

**Special and General Education Teachers'
Attitudes Regarding Successful Versus Unsuccessful
Inclusion in Elementary Schools**

By

Jennifer Stremich

Childhood Special Education

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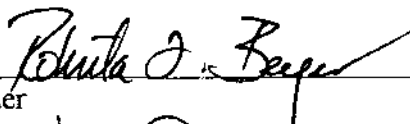
Jennifer Stremich

APPROVED BY:



Advisor


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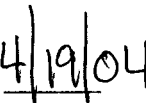


2nd Reader


Date



Director, Graduate Studies


Date

Dedication

**This thesis is dedicated to the first Childhood Special Education cohort at State
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Abstract

This study investigated teachers' attitudes of successful versus unsuccessful inclusion. All subjects were general and special education fourth and fifth grade teachers in an elementary suburban school district. One instrument was used for data collection in this research, which consisted of a survey with a rating scale and a written interview to gather teachers' attitudes. The planned analysis was conducted using SPSS (Noonan, 2003, version 12.0) in order to gather descriptive statistics (including mean, percentages, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics, using a paired sample T Test to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between teachers' attitudes and the success of inclusion. Significant differences were found between questions one and two, one and three, one and four, two and seven, three and eight, four and seven, and five and seven. Many teachers felt as though inclusion was a good idea, however there were many supports and services that they felt they needed, such as knowledge and training. Generally, special educators and general educators had the same types of feelings; however, special educators had more of a positive attitude toward inclusion as a whole. Teachers also agreed that inclusion helps students academically; however, they also agreed that the demands of the curriculum make it difficult to implement inclusion.

Introduction

Since the mid 1970's, we have been working toward placing students with disabilities into general education classrooms with their peers who are non-disabled. According to The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000), it is mandated that all children have the right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (LRE), which begins in the general education classroom. This results in a broad range of opinions from both special education and general education teachers in regards to why inclusion does or does not work. I have observed the attitudes stemming from these opinions during both student teaching and my special education internship. In both of these field placements, I have had the opportunity to work with students with disabilities and also converse with cooperating teachers in elementary education classrooms. In these settings, there were both general education teachers and special education teachers, all with very different perspectives regarding inclusion and the success of it.

Researching inclusion is important because it benefits all students, both special and general education students. It is also here to stay, and we want it to be successful for all students, parents, teachers, and community members who are involved. I have studied that inclusion means different things to different people. I have also studied that peoples' perceptions will affect their attitudes and their overall outcomes. It is essential that we know what makes inclusion successful or not so that

we can all work together to make it the most effective learning experience for everyone.

Kochhar, West, & Taymans (2000) discuss some attitudinal barriers to inclusion. One barrier is that there are many attitudes and misconceptions about students with disabilities from teachers, which prevents a commitment to inclusion. Another barrier is that many teachers question the effects of inclusion on students without disabilities. Teachers question whether or not there will be negative effects on the students without disabilities, and also, how the other students will respond to them. Lastly, some teachers feel threatened by inclusion because they know that they will need to teach in different ways and form new teacher relationships in order to work together.

Experts have also shown an interest and motive for studying people's attitudes toward successful versus unsuccessful inclusion. Ross & Wax (1993) indicated that teachers understanding and support of different models of inclusionary programs are determining factors in the success of these programs. The Appalaha Educational Laboratory, the College of William and Mary, and the Virginia Education Association (1996) found that both general and special educators have many concerns and questions about inclusion and effective strategies for making it successful.

I am interested in learning about what factors add to the success of inclusion programs so that I can become a useful resource to both special and general education colleagues in regard to this. Also, I hope to become an advocate by speaking up

when teachers display negative attitudes toward inclusion practices. I hope to use my knowledge and skills to discuss strategies and provide support for team members.

Therefore, the question I would like to research is what are special education and general education teachers' attitudes regarding successful and unsuccessful inclusion in elementary education? The first theme addressed in this review of the literature will be research based on general education teachers' perspectives, and then on special education teachers' perspectives regarding successful and unsuccessful inclusion. Finally, studies that have been conducted on a population of both special and general educators' attitudes will be reviewed.

Review of the Literature

General Education Teachers

During a study (Ross & Wax, 1993) about 10 years ago, general education teachers expressed many concerns for inclusion and the success of it. They felt that they would have additional responsibilities, but lack necessary administrative support. Also, teachers felt ill prepared to model effective teaching strategies and collaboration skills that were necessary to work with special educators. General educators felt as though they had a lack of planning time, paraprofessional help, and the requisite information about the characteristics and suggested modifications for a disability that a student may have.

Research has shown that there is a lack of general education college experiences to prepare future teachers for inclusive classrooms. When five graduate education students (Key, 2000) worked in inclusive classrooms through an internship, the majority of them felt that inclusion was a positive experience. However, as they reflected on their internship experience, they all came to conclusions that they did not receive adequate training for an inclusive setting as an undergraduate student. They all agreed that college general education programs need additional coursework, specifically in student diversity and classroom management for regular and special educated students. As a graduate student, I agree with these students' perspectives. When I was preparing for elementary education, I took one introductory class in special education. There is also a need for regular evaluations of teachers in regard to inclusion because there are so many components involved in working with students

with disabilities; consequently, more classes should be taken to prepare general education teachers for the challenges they will face as new teachers. With this in mind, training and professional development opportunities are extremely important in supporting skill building for both regular and special education teachers.

In another recent study (Leonardi, 2001), eleven female general educators thought that inclusion was a positive concept, and recognized the importance of inclusion. One concern that was raised was offering a program that developed positive and caring relationships among students. Some common themes were that individual considerations must be made for *all* students within the classroom. Many issues regarding finances and staff support were discussed as additional concern areas. There was consensus that inclusion would be less successful if a very disruptive or violent child was in their class.

Many researchers have found that the majority of general education teachers believe inclusion is important; however there are often many problem areas that hinder the success of inclusion. Four major themes that Smith & Dlugosh (1999) recognized as concern areas for successful inclusion were training for teachers, smaller class sizes and numbers of students with special needs within the classroom, support systems and time for planning. Smith and Dlugosh (1999) also identified some specific recommendations. Teachers felt there should be smaller class sizes and the ratio of students with disabilities to non-disabled students should be more reasonable. Paraprofessionals should be advised and evaluated at the time of employment in relation to inclusion expectations within the school. Paraprofessional

help should also be available to all regular education teachers and there should not be expectations that general education teachers should provide instruction alone.

Adequate time for planning and collaboration among professionals needs to be implemented. General educators assert that there should be comprehensive training, which must be practical and relevant to what they are expected to implement in their inclusion programs. Most importantly, they felt administrators need to play a more active role in inclusion by spending time teaching in these settings to gain a better understanding of the struggles that teachers face.

Special Education Teachers

An intriguing study by Phelps (1993) was performed on a reverse integration and inclusion program. This particular school had been exclusively for students with cognitive disabilities, however, future plans for integrating these students with non-disabled students caused a negative attitude among the special education teachers. They felt as though the regular education population was a poor role model to their students. Special education professionals thought that the new students would be noisy, rude and disruptive. Some even had worries about possible violence acts directed towards their students. There were some teachers who were searching to find positive aspects of integration. Eighty-five percent of these special educators felt inclusion could be successful if there was cooperation, consistency, fairness and positive attitudes among everyone. This highlights the importance that everyone must be a part of the decision making process.

General and Special Education Teachers

The majority of studies addressed both general and special educators' attitudes. Throughout research there are many different perspectives of the successfulness and unsuccessfulness of inclusion. Bergren (1997) discusses that the majority of both general education teachers felt very positive about inclusive settings for students with disabilities and the resulting benefits. In addition, a large amount of teachers felt that co-teaching was important; however the majority of them did not have adequate training in order to be successful co-teaching partners.

Supports are necessary in order to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment. Gessler Werts, Wolery, Snyder, & Caldwell (1996) identified three main supports that special and general educators felt they need in order to successfully implement students with disabilities into the general education classroom. The themes that were addressed in this study included a need for training, help from personnel outside the classroom, and additional help within the classroom. With this help, educators will have appropriate resources to maintain the needs of their students.

Concerns about placing special education students in inclusive settings are common apprehensions among special education and general education teachers. Trump & Hange (1996) found that one group of professionals displayed many concern areas as students with disabilities are placed into regular education classrooms. Major concerns expressed by members of this study included a lack of adequate staff and training. As subjects of the Ross & Wax study, Trump & Hange

(1996) confirmed yet again that teachers were concerned with a lack of planning time. The teachers questioned the lack of commitment to inclusion by administrators, parents and colleagues. There were major concerns with the high ratios of students with disabilities to students without disabilities and they questioned how to provide meaningful instruction to diverse students in a common setting. Whether or not students would be able to meet and establish academic standards was another concern. Amongst other questions, how the school would introduce inclusion within the district was raised.

Some special and general educators have negative feelings toward inclusion. In a study done by Vaughn (1994), it is shown that the common attitudes of teachers were extremely negative toward inclusion. The only factors that teachers saw that may make inclusion successful were communication and cooperative learning groups. Their negative feelings stemmed from factors in which they believed would effect the success of inclusion. Major worries among these teachers were class size, not enough resources and lack of adequate teacher support. They also questioned the extent to which all students would benefit from inclusive classrooms.

One group of researchers (Appalachia Educational Laboratory, The College of William and Mary, & Virginia Education Association, 1996) discussed seven themes of concern areas for successful inclusive practices. The first was teacher relationships in respect to co-teaching, effective communication and problem solving, and respect and involvement. Regarding instructional assessment, the teachers that were interviewed believed that successful modification decisions should be made by both

general and special education teachers. They also felt there should be more planning time, more special educators and also more teacher preparation in general for all educators. Family and community members should also be informed of all inclusion plans and everyone should act as active participants. With an understanding that inclusive settings are not always the best place for every student, there needs to be flexibility, modifications and accommodations so that all students are challenged and can be successful. Administrators and superintendents need a solid understanding of inclusion, and a way for monitoring and evaluating the inclusion programs. Laws, policies and procedures are important and there needs to be knowledge of these which are essential. It was also clearly stated that inclusion would succeed only if teachers are fully committed to the philosophy.

After researching the issue of special education and general education teachers' attitudes of successful and unsuccessful inclusion, I have found many gaps in the research. One major gap that I found among the literature was that the research was not all current. The studies ranged from 1993 to 2001. I would like to know what other studies have been done that were more recent in regard to successful inclusion since these issues are constantly changing. In the year 2004, how do general education teachers feel about inclusion success now that it has been implemented more noticeably?

Another gap that I found was that the studies did not state exactly how much training the general education teachers had before the study was done. Would the results and attitudes of these teachers have changed after training in this area?

Furthermore, are there opportunities for professional development within the school setting and what kind of incentives will there be for teachers? What has administration done to implement successful inclusion within their schools? Lastly, to what extent were these teachers immersed into an environment where there was a full inclusion plan?

I found that there was not a lot of research regarding a population of only special educators' attitudes regarding successful inclusion. The only study that I found was an inclusion plan where regular education students and teachers were going to be integrated into the special education school. It is not conclusive that all special education teachers would feel negatively if they were in this position as well. Therefore, more research might need to be done in this area.

The majority of studies done did not include very precise statistics. Some articles did not take very large population samples to obtain data of how people felt. Also, much of the research evaluated comments from conversations that teachers talked about regarding the issue of successful or unsuccessful inclusion. Many of the teachers took part in focus group settings where responses were analyzed to determine the attitudes of the majority of teachers' attitudes. This is not a very accurate measure of how the majority of general and special educators may feel about inclusion.

Conclusion

I have learned that there are varying perspectives among both general education and special education teachers. One very important factor that

differentiates all attitudes is that everyone has their own idea of what the definition of inclusion is. There is not a set definition that everyone acknowledges; therefore as we research the question, “What is effective inclusion?” we get attitudes from teachers based on their own beliefs of what inclusion is.

There is agreement among the experts in regard to inclusion and the success of it. From the most current data, I have learned that there are many positive attitudes regarding successful inclusion. Many teachers believe that it can be implemented in a positive way, as long as the supports and services they need are there as well.

Although there are many areas of concern in the research from educators, we see that both special and general education teachers are indeed eager to make inclusion work for all students involved. I think this is fantastic because teachers’ attitudes toward inclusion programs *are* determining factors in the success of these programs. Current research shows that both general and special educators have many concerns and questions about inclusion and effective strategies for its success. Educators need to continue to expand their knowledge of how to implement successful inclusion so that students with disabilities can be placed in the least restrictive environment.

This research will help me in the future because I will be collaborating with both special and general educators in inclusive settings. In order for inclusion to be a positive experience, there must be a support system among families, school personnel, students, and community members. I hope to serve as a collaborative team member and act as a positive role model for implementing practices for successful inclusion. As I finish my graduate degree in special education, I will have the most

current knowledge foundation for supporting the needs of diverse learners and future colleagues.

Methods

This researcher is planning to study both general and special education teachers' attitudes regarding successful versus unsuccessful inclusion in an elementary school. The research is being conducted in order to get an idea of what teachers are currently thinking about the ideas of teaching students with disabilities along with their non-disabled peers. Under IDEA (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000), it is mandated that children are educated in the least restrictive environment, which starts in a classroom, where students with disabilities and students without disabilities are educated in one classroom together. As we strive toward full inclusive practices, we must study how to implement it successfully. Teachers' attitudes are extremely important since these are the professionals who will be experiencing this. When finished, it is my hope that this study will provide a better understanding of general and special education teachers' perspectives in regards to the issue of inclusion and the success of it.

Subjects

All subjects are general and special education teachers in an elementary suburban school district. All these teachers educate students who are in fourth and fifth grade, where some teach in inclusive educational settings, and others teach in self-contained special education settings. The subjects are all of Caucasian ethnicity.

Instruments

One instrument will be used for data collection in this research. It will contain a survey with a rating scale and a written interview. The original reference was

adapted from Salend (2001), with editing changes that were not substantial for purposes for this study (see Table 1). The survey and written interview is designed to collect teachers' attitudes of successful and unsuccessful inclusion.

Procedures

I am planning to distribute the survey to teachers' mailboxes at school on March 8, 2004 with instructions to return on March 12, 2004 to my student based special educators' mailbox within one week. This will also ensure anonymity of the subjects. The surveys and written interviews will then be collected and analyzed. Planned statistical analyses of the surveys include descriptive statistics (including percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics, using paired samples T Test to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between teachers' attitudes and the success of inclusion. For this study, the reliability information on the survey is planned to be computed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Noonan, 2003), Version 12.0 (SPSS 12.0). It is also planned that validity information will be determined by a panel of two experts, who will determine if the survey content and wording is appropriate for this study.

The researcher will be using these subjects, instruments and procedures to conduct this study of teachers' attitudes. All of the information that is found will be presented in the results section.

Results

The research question was as follows: What are special education and general education teachers' attitudes regarding successful versus unsuccessful inclusion? The planned analysis was conducted using SPSS (Noonan, 2003, version 12.0) in order to gather descriptive statistics (including mean, percentages, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics, using a paired sample T Test to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between teachers' attitudes and the success of inclusion. Procedures and analyses went as planned.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics were computed using SPSS (Noonan, 2003, version 12.0). The mean, percentages, and standard deviation results are shown in Table 2. Table 3 contains exact comments from the two open ended questions from the survey.

Inferential Statistics

Reliability was computed through SPSS (Noonan, 2003, version 12.0) and concluded to be .887 for positively worded questions and .777 for negatively worded questions. An expert panel of two determined that the survey was valid. The inferential statistics were computed using a paired sample T Test on SPSS (version 12.0). No significant differences were found for the group as a whole on any items on the survey, except between questions one and two ($t = .669, p = .002^*$), questions one and three ($t = .737, p = .000^*$), questions one and four ($t = .696, p = .001^*$), questions two and seven ($t = -.734, p = .001^*$), questions three and eight ($t = -.720, p = .001^*$), questions four and seven ($t = -.807, p = .000^*$), and questions five and seven

($t = .747$, $p = .001^*$). Due to multiple T Tests performed, the adjusted p values used for the cut off point of significance level was $p = .002$.

After the data was computed, it was apparent from the raw data that there were discrepancies between how each group answered. Post hoc, the researcher decided to compute an independent sample T Test of each group (special educators and general educators) separately in regards to positively worded total scores and negatively worded total scores to questions. There was a significant positive difference between special and general education teachers' responses on their total scores for positively worded questions one, two three, four, and ten reflecting positive attitudes towards inclusion ($t = 6.863$, $p = .021^*$). There was also a significant positive difference between special and general education teachers' responses on their total scores for negatively worded questions five, six, seven, eight, and nine reflecting positive attitudes towards inclusion ($t = 7.013$, $p = .020^*$).

The results will be discussed in the next chapter on conclusions.

Conclusions

The research question that I investigated was: What are special education and general education teachers' attitudes regarding successful versus unsuccessful inclusion? Analyses were computed as planned, along with an additional post hoc, to determine if there was significance difference in attitudes on inclusion between the two populations of special education and general education teachers. There were limitations in the small sample size of teachers and the amount of volunteers within the survey. Not everyone who was given a survey responded to it. In addition, the total participants who did respond consisted of 21 out of 34 teachers who were sent surveys. Seven of the participants were special educators, 11 of the participants were general education teachers, and three participants of the study did not specify. Also, not all of the teachers were a part of an inclusion classroom. Some teachers were part of an inclusion classroom and others were part of a self-contained classroom. Lastly, the teachers involved in this study were all of Caucasian ethnicity from a suburban school district. Therefore, this study can be generalized only to Caucasian teachers within a suburban school district. No information was collected from teachers of other ethnic backgrounds, or urban and rural school districts.

Significance

Overall, a large number of the data appeared to agree with current attitudes and opinions identified in the review of the literature. As in Bergren's study (1997), there were many teachers who felt as though inclusion was a good idea, however there were many supports and services that they felt they needed, such as knowledge

and training. Many of the concern areas that teachers expressed concurred with sections of Appalachia Educational Laboratory, The College of William and Mary, and Virginia Education Association (1996) and Smith and Dlugosh (1999). Some major themes were a need for training, support and time.

No information existed before this study on the attitudes of special educators alone. The results from this study have shown that there is a significant positive difference in the way that special educators feel about inclusion. Generally, special educators and general educators had the same types of feelings; however, special educators had more of a positive attitude toward inclusion as a whole. This makes sense if one assumes that they have received much more training in the area of including special education students into the general education classroom. Many special educators alone mentioned that they were very concerned with time including planning, getting their work load complete and communication with others.

There was little information in the review of the literature on how curriculum standards fit into the success of inclusion programs. The findings in this study seem to suggest that there is a negative significant difference between the two. Teachers generally agreed that inclusion helps students academically; however, they also agreed that the demands of the curriculum make it difficult to implement inclusion. Therefore teachers would like inclusion to work; however, they feel pressured to meet curriculum standards.

Teachers' attitudes on inclusion and curriculum are one of the most important findings in this study. The results suggest that inclusion can never be successful with

the curriculum demands that are in place. It is difficult for students with disabilities to achieve the same curriculum expectations as students without disabilities.

Inclusion is here to stay and curriculum standards are also here to stay. Therefore, we will need more research on how to make achieving curriculum standards attainable for all students.

This study was geared not only toward teacher's concern areas for inclusion, but also what they felt were successful about it. Many teachers had positive attitudes about inclusion because all students can benefit from it, both socially and academically. Students with disabilities are treated in the same way, and students without disabilities are able to learn acceptance of others. In addition, some felt that collaborating and learning from other educators was a major benefit, along with having other teachers for support within the classroom.

Summary

There are many opportunities for future research in the area of teachers' attitudes toward successful versus unsuccessful inclusion. More studies on the training given to inclusive educators could take place in order to gain an understanding of how they feel they are supporting and training their teachers for inclusion. This could then be analyzed against the teachers' perceptions of support and training to see if there was any significance. In addition, studies on specific professional development training on inclusion for teachers may be researched, with a follow up analyses on how teachers felt it helped them for the inclusive classroom.

This could provide educators and administration an idea of specific implementations for their schools.

I learned that it is imperative to research teachers' attitudes towards successful versus unsuccessful inclusion. Many teachers are willing to make inclusion successful; however they need support and training in many areas to make it work for all of their students. As we strive toward full inclusive practices, we must study how to implement it successfully within the classroom, but this *starts* with teachers' attitudes.

Inclusion will work the best when all teachers have an optimistic attitude. Teachers' attitudes are extremely important since these are the professionals who will be working in this educational environment. Successful implementation of inclusion can *only* come from educators who start with perspectives that inclusion can be great and beneficial for all students involved. If teachers have an attitude that inclusion is less than successful, then it will not work to the fullest benefits. Attitudes regulate what we do and how well we do it. After educators hold a positive outlook for inclusion, they can be the most effectively trained in knowledge and skill areas for inclusion. This will then result in the greatest improvement and achievement for students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

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Table 1: Teacher Survey

A. My teaching environment is best described as: (circle)	Consultant classroom	Self contained special education classroom	Other (please specify) _____
B. I am a (circle one)	Special Education teacher	General Education teacher	

Please indicate your feelings about and experiences with inclusion using the following scale:

	Strongly Disagree(SD)	Disagree(D)	Neutral(N)	Agree(A)	Strongly Agree(SA)	Not Experienced(NE)
1. I feel that inclusion is a good idea.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
2. I feel that I have the time and the training to implement inclusion successfully.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
3. I feel that inclusion helps students academically.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
4. I feel that I receive the necessary support and assistance to implement inclusion successfully.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
5. I feel that it is difficult to modify instruction and my teaching style to meet the needs of students with disabilities.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
6. I feel that I do not have enough time to communicate and collaborate with others.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
7. My students have received less teacher attention.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
8. I feel that the demands of the curriculum make it difficult to implement inclusion.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
9. I feel as though I perform a subordinate role as a result of inclusion.			SD	D	N	A SA NE
10. My students have become more accepting of individual differences.			SD	D	N	A SA NE

Descriptive Statistics: Table 2

	N	Percentages						Mean	Standard Deviation
		1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (N)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	No Answer		
1) I feel that inclusion is a good idea (+)	20	4.8	9.5	14.3	<u>42.9</u>	28.6	0	3.81	1.123
2) I feel that I have the time and the training to implement inclusion successfully (+)	19	14.3	19	4.8	<u>28.6</u>	23.8	9.5	3.32	1.493
3) I feel that inclusion helps students academically (+)	19	4.8	14.3	4.8	<u>42.9</u>	19	9.5	3.66	1.155
4) I feel that I receive the necessary support and assistance to implement inclusion successfully (+)	19	0	23.8	14.3	<u>38.1</u>	14.3	9.5	3.47	1.073
5) I feel that it is difficult to modify instruction and my teaching style to meet the needs of students with disabilities (-)	19	19	<u>38.1</u>	9.5	9.5	14.3	9.5	2.58	1.387
6) I feel that I do not have enough time to communicate with others (-)	20	0	<u>33.3</u>	9.5	47.6	4.8	4.8	3.25	1.02
7) My students have received less teacher attention (-)	18	14.3	<u>33.3</u>	14.3	14.3	9.5	14.3	2.67	1.283
8) I feel that the demands of the curriculum make it difficult to implement inclusion (-)	20	0	33.3	4.8	<u>52.4</u>	4.8	4.8	3.3	1.031
9) I feel as though I perform a subordinate role as a result of inclusion (-)	17	28.6	19	<u>33.3</u>	0	0	19	2.06	0.8999
10) My students have become more accepting of individual students (+)	19	4.8	9.5	4.8	<u>52.4</u>	19	9.5	3.79	1.084

Based on the following scale:

(Strongly Disagree)SD = 1, (Disagree)D = 2, (Neutral)N = 3, (Agree)A = 4, (Strongly Agree)SA = 5, (Not Experienced)NE = left blank

Positively worded questions are denoted by (+), negatively worded questions are denoted by (-)

Table 3: Written Qualitative Survey Responses

Question 1: What things do you enjoy the most about inclusion?

- Seeing students with disabilities treated in the same way
- Working with (planning, collaborating, conferencing) other teachers
- Working with all types of students on varying academic levels
- All students have strengths and weaknesses, students are accepting of this
- Students with disabilities see themselves as being similar to other students
- More adults (teachers, aides) in the classroom, therefore *everyone* gets more help and support
- Peer tutoring
- Increase in social interaction among all students
- Learning by modeling
- Children learning acceptance of students with disabilities
- Incorporating new ideas into the classroom
- Observations of success with students
- Including students with disabilities in all activities
- Awareness of learning styles, thus making lessons that focus on all students
- Less pull out needed
- Gaining knowledge in other areas in education (Committee on Special Education, assessment report, medications, Instructional Support Teams, Individualized Education Programs)
- Motivation to meet needs of all students, continue learning and trying new things
- Watching kids build confidence and learn new things

Question 2: What are your biggest concerns about and frustrations with inclusion?

- Special education students' self esteem
- Time outside of school for planning, communication
- Some teachers are not "open minded" enough
- Curriculum demands- meeting, and also modifying
- Paperwork for students with disabilities
- AIS services add onto special educators "work load"
- Whether the regular education students are learning to their fullest potential
- If inclusion really does meet the needs for students with disabilities
- Meeting the academic needs of each student
- Students do not receive enough instruction at their academic level
- Wide range of students ability levels and not everyone gets what they need
- Slows down regular education students
- Focus tends to be on inclusion, rather than enrichment
- It is not the least restrictive environment for all students
- There need to be other options available for students rather than just inclusion
- Behavioral issues
- Pull out services
- Work load between teachers is not even
- Not all children are accepting of students with disabilities
- Too many needy children are oftentimes in one setting
- Not able to know all students
- Too many meetings outside of the school day, general education teachers do not always have an input in the meeting
- Not as much higher level learning
- Lower leveled kids often are moved along without being ready

Vita

The author Jennifer Stremich was born in Brockport, NY on . She attended the State University of New York College at Brockport from 2000 to 2004 and received a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics with certification in Elementary Education in 2003. She began work toward a Master of Science in Childhood Education with certification in Special Education at the State University of New York College at Brockport in the summer of 2003. From August 2003 through May 2004, Jennifer worked in the Brockport Central School district as a special education intern.