General Education and Special Education Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusion

Dr.Manju and Dr. Chandvir
Assistant Professor, Department of Teacher Education
School of Education, Central University of Haryana

Abstract

This study's objectives were to (1) investigate whether or not levels of self-efficacy, teacher type, and education level are factors that predict teachers' attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities; and (2) determine whether or not differences in teachers' attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities exist between general education and special education teachers. An online survey was used to gather data from 118 elementary and middle school teachers, and then a two-way analysis of variance and multiple regression were used to analyse the data and provide answers to the study questions. According to the findings, the attitudes of teachers who worked in special education were significantly more positive toward inclusion than those of teachers who worked in general education. Furthermore, both teacher type and self-efficacy were found to be predictors of teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. Higher levels of self-efficacy were linked to more favourable views toward inclusion. Change in practise may be accomplished if school district leaders adopt teacher training to promote teacher self-efficacy on inclusive practises. This, in turn, may eventually lead to improved student results and a narrowing of the achievement gap.

Introduction

Students with disabilities were not allowed to participate in the public-school system (Yell, 2006). However, since the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed in 1975, a tidal wave of reform has culminated in changes in public education that focus on (a) educating students with disabilities in general education settings and (b) providing those students with appropriate support services. (Yell, 2006). mandated the integration of children with disabilities into normal education classes; later reauthorizations of these laws have transferred the discussion of special education from the area of civil rights into the sphere of education law. For instance, that all students with intellectual, physical, or emotional impairments are provided equal opportunity to engage in their education in the setting that is the least restrictive to their needs. This is true regardless of the nature of the student's condition. These regulations were created to enhance the academic performance of children with disabilities, as defined by individual education plans (IEPs), which were developed to fit the students' particular needs and skills. At the same time, an emphasis was placed on high academic standards and accountability. Students who have IEPs are often given the opportunity to participate fully in the general education curriculum. The process of ensuring that students with disabilities are given equitable opportunities to receive effective educational services, with the necessary supplementary aids and support services, in age-appropriate classrooms in their neighbourhood schools, in order to prepare students for productive lives as full members of society is what is meant by the term inclusion (National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion, 1995, p. 99). The principle of inclusiveness has sparked both support and resistance from various groups. Proponents of inclusion, have argued that it is advantageous because, through collaboration, special education teachers bring specialised knowledge to the classrooms of general education teachers. This knowledge includes an understanding of students with disabilities as well as appropriate instructional design and strategies (p. 38). Inclusion also provides an opportunity for students with disabilities and their peers in general education to (a) establish and maintain friendships; (b) acquire social skills; (c) acquire behavioural skills and develop a work ethic;

and (d) collaborate, all of which can contribute to the advancement of academic achievement and social awareness. High-achieving students in general education classrooms felt that inclusive practises negatively impacted their learning, and Fletcher (2010) discovered that including students with emotional disabilities in kindergarten classes resulted in regular education students' reading and math performance decreasing by 10 percent by the beginning of the first grade. Despite claims that inclusion offers benefits to students and teachers, high-achieving students in general education classrooms felt that inclusive practises negatively impacted their learning. Other academics have identified obstacles that must be overcome before inclusive practises may be successfully implemented in general education settings. For instance, discovered that unreasonable obligations and expectations for general education instructors are a barrier to the adoption of inclusive solutions. Idol (2006) recognised a lack of training as one of the hurdles to inclusion, and several academics have identified a lack of knowledge as one of the barriers to inclusion. In addition, Orr (2009) noted that unfavourable attitudes about inclusion held by general education teachers, a lack of awareness of inclusion on the part of support personnel, and a lack of administrative support for inclusion might act as impediments to effective inclusion.

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Prior to Prior to the beginning of the wave of change that began in 1975 with the passing of the School for All Handicapped Children Act, kids with disabilities had essentially been denied access to public education. A little under 25 years later, in 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments (IDEA) and subsequently, in 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act made it mandatory for children with disabilities to be included in normal education classes. Every Student Succeeds Act reaffirmed the need of complying with this mandate. In point of fact, the intention behind the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was to make certain that all students with disabilities, be they intellectual, physical, or emotional, were provided with equal opportunities to participate in their education in the setting that posed the fewest barriers possible. These laws were designed to promote the academic success of students with disabilities, as defined by individual education plans (IEPs), which were designed to meet the students' unique needs and capabilities. While putting an emphasis on high academic standards and accountability, these laws were also designed to promote academic success. Students who have IEPs are often given the opportunity to participate fully in the general education curriculum. The process of providing students with disabilities equitable opportunities to receive effective educational services, with the needed supplementary aids and support services, in age appropriate classrooms in their neighbourhood schools, in order to prepare students for productive lives as full members of society is what is meant by the term inclusion. Inclusion refers to the process of providing students with disabilities equitable opportunities to receive effective educational services, with the needed supplementary aids and support services.

Conclusion
The process of ensuring that kids with disabilities are given the opportunity to participate in age-appropriate classes and get appropriate educational assistance is referred to as inclusion. The principle of inclusiveness has sparked both support and resistance from various groups. Proponents of the idea argue that special education instructors may benefit general education classrooms by collaborating with one another and sharing their specific expertise. Students with high levels of academic achievement reported that inclusive practises had a detrimental influence on their ability to learn, despite assertions that inclusion gives advantages to both students and instructors. The practise of offering kids with

disabilities equitable opportunity to obtain effective educational services, in age appropriate classes in their neighbourhood schools is referred to as inclusion, and it is part of the larger movement toward universal design in education.

Many academics have identified obstacles that must be overcome before inclusive practises can be successfully implemented in general education settings. These include attitudes that are hostile toward inclusion as well as a lack of information about inclusion among support professionals. According to the findings of other studies, one of the obstacles to inclusion is a lack of training.

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