

Satisfaction Level of Parents of Children without Disabilities on the Idea of Inclusion

by

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my family and Dr. Fallon for all of their support and encouragement throughout this year.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	1
Chapter One: Introduction.....	2
Chapter Two: Review of Literature.....	10
Parents That Are Satisfied.....	10
Parents That Are Unsatisfied.....	15
Chapter Three: Methods.....	18
Subjects.....	18
Instruments.....	18
Procedures.....	19
Chapter Four: Results.....	20
Descriptive Statistics.....	20
Inferential Statistics.....	20
Chapter Five: Conclusions.....	22
Limitations.....	23
Discussion.....	23
Future Research.....	28
Summary.....	29
References.....	30
Illustrations	
Appendix A.....	32
Table 1.....	34

Table 2.....	35
Table 3.....	39
Table 4.....	40
Table 5	48
Vita: About the Author.....	49

List of Illustrations

Appendix A: Inclusion Questionnaire.....	32
Table 1: Descriptive Statistical Results.....	34
Table 2: Bar Graphs Representing Descriptive Statistics.....	35
Table 3: Frequencies, Mean, Standard Deviation.....	39
Table 4: Open Ended Responses to the Questionnaire.....	40
Table 5: Pie Chart Representing Mothers and Fathers.....	48

Abstract

As a result of inclusion becoming more prevalent, it is crucial to know parents' perspectives toward inclusion. Therefore, the research question is: How satisfied are parents of children without disabilities on the idea of inclusion? In order to answer this question, the researcher developed an inclusion questionnaire, and sent it to all parents in a fourth and fifth grade class in upstate New York. Being a special educator, it is crucial to know how parents feel about inclusion. It is also important for parents to know the benefits and possible drawbacks of having their child in an inclusive setting.

The data that the researcher obtained from this inclusion questionnaire revealed what parents know about inclusion and how they feel about inclusion. The results show that parents of children without disabilities do not believe that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages for their child in an inclusive setting. These findings lay the foundation for future research to be conducted on parents' attitudes towards inclusion.

Introduction

“Inclusion means that students with disabilities are served in the general education classroom under the instruction of the general education teacher. Specifically, it involves providing support services to the student in the general education setting versus excluding the student from the setting and their peers. Inclusion requires the provision of adaptations and accommodations to classroom curriculum to ensure that the student will benefit from the placement. The definition, however, does not require that the student with special needs perform at a level comparable to peers with disabilities” (Wolfe, & Hall, 2003, p. 57). Many people have different perspectives on the idea of inclusion. Some people are happy that schools are becoming more inclusive because they feel that all children benefit, and other people do not like it that schools are including children with disabilities into the regular classroom because they feel that they are not receiving the best education in that setting.

There has been a steady increase in the percentage of students with disabilities served in the general education classrooms. In 1998, 47% of students with disabilities were taught in the general education classroom for more than half the school day. The percent of children being taught in the general education classroom has almost doubled since 1984 (Burnstein, Cabello, Sears, Spagna, & Wilcoxon, 2004). As a result of inclusion becoming more prevalent, I wanted to do research on the question: how satisfied are parents of children without disabilities on the idea of inclusion?

Everyone has a different definition of what satisfied means to them. There is not just one definition of satisfaction, there are many. In terms of this study, I am focusing on just one definition of satisfied. Satisfied is defined in this study as meeting the parents' expectations. A parent can say that they are satisfied when they are overall happy that their child is placed in an inclusion setting. They feel that having their child placed in an inclusion setting is the most beneficial placement for them.

A placement in an inclusion setting has an effect on many people such as: the parents of children with disabilities and without disabilities, the regular classroom teacher, and the actual children with disabilities and without disabilities. Including all children in the same classroom affects the parents of children with disabilities, because they know what is best for their child. They may have a positive outlook on inclusion because they want their child to be served in the regular classroom. According to Tichenor & Piechura (1998), parents of children with disabilities are in favor of inclusion. On the other hand, they may think that their child is not getting the best education by not being taken out of the regular classroom, and receiving more one on one service in a special education classroom. Tichenor & Piechura (1998) state that some parents feel that their child's self-esteem is negatively affected and that general education teachers lack the understanding of how to teach children with learning disabilities.

Parents of children without disabilities are affected by an inclusion setting in such a way that they may not want their child in the same class with children with disabilities. They may believe that children with disabilities should be taught in a

separate classroom. On the opposite end, they may be happy that children with disabilities are being taught in the same classroom as their child. Tichenor & Piechura (1998) state that some parents found that their child benefited from being included in the regular education classroom in such a way that it prepared them to enter more normal situations in life. A parent's perspective has a big impact on how they feel about the idea of inclusion. For the purpose of this study, the researcher is going to focus entirely on parents of children without disabilities, and how satisfied they are on the idea of inclusion.

The researcher believes that general education teachers are greatly affected by an inclusion setting. As a result of the teacher having children with and without disabilities in the classroom they need to be able to meet every child's individual needs. They are going to need to go through training on how to teach children with disabilities. Inclusive educators need to learn how to make the appropriate accommodations in their classroom. They also need to make their classroom accessible to all students. All children are guaranteed the most appropriate education possible, so it is the teachers' responsibility to provide this to all children in their class. Since an inclusive classroom is very diverse and it has many different students with many different needs, it is very important for the teacher to establish a classroom community. They also need to make sure that they have good classroom management skills. Being an inclusive classroom teacher requires them to collaborate even more with different colleagues, such as, special education teacher, other teachers, therapists, and counselors. There are many things that a teacher must do to make inclusion beneficial for all students.

One way that inclusion affects children with disabilities is they will have an increase in social skills. Instead of being taken out of the classroom to receive special services they are able to stay the entire day in the same classroom with their peers. They are able to form friendships, instead of being looked at as different because they are only in the classroom for half of the day. They are able to learn from the different students in the classroom by working in cooperative groups. Children with disabilities are not missing out on all the community building activities or rituals that their classmates do when they are not present in the classroom. They develop a sense of belongingness and self-worth. Being included in the general education classroom with children without disabilities fosters higher self-esteem because of the direct and frequent interaction with nondisabled peers (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000). As a result of inclusion, children with disabilities have the opportunity to show people that they can succeed in a regular classroom.

Children without disabilities are affected by the placement of students with disabilities in their inclusive environment in many ways as well. They are able to see that children with disabilities are no different than they are. The children both with and without disabilities are able to learn from each other in an inclusive setting. Cooperative groups are very important to have in any classroom, but especially in an inclusive classroom. Cooperative groups help build communities, enhance social skills, and increase learning altogether. Students without disabilities have the opportunity to mentor, tutor, or guide a classmate with a disability (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000). According to Peterson & Hittie (2003), Eric Erickson formulated the assumption that community and building caring, trusting relationships has a

significant social factor. He is a strong supporter of small group activities and classroom workshops as exemplary teaching strategies, because children are able to work together and share ideas.

To make inclusion successful, it is important to have open communication. There needs to be communication between parent and teacher, teacher and student, and parents and students. It is important to form caring relationships between all of these people who are being affected by inclusion. Communication is a key factor in the success of inclusion. I strongly believe that the more people that are involved in a child's education, the better. Parents are a critical part of a child's education. They need to be there to support their child in all ways possible. Many children look to their parents for encouragement and motivation. Teachers need to let parents know what is going on in the classroom. It is also important that they let the parents know that they are always welcome into the classroom. The more satisfied parents are with their child's education, the more they will be willing to participate. Peterson, & Hittie (2003) state that Eric Erickson would strongly encourage parents to take an active role in their child's education. According to Peterson & Hittie (2003), Vygotsky and Piaget place a big emphasis on communication skills and social development. It is very important for children to learn from each other, and form caring relationships. Both of these theorists support small group activities, authentic learning, and reflective assessment as good teaching strategies, because they all rely on children constructing their own meaning and sharing their ideas with their peers.

The placement of students with disabilities into the general education setting is becoming more prevalent these days. Many people are seeing that all children are

benefiting from the idea of inclusion. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997) is the law that provides the framework for special education. Initially the law was passed as Public Law 94-142 in 1975, it remains first a civil right law that guarantees a free appropriate public education from birth through the age of twenty-one for all children with disabilities (Smith, 2004). The students' identified with the disabilities are authorized to receive individualized education programs in the least restrictive environment. The key words are individualized and appropriate. These two words work hand-in-hand in providing the students with disabilities the best education possible. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act coined the term inclusion and worked with parents in a partnership.

The researcher believes that there are many future benefits of inclusion, such as life-long skills. When children with disabilities are being taught in the same classroom with the rest of their peers, they are developing skills that will help them through life. They are able to experience diversity at its finest. Inclusion helps decrease the stigma that children with disabilities receive when they get pulled out of the regular classroom. It also shows parents, other adults, and children that a child with disabilities is fully able to succeed in the regular classroom. The child with the disability has an increased feeling of self-worth.

I personally worked in an inclusive classroom, and I have to admit I was not sure that inclusion was a good idea until this experience. I saw how all of the children in the inclusive classroom got along. I could not visually pick out which students were the ones with the disabilities. The teacher who I worked with had great classroom management skills, and she created a strong classroom community from

the first day of school. All of the students in the classroom felt cared for and important. Parents were very involved in their child's education. At least one parent volunteer came in every day to help out with the classroom activities. It was such an amazing experience. I do not think that this classroom would have run as effectively as it did if the parents were not as involved. I believe that you can not have inclusion without collaboration. There was always open communication and collaboration between the parents and the teacher. In every student's homework folder that was sent home every Friday, the teacher had a place to write letters back and forth to the parents. As a result of the open communication and parental involvement, this inclusive classroom was effective in providing every child with the best education possible. Since I had such a wonderful experience, it made me want to do some research on how satisfied parents of children without disabilities are on the idea of inclusion. In this particular classroom I could assess that all of the parents liked having the diversity in their child's classroom. I believe they felt that was the best for their child.

The change from having students with disabilities taught in a separate classroom, to having them included in the regular classroom, has created opportunity for all children. These opportunities would not be as rewarding if it were not for parental involvement. According to Palmer, Fuller, Arora, & Nelson (2001), parental support and involvement are essential for any educational reform movement to succeed. In order to make inclusion successful, there needs to be communication and collaboration among parents, teachers, and students. It is essential to hear how parents feel about their child's educational placement.

My research question is: How satisfied are parents of children without disabilities on the idea of inclusion? As a researcher, I want to investigate if parents believe that there are more advantages or disadvantages of inclusion, and what factors influence parents' attitudes toward the placement of their child in an inclusive setting. This researcher would hope that she will have some effective information to give back to all parents as a result of doing this research study. Being a special educator, it is important to know the different perspectives of all parents on the issue of inclusion. The researcher will expect to find that parents of children with disabilities will have a more positive attitude towards inclusion, and parents of children without disabilities will have a more negative attitude towards inclusion. This question will be answered in part by assessing the answers to a questionnaire on parents' perceptions towards inclusion. This study is not designed to look at all aspects of inclusion; it is designed to focus on investigating parents' perceptions. This study will not change policy at the school district where this study is being conducted. I will begin to answer my research question by reviewing the relevant literature that relates to this significant issue.

Review of Literature

This section of this thesis focuses on the literature supported by empirical evidence relevant to this research question: how satisfied are parents of children without disabilities on the idea of inclusion? The researchers presented the research on two sides of the issue dealing with parents' perceptions on inclusion. Some parents are very satisfied with the idea of inclusion, and others do not feel that inclusion is appropriate for all students. Since there are two distinct sides to this question, I organized this paper into two sections: parents that are satisfied with the idea of inclusion, and parents that are not satisfied with the idea of inclusion.

Some acts have been passed to mandate that students with disabilities be educated in the general education classroom along with their nondisabled person. One act was the Education for all Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142). “The 1975 Education for all Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142) and the most recent amendments in 1990 and 1997, (P.L. 101-476 and P.L. 105-17) were enacted to endure that all students with disabilities under the age of 22 were guaranteed a free, appropriate public education. This law did not contain the word inclusion, but it defined the most appropriate education as the least restrictive environment” (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000, p. 11). “The least restrictive environment requires schools to educate students with disabilities as much as possible with their peers who do not have disabilities” (Salend, 2005, p. 12).

Parents that are satisfied with the idea of inclusion

After looking at what various researchers discovered about how satisfied parents of children without disabilities are on the idea of inclusion, this researcher

verified that there were more satisfied parents than there were unsatisfied. Burstein, Cabello, Sears, Spagna, & Wilcoxon (2004) state that the intention of inclusion is to alter education for all students, benefiting not only students with disabilities, but also those without disabilities.

There was a common theme among many of the research based articles. The common theme was, start early. According to Tafa and Manolitsis (2003), the inclusion of children with disabilities together with their typically developing peers has been identified as the best practice. One reason why inclusion has been advocated during the pre-school years is because children have not yet formed stereotypes, so it increases the likelihood that they will accept their peers with disabilities. When children with disabilities are placed in the regular classroom setting, it fosters the belief among parents that inclusion is the norm, and it better prepares the child with disabilities to function in a typical environment.

Some parents of children without disabilities reported that, as a result of their child being placed in an inclusive classroom, it had a positive impact on their child in the areas of socialization and academics. Children with disabilities and children without disabilities were able to work together in cooperative groups and they were able to learn from each other. Also, the child benefited from the increased instructional support in the classroom (Tichenor & Piechura, 1998). In the study conducted by Tichenor & Pichura (1998), parents of children without disabilities made these various positive remarks about their child's placement in an inclusive classroom: more interaction, movement, hands-on learning, and definitely more challenges. The parents in this study believe that as a result of having more adults in

the class, it allows for more one-on-one time, and more opportunities to have children working in cooperative groups. Some parents commented on the fact that being in an inclusive classroom has helped their child's self-esteem. At the end of this study the parents of children without disabilities were asked if they would want their children to participate in an inclusive classroom in another grade level. This question received an overwhelming "yes!" Nineteen parents answered this question and fifteen of them responded that they would allow their children to participate in another inclusion classroom. Four parents indicated that it would depend on the situation; two parents said they would probably not want their child to be in another inclusion classroom; and one parent said "no." (Tichenor & Piechura, 1998).

A study done by Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) compared academic achievements of 606 students without disabilities at the elementary age who were either in an "inclusive" classroom or a "traditional" classroom. The results indicated that the children that were in the inclusive classroom made greater academic gains on curriculum-based assessments than the students in the "traditional" classroom. These findings were limited because of the narrow measures of academic learning.

Arora, Fuller, Nelson, & Palmer (2001) conducted a study on parents of children with disabilities who were being educated in traditional or noninclusive public schools. The parents were asked to complete a sixty-two item survey based on their perceptions regarding inclusive practices. They were asked to explain why they are or are not supportive of inclusive placement for children with significant disabilities. One parent felt that being placed in an inclusive setting helps children without disabilities to be sensitive to other children who do not have the same

capabilities. Arora, Fuller, Nelson & Palmer (2001) stated that if a child without disabilities is able to see a child with a disability, that might make them aware of how grateful they should be with their lives. They could walk, talk, see, and use their hands, all of which are wonderful gifts that God has given them. They could use their gifts to help others.

According to Tafa and Manolitsis (2003), the more the frequency of the parents' contact with individuals with special needs, the less of a concern they have with a child with special needs in their child's classroom. "The nature and duration of interpersonal relationships with individuals with special needs are the most important variable that affect parents' perceptions towards inclusion" (Tafa & Manolitsis, 2003, p.168). Tafa and Manolitsis (2003) found evidence that suggests parents with higher education levels hold a more positive attitude toward inclusion. The parents believed that inclusion helps children with special needs to become prepared to function effectively in the "real world." It also gives them the opportunity to be around typically developing children, so that they can learn from them. Tafa and Manolitsis (2003) also found that there is a significant difference between mothers with higher and lower education levels regarding the participation of their own child being included in a classroom along with children with disabilities.

Seery (2000) found, in several studies, that the parents of typically developing children were consistent in their belief that the benefits add to their own children as well as children with special needs. Azzopardi (2000) did a case study on a parents' self-advocacy group in Malta, and the Parents' Society perceived inclusion as a fundamental principle to social understanding and respect. They found that what

started out as a support group has now evolved into a self-advocacy which is starting an activist approach to issues. In this article it mentioned that inclusion is about a community for all and a society that is ready to get rid of disrespect so individuals are seen as a whole.

The researcher came across an article that studied the same question that the researcher was going to investigate. Peck, Staub, Gallucci, & Schwartz (2004) did a study on parents' perceptions of the effects of their nondisabled child's participation in an inclusive classroom. The researchers used a survey that was previously used to measure parent and teacher attitudes toward inclusion. The survey responses indicated that seventy-eight percent of parents felt that there was no effect on their child's academics as a result of being in an inclusive classroom. Fifteen percent of parents believed that there were positive effects, and seven percent felt that their child's academics decreased as a result of being in an inclusive classroom. The survey also addressed the impact inclusion has on their child's emotional and social development. More than half of the parents that participated in this study reported that there were more social and emotional benefits for their nondisabled child. Only one percent of parents in this study indicated that there was a negative affect in the areas of social and emotional development. Overall, most of the parents of nondisabled children reported holding a neutral or positive attitude toward inclusion. When asked if they were given the opportunity to enroll their child again in an inclusive classroom, seventy-three percent said yes.

Parents that are unsatisfied with the idea of inclusion

Many parents have different perspectives on different disabilities. Tafa and Manolitsis (2003) concluded that including children with physical or sensory disabilities in inclusive classrooms causes the least concern for parents of typically developing children, whereas the inclusion of children with mental retardation or children who are emotionally disturbed causes the most concern. This statement suggests that the level of the child's disability plays a role in parents' attitudes toward inclusion. Seery (2000) found that as the severity of the disability increased, the teachers' level of comfort with inclusion decreased.

Parents of children without disabilities seem to have doubts about whether or not children with disabilities in an inclusion classroom will receive the individualized instruction that they need. If the teacher provides the students with the special needs more one-on-one time, then the parents are concerned that the teacher's attention is being taken away from their child (Tafa & Monolitsis, 2003). Recchia, Berr, and Hsiung (1998) found that 50% of caregivers in an inclusive preschool mentioned that they had concern about their lack of education and information regarding children with disabilities. According to Tafa & Monolitsis (2003), these concerns may have risen from parents' doubts concerning teacher efficacy in managing an inclusion classroom.

Tichenor & Piechura (1998) confirmed that parental concerns center around the following: gifted students are bored by the pace and not challenged; average children receive a "watered" down curriculum and resent adaptations made for students with disabilities; regular education students are frustrated by seeing other

children doing less work and receiving the same or better grades; and teachers spend “too much time” on disciplining and managing students with behavior problems, or working with the students with special needs. Parents of children without disabilities are also concerned that their child may imitate inappropriate behaviors exhibited by children with special needs. On the other hand, instead of imitating the inappropriate behaviors, they worry that their child may be frightened by the “strange behaviors” of the children with the special needs (Tafa & Monolitsis, 2003).

The article written by Cook & Swain (2001), Kenworthy and Whittaker (2000) suggested that the only way to truly end the segregation of children depends on achieving a consensus with children, parents, survivors of segregation, educationalists and policy makers. Kenworthy and Whittaker believe that the system silences parents. Parents may have theoretical understandings and perceptions that are never being heard because nobody is asking them what they believe. In a study done by Frederickson, Dunsmuir, Lang, and Monsen (2004) the parents that participated in this study indicated that good communication with schools is very important. The parents reported that they valued effective, responsive communication that relayed information between home and school. They wanted to be provided with opportunities to develop cooperative relationships. It is time to start trusting parents and learning from them. By doing so, new opportunities will be found to benefit children’s education.

Peck, Staub, Gallucci, and Schwartz (2004) found a gap in the literature. They found that while the philosophical rationale for inclusive education has expanded considerably within the last two decades, the predominance of empirical

work has remained focused on questions related to the impact of inclusion on children with disabilities. An inclusion classroom has both children with and without disabilities, so it is essential to study the impact of inclusion on children without disabilities too.

There is another gap in the literature in that many studies done on parents' attitudes towards inclusion only obtained data from mothers. The only study that looked at both fathers and mothers was Green and Stoneman's study that was conducted in 1998. They collected data from both mothers and fathers, and the data revealed that they did not differ in their positive attitudes toward inclusion (Tafa & Manolitsis, 2003). This is just one study that looked at two hundred and ninety parents. What about the rest of the parents who have children without disabilities who are placed in an inclusion setting? It is crucial that more research is done on the satisfaction level of fathers as well in order to successfully represent how parents feel about the issue of inclusion.

There could be many reasons that lead parents of children without disabilities to not speak about their level of satisfaction with inclusion. The main reason why the researcher believes that there is little research done involving parents of children without disabilities is because they do not feel comfortable saying that they do not want their child in the same class as children with disabilities. This is an issue in which parents have some strong feelings. The researcher believes that parents of children without disabilities need to voice their opinions. That is why the researcher chose to do a study that focuses on how satisfied parents of children without disabilities are on the idea of inclusion.

Methods

The researcher explored the satisfaction level on inclusion of parents of children without disabilities in a fourth and fifth grade class in a suburban district in upstate New York. The researcher conducted this study to identify what factors influence parent's satisfaction level with the idea of inclusion. After evaluating the questionnaires, the researcher will attempt to answer whether or not most parents are satisfied with the idea of inclusion overall, or with some aspects of inclusion.

Subjects

There is a pool of seventy-six potential subjects. All the subjects have a child enrolled in a fourth or fifth grade class. Seventy-one subjects are Caucasian, three are African American, and two are Vietnamese. The majority of the subjects' primary language is English, except there are two subjects whose primary language is Vietnamese, and another subject whose primary language is Ukrainian. Seven sets of the potential subjects involved in this study have a child with various classified disabilities, including learning disabilities, speech and language disabilities, autism, and other health impairments (Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder).

Instruments

One instrument was utilized for data collection in this research study. The instrument was a questionnaire. This is an unpublished instrument developed by the researcher for the purpose of this study (see Appendix A). The questionnaire was submitted to a panel of three to assess face validity. The researcher developed the questionnaire based on the review of the literature. The questionnaire was designed to identify the factors that influence parents' satisfaction level on the idea of

inclusion. I will draw conclusions about parents' satisfaction level based on their answers to the eight questions presented on the questionnaire. Reliability will be analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences, volume 10.0) for internal consistency on the questionnaire that was created by the researcher.

Procedures

The questionnaire was distributed simultaneously to all the subjects by mailing them to the subjects' home address on January 7th, 2005. There were two questionnaires, one for the father and one for the mother, in an envelope along with an informed consent form consisting of an explanation of the purpose for this study. An additional envelope addressed to the elementary school where the study was being conducted was included for returning the completed questionnaires.

The researcher gave the subjects two weeks to fill out the questionnaire. At the end of the two weeks, the researcher sent a reminder to all the potential subjects. The researcher stated in the reminder that those who have returned the questionnaire can disregard this reminder. The data was collected and analyzed by February 7th, 2005. Planned statistical analyses were done using SPSS, volume 10.0 (1999) to see if there were more satisfied parents or unsatisfied parents with the idea of inclusion. The data that was collected allows the researcher to identify the factors that contribute to the parents' satisfaction level with inclusion.

Results

The research question that was studied was: How satisfied are parents of children without disabilities on the idea of inclusion? The planned analyses were computed using SPSS, volume 10.0. The descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics were computed as planned.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were obtained using SPSS, volume 10.0. The results of the descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1. Table 2 is a visual representation of the data presented in Table 1. The frequencies, mean, and standard deviation are represented in Table 3. Table 4 shows all of the responses to the open ended questions on the inclusion questionnaire. Table 5 is a pie chart representing the amount of fathers and mothers who participated in this study.

Inferential Statistics

A panel of three experts examined the content of the inclusion questionnaire to determine its validity. The experts concluded that the questionnaire is a valid instrument. Inferential statistics were calculated using SPSS, volume 10.0 to establish the reliability of the inclusion questionnaire. The reliability was computed to be .0615. This means that the questionnaire is 94% reliable. The researcher included a table that contains all the answers that the subjects gave to the open ended questions. This data can be found in Table 4. Table 5 is a pie chart that represents the difference between mothers and fathers who participated in this study. Pearson Product Moment Correlations were computed using SPSS 10.0 among all of the questions in the questionnaire. A significant positive correlation was found between

the question that asked if their child has ever been in an inclusive setting, and the question that asked the parents if they thought they knew enough about inclusion to know if it is a good placement for their child ($r=.775$, $p=.000$). A significant negative correlation was found between the question that asked the parents if their child has been previously classified with a disability, and if they believe that there are more advantages to inclusion than there are disadvantages for the children with disabilities ($r=-.671$, $p=.024$). There was also a significant negative correlation between the question that asked the parents if they had a choice would they want their child in an inclusive setting, and the question that asked if they associate with anyone that has a disability ($r=-.524$, $p=.037$). No significant differences were found among any other questions.

Conclusions

The research question that I studied was: How satisfied are parents of children without disabilities on the idea of inclusion? I studied this question for many reasons. First, it is important to know how parents feel about inclusion since it is becoming more prevalent. Second, in order for inclusion to be successful, it is crucial that all people involved such as administrators, teachers, students, and parents, are educated about inclusion. Everyone needs to know what inclusion consists of, the benefits, and the possible drawbacks.

The researcher specifically studied parents of children without disabilities because the empirical research shows that parents of children with disabilities are studied more than parents of children without disabilities. I strongly believe that parents of children without disabilities have an equal right to have their feelings and beliefs be heard. Their child is affected in some way or another as a result of making more classrooms inclusive. In order to find out how parents of children without disabilities feel about inclusion, the researcher used a questionnaire that contained eight questions that were based around the empirical research that was studied on this topic.

The results of this study show a significant positive correlation between the question that asked the parent if their child has ever been in an inclusive setting, and the question that asked if they thought they knew enough about inclusion to know if it is a good placement for their child. A significant negative correlation was found between the question that asked the parents if their child has been previously classified with a disability, and if they believe that there are more advantages to

inclusion than there are disadvantages for the children with disabilities. There was also a significant negative correlation between the question that asked the parents if they had a choice would they want their child in an inclusive setting, and the question that asked if they associate with anyone that has a disability. No significant differences were found among any other questions.

Limitations

This study contained some limitations. One major limitation was the small sample size that was used for this study. A convenience sampling was used consisting of only parents of children in one fourth grade class and one fifth grade class because those were the two classes that I was working with during my internship. As a result of doing this study with these two classes, I only had seventy-six subjects from one suburban school district. This leads to the second limitation. There was not much diversity within the subjects that participated in this study. The majority of the parents of the children in these two classes are Caucasian. Three parents are African American, and two are Vietnamese. There was not any information collected from a rural or urban school district.

Discussion

The researcher obtained her objectives because she gave parents of children without disabilities a chance to voice their opinions on the idea of inclusion. The researcher also met her objective of giving fathers of children without disabilities the opportunity to state their opinions about inclusion. At the beginning of this research study, the researcher was hoping to provide parents with effective information about inclusion. She was also hoping to learn about the different perceptions that all

parents have on the issue of inclusion. I strongly believe that I accomplished these goals as a result of doing this study. The results of this study are of interest to any administrator, teacher, or parents of children in the fourth or fifth grade.

After assessing the data on the topic of how satisfied parents of children without disabilities are on the idea of inclusion, I have found that some of the researchers' findings are similar to mine and some are different. One of the most important findings that resulted from this study was the answer that parents gave to the question asking if their child has previously been in an inclusive classroom. Only three out of twelve parents of children without disabilities answered yes to the question. The surprising thing is that every single one of the parents involved in this study has a child who is currently in an inclusive classroom. None of these parents knew that their child is in a classroom with children with disabilities, and have been for over two years now. Their lack of knowledge has a huge impact on how they answered the questions on this questionnaire. At the top of the questionnaire, the researcher specifically stated that if your child has been in an inclusive setting, then base your answers on your experiences with inclusion. It continued to state that if your child has not been in an inclusive classroom then base your answers on your feelings towards inclusion. When the researcher was assessing the data, she noticed that twelve of the parents based their answers to the questions on their feelings toward inclusion. In all reality, these parents should have been basing their answers on their experiences with inclusion. I wonder if the teachers in these two classes are doing such an excellent job of teaching inclusively that these parents are unaware that their child is in an inclusive setting?

The inferential statistics revealed that there is a significant positive correlation between the question that asked if their child has ever been in an inclusive setting, and the question asking if they know enough about inclusion to know if it is a good placement for your child. The researcher is able to conclude that the parents that stated that they know enough about inclusion are the ones that have children who have been in an inclusive setting before.

There was also a significant negative correlation between the question that asked the parents if they have a child who has been previously classified with a disability, and if they believe there are more advantages to inclusion than there are disadvantages for children with disabilities. Only five parents who participated in this study have children with disabilities, but a total of eight parents believe that there are more advantages for children with disabilities. Seven parents stated that they do not know if there are more advantages for children with disabilities.

As a result of Green and Stoneman (1998) stating that there has not been a lot of data collected on fathers' attitudes toward inclusion, the researcher sent the inclusion questionnaire to both mothers and fathers. The responses to the questionnaire indicated that ten mothers, seven fathers, and one unknown gender participated in this study. According to Tafa and Manolitsis (2003), both mothers and fathers did not differ in their attitudes toward inclusion. The findings of this inclusion questionnaire concur with Tafa and Manoltsis. Only one set of parents differed on their perspectives regarding whether there are more advantages for their child being in an inclusive classroom.

The findings also concur with Arora, Fuller, Nelson, and Palmer's (2001) study. In this study, parents of children without disabilities felt that being placed in an inclusive setting helps children without disabilities to be sensitive of children with disabilities. Twelve out of the eighteen parents stated in some way or another in the open-ended response section of the questionnaire that their child would learn to be compassionate towards children with disabilities.

The findings of Tichenor and Piechura's study (1998) were significantly different than the findings of this study. At the end of Tichenor and Piechura's study, they asked parents of children without disabilities if they wanted their child to participate in an inclusive classroom in a future grade level. The parents responded with an overwhelming "yes!" Out of the thirteen parents of children without disabilities that answered this question, seven parents stated that they would not want their child to be in an inclusive setting. Two parents stated that they did not know if they would want their child in an inclusive setting, because they felt that they did not know enough about inclusion to make that decision. The thirteen parents that do not want their child in a classroom with students with disabilities are making that decision, but they are not aware that their child is already in this setting.

The parents of children with disabilities who participated in this study all have similar responses. There were five parents of children with disabilities that participated in this study. All five of these parents felt that they knew enough about inclusion. These parents agreed that there are more advantages for both their child and children with disabilities as a result of being in an inclusive classroom. The question that they had different perceptions on was, does the teacher have lower

expectations for your child because of having students with disabilities in the classroom? Three out of the five parents responded that the teacher does not have lower expectations, and two responded that the teacher does have lower expectations.

After reading the various responses that parents wrote on the open-ended questions, the researcher wondered that many parents might place a stigma on the word disability? The researcher also wondered if parents responded to the questions on the questionnaire based on their own experiences when they were in school? When they hear the statement, children with disabilities, they are envisioning the most severe disability. They are not seeing a “normal” developing child with a processing problem; they are seeing a child in a wheelchair or a child who is noncompliant and disruptive in class. Tafa and Manolitsis (2003) found in their study that the level of the child’s disability plays a role in parents’ attitudes toward inclusion. As a result of the parents that participated in this study visualizing the most severe disability may have influenced their attitudes toward inclusion in a negative way.

Although there were many similar findings between the results of the inclusion questionnaire and previous studies addressing parents’ perceptions on inclusion, there were also some different findings among studies. Tafa and Monolisis (2003) found that the more contact parents had with individuals with disabilities the more supportive they were of having a child with disabilities in their child’s classroom. This was not always the same case in this study. Ten parents stated that they associate with someone with a disability. Out of the ten parents, five of them would want their child to be educated alongside children with disabilities.

There were four different researchers who had similar findings dealing with parents of children without disabilities and the benefits that they saw for their child in an inclusive setting. The four researchers are: Seery's (2000), Peck, Staub, Gallucci, and Schwartz (2004), Tiechenor and Piechura (1998), and Tafa and Manolitsis (2003). The findings of their studies were completely different from this study. All of these researchers found that parents of typically developing children believed that there are benefits for their child being in an inclusive classroom. In Peck, Staub, Gallucci and Schwartz's study, seventy-three percent of the parents said that they would enroll their child in an inclusive classroom again. The parents that filled out this questionnaire replied that there are not any significant benefits for their child. Many of the parents' open-ended responses to this question dealt with the issue of time. They believed that too much time would be taken away from their child because of the children with the disabilities needing the extra help. According to the data representing the answers to the inclusion questionnaire, only five of the thirteen parents of children without disabilities responded that their child would not receive enough of the teacher's attention in an inclusive classroom.

Future Research

One recommendation by the researcher of this study would be to have a larger sampling size that was created by a physical random sampling. This physical random sampling should be done in many different schools, instead of just one. This would allow the researcher to justify generalizations. It will provide more feedback on how parents in different school districts feel about inclusion.

Summary

It is evident by this study that parents are not educated enough about inclusion to make justifications about the pros and cons that inclusion has on their child, or other children in the same setting. The results indicate that parents of children without disabilities do not believe that there are more advantages for their child as a result of being in an inclusive classroom. If parents of children without disabilities had a choice whether or not they wanted their child in an inclusive classroom the majority would choose not to. However, these parents are unaware that their child is currently in an inclusive classroom.

In order for inclusion to be successful, parents need to be educated about inclusion. Schools need to communicate with parents and let them know what type of classroom their child is in. Inclusion is only successful when there is open communication and collaboration between schools and parents. It is the parents' right to now about their child's education.

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Appendix A

Inclusion Questionnaire

Please answer the following eight questions by circling YES or NO, and provide an explanation as to why you chose YES or NO.

Inclusion is a setting in which both children with and without disabilities are in the same classroom.

For the purpose of this study satisfaction is defined as meets your expectations.

****Remember that this questionnaire is completely anonymous.**

Please circle your gender Male Female

1.) Has your child ever been in an inclusive setting? YES NO D/K
 If you answered YES circle the number of years 1 2 3 4 5 6

2.) Has your child previously been classified with a disability? YES NO

If you answered YES to question #1 please base your answers to the following questions on your experiences with inclusion.

If you answered NO or D/K to question #1 please base your answer to the following questions on your feelings toward inclusion if your child was placed in that setting.

3.) Do you believe that you know enough about inclusion to know if it is a good placement for your child? YES NO

In your own words, what do you know about inclusion?

4.) Do you believe that there are more advantages to inclusion than there are disadvantages for your child? YES NO

What advantages do you see for your son/daughter as a result of being in a classroom with students with disabilities?

What disadvantages do you see for your son/daughter as a result of being in a classroom with students with disabilities?

5.) Do you believe that there are more advantages to inclusion than there are disadvantages for the children with disabilities? YES NO

What advantages do you see for students with disabilities as a result of being in a classroom with children without disabilities?

What disadvantages do you see for students with disabilities as a result of being in a classroom with children without disabilities?

6.) If you had the choice would you want your child in an inclusive classroom?

YES NO

Why? If your answer is NO, please give some reasons why you chose NO.

7.) Do you associate with anyone that has a disability? YES NO

Are they a family member or a friend? What types of issues are important for them and you?

8.) Do you believe that the classroom teacher has lower expectations for your child because of having students with disabilities in your child's class? YES NO

Why?

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

Yes and No Responses to Each Question on the Inclusion Questionnaire

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Question 7	Question 8
0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
0	0	0				0	0
0	0	0			0	0	0
0	0	0				1	
1	0	1	1		1	1	0
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
0	0	1	0		0	1	0
	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
0	0		0	0	0	0	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
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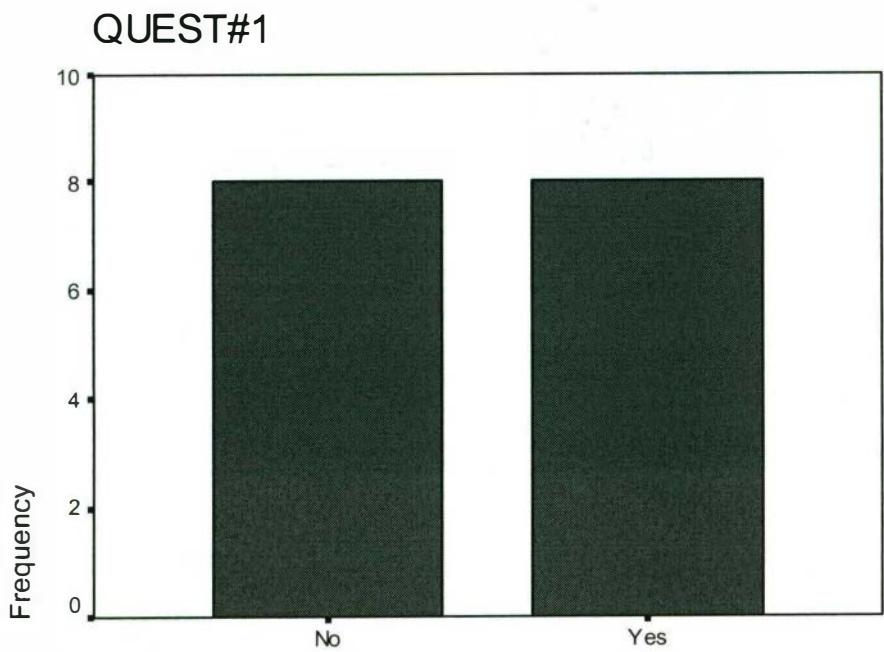
Blank=a missing response

0=a response of a no on the questionnaire

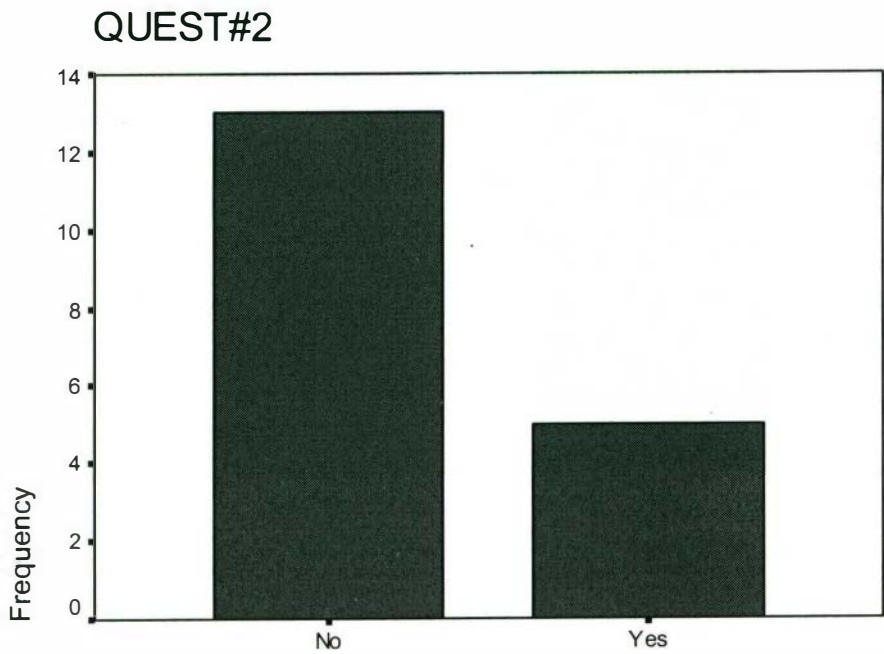
1=a response of yes on the questionnaire

Table 2

Bar Graphs Representing the Descriptive Statistics

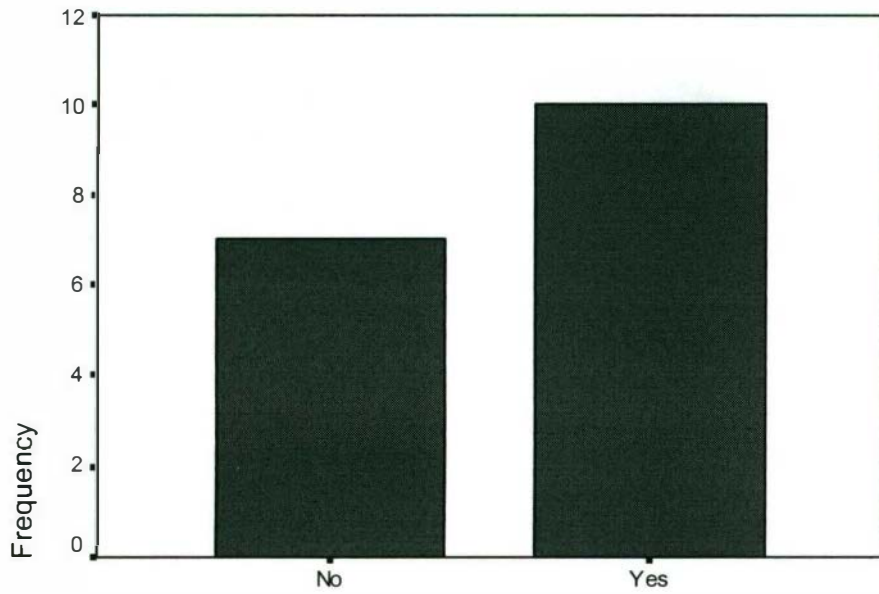


QUEST#1



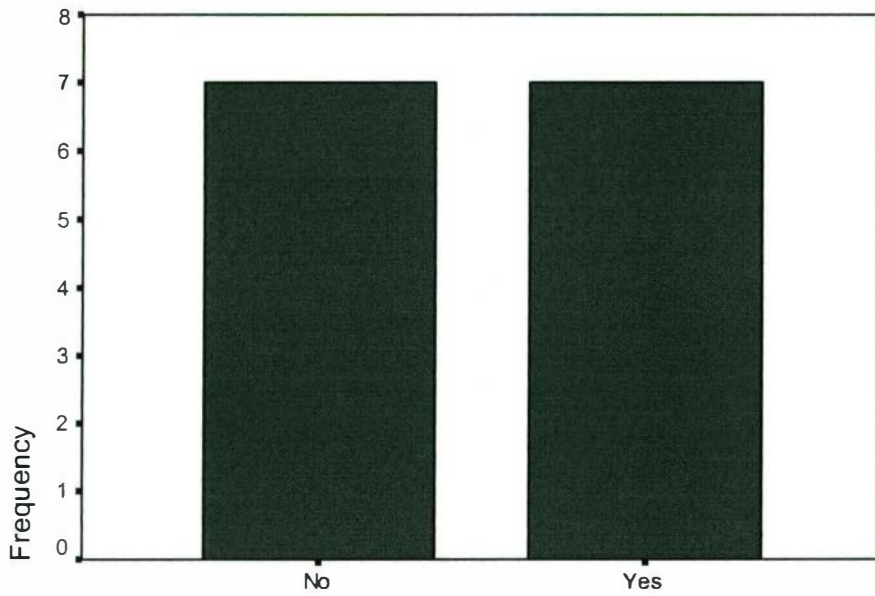
QUEST#2

QUEST#3



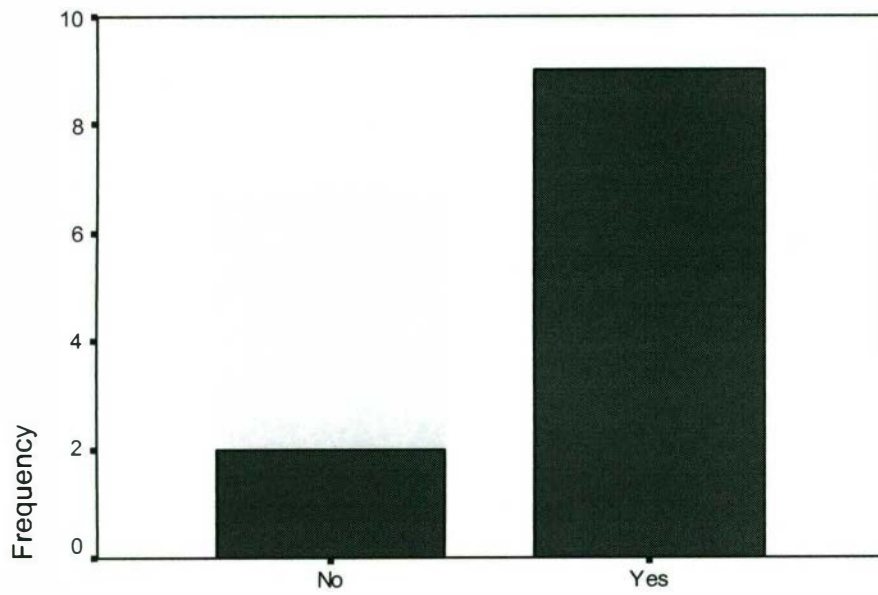
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QUEST#4



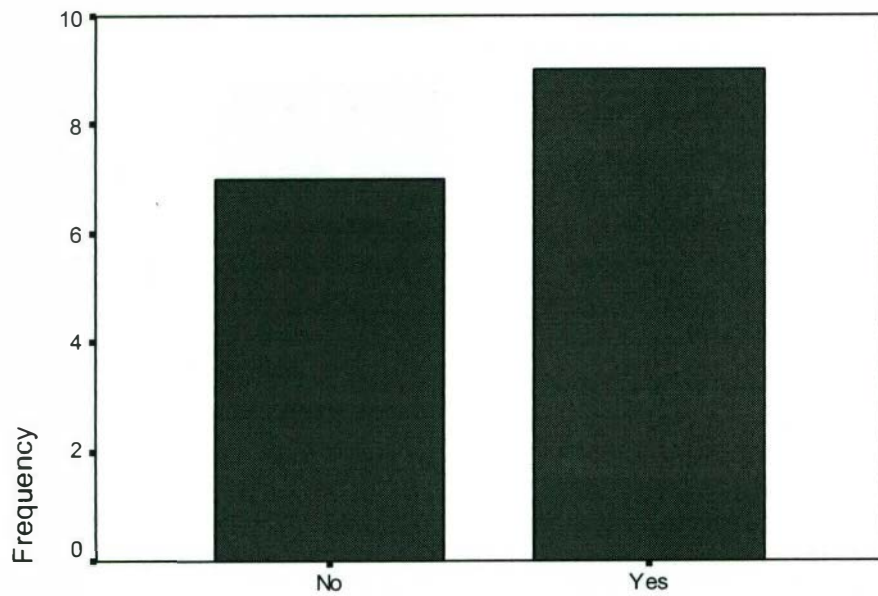
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QUEST#5



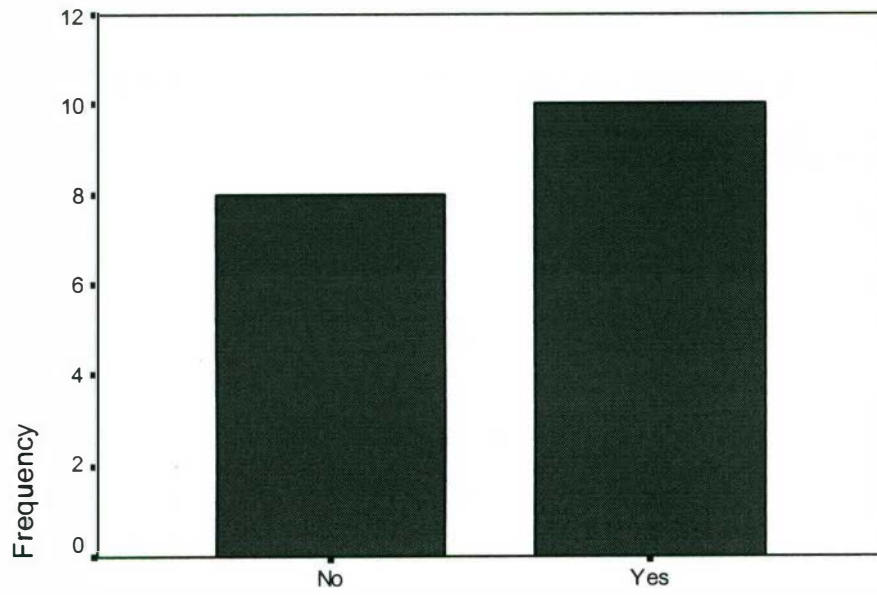
QUEST#5

QUEST#6



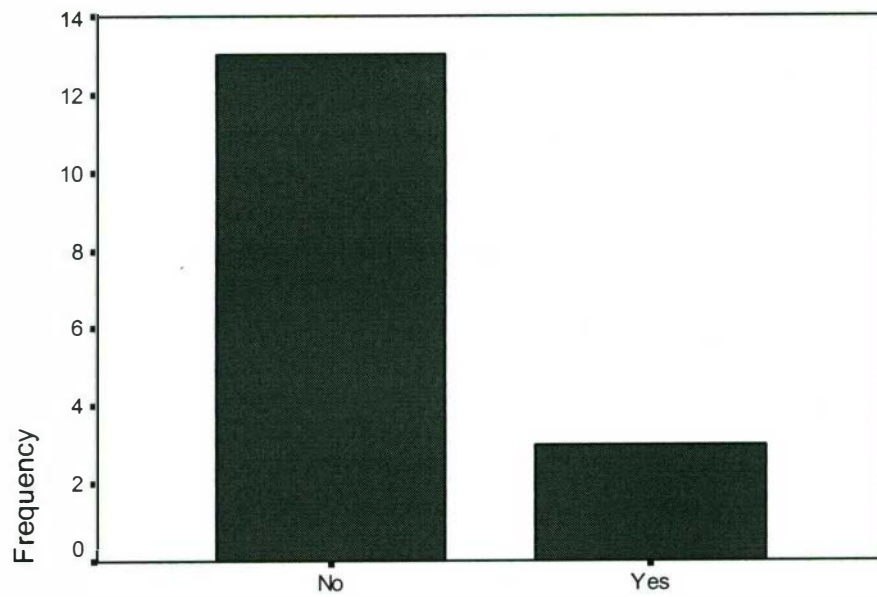
QUEST#6

QUEST#7



QUEST#7

QUEST#8



QUEST#8

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics

Frequencies, Mean, and Standard Deviation for the Inclusion Questionnaire

	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation
Question 1 Setting	16	.50	.52
Question 2 Classified	18	.28	.46
Question 3 Know	17	.59	.51
Question 4 Your Child	14	.50	.52
Question 5 Children with Disabilities	11	.89	.40
Question 6 Choice	16	.56	.51
Question 7 Associate	18	.56	.51
Question 8 Expectations	16	.19	.40

Table 4

Parents Responses to the Open Ended Questions on the Inclusion Questionnaire

	Question 3 Know	Question 4 Your Child	Question 5 Children with Disabilities	Question 6 Choice	Question 7 Associate	Question 8 Expectations
Parent 1	Mixing of children with disabilities into mainstream classes.	Advantages-Understanding and getting along with children with disabilities. Disadvantages- Potential for slow down class progress. Require more of teachers time and attention	Advantages-If they are in the right level classroom then they can succeed. This will allow them to increase self-esteem by succeeding. Disadvantages- They might not be able to keep up on the school work. They may have more exposure to teasing by other children.	Yes, but the teacher would need to challenge and push the kids. This may require special support for the disabled kids to help them and not impede the class progress.	No Response	It would likely decrease the amount of time the teacher has with my child.
Parent 2	No Response	Advantages- Learning to treat all people the same. Disadvantages- Teacher may have to spend extra time with that child. Teacher should have an aid to assist with the extra attention needed.	Advantages-Being able to be included and to be treated like just another kid. Disadvantages-No Response.	No Response	No Response	No Response
Parent 3	No Response	Advantages- Positive exposure to students with disabilities so that he can learn that these children are just kids like him except they have special needs. Disadvantages- There is or would be a concern regarding the amount of time the teacher would need to spend with the child with disabilities.	Advantages-No Response Disadvantages-Less attention from the teacher and potential exposure to mean behavior or negative attitude from other students.	I don't know, I do not have enough information to make that choice.	No Response	No Response

Parent 4	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
Parent 5	Blending disabled children into regular classroom settings with an aid to assist the disabled children with learning.	Advantages-To become more tolerant and accepting of people that may be different and may need to learn things with assistance from an aid or teacher. Disadvantages- I would hope that the curriculum would not be lacking or not include things that other classrooms would be teaching in the same grade.	Advantages-To be included. Disadvantages- I wouldn't want them to be left behind in the curriculum it they are not grasping what is being taught.	I need to know more about inclusion before I could answer this.	Both family and friends. Handicap accessible, getting he help they need to be healthy and live comfortably, get the additional help they needed to learn to the best of their ability.	I don't know. If they did then I would be against inclusion. I would hope that the classroom would have enough teachers/aids in the class in order to meet the learning standards.
Parent 6	Yes, I am a therapist who has worked in the school district and has worked with kids in the general classroom with special needs.	Advantages- Learning about various abilities and learning styles. Helping others and learning patience. Disadvantages- As long as my child is being academically challenged and not losing learning due to excessive repetition of materials.	Advantages- It depends upon the disability. The child with the disability may get positive role models and assistance from other students. As long as student is benefiting from the academic instruction as well. Disadvantages- May feel low self-esteem due to higher academic challenges.	As long as there is enough teacher/aid/therapist support and as long as the teacher challenges those students who need it. Also as long as the student is not always being used as a good example.	Family and friends who accept their differences and don't make fun of them. Also getting good grades like the rest of their peers.	They shouldn't if they understand how to teach with differentiation.
Parent 7	Inclusion allows my child to learn in a "real world"	Advantages- My son is able to work, learn and interact with both nondisabled and disabled students. Both groups learn how to work with each other	Advantages-The students learn to work with students without disabilities, also they are challenged to overcome their disabilities and strive to succeed	No Response	Yes it is very important for my child to be included and not	My son is excelling many of the classroom expectations

	environment in which he will learn to live.	and accept each other by their experience. Disadvantages-None	in a real world environment. Disadvantages- Additional support is required for these students to ensure they are not left behind. BOCES, school teachers, administration and staff all work together to fully support their effort.		excluded from this "normal" school experience. Not only is this the best learning environment for him, but by inclusion he is seeing that if he works hard he can succeed. This environment is a significant encouragement that should never be removed.	and has been challenged to go further by this teacher. To consider lowering expectations for a disabled child, or for that matter any child would be a disservice to them. All children can, and I believe are, challenged in our school system to work hard and achieve all that they can.
Parent 8	The state requires children with disabilities be placed within a regular classroom environment and getting services through a	Advantages-We talk about having compassion for kids and adults who have a difficult time with situations in their life. My child learns to accept others. Disadvantages- Misbehavior and distractions make it difficult for my child to learn at times. I have heard stories over the years of what each	Advantages-Some students belong in a regular classroom environment. They learn appropriate social skills and a desire to learn. Disadvantages-If the environment is too stressful for everyone involved, there should be alternatives.	No because of safety, modeled behaviors (inappropriate), disruption to learning and too many teachers coming and going from the classroom.	Both, staying focused, feeling of inadequacy, completing work in a timely manner, and forgetting things.	No, but I don't think they can concentrate as much on the average child. Their effort seems to be on what the state requires. It's

	consultant teacher.	teacher has had to deal with, and their hands are tied. This shouldn't be the case.				hard to pay attention to so many individuals. The middle ones are well behaved, and are capable; I'd like to see them get attention too.
Parent 9	Inclusion involves placing children with disabilities in classrooms with normally developed children. Instruction methods are changed to accommodate children with a range of abilities.	Advantages-I see him learning compassion others, and learning patience or acquiring more teamwork skills. Disadvantages-As a highly motivated and self-directed learner, I think that he would be frustrated if he felt that he always waiting on other students, or if the curriculum content became less challenging or more slowly paced.	Advantages-Disabled children may be encouraged to try new things or to push themselves harder to achieve. Inclusive classrooms may also relieve social stigmas about children with disabilities. Disadvantages-Disabled children may become frustrated if they aren't achieving at the same level as the rest of the class. Also the teacher won't have the special education or OT training that could be beneficial.	When a teacher must invest a significant amount of time and energy managing the special needs of a few students, the "less pressing" academic needs of the rest of the class may be neglected.	Yes, time, resources, one-to-one instruction, and special facilities are all important to my disabled friends and relatives.	I think that generally teachers have high expectations and great optimism for their students. However, in an inclusive setting a teacher may not be able to ensure her most able students achieve her goals for them, or that the goals they set for themselves are

						increasingly challenging.
Parent 10	It is a mainstream process to lump all children together from highly intelligent to mentally disabled spectrum in hopes to not let any child feel "left out" or their self-esteem or feelings hurt.	Advantages-It is helpful for my children to see outside of themselves and be concerned for others and aware that all people are not like them. Disadvantages-A teacher will often times spend more time, attention, and energy on 1 or 2 disabled students and slow the academic achievement of the class as a whole. The attention then that is given to disability could make a child want to have a disability in hopes of getting special treatment. The thought would be "I'm not valued if I don't have a disability. I'll get more attention if I'm stupid."	Advantages-They can learn from the other children and can again see outside of themselves accepting their disability as part of them, but not letting it be an obstacle. Disadvantages-They receive a false sense of optimism that gives them hope that "maybe some day I'll be normal," and it teaches them that they are just like everyone else when in fact they aren't, but the way that they are is acceptable.	I believe that each child is a unique person and has certain strengths that need to be challenged, skills that need to be sharpened and honed, and weaknesses that shouldn't be neglected. I want my children in classes that are just above their reach, challenging but not boring.	Family and friends. The main issue is to recognize the disability and adjust for it but to love them in spite of it, and not let it hinder how we treat them, love them, and interact with them.	I think that most teachers have reasonable expectations for all their students. I think that it is the states or governments expectations on the teachers that messes them up.
Parent 11	Children with a disability placed in a regular classroom in hopes that they will perform better when challenged by others without a disability.	Advantages- Learning acceptance of others and patience. Disadvantages- Potentially being held back from progress in order to help children with disabilities. Also extra confusion/distraction in the classroom.	Advantages-Academic challenge and more social interaction. Disadvantages-More confusion in classroom/distraction and could be overwhelming.	Ability grouping for those students who are academically advanced provided more enrichment and greater teacher attention.	Yes, several friends. They do want to feel included and they want to perform at their highest standard. They also want greater social interaction.	I do not believe the expectations are lower, but I do think the teacher is less able to press her to success.

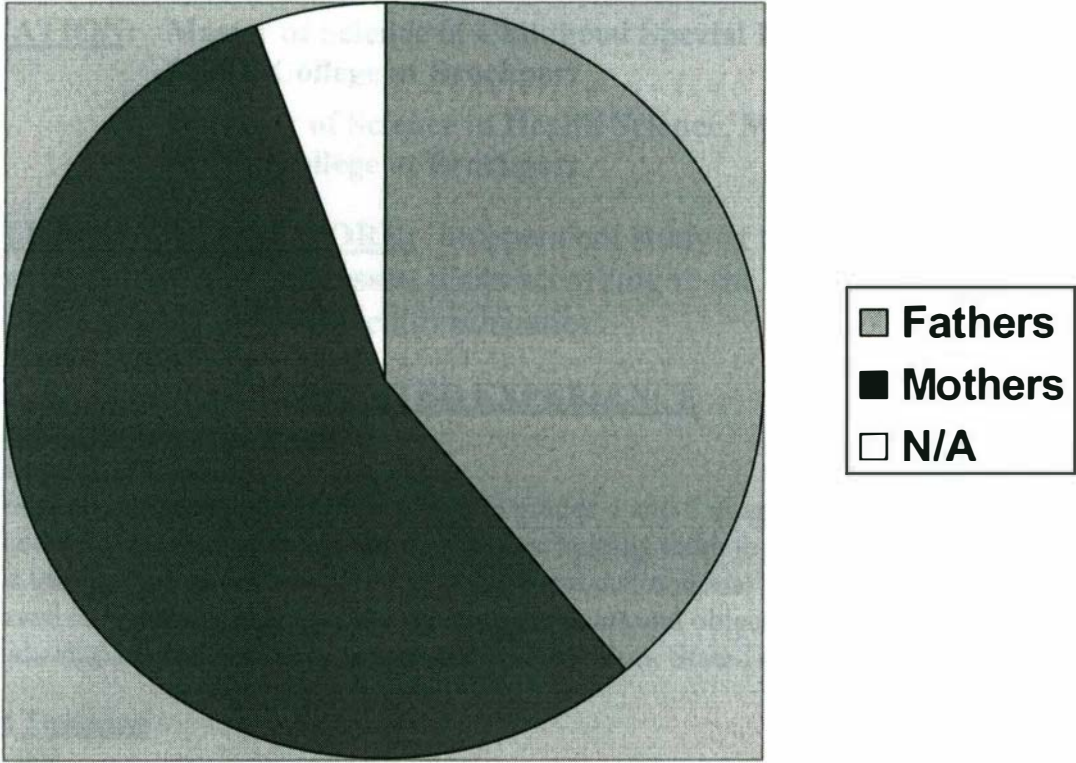
<p>Parent 12</p>	<p>I think that it is reasonable to infer that if you place an intelligent child with a child who has mental and learning disabilities, that the intelligent child will be slowed down to the learning capacity of the disabled child.</p>	<p>Advantages-My child will become comfortable around children with disabilities and not see them as “retards.” The disadvantages outweigh the advantages by far. Disadvantages-My child’s advancement and what the teacher would be able to teach to a classroom mixed with disabled children would be seriously restricted. I don’t see how inclusion could possibly work with the high demands from the state on what level children should be at. Overall our country would not be productive.</p>	<p>Advantages-I really do not see any advantages to the disabled children. Disadvantages-They will not get as much individual attention that they should have. Disabled children vary considerably in mental capacity among each other.</p>	<p>See previous answers.</p>	<p>No Response</p>	<p>The teacher would have to have lower expectations to be able to keep a pace that the disabled child could handle.</p>
<p>Parent 13</p>	<p>Inclusion is a setting in which students who have disabilities and general education students work together within a classroom. Most special education services are provided within the classroom.</p>	<p>Advantages-It depends on the child’s needs, and if the child is able to learn within the environment and not prevent/interrupt the learning. Disadvantages-Sometimes I am not sure if enough small group instruction is taking place within the classroom to meet my child’s needs.</p>	<p>Advantages-It depends on the child. If the child is more than one year below grade level, he may become self-conscious. It can be a challenge to find grade level materials at the child’s instructional level. Disadvantages-They may be perceived as too different/less capable. Staff training and adequate academic supports are necessary.</p>	<p>It depends on the child’s needs. If the child will learn more in a different setting, that would be the better choice.</p>	<p>Yes, family members and people at work.</p>	<p>No Response</p>

Parent 14	Children with disabilities placed with typically performing children.	Advantages-Positive peer and exposure to lessons given to typical performing peers. Disadvantages-Possible exposure to inappropriate behaviors or what might appear to be poor study habits.	Advantages-Positive role models and socialization. Disadvantages-Possible lack of individual help and individualized curriculum.	No Response	Yes, family members. It is important that she have positive role models and socialization.	I believe that teachers view each student individually.
Parent 15	Not a lot.	Advantages-Learning respect for all life whether normal or not. Disadvantages-More visual distraction and possibly more disruptions.	Advantages- I'm not sure. Disadvantages-Less trained professionals and kids who don't have enough coping skills.	Minimizing exposure to teasing, name calling and peoples' feelings getting hurt. There is an emotional side to this for both groups, and creating an environment which creates good feelings is most desired.	No Response	I'm not sure.
Parent 16	Inclusion in my words is a classroom with both types of children with and without disabilities.	Advantages-Children with disabilities can learn a great deal having the other children in the classroom. They also learn self-esteem. Disadvantages-When there is something that they don't know the other children make fun of them.	Advantages-They just want to be like everyone else. They are learning not only from their teachers but from their friends too. Disadvantages-The other children might finish their work faster. They might not have to ask as many questions.	No Response	No Response	I think yes only because teachers want their days to go smoothly with no disruptions and with children with disabilities need extra reminding and more guidance.
Parent 17	Inclusion in my words is a	Advantages-Children with disabilities can learn a great	Advantages-They just want to be like everyone else. They are	No Response	No Response	I think yes only because

	classroom with both types of children with and without disabilities.	deal having the other children in the classroom. They also learn self-esteem. Disadvantages-When there is something that they don't know the other children make fun of them.	learning not only from their teachers but from their friends too. Disadvantages-The other children might finish their work faster. They might not have to ask as many questions.			teachers want their days to go smoothly with no disruptions and with children with disabilities need extra reminding and more guidance.
Parent 18	Students with disabilities have an aid that is taught individually for subjects he/she has difficulties with. It is encouraged for all the students to work together whenever possible.	Advantages-My son could learn to interact with a disabled child, understanding better when and how he can help them. Disadvantages-If the level of disability a child who is placed in an inclusive setting is extreme and/or the level of required support is not present, unnecessary or an unacceptable level of interruption may occur.	Advantages-Appropriate social behaviors is learned and reinforced. Student may benefit from group learning experiences. Disadvantages-Often it is difficult to monitor a disabled student's progress because an aid may work so closely with the student. Or, if a disabled student does not receive enough support they may get frustrated and fall behind.	As long as a sufficient level of support exists in the classroom at all times.	Yes, I have an older son currently a senior in a self contained BOCES class. It is important that the student learns to their maximum potential, is always challenged, have friends and mostly, they are happy.	I would certainly hope not.

Table 5

Pie Chart Representing the Difference Between Mothers and Fathers Who Participated in the Inclusion Questionnaire.



CARRIE L. ISAMAN

TEACHER CERTIFICATION: Initial New York State Certification;
Childhood Education, Grades 1-6
Health Education, Grades K-12
Special Education, Grades 1-6

EDUCATION: Master of Science in Childhood Special Education, May 2005
SUNY College at Brockport
Bachelor of Science in Health Science, May 2004
SUNY College at Brockport

ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK: Independent study at the Graduate level on developing curriculum and lesson plans according to the New York State Learning Standards in K-12 Health Education.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Consultant Teacher Internship

Fall and Spring 2004-2005

- Successfully planned and taught students in grades 4 and 5 in an inclusive setting.
- Worked with students with various disabilities, helping them to meet their individual needs through the use of assistive technology and instructional strategies.
- Assessed students to see if they are meeting the goals and objectives presented on their Individualized Education Plan as required by New York State Learning Standards.

Student Teaching

Spring 2004

- Worked with students of varying abilities and with students whose first language is not English.
- Constructed Science unit utilizing a computer program that can be used by all fifth grade classes.
- Continued to assist supervising teacher with field trips and parent activities after my placement was finished.

Student Participant

Fall 2003

Spring 2003

Fall 2002

- Observed teachers; worked with students individually and in small groups to support instructional objectives in an inclusive classroom.
- Developed lesson plans that integrated many subject areas in accordance with the New York State Learning Standards.
- Utilized classroom management strategies that accommodated various types of student behavior.

Resume of Carrie L. Isaman, page 2**Teacher Assistant-“Big Buddy Program”**

1999-2000 Academic Year

- Participated in “Big Buddy Program” for future teachers.
- Assisted students in grade 2 in developing fundamental skills in Physical Education.

RELATED EMPLOYMENT**Substitute Teacher**

March 2004-Present

January 2005-Present

Customer Service

2001-Present

Wegmans

Brockport, New York

- Assist customers in two different departments: answering their questions; providing them with the product they are looking for; making sure that the food safety measures are being followed.

Personal Care Assistant

1998-Present

Livingston County Nursing Facility

Mt. Morris, New York

- Assist Alzheimer residents by helping with their everyday needs: transporting them to meals and services; supervising their nutritional intake; maintaining a safe environment.
- Keep open communication with family members while maintaining confidentiality.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

November 2004-Invited to do a presentation on test taking strategies at a faculty meeting.

June 2004-Volunteered at Camp Abilities in Brockport.

January 2004-January 2005-Member of Kappa Delta Pi.

September 2004-January 2005-Member of National Science Teachers Association

April 2001-Volunteered at the Special Olympics in Brockport.

REFERENCES*Furnished upon request.*