The survey determined if the teacher's attitude was influenced by grade level taught, number of students in the class, number of students in the school, the teacher's perception of his/her degree of success in dealing with special-needs children, the level of administrative support, the availability of additional support services, years teaching experience, number of special education courses taken, or the number of mainstreamed students in the class.

The first null hypothesis stated there would be no significant correlation between teacher attitude and grade level taught, class size, school size, or the number of mainstreamed students in the class. Based upon the results of this study, the first hypothesis was accepted. The second null hypothesis stated there would be no significant correlation between attitude and the teacher's perception of his/her degree of success with special-needs

children, the level of administrative support received, or the availability of supportive services. This hypothesis was rejected since there was a significant correlation between teacher attitude and each of these variables. The third null hypothesis stated there would be no significant correlation between attitude and years teaching experience or the number of special education courses taken. This hypothesis was accepted.

Conclusions

The findings in this study were very similar to those of Larrivee and Cook in their original study using the survey. The original study found that class size and school size had very little impact on attitude. It found the teacher's perception of his/her degree of success to have the most important effect. The present study found the variable with the most effect to be the availability of additional support services. Similar results were gained by other researchers (Gullotta, 1974; Shotel, Iano, and McGettigan, 1972; and Moore and Fine, 1978).

The feeling that the handicapped student's presence in the regular classroom would impede the progress of the normal child was evident in this study. To the statement, "The extra attention special-needs students require will be to the detriment of the other students," 112 of the total 214 teacher responses surveyed either strongly agreed

or agreed. Similar findings were reported by other researchers (Graham et al., 1980; Williams and Algozzine, 1979; and Feldman and Altman, 1978).

Although some researchers found more positive attitudes based upon grade level (Larrivee and Cook, 1970; Hirshoren and Burton, 1979), this study found no such data to conclude that one area is more accepting than another. Since there was less than a five point difference between each of the mean scores for elementary, middle, and high school teachers and there were varying numbers of mainstreamed special education students in each area, such a distinction could not be made.

Three earlier studies (Mandell and Strain, 1978; Stephens and Braun, 1980; and Jordan and Proctor, 1969) had found a positive relationship between coursework in special education and attitude. This study found no significant correlation although elementary school teachers had done more coursework in special education than middle or high school teachers.

Although most of the variables had no significant effect on attitude, it is noteworthy that teacher's perception of degree of success correlated with the levels of administrative support and availability of additional services. It can be concluded that the teacher feels more successful with handicapped children if he/she receives

support and assistance by means of resource personnel, materials, counselors, administrative follow-up, etc. If these additional services are available to the teacher, he/she is more willing to work with the special-needs children. The overall learning environment improves.

Implications

The results of this study suggest that teachers feel more positive toward handicapped children in their regular classrooms if they are given additional support. Although the individual teacher's amount of coursework or experience play no significant role in his/her level of acceptance, the level of success with these students as perceived by the teacher is congruent to the level of assistance given. It appears that the apprehensions of many educators that evolved when P.L. 94-142 was passed have been realized. Handicapped children are being placed into regular classrooms with teachers who feel inadequately prepared to deal with them. Class sizes are not conducive to giving the mainstreamed students the individual attention to which they are accustomed and need. Materials and textbooks are inadequate for the students with learning and reading disabilities. The classroom environment and equipment are not always adequate for the student who is physically handicapped. Problems with acceptance by other students, more demands on the patience of the teacher, and discipline

arise frequently. In addition, there are instructional problems to be faced. Lectures and lab work need to be conducted at a simpler and slower pace. The regular functioning students become bored and frustrated when this occurs. Assignments are usually easier for the slower students which can result in animosity from regular students. Evaluation is another major problem. The teacher must either make the test a simpler, objective one for the entire class or make out two separate tests. Resentments sometimes may arise with this practice. In summation, the problems facing the regular classroom teacher are many.

Based upon the results of this study, one can infer that teachers are willing to work with and accept handicapped students if they are given additional support. This additional support can be in the form of a resource room and resource teacher, a remedial reading teacher, counselors, extra instructional materials, etc. The handicapped child may not need all these sources of help; however, they should be available for the teacher. The resource teacher can serve as a source of remediation for specific areas of disability for the student or as a resource person for the teacher providing him/her with materials, suggestions, and assistance in dealing with the handicapped students. Remedial reading teachers may serve

similar functions. Counselors are extremely helpful in dealing with all handicapped students particularly the emotionally disturbed, behaviorally disordered, or other disabilities that may cause classroom problems for the teacher. Sadly, counselors are not available at all levels at all schools.

Workshops, in-services, and faculty meetings could be utilized by resource personnel and administrators to instruct teachers in methods of dealing with various exceptionalities. Methods of encouraging and utilizing parental assistance could also be useful. Resource personnel should make themselves available to teachers to give classroom assistance, to make suggestions for materials and methods, and to provide help with evaluation of the students. Occasionally, resource teachers can be called upon to read materials to handicapped students or give oral tests to check progress for the regular classroom teacher.

The class size of the regular classroom teacher with mainstreamed students should be smaller. As was indicated by the study, regular teachers perceive themselves as needing more patience to work with handicapped students. The teacher needs more time to deal individually with the students and to insure that the material he/she is teaching is being interpreted.

The essential ingredient throughout the entire system of mainstreaming the handicapped child is cooperation. Regular classroom teachers must be willing to cooperate with resource personnel, administrators, parents, and students. Likewise, resource teachers and administrators must be willing to cooperate with and assist regular classroom teachers. The primary concern should always be the student. All decisions should be based on the extent to which the student will best be served. Through total cooperation and a willingness to provide the extra attention that is essential, the handicapped student will achieve success and benefit from his experience in the mainstream.

Suggestions for Further Research

The types of support services that are most beneficial to teachers with special-needs children in their classrooms is an area that needs further research. The type of administrative support that is deemed most useful and necessary to these teachers is another area. This information would help resource personnel and administrators to better assist regular classroom teachers in working with special-needs children.

Research dealing in the ideal class size for classes containing special-needs children should also be done. Since these sizes may vary according to type of exceptionality, all exceptionalities should be included from all

grade levels.

The characteristics of the regular classroom teacher who is most accepting of handicapped students is an area that would prove most helpful in the placement of these students. Also, the types of classes in which these students can function the best should also be considered. Such questions would be: In which subjects does mainstreaming work the best? In which grade levels is mainstreaming most efficient?

The effects the handicapped child in the regular classroom has on the normal functioning child should also be a topic for further research. Does the behavior of the handicapped child affect the normal child? Does the handicapped child's presence lessen the amount of time the normal child spends individually with the teacher? Does the teacher "gear down" his/her lectures and assignments to accommodate the slower functioning students thus decreasing the amount of material presented to the normal child? These are all important considerations in need of further exploration. The answers to these questions would prove helpful to everyone involved in the mainstreaming process.

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APPENDIX

A SURVEY OF TEACHER'S OPINIONS
RELATIVE TO MAINSTREAMING SPECIAL-NEEDS CHILDREN

INSTRUCTIONS: After reading the statement, choose your response and mark it on the answer sheet provided.

SECTION I

	A	B	C	D	E
	K	1-3	4-5	6-8	9-12
1. Grade level taught:	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31+
2. Number of students in your class:	1-300	301-600	601-900	901-1200	1200+
3. Number of students in your school:					
4. My degree of success to date in dealing with special-needs students in the regular classroom has been:	very low	low	average	high	very high
5. The level of administrative support I have received relative to special-needs students has been:	very low	low	average	high	very high
6. The availability of additional support services for accommodating special-needs students, such as resource room, resource teacher, remedial reading teacher, counseling, appropriate instructional materials, etc., has been:	very low	low	average	high	very high
7. Years teaching experience:	0-3	4-7	8-12	13-17	18+
8. Number of special education courses taken:	None	1-3	4-6	7-9	10+
9. Number of mainstreamed students in your class or classes this year:	None	1-5	6-10	11-15	16+

SECTION II

Please mark the number under the column that best describes your agreement or disagreement with the following statements. There are no correct answers; the best answers are those that honestly reflect your feelings.

SCALE: SA=Strongly Agree
A=Agree
U=Undecided

D=Disagree
SD=Strongly Disagree

	A	B	C	D	E
10. Many of the things teachers do with regular students in a classroom are appropriate for special-needs students.	SA	A	U	D	SD
11. The needs of handicapped students can best be served through special, separate classes.	SA	A	U	D	SD
12. A special-needs child's classroom behavior generally requires more patience from the teacher than does the behavior of a normal child.	SA	A	U	D	SD
13. The challenge of being in a regular classroom will promote the academic growth of the special-needs child.	SA	A	U	D	SD
14. The extra attention special-needs students require will be to the detriment of the other students.	SA	A	U	D	SD
15. Mainstreaming offers mixed group interaction which will foster understanding and acceptance of differences.	SA	A	U	D	SD
16. It is difficult to maintain order in a regular classroom that contains a special-needs child.	SA	A	U	D	SD
17. Regular teachers possess a great deal of the expertise necessary to work with special-needs students.	SA	A	U	D	SD
18. The behavior of special-needs students will set a bad example for the other students.	SA	A	U	D	SD

		A	B	C	D	E
19.	Isolation in a special class has a negative effect on the social and emotional development of a special-needs student.	SA	A	U	D	SD
20.	The special-needs child will probably develop academic skills more rapidly in a special classroom than in a regular classroom.	SA	A	U	D	SD
21.	Most special-needs children do not make an adequate attempt to complete their assignments.	SA	A	U	D	SD
22.	Integration of special-needs children will require significant changes in regular classroom procedures.	SA	A	U	D	SD
23.	Most special-needs children are well behaved in the classroom.	SA	A	U	D	SD
24.	The contact regular-class students have with mainstreamed students may be harmful.	SA	A	U	D	SD
25.	Regular-classroom teachers have sufficient training to teach children with special needs.	SA	A	U	D	SD
26.	Special-needs students will monopolize the teacher's time.	SA	A	U	D	SD
27.	Mainstreaming the special-needs child will promote his/her social independence.	SA	A	U	D	SD
28.	It is likely that a special-needs child will exhibit behavior problems in a regular classroom setting.	SA	A	U	D	SD
29.	Diagnostic-prescriptive teaching is better done by resource-room or special teachers than by regular classroom teachers.	SA	A	U	D	SD
30.	The integration of special-needs students can be beneficial for regular students.	SA	A	U	D	SD

	A	B	C	D	E
31. Special-needs children need to be told exactly what to do and how to do it.	SA	A	U	D	SD
32. Mainstreaming is likely to have a negative effect on the emotional development of the special-needs child.	SA	A	U	D	SD
33. Increased freedom in the classroom creates too much confusion.	SA	A	U	D	SD
34. The special-needs child will be socially isolated by regular-classroom students.	SA	A	U	D	SD
35. Parents of a special-needs child present no greater problem for a classroom teacher than those of a normal child.	SA	A	U	D	SD
36. Integration of special-needs children will necessitate extensive retraining of regular teachers.	SA	A	U	D	SD
37. Special-needs students should be given every opportunity to function in the regular-classroom setting, where possible.	SA	A	U	D	SD
38. Special-needs children are likely to create confusion in the regular classroom.	SA	A	U	D	SD
39. The presence of special-needs student will promote acceptance of differences on the part of regular students.	SA	A	U	D	SD

(Survey devised by: Larrivee, Barbara, & Cook, L. Mainstreaming: A Study of the Variables Affecting Teacher Attitude. Journal of Special Education, 1979, 13, 315-324.)

