ASSESSING THE ATTITUDES OF ADMINISTRATORS TO INCLUDE STUDENTS WITH DISABILTIES

Dissertation

**Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education**

by

November 2012

Dedication

Acknowledgments

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to assess the attitudes of administrators in a medium sized school district in the Southeastern region of the United States. The researcher used a quantitative descriptive comparative pre-test and post-test design with a convenience sampling of the district administrators. There were 21 administrators at the pre-test and post-test stages, and the population consisted of 32 administrators. For the duration of the pre-test and post-test, the researcher facilitated learning module sessions focusing on interventions to provide the participants with skills for facilitating inclusive teaching practices. Participating administrators completed a modified version of Praisner's Principals and Inclusion Survey (PIS) to assess their attitudes toward implementing inclusive practices. A paired sample test compared differences in attitudes of pre-test and post-test. The mean of (.50) indicated that the effect size was medium in which administrators had a positive attitude towards having students in inclusive practices.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter I: Introduction to the Study

By the 1950s, special education programs were widely available in many school districts even though there was a perception that disabled students were not capable of learning from the special education programs (O'Neil, 1994). That has however changed during the last 20 years as disabled students have been fully integrated to normal education system (Fuchs, Fuchs, and Stecker, 2010). Researchers such as Maccini & Charles (2000) have maintained that many educators found that disabled students could be provided for effectively in general education classrooms if teachers were prepared to teach.

Education researchers viewed the conceptualization of special education instructional practices as including provisions of a wide variety of services to children with disabilities and their families. Some scholars have argued that special education services under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 1997 should be implemented as much as possible within the general education curriculum (Dukes and Lamar-Dukes, 2009). Such related services were meant to help students with learning disabilities achieve reasonable outcomes in their studies. Some of the related services included adaptive physical education, recreational therapists, psychologists, school social workers, and rehabilitation counselors (IDEA, 2005). Typical special education services included in the general education curriculum were direct instruction in the general education classroom, consultation, and collaboration among the general education and special education teachers (Mastropierri and Thomas, 2000).

The current trend toward successful implementation of the mandates of IDEA 1995 promoted the concepts of inclusion and full inclusion (Yell, 1995). The concept of inclusion demanded that school systems include students with disabilities in their general education classroom (Mercer, 1997). Among the students that IDEA act of 1995 wanted to participate in the school systems included students with learning difficulties. Similarly, full inclusion involved students with severe to profound disabilities, including students with severe to profound mental retardation, traumatic brain injury, physical disabilities, and other health impairments (IDEA 2005). For many students in an inclusive education setting, the general education teacher and special education teacher collaborated in sharing joint ownership and authority for teaching all students.

Statement of the Problem

This study assessed the attitudes of educational elementary and secondary administrators in inclusive educational settings. The No Child Left Behind Act (2001) set forth many demands for increasing test scores, which resulted to challenges for all educators. Education reformers and policymakers emphasized a need to examine administrators' attitudes to facilitate inclusive teaching practices in general education classrooms.

Background

At one time, students with disabilities were seen as "a menace to society" (Winzer, 1993, p. 415). Educators reportedly believed that these students would learn better in a protected setting (Bennet, 1932).

Due to the perception that many students with disabilities were not capable of maintaining satisfactory academic achievement, various Civil Rights movement such as

the movement that focused on the rights of African Americans expanded and began to influence thinking about students with disabilities (Chaffin, 1975).

The *Brown v. Board of Education* case that took place in 1954 recognized the negatives of discrimination against any race or group. The court established that all children were allowed equal protection and treatment under the Fourteenth Amendment, changing the direction of public education in the United States for students of color as well as students with disabilities. This United States Supreme Court case proved the principle that school segregation denied equal educational opportunity. The case has since become the "cornerstone for ensuring equal rights for students with disabilities as well" (Pitts, 1999, p. 45).

An El Paso (Texas) Independent School District case involving a child with Down syndrome addressed two steps. The decision from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit had to determine if the schools appropriately placed the student in a setting where the student could be successful. Firstly, the U.S. Court of Appeals had to determine whether the student could be satisfactorily educated in the general education setting with supplementary supports provided. Secondly, if the student was not successful in the inclusive general education classroom with supports, the child needed to be mainstreamed to the "maximum extent appropriate" (Imber and Van Geel, 2004, p. 184).

Oberti V Board of Education of Clementon School District that took place in 1993 was a crucial case which addressed inclusion. This case had a positive impact on the drive for students being involved in the inclusive general education classroom. The U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Third Circuit maintained a ruling that school districts had to make a full range of supports and services in the general education setting available to

accommodate students with disabilities. The courts ruled that school districts need to accommodate and modify assignments to include students with disabilities in the inclusive education classroom. The court ruled that just because a student learned differently than other students, this was not grounds for being educated in a different environment (Jaeger and Bowman, 2002).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the attitudes of administrators in a medium sized school system of Southeastern region of the United States. This study examined the administrators' attitudes towards the inclusive practices in the general education classroom. The inclusive practices involved the administrator working in regular classroom environment, preparing the educators as the models while accommodating any adaptations in the inclusive classroom. Although the majority of relevant studies on the use of general inclusive educational practices focused on the attitudes of general and special education teachers' willingness to use teaching practices, past studies provided minimal results on the topic of administrators. Special education was more rigorous as well as ever changing, and past research did not illustrate the roles of administrators. Therefore, this study focused on the administrators' attitudes in a Southeastern region of the United States school district.

Research Questions

In order to address the purpose of the study, the following questions guided this research study:

1. What are the attitudes of elementary and secondary administrators toward students with disabilities?

2. What are the attitudes of elementary and secondary administrators toward implementing inclusive education practices?

3. Is there a difference in the perceptions of the elementary and secondary administrators before and after the intervention?

Description of Terms

For the purpose of the study, several terms relative to inclusion were used throughout this section.

Alternative teaching: Alternative teaching as described by Cook and Friend (1996) is a form of collaborative teaching that involved the teachers organizing students into small groups and one large group.

Autism. "Developmental disability that effects an individual's communication and social interaction. Autism which significantly affects a child's education performance can be diagnosed before a child is three years. Students with autism finds it hard to interact with other students" (TnGov, 2008, p. 2).

Blindness/visual can be described as "impairment in vision that even when corrected, negatively influences the education performance of a child. Blindness entails both partial sight and blindness. Visual impairment on the other hand includes legal blindness, low vision or any other form of visual impairment that is not perceptual in nature but results in a medically documented condition" (TnGov, 2008, p. 7).

Collaborative teaching. Collaborative teaching is an approach through which the general education teacher together with the special education teacher work together to

come up with teaching strategies for students with learning disabilities (Erchul and Martens, 2010). According to Cook and Friend (1996), there have been five different types of collaborative teaching in the past. The initial form of collaborative teaching involved one of the instructors undertaking the actual teaching while the other one was responsible for offering academic support to the students. Unlike the shortcoming in consultation technique discussed by Gardner and Lipsky (1997), collaborative teaching only needed few teachers which meant it was feasible in various schools. The main shortcoming of this type of collaborative teaching as noted by Cook and Friend (1996) was that special education instructors were not viewed as instructors but as support instructors.

Collaborative model. Collaborative model is a model that emphasized that general educators as well as special educators should work as equal partners in the general education classrooms to address the needs of all students (Jordan, 1994).

Consultation technique. Consultation technique as explained by Gartner and Lipsky (1997) entailed the teacher who was originally trained to teach students with no disabilities instructing disabled students in a normal classroom setup.

Consultation model. This is an approach in which the special education teacher who also happens to be an instructional expert offers interventional strategies that should be implemented to students with disabilities in the general education classroom setup (Gartner and Lipsky, 1997).

Co-teaching. For the purpose of this study has been used as an arrangement whereby a special education teacher works side by side with a general educator in the general classroom (Cook and Friend, 1995).

Deafness / blindness. "Concomitant hearing and visual impairments that causes serious communication, developmental needs and educational needs that cannot be accommodated in special education programs by addressing only one of the impairments" (TnGov, 2008, p. 2).

Deafness. A "hearing impairment that when is so serious makes the child impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The child has an inability to communicate effectively due to deafness and an inability to perform academically on a level commensurate with the expected level because of deafness and a delayed speech and/or language development due to deafness" (TnGov, 2008, p. 2).

Direct consultation model. Direct consultation model as discussed by Cook and Friend (1996) was an approach that saw the special education teacher consulted with the general education teacher as an instructional expert for providing intervention strategies for implementation to student who had disabilities in the general education classroom.

Disabilities. To qualify for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, students have to be aged between 3 and 21 years as specified in 34CFR300.7 (b) (IDEA 2005). In addition, the students also have to meet the requirements of two tests that ascertain whether the child meets the criteria of one or more of the disabilities categories specified under IDEA, as well as establishing whether the child requires special education services because of his or her disability in order to be successful in the general education classroom (IDEA 2005). The disabilities as defined by IDEA (2005) and the Alabama State Department of Education were "learning

15

disability, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, blindness/visual, other health impairment, deafness, hearing impairment, speech/language impairment, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, deafness/blindness" (IDEA, 2005, p. 7.)

Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA). Federal legislation that mandated students with disabilities to be educated, to the maximum level possible, with their non-disabled peers in normal education setup (Diener, 2012).

Emotional disturbance. A "disability wherein the child exhibits one or more characteristics such as inability to learn, which cannot be explained by limited school experience, cultural differences, or intellectual sensory or health factors; the inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and school personnel; inappropriate types of behavior or feelings when no major or unusual stressors are evident; general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems"(TnGov, 2008, p.3).

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). FAPE is an acronym for Free Appropriate Public Education that requires that all students with disabilities be entitled to a free appropriate public education with no costs been incurred by the students' families (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997).

Full inclusion. All students with disabilities were placed in their neighborhood schools in general education classrooms for the entire day. Full inclusion model is encouraged because students can learn the significance of individual and group contributions while developing valuable skills that were most of the times unexplored in

education settings that were not inclusive (Hallahan and Kauffman, 2005).

Hearing impairment. This is mutilation in hearing that seriously affects a child's educational performance even though it does not entail deafness. Some of the common characteristics that can be found with children with hearing impairment include incapability to communicate successfully, inability to perform well academically and belated speech that is caused by the hearing impairment (TnGov, 2008, p. 4).

IDEA is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997; that stated that all students were entitled to FAPE. IDEA 1997 also provided state and local school districts with support funds for individualized education in an educational environment considered less restrictive. The IDEA framed special education as particularly intended instruction that was created with the goal of serving the requirements of students with learning difficulties. That instruction included specialized materials and supports within educational environments that were inclusive in general education classrooms, special education classrooms, hospitals, and residential settings - free of charge to parents (IDEA 2005).

Indirect consultation model. This was where the general education teacher and special education teacher met beforehand to plan strategies of intervention to address the needs of a student or students with disabilities in the general education classroom (Gardner and Lipsky, 1997)

Inclusion means that children have access to the general education curriculum within the general education classroom with non-disabled peers (Hallahan& Kauffman, 2005).

Learning disability. A "disorder in one or more of the basic psychological

processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, and that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Among others, some of the conditions that can be termed as learning disabilities are perceptual disabilities, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia"(TnGov, 2008, p. 5).

Mental retardation. Mental retardation is differentiated by considerably impaired thinking existing concomitantly with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested in the developmental period that harmfully affects a child's educational performance (TnGov, 2008, p. 4).

Multiple disabilities. Multiple disabilities consist of related impairments that cause serious educational needs which cannot be covered by addressing only a single impairment. Multiple disabilities might include mental retardation, blindness and deafness (TnGov, 2008, p. 4).

Orthopedic impairment. This is a serious orthopedic impairment that negatively affects a child's education performance. Moreover, the term orthopedic impairment also entails impairments that are caused by congenital irregularity such as clubfoot. Orthopedic impairment might be caused by disease such as poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis as well as other various causes such as cerebral palsy, amputations, fractures and burns that cause contractures (TnGov, 2008, p. 4).

Other health impairment. These impairments were categorized as individuals who have "limited strength and vitality including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli. These conditions must result in limited alertness with

respect to the educational environment due to chronic or acute health problems—

such as asthma, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a

heart condition, hemophilia, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell

anemia, and Tourette's Syndrome"(TnGov, 2008, p. 4).

It is however important to note that the impairments must adversely affect the

child's educational performance in school in school for the impairment to be considered

as a disability.

Parallel teaching. Parallel teaching was the third form of collaborative teaching.

In parallel teaching, each teacher planned the instruction but divided the class in half.

Furthermore, parallel teaching lowered the student-teacher ratio, because the instructors

prepared the work jointly, but each instructor taught a heterogeneous group consisting of

half of the class. Moreover, teachers in parallel teaching coordinated their instruction so

that students received the same amount of instruction in the same amount of time (Cook

& Friend, 1996).

Pod concept. In this particular study, four classrooms joined together in a school

setting to form a Pod Concept. In the school district, several schools used this concept so

that students would be joined together (Brophy, 1987).

Service delivery model. Services delivery model is the type of instructional

environment that is designed specifically to maximize the learning ability of students

with disabilities (self-contained, inclusive, resource room) (Gartner and Lipsky, 1997).

Speech/language impairment. This is a communication disorder that negatively

affects a child's education performance. The communication disorder might consist of

language mutilation, stuttering, mutilated articulation and voice impairment (TnGov,

2008, p. 4).

   Station teaching. Station teaching was the second form of collaborative teaching and was involved in dividing the content and the room between the teachers, each directing part of the curriculum and students. The authors suggested that this type of cooperative teaching increased the comfort level of inexperienced co teachers; the researchers suggested that the students benefit from both educators because of a lower pupil/teacher ratio, and because students with disabilities were integrated into all the groups instead of being singled into isolation (Cook and Friend 1996).

   Team teaching. Team teaching as noted by Cook and Friend (1996) involved the general education teachers and the special education teachers sharing responsibility for planning and teaching academic subject content to students with and without disabilities in the classroom. The teachers involved in this approach also role played and modeled appropriate strategies for asking questions. The authors suggested that this method required a "high level of mutual trust and commitment" (p. 86).

   Traumatic brain injury. This is "an acquired injury to the brain that is caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment or both that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more of the areas such as cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem-solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior, physical functions, information processing and speech" (TnGov, 2008, p. 5).

   It is however important to highlight that this term does not apply to brain injuries

that are hereditary or degenerative, or brain injuries that are caused by birth trauma.

Significance of the Study

The interest in educating students with disabilities in inclusive general education classrooms served as the foundation for addressing the mandates of IDEA 1997. In addition to the new mandates of the NCLB Act of 2001, principals' roles evolved to the responsibility of providing all students with the best learning opportunities possible. It was thus important to assess the principals' attitudes, the contributing variables to those attitudes, and how those attitudes impacted students with disabilities in the general education classroom. The data collected from this study identified and described the attitudes of principals, increased awareness of the variables that influenced those attitudes, and provided guidance for future training needs for principals. Relevant research indicated that the administrators' attitudes plus preparation of general education and special education teachers to work together as equal partners determined the success or failure of implementation.

Assumptions

The researcher assumed that the data collected from the elementary and secondary administrators was accurate as the administrators were expected to have acted in an ordinary manner during the data collection process. In addition, researcher assumed that the findings of the research were generalizable to include attitudes of elementary and secondary administrators towards students with learning disabilities in other schools within Southeastern region of the United States even though only mid-sized schools were investigated.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

The researcher examined previous studies of administrators' attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities in inclusive general education classrooms in order to understand the trends in this area of research.

The review of literature consisted of several components. The researcher presented an overview of past court cases concerning inclusion and present legislation; discussed students with disabilities in general education classes, accommodations, and adaptations; explains administrators' special educators' , and general educators' roles in and attitudes toward inclusive education; described barriers to inclusion; and analyzed the impact of attitudes on inclusion and the impact of inclusion.

Federal Legislation

The 1990s provided changes to EHA by passing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990. IDEA 1997 included several provisions to improve the educational performance of students with disabilities and strengthen the roles of the families in their children's education. The provisions of IDEA 1997 mandated that the value of services received by students with disabilities be improved and that those services be provided in inclusive classrooms (Reynolds and Birch, 1997, Turnbull, 1993,).

IDEA 1990 strengthened EHA by creating opportunities for families and professionals to work together. The principle of IDEA was to ensure students with and without disabilities get a "Free Appropriate Public Education" (FAPE). The law encouraged inclusion of students with disabilities in general education settings and fostered collaboration among families, general and special educators, and community agencies (Hardeman, Drew, Egan, and Wolfe, 1983; Reynolds and Birch, 1997; Scott, Vitale, and Masten, 1998; Turnbull, 1993).

According to the US Department of Education (2002), the intent of inclusion was to enable all students meet levels of expectations at or above grade level in the general education curriculum. The implementation of inclusion educational practices required special educators to work collaboratively and to co-teach with general educators. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) changed phases of education, and the requirements placed a burden on general and special education teachers. NCLB placed high demands for increased SAT scores and graduation rates. On the other hand, the intent of NCLB was to improve overall student achievement and to raise academic standards for students with and without disabilities.

Prior to the passing of NCLB, the need for changes in the American education system through the proposed Regular Education Initiative (REI) was obvious (Will, 1986). The premise of REI was to change the relationship between general and special education in addressing the needs of all students by requiring academic support in inclusive education settings. REI provided more pronounced changes and was predicated on serving diverse student populations. Will (1986) advocated that general and special educators should possess an understanding of individualized instruction and

accountability for all students learning.

The education standard reform movement assessed the general education curriculum. The movement also assessed what the students were expected to learn and do prior to graduation. Nationally, school systems' compliance with education changes resulted in presenting the general education teacher with new challenges and assisting students with disabilities in the general education curriculum (Baker and Zigmond, 1995; Salend, 1994).

Inclusion Process

The special education process has evolved during the last two decades mainly as a result of amendment of the federal laws pertaining to necessary requirements for offering education services to disabled students. The inclusion concept main aim was to integrate disabled students in a normal classroom setup where schools administrators, specially trained teachers and general teachers were responsible for the inclusion concept in their respective schools.

General educators and special educators possessed areas of expertise that were specific to student learning (White and White, 1992). The authors indicated that combining the teachers' specific skill areas improved student outcomes. They further noted those general educators' areas of expertise involved knowledge of content, curriculum objectives, curriculum sequencing, and content development.

Special educators' areas of expertise involved motivation techniques, knowledge of learning strategies, curriculum adaptation strategies, and knowledge of disabilities. The benefits of student instruction included a student/teacher ratio that was cut in half, addressing the academic and social needs of all students, more individualized instruction,

and shared decision-making by general and special education teachers.

According to Gartner and Lipsky (1997) there existed various techniques that were implemented when adopting the inclusion model. Some of the techniques discussed by Gartner and Lipsky (1997) involved partnership, consultation, and partnership through consultation. Gartner and Lipsky (1997) explained in details how each of the three techniques was effectively adopted in schools to make sure that the inclusion concept was effective in the schools.

The consultation technique as pointed out by Gartner and Lipsky (1997), placed much emphasis on cooperation between special trained teachers and general trained teachers working together with the sole aim of widening their skills and knowledge on how to effectively integrate students with disabilities. The main shortcoming of this technique was that a lot of teachers were required to be involved; a point that Gartner and Lipsky (1997) stated that could have hindered the success of inclusion in schools.

The indirect consultation model was where the general education teacher and special education teacher met beforehand to plan strategies of intervention to address the needs of a student or students with disabilities in the general education classroom (Gardner and Lipsky, 1997). General education teachers had to implement the strategies. During this model, the special education teacher did not implement strategies.

In the alternative teaching model, one teacher provided instruction to a larger number of students, while the other worked with the smaller group. The risks of this approach included stigmatizing groups with disabilities by repeatedly grouping them for re-teaching, with or without other students included as group members. To avoid this situation, the authors recommended varying groupings and ensuring periodic inclusion of

all students in a group (Cook and Friend, 1996).

In collaborative consultation, the special education teacher acted as an expert who provided advice to the general education teacher. Students with and without disabilities did benefit from the expertise of the special educators' ability to maintain daily records of behavior and specific instruction. Education researchers suggested that collaborative consultation met the needs of many students with disabilities in the general education settings with follow-up and feedback of intervention (Cook and Friend, 1996).

Cook and Friend (1996) described the direct consultation model as an approach when the special education teacher consulted with the general education teacher as an instructional expert for providing intervention strategies for implementation with the student with disabilities in the general education classroom. This model emphasized that general education and special education teachers should work together and broaden their knowledge in various areas of instruction.

In the indirect consultation model, Cook and Friend (1996) suggested that the special education teacher met with the general education teacher to plan strategies of the intervention to address the needs of a student or students with disabilities. The special education teacher implemented the strategies.

In relation to the consultative model, the collaborative model emphasized that general education teachers and special education teachers taught as equal partners to students with and without disabilities. Both kinds of teachers were responsible for instructional planning and service delivery. In this model, they were equals for preparing and delivering each lesson.

In addition to IDEA mandates, states had the responsibility to ensure that local

school districts educated students appropriately. The IDEA (2005) demanded district schools take into considerations the general students so that the schools were in compliance with regulations governed by the federal government. Alabama in addition to other states in the United States demanded that district schools amend their teaching techniques so that more disabled students were integrated into normal schools. Some of the substitute services that students could receive as highlighted by The Alabama State Department of Education (2005) includes:

1. "Normal classroom set up where students are taught in at most times of the day with less times been spent in special classroom settings.

2. Specially configured classrooms where most of the teachings are undertaken in the special classrooms which are different from normal classroom set up.

3. Unique schools which implies that students are taught in different environments during most times of the day.

4. Provision of services to the disabled students either in their homes or at hospitals.

5. Home settings where disabled students obtain instructions from private or public institutions with the parents not incurring any costs" (P. 8).

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

According to the OSEP (1999), the fundamental principles involved in the implementation of students with disabilities being in the inclusive general education classroom included providing accommodations. IDEA 97 guaranteed all students with disabilities a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Each student had an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP contained goals and benchmarks for each student with disabilities. According to OSEP (1999), the IEP remained a

cornerstone in every educational program planned for students with disabilities.

Bateman and Linden (1998) stated that all students with disabilities must have their needs met. These authors recommended that the fine motor and functional needs of the students be met as well as the academic areas. In addition, Bateman and Linden concluded that student with disabilities needed services without reservation.

Roles and Attitudes of Principals toward Inclusive Education

Educational administrators were the leaders within the building that set the tone, incorporating special education services in their schools. The roles of school administrators have changed since administrators were now required to have additional referral meetings, extra paperwork, and professional development (Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, and Harniss, 2001). A research conducted by Goor and Schwenn (1995), found that majority of administrators lacked the special education background required to effectively engage with each learner that had a disability. These researchers (Goor and Schwenn (1995) highlighted that the leadership role of the administrators was required for the teaching of students with disabilities. Moreover, the researchers also noted that many states did not give priority to education policies, guidelines, and procedures towards teaching of the disabled students. Sage and Burrello (1994) recommended that administrators should be responsible for developing and implementing programs meant for all students including students with disabilities. According to Bowser (2001), accountability guidelines specified by NCLB made most of the educators plan to retire.

The change in the role of administrators as explained by the U.S. Department of Education (2002) was due to the increased numbers of students that were referred to special education programs. Other researchers who noted the increase in the

responsibilities of administrators included Bateman and Bateman (2001) who claimed that that the administrators were not been trained or being provided any additional professional development even though their responsibilities had increased.

Balt (2000) argued that school administrators had to be ready to cater to the students with disabilities, while at the same time catering to the students with no disabilities. According to Balt (2000), training the school administrators helped normal instructors as well as special instructors to be efficient in provision of learning services to both the students with disabilities and students with no disabilities.

Anderson (1999) discussed that a majority of the school administrators felt that they were not properly skilled to help or be around students with disabilities as they had not received specific training on how to handle students with disabilities. In addition, Patterson, Bowling, and Marshall (2000) pointed out that school principals were not prepared for inclusion and special education leadership in their respective schools.

Bang (1993) stated that the school leadership support of the administrator was positively related to teachers' use of strategies that resulted in successful inclusion of all students in the general education classroom. As highlighted by Sage and Burrello (1994), administrators were required to be willing to work with students with disabilities and to include them in the learning environment as much as possible. Sage and Burrello (1994) suggested that school administrators needed to promote staff development actions with both special educators and general educators. Boscardin (2005) concluded that administrators needed to have meaningful conversations with the school staff and faculty and to provide the appropriate instructional support for students in the inclusive environment. Boscardin (2005) implied that professional development promoted more

29

understanding of research based instruction.

Educational reform initiatives of the 1980s, as described by Will (1986), entailed litigation, legislation, and advocacy that supported the full inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Due to issues surrounding litigation, legislation, and advocacy, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) changed all phases of education. The requirements of NCLB placed a burden on administrators, general education, and special education teachers to address the needs of students with disabilities. The intent of NCLB was to improve overall achievement and to raise academic standards of all students. This included raised expectations for students with disabilities (CEP, 2007).

Theoharis and Theoharis (2008) affirmed that committed leadership within a school district with all stakeholders was appropriate for successful inclusive practices. These authors acknowledged that for a school to become an inclusive district, the superintendent and administrative team had to communicate a vision and commitment towards the philosophy and practice of inclusion for all. Also, these authors suggested that administrators needed to provide training and professional development for staff members to build skills and engage all students in the learning environment.

The Impact of Attitudes of General Education Teachers

Various studies sought to gather an understanding of general education teachers' attitudes toward inclusion in the classroom (Brownell and Pajares, 1999; Cook, Tankersley, Cook & Landrum, 2000; Little & Robinson, 1997; Soodak, Podell, & Lehman, 1998). The main objective of these researchers was to examine the efficacy, school environments and behaviors towards disabled students and the willingness of

general education teachers to teach students with disabilities in a normal education setup.

The research by Cook, Tankersley, Cook and Landrum (2000) examined the reaction of seventy normal education instructors in grade K-6 grade after students with disabilities had been integrated in their general classroom settings. The research subjects proposed three students matched to the four attitudinal categories that were made up of "affection, concern, indifference and denial" (p. 121). In addition, Cook, Tankersley, Cook & Landrum (2000) conducted four different chi-square analyses that aimed at investigating students with disabilities and were represented in each attitudinal group. Five chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate the outcome of the experience of inclusive teaching, formal teaching in unique experience, formal teaching in exclusive education, partnership special education support offered in class, as well as the size of the class on attitudes of the teachers towards integration of disabled students in their classrooms. The research found that general education teachers had various attitudes towards integration of disables students into normal classroom setting.

Brownell and Pajares (1999) conducted a research to investigate the relationship of normal education instructors' beliefs in effectiveness on how to teach and administer to students with disabilities. Brownell and Pajares (1999) developed a Likert-type instrument in order to study 200 general education instructors who taught second grade children with mild disabilities in integrated learning settings. The research findings indicated that there was a need for reorganizing the instruction and the syllabus in order for the teachers to be effective. Furthermore, the research underlined the need for comprehensive training of general teachers who were to be involved in full inclusion.

Soodak, Podell, and Lehman (1998) surveyed 530 general education teachers'

attitudes toward including students with disabilities in the inclusive general education classroom. The teachers who were participating in the study enrolled in graduate classes at three universities in New York. There were 530 general education teachers, and 180 of the teachers completed all the survey questions. The survey was divided into four categories: "(a) Response to Inclusion Survey (undated); " (b) "Teacher Efficacy Scale" (c) Differential Teaching Survey (undated); and (d) "School Climate Survey (undated) " (Gibson & Dembo, 1984, p. 573).

The first category was labeled "hostility/receptivity" and included adjective pairs such as pleased/displeased, accepting/opposing, angry/not angry, and optimistic/pessimistic. The second category was labeled "anxiety/calmness", and included adjective pairs such as anxious/related, nervous/calm, and scared/fearless. A "regression analysis" was completed in which "each of the first two" categories and each of the "factor scores was computed by using weighted sums of responses to each item". According to these researchers' analyses of the data of the first and second categories, the teacher, student, and school variables accounted for "43.6% of the variance in participating teachers' hostility/receptivity" towards inclusion. Additional analysis of the survey data for the first and second categories pointed out that the same variables accounted for "19.8%" of the participating teachers' anxiety/calmness about including students with disabilities in their classrooms. It is important to note that the researchers' analysis of the data of categories 1 and 2 accounted for a far lower proportion of the variance in teachers' responses to category 3, the Teacher Efficacy Scale (Gibson & Dembo, 1984, P, 575).

The data analysis of category 3 indicated that teachers were not receptive to the

"inclusion of students with mental retardation, behavior disorders, and learning disabilities" (Soodak, Podell, and Lehman, 1998, p. 488). The teachers were more "anxious about including students with mental retardation" (p. 488) than they were about the other two exceptionalities. The researchers' analysis of the data for category 4 indicated that the teachers were "fearful of, but not hostile to, the inclusion of students with physical disabilities" (p. 488). The survey data indicated that teachers' feelings of hostility were reflective of "frustration in their attempts to work with students who were low achieving and/or demonstrated acting-out behaviors" (p. 489).

In addition, an analysis of the *Differential Teaching Survey* (undated) indicated that participating teachers' receptivity toward students with learning disabilities decreased with teachers' years of experience (Soodak, Podell, and Lehman, 1998). The analysis of the findings from the *Differential Teaching Survey* (undated) led to the conclusion that "teachers became less receptive as their efforts to help students with learning disabilities did not yield the desired effects" (p. 489). However, an alternate explanation provided by the researchers was that "more recently trained teachers have learned effective strategies for teaching students with learning disabilities" (p. 490).The researchers' analyses of the *School Climate Survey* indicated that class size had a low but significant correlation to the participants' positive responses to inclusion (Soodak, Podell, and Lehman, 1998). The researchers' conclusion of the analyses of the *School Climate Survey* was that the greater the number of students in the class, the more anxious the teachers became about including a student with disabilities. Other school variables noted by the researcher that did not relate to the participants' responses to inclusion were administrative support and feedback, school standards, and parental involvement. The

researchers concluded that inclusive education might be facilitated by addressing the variables found to relate to teachers' hostility and anxiety. In addition, the researchers' concluded that the success of inclusion efforts by school personnel should be facilitated by ensuring that teachers were able to work effectively with their students and other teachers in combination with modifications of administrative support, the use of differentiated teaching practices, and opportunities for training in the area of inclusion.

Little and Robinson (1997) studied the effect of program plans, goals, activities, components, and personnel preparation on teacher preparedness for addressing the needs of diverse student populations. The project was funded by the Office of Special Education and included teachers who were provisionally certified in special education.

The focus of the study was on the role and training of the master teacher, partnerships between preparation programs and the public schools, and the effects of school structure on the continued professional growth of novice teachers (Little & Robinson, 1997). Master teachers spent fewer than eight half-days with novice teaching partners in the novice teachers' classrooms. Partners also met outside of the school to share and plan ideas about their classrooms, students, and instruction.

The researchers' concluded that (a) cooperating teachers' effectiveness was determined by ensuring that the teachers were knowledgeable and equipped to facilitate continuous improvement; (b) cooperating teachers should be carefully selected for participation to ensure proper student development and training; and (c) training cooperating teachers allowed for feedback within a supportive relationship.

In an identical research, Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) investigated the views of approximately 10,000 normal education instructors in view of having students with

disabilities includes in general education setting. The research found that 66% of the respondents who were general education teachers supported the inclusion of students with disabilities in their general education classroom setting. The two key factors that were found to be the main determinant of the opinions given by the teachers were the seriousness of disabilities that the students had and the time that would be spent assisting the students. In addition, the research found out that the respondents were willing to teach disabled students as long as they received training that would help them be more effective in teaching disabled students in normal classroom settings.

Snell and Janney (1993) stated that the main obstacle faced by general instructors was to offer accommodations for disabled students while ensuring that FAPE act were implemented for all students. The authors' further stated that the concept of inclusion was not "trying to fit students with special needs into the general education setting; instead, it means creating an environment where everyone fits" (p. 220). No student with or without a disability should be isolated in the presence of his or her teacher or peers. All educators were responsible for ensuring a free and appropriate public education that maximized the potential of all students (Snell and Janney, 1993).

Kupper (1997) contended that the goal of IDEA 1997 was to ensure that all children with disabilities learned and had their unique education needs addressed and assessed, as possible, with their peers who were non-disabled in an environment that was considered least restrictive. By doing this, all students were assured opportunities for a free and appropriate education. The law provided for supplementary aides and services to enable students with disabilities the opportunities for success in inclusive educational settings.

The reauthorization of IDEA 1997 focused on the concept of inclusion to facilitate collaboration and cooperative teaching models among general and special educators to ensure equal opportunities for learning for all students. The renewed emphasis on providing access to the general curriculum and the training of general and special education teachers were focal points for educational reform in teaching institutions (Fullan, 1994; Metcalf-Turner and Fischetti, 1996; Rigden, 1996; Wigle and Wilcox, 1996).

Even though the reforms in education developed some aspects of instructor preparation, efforts aimed at manipulating how the students were taught led to amendments of teaching programs. IDEA 1997 clarified those students with disabilities be integrated in normal education setting. However, McIntosh, Vaughn, Schumm, Haager and Lee (1994) pointed out that the requirements presented a bigger challenge to general educators because they were not prepared to attend to the needs of students with different learning abilities in normal education setting. The authors argued that students with disabilities affected the general teachers' performance because they took most of the teacher's time.

McIntosh et al (1994) findings concurred with Cohen and Forgan (1998) findings because McIntosh et al (1994) stated that the implementation of IDEA 1997 resulted to special educators claiming that the normal education setup was not good to majority of students with disabilities. Cohen and Forgan (1998) added that special educators also claimed that the inclusion also affected the academic and social development of students with no disabilities. On the other hand, proponents of inclusion as explained by Davis (1989), Fuchs and Fuchs (1995),Fuchs, Fuchs and Fernstrom (1993), Gartner and Lipsky

(1997), O'Neill (1994) and Roberts and Mather (1995), argued that inclusion presented a more realistic environment to both disabled and nondisabled students which at the long run would be beneficial to both set students.

As far as education reforms were concerned, Gartner and Lipsky (1997) pointed out that the total education system required to be reformed. Gartner and Lipsky (1997) argued that the reforms were vital if inclusion in general education classroom setting was to be effective.

The review of literature of teachers' attitudes on including students with disabilities in the general education curriculum showed that general education teachers needed to be knowledgeable about students with disabilities. Further, the review indicated that the attitudes of general education changed if teachers acquired the knowledge and skills for addressing the needs of students with disabilities (deBettencourt, 1999).

The Impact of Attitudes of Special Education Teachers

Studies of special education teachers' attitudes toward students in an inclusive general education setting attempted to determine how well teachers adapted to a collaborative setting. In addition, the studies aimed at differentiating between the attitudes of special education teachers toward children with mild disabilities and severe disabilities. The researchers of the studies of special education teachers tried to gain an understanding of the teachers' attitudes toward an increased instructional load in a general education setting.

Austin (2001, p. 247) presented a study of "139 collaborative teachers who taught kindergarten through the 12th grade in Northern New Jersey". The respondents were

employees of various schools located in the nine different districts. All the nine districts were regarded as middle income which was also reflected in the enrollments since the districts received identical enrollments that "varied from 6400 to about 7800 with the average size of the classes ranging from 27 to 31" (p. 248).

Further research found that 40 of the 46 special instructors who were included in the final paired sample were involved with high levels of disabilities. "A minimum of six pairs of collaborative teaching" (p. 248) were employed in each of the districts in the study according to the data obtained from either the "office of the superintendent or the office of special services schools" (p. 248).

Austin (2001) contended that all participants were assessed using the Perception of Co-Teaching Survey (PCTS). The study was made up of two major parts where the first part was investigating the demographics and the second part collected data that was relevant to the four various categories of collaboration teaching.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 1999) was used to analyze the collected data where the importance level of the data was set as .05. A number from1 to 5 was allocated to the scaled response for each research item. Data analysis was later on carried out to establish the occurrence of response from general education instructors as well as the special education instructors in the specified demographics. Cross tabulations was used to examine the demographics categories with a t-tests of paired test been conducted on the various demographic categories.

In addition, Daane, Beirne- Smith &Lathan (2000) conducted a research on attitudes and beliefs of "324 general elementary teachers, 42 special education teachers and 15 administrators in a school district in Southeast that had 800 students" (P.331).

Apart from investigating the opinions of the respondents on the subject of inclusion, the study also investigated the efforts made by the respondents to help disabled students achieve academic success.

The review of literature of teachers' attitudes on including students with disabilities in the general education curriculum indicated that general education teachers needed to be knowledgeable about children who were different from the mainstream population. The literature review on inclusion and teachers' attitudes indicated a direct correlation between teachers' perceptions of their ability to make adaptations to accommodate diverse populations of students and their willingness to use or facilitate cooperative teaching practices. (deBettencourt, 1999; Schumm, York, and Tunidor, 1995; Vaughn, Gordon, Gordon, and Rothlein, 1994).

Accommodations and Adaptations

A review of various literatures (Lombardi and Hunka, 2001; Salend, 1999; Scott et al., 1998; Zigmond and Baker, 1990) on inclusion and instructional modifications for accommodating students with special needs indicated that general education teachers were either unprepared or unwilling to make accommodations for students with special needs in general education classrooms. Research findings by different scholars (Christianson, Ysseldydke, and Thurlow, 1989; Heller, Spooner, and Algozzine, 1992; Lombardi and Hunka, 2001; Salend, 1999; Scott et al., 1998; Zigmond and Baker, 1990) on inclusion indicated that making instructional accommodations for students with disabilities in inclusive settings had a primary method for meeting their academic and social needs. Researchers concluded that general education teachers lacked the appropriate training for facilitating inclusive education practices

Hunt, Soto Maier and Doering (2003) researched the success of normal education and special education collaborative process on aspects of academic and social involvement of six students in normal education setting. The research involved "two elementary schools in the San Francisco Bay Area" (p. 315) with each school having six seriously disabled students. The researchers made use of the "Unified Plaxs of Support" (p. 315) in order to facilitate the entire participation of students with disabilities. To make sure that periods of non engagement were minimal students involvement and interaction support were developed (Hunt, Soto, Maier and Doering, 2003)

In a research conducted by Hunt et al (2002), the authors found that there was a need for all senior members of schools to cooperate to achieve the school's vision of facilitating interaction and academic success for all students irrespective of whether they were disabled or not.

An analyses of the data from the interviews indicated that the teachers' responses suggested they did not support integration in the absence of protected resources (Minke, Bear, Deemer, and Griffin, 1996). The data findings indicated that, where group differences occurred between the participants, general education teachers outside of the team-teaching model held negative attitudes toward inclusion. Relative to general education teachers outside of the team teaching model, the researchers noted that general education teachers working in integrated settings held positive attitudes toward inclusion.

Further, the researchers' analyses of data on self-efficacy indicated that significant differences emerged between general education teachers in the inclusive setting. The researchers concluded that "the findings of the study were consistent with similar studies of teachers attitudes toward inclusion, and teachers' attitudes toward

inclusion were actually found to be more positive than they were commonly believed to be" (P, 184).

According to Lipsky and Gartner (1996), classroom practices supporting accommodating disabled students entailed grouping students in teams as well as engaging in team learning. However despite such efforts, Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) noted that a high percentage of general education teachers agreed that disabled students posed problems for them.

According to research findings by Kerns (1996), normal education instructors were found to be incompetent when dealing with students with disabilities in a normal classroom setting.

Kerns (1996) research studies on teacher training indicated that general education teachers were insufficiently prepared for collaborative roles and responsibilities in meeting the needs of students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Many teachers claimed they were uncomfortable working with co-workers of other teaching disciplines because of the lack of orientation on how to collaborate with their co-workers. Further research findings and studies on teacher preparation for collaboration said that many general education teachers were uncertain about how to form caring relationships with students of special needs because of their lack of training and little to no practicum (Kerns, 1996).

Past research studies on the role of teachers in assisting students in learning indicated that general education teachers had to take the lead in developing relationships with all students that necessitated attitudinal adjustments on how they perceived students with disabilities. General education teachers are also required to demonstrate to the

students actively and consistently that they are cared for as the teachers accept the role of caregivers by sharing ownership and responsibility for all students (Glomb & Morgan, 1991).

Baker and Zigmond (1995) indicated that one area of concern for general education teachers in accommodating students with special needs was the amount of time these accommodations would take. In assessing factors that are important for teachers' effectiveness in accommodating the needs of students with disabilities in their classrooms, the researchers identified "common themes" and characteristics across "five school sites in five different states" when discussing implications for making accommodations and adaptations for students with special needs (Baker & Zigmond, 1995, p. 176).

The authors recognized three common themes and characteristics that were organized into dimensions characteristic of each school site: the responsibilities of special instructors, extent of inclusion and the experience gained by the students. According to the researchers (Baker & Zigmond, 1995), different methods of inclusion were implemented depending on the teachers nominated to be involved with inclusion, distribution of disabled students as well as the type of special education offered. Among others, some of the models implemented by the various schools consisted of "peer tutoring, cooperative training and assistance from the teachers" (p. 176).

Baker and Zigmond (1995) analyses of the data indicated that students with learning disabilities in inclusive settings were getting a good general education. The researchers (Baker and Zigmond, 1995) pointed out that the strategies of special education teachers in the five sites ranged from using co-teaching practices to

collaborative consultation with general education classroom teachers. The most significant data focused on the instructional experiences received by students with disabilities in the general education classrooms; the significant data were that the instructional experiences received by students with disabilities in the general education classroom were the same as for other students. The common theme among the five sites observed by Baker and Zigmond (1995) was that inclusion was viewed as "place" (p. 176), bringing special education services into the classroom to make inclusion work (Baker and Zigmond, 1995).The original five sites of the Baker and Zigmond (1995) study were used by the researcher because of their geographical representation and variety of approaches to full-time integration of students with learning disabilities into the general education classroom.

Barriers to Inclusion

Mastropieri and Scruggs (2001) identified challenges that affected the learning and success of students in the classroom. These authors contended that the pace of instruction and the demands of high-stakes testing affected the student in the general education classroom.

In a 1999 study conducted by deBettencourt (1999), the majority of educators either disagreed with the concept of inclusion or did not feel comfortable welcoming the students. Often, when educators resisted change, the transformation was largely due to fear or additional burdens. Friend (2000) believed tolerance was important for collaboration with administrators, special educators, and general educators (deBettencourt, 1999; Kochhar and Erickson, 1993).

The role of administrators has changed due to the increase of additional

responsibilities of personnel and paperwork (Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, and Harrniss, 2001). According to Goor and Schwenn (1995), administrators often feel unprepared for their roles in dealing with special education programs.

Advantages of Inclusion

As far as the topic of inclusion was concerned, there were usually two schools of thoughts. One school of thought advocated for the concept while the other school of thought was opposed to the concept. Salend (2000) argued that inclusion enabled students with disability to greater academic success when students with disabilities were integrated into normal classroom setup; the setup tended to make the students become more engaged in learning as they had greater exposure to various learning activities.

Another benefit of inclusion was that students were able to interact with new normal students and improve their interaction skills. According to Wood (1993) initially, normal students tend to be "conscious of the person first though the concern eventually fades" (p. 20) as the friendship develop.

As far as the students with no disabilities were concerned, they benefited from inclusion by getting to know how to understand people with disabilities better."Academic benefits for general education students include having additional special education staff in the classroom, providing small group, individualized instruction and assisting in the development of academic adaptations for all students who need them" (Hines, 2001, p. 3). As a result of inclusion, general education students' ended up understanding that people with disabilities were also part of the society and made contributions to the society with their unique gifts and talents.

According to Irmsher (1995), "it appeared that special needs students in regular classes did better academically and socially than comparable students who were in con- inclusive environment" (p. 6).

Disadvantages of Inclusion

On the other hand, there were some who argued that inclusion consisted of more harm than good. Those who opposed the concept argued that it was driven by unachievable objectives as schools attempted to make all students study in an environment regardless of the fact some required special learning environment. According to Bateman and Bateman (2002) "full inclusion was not the best placement for all students" since "the general classroom was typically not individualized" (p.2). According to Irmsher (1995), proponents of inclusion tended to argue that students with disabilities needed to be completely integrated into normal education setup regardless of the fact that they may be disruptive to the other students.

In such situations, students who were quite disruptive usually ended up taking the teacher's time that would have been spent teaching the other students. Irmsher (1995) contended that teachers as well as parents were usually concerned that inclusion eventually decreased the standards of learning in schools that adopted the concept as socializing and interacting become the main priority.

Another disadvantage of inclusion was argued to be the fact that students with disabilities engaged in the inclusion concept usually ended up missing special education services such as speech therapy and occupational therapy since such services were provided in a normal education setup as general education were.

Implementation Strategy for inclusion

Education leadership as explained by Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff and Harniss, (2001) was the most significant aspect that determined how effective programs adopted by a school will be. According to Gersten et al (2001), principals' support had "strong direct and indirect effects on virtually all critical aspects of teachers working conditions" (p. 557). Nevertheless, school principals were most of the times not ready to oversee implementation of inclusion in their schools even though their roles were important in the success of inclusion concepts in their school (Goor and Schweenn, 1995).

Moreover, any school implementing inclusion in its education system needed to understand that inclusion was challenging and demanding since different students had different disabilities implying that different programs had to be implemented for different students. It was thus advisable that schools implement the concept on small basis and increase the level of inclusion as success was achieve since the process helped schools adequately prepare and work hard in implementing both proactive and consequential procedures while at the same time acknowledging the progress that the disabled students made (de Boer, 2009).

For inclusion to be effective there must be an in-depth collaboration between special teachers, general teachers and the principal of the specific schools. Preparation programs meant for the principals had to aim at making sure that the principals were well prepared for leadership in the inclusion concept. Among others, the principal needed to monitor the academic performance of the disabled students, while efficiently managing confidentiality issues, facilitating involvement of parents, and employing assertive technology (Goor et al, 1997).

Chapter III: Methodology

The purpose of the study was to assess the attitudes of administrators in a Northern Alabama school district. The study provided information relevant to improved collaborative efforts between schools and administrator training institutions for structuring pre-service curriculum and clinical experiences. The information obtained from the study provided assistance to schools in establishing levels of proficiency that were prerequisites for addressing the needs of diverse student populations in inclusive general education classrooms.

Research Design

A convenience sampling procedure was used in consideration of the demographic representation of the population studied and the researcher's anticipation of replicating the study with similar populations later. Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) defined the convenience sampling procedure as using a group of individuals who were available for study. The convenience sampling allowed the researcher to assess the effects of facilitating learning modules of intervention on the administrator-participants' attitudes toward including students with disabilities in their classrooms. In addition, the convenience sampling allowed the researcher to assess the effects of facilitating learning modules of intervention on the teacher-participants' attitudes toward including students

with disabilities in their classrooms. For the duration of the pre-test and post-test of the study, the researcher facilitated a learning module session that focused on interventions to provide the participants with skills for facilitating inclusive teaching practices. The learning module lasted approximately one hour. The treatment or intervention module emphasized communication in problem-solving activities, including content areas, best practices in classroom/behavior management, collaborative problem-solving and learning or instructional activities used in inclusive general education classrooms.

This study consists of a pre-test, intervention, and post-test. The Principal Inclusion Survey (PIS) was mailed to 32 principals in a Southeastern region of the United States school district. The survey identified those administrators who responded and those who did not. Each principal received a coded packet that included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research project and requesting his or her participation, a survey, and a stamped envelope. The letter asked the principals to complete the survey and return to the researcher. Surveys were mailed a second time for those who did not respond to the first request. Twenty-one surveys were returned. Next, the researcher conducted an intervention. The intervention was a learning module about the inclusion process and how the process worked. Finally, each principal received a survey for the post-test.

Population

The target population of this study was in a mid-sized Southeastern region of the United States school district with 20 schools. The school district consisted of 12 elementary, three middle, three alternative, and two high schools, and 32 administrators. Twenty-one administrators participated in the study twelve females (57.1%), and nine

males (42.9%), with an age range between 31 to over 62. Six administrators were 31 to 40 years of age; seven were 41 to 50; and six were 51 to 60. Only one administrator was over 60. The district had seven schools that received federal funds to help students who performed below standard. Six were elementary schools receiving Title 1 monies, each having a diverse population of various backgrounds and used technology to enhance student learning. The other elementary schools were predominately in middle to high socioeconomic communities that had high parental involvement and performed at or above standard on high-stakes testing.

One middle school received federal monies to enhance student learning and had a diverse student population, an extremely high poverty rate, and several students who struggled in the classroom. The other two middle schools had high parental involvement and generally acceptable scores on high-stakes testing. The alternative programs were for at-risk, struggling, and special education students. The alternative schools were effective, because they had students in small-group settings to reinforce correct behaviors.

The student population in the district ranged from zero to over 1,000 students. Eight schools had zero to 250 (38.1%) students. Five had 251 to 500 (23.8%) students. Six had 501 to 750 (28.6%) students. Two schools had 1,000 or more (9.5%) students.

Many of the administrators lacked training in the special education process. Seventeen administrators (81.0%) lacked training, workshops, and courses for field-based activities with actual inclusion. Over 90% of administrators lacked training, workshops, and courses for interagency cooperation, eliciting parental and community support for inclusion, change process, and family intervention training. The researcher obtained

permission from the district superintendent and administrators of participating schools.

Instrumentation

Praisner (2000) designed the *Principals and Inclusion Survey* (PIS). The researcher used the survey to collect data for this study. Praisner gave the researcher permission to adapt the survey to measure the extent to which training, experience, and program factors related to administrators' attitudes. The instrument (PIS) has four main sections: "demographics, principal training and experience, attitudes toward inclusion, and principal beliefs about most appropriate placements" (Praisner, 2000, p. 1).

Validity of Instrument

Praisner (2000) developed a review of related literature and research on inclusion to ensure the validity of the content used for this survey instrument. The questions recognized those factors related to personal characteristics, training, and experience relative to education professionals' attitudes toward inclusion. The survey showed variables that reflected a positive, negative, or inconsistent relationship of administrators' attitudes toward inclusion to address the validity of this section more specifically.

The questionnaire items were submitted to a panel of four university professors with experience in integration of students with disabilities or educational administration (Praisner, 2000). Following review and analysis of the survey, the panel evaluated the questions to ensure potential content validity of the questions for measuring variables that related to the attitudes of administrators.

In addition to improve the clarity and assess the content validity of the survey instrument, Praisner (2000) piloted with nine individuals in school leadership positions. The individuals provided feedback on the explicitness of the items and the amount of

time required to complete the survey. Praisner (2000) adapted this survey from "Stainback's (1987) survey, the Superintendents' Attitude Survey on Integration" (p, 188), with permission from the author.

Praisner (2000) stated that Stainback (1986) "addressed the question of validity" (p. 5) by presenting questions to a panel of five administrators with experience in the integration of students with severe and profound disabilities into general education environments to ensure the potential content validity of the questions. Praisner contended that Stainback (1986) conducted an analysis of reliability by computing a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with a split-half correction factor. Praisner noted that the "reliability coefficient was 0.899" (p.4).

Protection for Human Subjects

The respondents were assured that data would not be reported by identifying individual responses. Also, the respondents were informed that participation in the survey was voluntary. The researcher told the respondents that they were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time.

Limitations

This study was limited to 32 administrators in a Southeastern region of the United States school population and the administrators' responses to inclusion and presumed that their responses denoted their attitudes. Also, the study counted on self-reported data to assess attitudes and was limited by administrators' understanding of inclusion.

Chapter IV: Analyses and Results

This chapter described the quantitative analysis of data collected relevant to research questions significant to educational administrators' attitudes toward including students with disabilities. This research was based on an adapted version of Praisner's Principals and Inclusion (PIS) (2000).

Data Analysis

Once the responses were collected, the researcher summarized the survey items by using occurrence data and descriptive statistics to scrutinize the correlation between variables. The researcher used a paired *t*-test to evaluate the differences in pre- and post-test means for items in Sections 3 and 4 of the survey. The responses were entered by using the SPSS software package to analyze data. The researcher used (17) degrees of freedom instead of 21, because a total of 17 respondents completed the entire survey.

In Section One of the Principals and Inclusion Survey, the principals were asked to respond to questions concerning the characteristics of their schools (See Table 1). Table 1 detailed the administrators' responses. Thirty-two administrator surveys were mailed out in the school district. 21 of the 32 (65.6%) participated and responded to the research questions. The usable return rate of 65.6% participated throughout the process of study. There were nine males, which represented 42.9% of the study; and 12 females, representing 57.1%. 21% of the respondents were Blacks while the rest were Whites.

Table 1.Demographic Information, Background, Training, and Experience of Administrators.

ID	Total students	Average class size	IEP	Age	Gender	Years Exp	Principal	Training & In-Service
1	501-750	10-19	16-20a	41-50	F	7-12c	0-5	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		1-8f
2	1000+	20-29	6-10a	51-60	M	—c	—	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		9-16f
3	0-250	0-9	21+a	51-60	F	19+c	6	22+e
			0-20b			19+d		25+f
4	501-750	20-29	11-15a	41-50	M	13-18c	6	1-9e
			61-80b			0-5d		9-16f
5	0-250	0-9	16-20a	41-50	M	13-18c	—	10-15e
			81-100b			0-5d		9-16f
6	251-500	10-19	0-5a	31-40	M	7-12c	—	10-15e
			0-20b			0-5d		9-16f
7	0-250	10-19	0-5a	51-60	F	1-6c	11-15	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		25+f
8	501-750	20-29	21+a	41-50	M	19+c	11-15	22+e
			0-20b			19+d		25+f
9	251-500	20-29	6-10a	41-50	F	13-18c	—	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		9-16f
10	0-250	20-29	16-20a	51-60	M	13-18c	6-10	1-9e
			61-80b			1-6d		0f
11	0-250	20-29	6-10a	51-60	F	13-18c	11-15	22+e
			81-100b			7-12d		25+f
12	251-500	20-29	6-10a	31-40	F	1-6c	6-10	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		9-16f
13	0-250	20-29	0-5a	41-50	F	1-6c	6-10	1-9e
			0-20b			0-5d		9-16f
14	501-750	20-29	6-10a	61+	F	7-12c	—	0e
			0-20b			0-5d		1-8f
15	1000+	20-29	6-10a	51-60	M	—c	—	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		17-24f
16	501-750	10-19	6-10a	31-40	M	7-12c	0-5	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		17-24f
17	251-500	20-29	6-10a	41-50	F	7-12c	6-10	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		25+f
18	0-250	10-19	0-5a	51-60	F	—c	6-10	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		9-16f
19	501-750	20-29	11-15a	31-40	F	7-12c	0-5	1-9e
			81-100b			0-5d		9-16f
20	251-500	20-29	0-5a	31-40	F	1-6c	6-10	22+e
			81-100b			7-12d		25+f
21	0-250	10-19	6-10a	31-40	M	7-12c	0-5	22+e
			61-80b			7-12d		17-24f

Note: approx. % of students with IEPS in your building (exclude gifted), b approx. % students with IEPS in your building included in regular education classrooms 75% or more of school day (exclude gifted), c years of full-time regular education teaching experience, d years special education teaching experience, e approx. # of special education credits in your formal training, f approx. # of in-service training hours in inclusive practices.

In Section Two of the survey, elementary and secondary administrators were required to respond to eight items connected to their background, training, and experience. Over three-fourths of the administrators (95.2%) had completed courses, workshops, and significant portions of courses for special education law.

Research Findings

Research question 1. What is the attitudes of administrators toward students with disabilities?

In Section Three of the survey, elementary and secondary administrators were asked to respond to ten expressive statements regarding their opinions about inclusion (Table 2). The instruments used a Likert-type scale with ratings from (1) Agree to (5) Disagree.

During the pre-test, most elementary and secondary administrators either agreed or strongly agreed that *"schools with both students with severe and profound disabilities and students without disabilities enhance the learning experiences of students with severe/profound disabilities"(95.2%);* that *"regular educators can do a lot to help students with severe/profound disabilities" (81.0%);* that *"students without disabilities can profit from contact with students with severe /profound disabilities" (100%).*

There was variation in how administrators responded to the statement that only teachers with extensive special education experience could be expected to deal with students with severe/profound disabilities in a school setting. Although 61.9% of the administrators either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, 14.3% were uncertain, and 23.8% either agreed or strongly agreed. Administrators responded with

uncertainty on three other statements with 14.3% or more.

Table 2. Attitudes Concerning Inclusion.

Item		f	%
1. Only teachers with extensive special education experience can be expected to deal with students in a school setting.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	5 3 13	23.8 14.3 61.9
2. Schools with both students with regular and profound disabilities and students without disabilities enhance the learning experiences of students with severe/profound disabilities.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	20 1	95.2 4.8
3. Students with severe/profound disabilities are too impaired to benefit from the activities of a regular school.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	2 2 16	10 10 80
4. A good regular educator can do a lot to help a student with severe/profound disability.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	17 1 3	81 4.8 14.3
5. In general, students with severe/profound disabilities should be placed in special classes/schools specifically designed for them.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	4 7 10	19 33.3 47.6
6. Students without disabilities can profit from contact with students with several profound disabilities.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	21 -- --	100 -- --
7. Regular education should be modified to meet the needs of all students -- including students with severe/profound disabilities.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	9 7 5	42.3 33.3 23.8
8. It is unfair to ask/expect regular teachers to accept students with severe/profound disabilities.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	41 2 15	19 9.5 71.5
9. No discretionary financial resource should be allocated for the integration of students with severe/profound disabilities.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	2 1 18	90.5 4.8 85.7
10. It should be policy and/or law that students with severe/profound disabilities be integrated into regular educational programs and activities.	Agree Uncertain Disagree	7 9 5	33.3 42.9 23.8

Administrators were uncertain about the statement that "*students with severe/profound disabilities should be placed in special classes or schools specifically designed for them*" (33.3%); that "*regular education should be modified to meet the needs of all students including students with severe/profound disabilities*" (33.3); and that "*it should be policy and law that students with severe/profound disabilities be integrated into regular educational programs and activities*" (42.9%).

Research question 2.What is the attitudes of administrators toward implementing inclusive education practices?

In Section Four of the survey, administrators were asked to indicate the most appropriate placement for students with various disabilities. (See Table 3). The eleven categories listed on the survey reflected the disabilities as defined by the Alabama State Department of Education. In this section, administrators were asked to select from six placement options. The categories ranged from most restrictive, including special education services, regular school, to least restrictive, including full-time regular education with support.

Of the eleven disability categories listed, six were identified by administrators as needing a least restrictive placement in a full-time regular education class with support. The researcher listed nine (9) categories because the respondents only responded to the nine (9) disabilities displayed in the table. In this section, administrators were asked to select from six placement options. The categories ranged from most restrictive, including special education services, regular school, to least restrictive, including full-time regular education with support. Of the eleven disability categories listed, six were identified by administrators as needing a least restrictive placement in a full-time regular education

class with support. The researcher listed nine (9) categories because the respondents only

responded to the nine (9) disabilities displayed in the table.

Table 3.Pretest: Most Appropriate Placement, Percentages.

Disability	Regular Education			Special Education		
	Full Time	Most Day	Plus Resource Room	Part-Time	Most or All Day	Our Regular School
Autism/pervasive developmental disorder	42.9	19.0	28.6	9.5	_	_
Blindness/visual impairment	52.4	9.5	38.1	_	_	_
Deafness/hearing impairment	52.4	14.3	19.0	9.5	4.8	_
Mental retardation	_	_	42.9	19.0	38.1	_
Neurological impairment	5.0	10.0	20.0	25.0	35.0	5.0
Other health impairment	42.9	23.8	19.0	9.5	4.8	_
Physical disability	66.7	_	23.0	_	_	_
Specific learning disability	42.9	19.0	28.6	9.5	_	_
Speech and language impairment	66.7	9.5	23.8	_	_	_

The administrators identified their experience (Table 4) as positive or somewhat

positive with students with a specific learning disability in the school setting (100%),

deafness/hearing impairment (71.4%), speech and language impairment (95.2%), other

health impairment (90.5%), and physical disabilities (85.7%).

Table 4. Experience Level for each Disability Category, Percentages.

Disability	Negative Experience	Somewhat Negative Experience	No Experience	Somewhat Positive Experience	Positive Experience
Autism/pervasive developmental disorder	4.8	4.8	—	71.4	19.0
Blindness/visual impairment	—	—	28.6	23.6	47.6
Deafness/hearing impairment	—	—	28.6	23.8	47.6
Mental retardation	—	4.8	28.6	33.3	33.3
MulHa	—	4.8	38.1	19.0	38.1
Neurological impairment	--	4.8	57.1	14.3	23.8
Other health impairment	—	4.8	4.8	52.4	38.1
Physical disability	—	—	14.3	28.6	57.1
Specific learning disability	5.0	30.0	15.0	40.0	10.0
Specific learning disability	—	—	—	9.0	11.0
Speech and language impairment	—	—	4.8	38.1	57.1

The administrators' responses were more consistent for students with mental retardation being placed in special classes for most or all of the school day (38.1%), part-time special education classes (19%), and in regular classrooms and resource rooms (42.9%). A small percentage of administrators indicated that students with serious emotional disturbances (9.5%) should spend the school day in special education services outside regular school. Overall, administrators wanted to implement inclusive practices in the regular education classroom (see Table 5).

Table 5. Post-Test Results, Percentages.

	Regular Education			Special Education		
Disability	Full Time	Most Day	Plus Resource Room	Part-Time	Most or All Day	Our Regular School
Autism/pervasive developmental disorder	4.8	14.3	33.3	14.3	28.6	4.8
Blindness/visual impairment	28.6	23.8	23.8	14.3	9.5	—
Deafness/hearing impairment	33.3	14.3	23.8	19.0	9.5	—
Mental retardation	4.8	4.8	33.3	—	42.9	14.3
MulHa	14.3	14.3	28.6	33.3	9.5	—
Neurological impairment	—	4.8	33.3	23.8	38.1	—
Physical disability	38.1	38.1	4.8	19.0	—	—
Other health impairment	38.1	23.8	19.0	19.0	—	—
Specific learning disability	28.6	19.0	23.8	23.8	4.8	—
Speech and language impairment	33.3	23.8	9.5	14.3	14.3	—

Research question 3. Is there a difference in the perceptions of the administrators before and after the intervention?

To answer Research Question 3, four variables were applied: pre-test and post-test measured the items in Section Three of the survey, and pre-test and post-test measures of the items in Section Four of the survey. Each of the four variables was evaluated as the

average of the items included in the given section. The pre-test and post-test variables for the items in Section Three had a potential range of one to five, while the pre-test and post-test variables for the items in Section Four had a potential range of one to six.

Table 6. Pretest/Posttest Measure Results for items in Section 3.

Test	*Mean*	SD	*Cohen's d*
Pretest	2.928	.330	.13
Posttest	2.978	.284	

Table 7. Pretest/Posttest Measure Results for items in Section 4.

Test	Mean	SD	*Cohen's d*
Pretest	4.242	.828	.50
Posttest	3.737	.918	

The No Child Left Behind Act placed more accountability on administrators to address the concerns of inclusion to improve the delivery of services and instruction to students with learning disabilities. Administrators played a major role in providing for inclusive opportunities for all students. The aim of the study was to assess attitudes of administrators in a Northern Alabama school district and revealed that administrators had a positive attitude towards inclusion. Based on the results of this study, administrators were familiar and supportive of the inclusionary practice. The administrators felt that the following groups required a more restrictive environment: several conclusions, derived from the results of this study, for administrators dealing with students with disabilities in the inclusive general education classroom:

Notably, 100% of administrators indicated that: "*students without disabilities can profit from contact with students with severe /profound disabilities*". Also, over three-

fourths of the administrators (95.2%) had completed courses, workshops, and significant portions of courses for special education law.

Administrators were uncertain about the statement that students with severe/profound disabilities should be placed in special classes or schools specifically designed for them (33.3%): that "*regular education should be modified to meet the needs of all students including students with severe/profound disabilities*" (33.3); and "*that it should be policy and law that students with severe/profound disabilities be integrated into regular educational programs and activities*" (42.9%).

Of the eleven disability categories listed, six were identified by administrators as needing a least restrictive placement in a full-time regular education class with support (see Table 3).

The administrators identified their experience as positive or somewhat positive with students with a specific learning disability in the school setting (100%), deafness/hearing impairment (71.4%), speech and language impairment (95.2%), other health impairment (90.5%), and physical disabilities (85.7%).

The administrators' responses were more consistent for students with mental retardation being placed in special classes for most or all of the school day (38.1%), part-time special education classes (19%), and in regular classrooms and resource rooms (42.9%).A small percentage of administrators indicated that students with serious emotional disturbances (9.5%) should spend the school day in special education services outside regular school.

Summary of the results

Administrators either disagreed or strongly disagreed that "*only teachers with*

extensive special education experience could be expected to deal with severe/profound disabilities in a school setting" (61.9%); that "*students with severe/profound disabilities are too impaired to benefit from activities of a regular school*" (80%); that "*it is unfair to ask regular teachers to accept students with severe/profound disabilities*" (71.4%); and that "*no discretionary financial resources should be allocated for the integration of students with severe/profound disabilities*" (85.7%). Overall, these data indicated that administrators in a Northern Alabama school district had positive attitudes in general toward inclusion.

Based on the results of this study, administrators should create a supportive atmosphere with mutual respect and acceptance through professional development, classes, and graduate work. In this study, some administrators characterized themselves as having little or no training when teaching students with disabilities. The results of this study should provide information to improve collaborative efforts and training institutions for structuring pre-service curriculum and clinical experiences. Administrators who received inclusive training demonstrated more positive attitudes toward inclusion. The school district will need to provide several training opportunities for administrators to participate in effective training and staff development dealing with inclusive practices. Administrators who received credit hours in special education during their college preparation exhibited more positive attitudes toward inclusion.

There has been a great deal of effort resulting from the IDEA 1997 to promote inclusion for special education students (Yell, 1995). Inclusion involved children accessing the general education curriculum within the classroom with non-disabled peers (Hallahan& Kauffman, 2005).The change from special education self-contained

classrooms, resource rooms, and modified schedules to the inclusive general education classroom has caused many barriers for the administrators. Administrators with no training were timid. According to the findings in this research, many of the administrators lacked training in the special education process.

The No Child Left Behind Act (Public Law 107-110) placed more responsibility on general educators and special educators to improve the delivery of services and additional accountability demands. Educator informed this researcher that they lacked the time to plan collaboratively in the inclusive process (Merkt, 2011). In addition, general education teachers were disheartened by the amount of paperwork required when teaching students with disabilities (Abernathy, 2011).

This study suggested that administrators and educators needed to engage in collaborative efforts and to communicate to assist general education students as well as special education students. Administrators reported *positive* or *somewhat positive* experiences dealing with students with disabilities, such as specific learning disability in the school setting (100%), deafness/hearing impairment (71.4%), speech and language impairment (95.2%), other health impairment (90.5%), and physical disabilities (85.7%).

Administrators must coordinate schedules and planning times for educators and effective learning environments that include accommodations for students with disabilities in the inclusive process. According to the results, most administrators either *agreed* or *strongly agreed:* "*schools with both students with severe and profound disabilities and students without disabilities enhance the learning experiences of students with severe/profound disabilities*" (95.2%); that "R*egular educators can do a lot to help*

students with severe/profound disabilities" (81.0%); that "*students without disabilities can profit from contact with students with severe /profound disabilities*" (100%).

However, several administrators felt unprepared because of the lack of special education training and coursework in their training, as indicated by the 90% who lacked training and struggle with the inclusive process.

The *least restrictive environment* was another important component for students with disabilities. This researcher suggested that both the administrator and the educator must find the correct environment for the student based on individual needs or their individual education program (IEP). Bateman and Linden (1998) contended that all students with disabilities must have their requirements met within their IEP. The authors maintained that the total student would benefit academically and emotionally in the inclusive general education classroom. Student accommodations and modifications should be implemented in the inclusive education classroom to give the student the necessary support.

Administrators' involved in this study suggested that the students be placed in a full-time regular education class with supports. The specific disabilities identified by this suggestion included: specific learning disabilities (42.9%), blindness/visual impairment (52.4%), deafness/hearing impairment (52.4%), speech and language impairment (66.7%), other health impairment (42.9%), and physical disability (66.7%).

Chapter V: Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of elementary and secondary administrators in a Southeastern region of the United States school district. This study was based on data collected through the use of an adapted version of Praisner's Principals and Inclusion Survey. Implementation of an effective inclusive program demanded continuing training as well as collaborative consultation for normal and special education teachers, administrators and parents. Teachers were required to be thoroughly trained to work with various students with disabilities for inclusion program to be effective (de Boer, 2009).

It was thus evident that the implementation of inclusion in any school was not easy and required extensive preparations particularly in training of the administrators. In addition, training for the schools leadership was required to make sure the school adhered to the inclusion law. As explained by Balt (2000), school principals required relevant and practical training that acquainted them with skills required with managing operations of schools while at the same time ensuring that the right services were accorded to the disabled students.

Elementary and secondary administrators may utilize the study results at school building level. The findings could help to provide on-site development of improved collaborative efforts for general education and special education teachers. Moreover, the findings would allow for meaningful, productive conversations and dialogue for each

educator. Each educator will be able to share lesson plans, class groupings, and strategies with one another.

In addition, teacher-training institutions in colleges and universities can integrate the findings of this study to improve the clinical experiences their students receive in preparation for the inclusive general education classroom. The colleges and universities can create different modules to inform their students about negative, moderate, and positive attitudes of general education and special education teachers toward teaching students with disabilities and inclusive practices.

Paperwork and behavior issues concerning students in the inclusive classroom setting were found to be the main struggles that the administrators faced. Majority of the administrators were found to be concerned about federal court cases such as *Brown vs. Board of Education* (347 U.S. 483, 1954) in which several school systems lost cases and settlements after they were found not to be implementing the students IEP accurately.

The data collected from this study suggested that students with low-incidence disabilities such as hearing impairment, visual impairment, speech, and language impairment, needed a least restrictive placement in a full-time regular education class with accommodation supports.

Furthermore, the findings of this research supported the following suggestions for implementation in order to ensure that all stakeholders understood the inclusive process; develop a professional learning team; hold weekly meetings and conferences; and provide collaborative planning periods.

1. Develop a Professional Learning Team (PLT). The professional learning team can be organized by the school leader/administrator. This team is made up of 4-10

educators within each school. These educators pick topics that are pertinent to the survival of the school. Some examples of topics include behavior management, effective lessons/ lesson plans, effective strategies, and co-teaching tips. The objective of the team is to keep the staff and faculty informed about current trends, literature, and information on the chosen topic throughout the year.

2. Hold weekly meetings and conferences with the co-teachers. The meetings would help ensure all members are communicating together and provide support and guidance to faculty members. During this time, each educator or co-teacher can identify their roles or parts of instruction that seem important. Likewise, the administrator can provide formative feedback, such as guidance if one of the educators did not realize his/her role. During the meeting, the administrator can provide different modules (teach, support, team teaching) to the educators.

3. Schedule the special educator and regular educator the same planning period. Having the same planning period allows collaboration on the implementation of effective lesson plans for general education and special education students. Effective lesson plans engage both general education students as well as special education students. These plans keep their attention and provide meaningful instruction and lectures for the students. In addition, the lesson plans are created to ensure educational standards and learning needs of each *group* are met without sacrificing the needs of the *learner*.

Over the past 20 years, the special education process has been altered as federal law has continued to demand that a range of educational settings be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities. A fundamental acceptance (Hallahan& Kauffman, 2005) of *inclusion* of all students with disabilities should be integrated into the inclusive

general education classroom. Attending to the needs of disabled students was seen as an obligation of administrators, special educators, and general educators. This study revealed that administrators in the Southeastern region of the United States school district held a positive attitude towards inclusion. More positive attitudes toward inclusion were seen in administrators with a background in the special education process and those who attended training opportunities focusing on inclusive practices. As a result of this study, the need for individualized or group training was vital for the successful application of inclusion.

Additional personnel tasks and paperwork have modified the administrator's role (Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, &Harrniss, 2001). According to Goor and Schwenn (1995), administrators often felt unprepared for their roles addressing the needs of students in special education and educators of special education programs. Goor and Schwenn (1995) stated that the administrators had to take a leadership role to support the development of students with disabilities. In addition, Goor and Schwenn (1995) reported that many states did not complete the necessary paperwork or felt hard pressed by requirements of the referral and intervention special education policy, guidelines, and procedures.

The least restrictive placement students generally made up a small percentage of all students with disabilities. The large number of administrators holding positive attitudes about inclusion may lead to increased support and services for students in the inclusive education classroom. Attitudes of administrators were important to implementing a successful inclusive environment for students with disabilities. Carrying out the vision of administrators towards inclusion was very difficult from school to

school. Administrator's attitudes were developed over time and years of experience as an educator, instructor, or administrator. Perceptions of administrator's were swayed by group dynamics, placement, and disability categories. In addition, class size also factored into administrator's perception regarding the advantages between students' with disabilities and placement decisions. The perceptions of the administrators were important because administrator set the tone of the school building. If the administrators had a positive attitude towards students with disabilities than the other members in the building followed their lead.

Inclusion process was very difficult to implement from school to school. This process varied from each grade level (elementary, middle, and high school). The challenges included the size of the student population, faculty members, groupings of students, and the rapport of educators working together. All of these components had to be aligned for the inclusive process to be effective.

This study suggested that several elementary and secondary administrators who lacked training and coursework in the special education process struggled when implementing the inclusive concept. Administrators tended to think that students with specific learning disabilities should be placed in general inclusive classrooms. This study also suggested that students with disabilities benefited from half-day resource and half-day general education. The researcher encountered discussions with current administrators who acknowledged that student reports such as testing and behavior issues demonstrated the need for half-day resource and half-day general education (Merkt, 2011). Administrators who scheduled courses according to teacher characteristics found inclusion to be pleasant. These characteristics included having traits such as patience,

tolerance, and flexibility. Administrators were able to pair co-educators to ensure they were instructing as a team and communicating with each other. This overlap and collaboration opportunity enhanced student learning and controlled classroom behaviors. Based on this study's findings, specific implication include improved collaboration, professional training, and clinical experiences for future teachers.

Implications for Further Research

This study assessed elementary and secondary administrators' attitudes toward students with disabilities in the inclusive general education classroom and implementing inclusive education practices. The research recommended the following areas for further research;

1. Obtaining a larger, truly random sample of schools from various socioeconomic levels and replicating the study. Moreover, additional studies could focus on other demographics of a similar population.

2. Replicating this study to include an interview process with administrators of schools with and without inclusive classrooms in their districts.

3. Examining elementary, middle, and secondary school teacher's attitudes toward inclusion and the factors that influence their attitudes.

4. Examining if instructional leadership programs have an influence on administrators toward inclusion.

5. Examining critical success factors of the inclusion concept.

6. Examining the attitudes of students with no learning disabilities in the inclusive classrooms.

7. Examining roles played by students with no learning difficulty in the success of inclusive classrooms.

8. Examining government approach toward inclusive classrooms.

References

Abernathy T. (2011).*Decatur City Educator in Alabama*.Montgomery, AL: Author

Alabama State Board of Education. *Reference Rules*.Montgomery, AL: Author

Alabama Virtual Library.*Alabama State Department of Education*. Montgomery, AL:
Author.

Anderson, K. M. (1999).*Examining principals' special education knowledge and the
inclusiveness of their schools.*(Doctoral dissertation, University of North Carolina
at Greensboro, 1999).*Dissertation Abstracts International, 61*(02A), 431.

Antonak, R. F., &Larrivee, B. (1995).Psychometric analysis and revision of the opinions
relative to mainstreaming scale. *Exceptional Children*, *62*(2), 139-149.

Austin, V. L. (2001). "Teachers' beliefs about co-teaching."*Remedial and Special
Education, 22*(4), 245-258.

Baker, J. M., &Zigmond, N. (1990). Are regular education classes equipped to
accommodate students with learning disabilities? *Exceptional Children, 56,* 515-
526.

Baker, J., &Zigmond, N. (1995). The meaning and practice of inclusion for students with
learning disabilities: Themes and implications from the five cases. *Journal of
Special Education, 29*(2), 163-180.

Balt, S. D. (2000). *Preparing principals for leadership in special education.*Doctoral
dissertation, University of California Riverside, 2000).*Dissertation Abstracts*

International, 6(06A), 2112.

Bang, M. (1993). *Factors related to the use of instructional strategies that facilitate inclusion of students with moderate and severe impairments in general education classes.*Annual Conference of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, Chicago, IL.

Bateman, B., & Linden, M. A. (1998).*Better IEPs: How to develop legally correct and educationally useful programs* (3rd ed.). Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Bateman, D., & Bateman, C. F. (2001).*A principal's guide to special education.* Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Bateman, D. & Bateman C. (2002).*What Does a Principal Need To Know About Inlcusion*? Arlington, VA : ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education.

Bennet, A. (1932).*Subnormal children in elementary grades*. New York: Columbia University, Teacher's College, Bureau of Publications.

Boscardin, M. L. (2005). The administrative role in transforming secondary schools to support inclusive evidence-based practices.*American Secondary Education, 33*(3), 21-32.

Brophy, J. E., & Good, T. L. (1986).Teacher behavior and student achievement.In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching.* New York: McMillan.

Brown v. Board of Educ., 347 U. S. 483 (1954).

Brownell, M. T., &Pajares, F. (1999).Teacher efficacy and perceived success in mainstreaming students with learning and behavior problems.*Teacher Education and Special Education, 22*(3), 154-164.

Brophy, J. (1987). Synthesis of research on strategies for motivating students to learn. *Educational leadership*, 40 – 48.

Bowser, B. A. (2001). Principal shortage.*PBS Online News Hour*. Retrieved September 17, 2011, from www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/education/jan-june01/principal_5-22.html

Butler, J. E., &Boscardin, M. L. (1997). Understanding mainstreaming through the perceptions of all participants: A case study. *Exceptionality, 7*(1), 19-35.

Causton-Theoharis, J., Theoharis, G., Trezek, B. (2008)."Teaching pre-service teachers to design inclusive instruction: A lesson-planning template."*International Journal of Inclusive Education, 113*(4), 381-399.

Chaffin, J. (1975). Will the real "mainstreaming" program please stand up! (Or…should Dunn have done it?) In E. L. Meyen, G. A. Vergason, & R. J. Whelan (Eds.), *Alternative for teaching exceptional children*.6p. Denver, CO: Love.

CEP Report, (2007).*Answering the Question That Matters Most: Has Student Achievement Increased Since No Child Left Behind*?

Christenson, S. L., Ysseldyke, J. E., &Thurlow, M. L. (1989). Critical instructional factors for students with mild handicaps: An integrative review. *Remedial and Special Education, 10,* 21-31.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (1993). Title 34; Education; Parts 1-399, July 1, 1993. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. (This document contains the complete federal regulations used to guide implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.)

Cohen, P., &Forgan, J. W. (1998). Inclusion or pull-out: Which do students prefer?

Journal of Learning Disabilities, 31(2), 148-158.

Cook, B. G. (2001). A comparison of teachers' attitudes toward their included students
with mild and severe disabilities.*Journal of Special Education, 34*(4), 203-213.

Cook, B. G. (2002). Inclusive attitudes, strengths, and weaknesses of preservice general
educators enrolled in a curriculum infusion teacher preparation program. *Teacher
Education and Special Education,25*(3), 262-277.

Cook, B. G., Tankersley, M., Cook, L., & Landrum, T. J. (2000).Teachers' attitudes
toward their included students with disabilities.*Exceptional Children, 67*(1), 115-
135.

Cook, R. (2001). Have things got this much better? An analysis of Subject Review
scores, 1998-2000.*Higher Education Review, 33,* 3-11.

Cook L., & Friend M.(1995). Co-teaching: Guidelines for effective practices. *Focus of
Exceptional Children*, 28 (3), 1 – 16.

Cook L., & Friend M., (1996). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals.
White Plains, New York*: Longman Publishers.

Daane, C. J., Beirne-Smith, M., & Latham, D. (2000).Administrators' and teachers'
perceptions of the collaborative efforts of inclusion in the elementary
grades.*Education, 121*(2), 331-339.

deBettencourt, L. U. (1999). General educators' attitudes toward students with mild
disabilities and their use of instructional strategies: Implications for training.
Remedial and Special Education, 20, 152-161.

deBoer R. S. (2009). Successful Inclusion for Students with Autism: Creating a complete,
effective ASD Inclusion Program. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Deiner L. P. (6th Ed.) (2012). *Inclusive Early Childhood Education: Development,*
    Resources and Practice. Cengage Learning: USA.

Dukes, C., & Lamar-Dukes, P. (2009). Inclusion by design: Engineering inclusive
    practices in secondary schools.*Teaching Exceptional Children, 41*(3), 16-23.

Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, Pub.L. No. 94-142, § 602, 89 Stat.
    775 (1975).ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education
    (2002).*Legal foundations 1: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the*
    Americans with Disabilities Act. Reston, VA: Author.

Erchul, W. P., & Martens, B. K. (2002).*School consultation: Conceptual and empirical*
    bases of practice (2nd ed.). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

Fraenkel, J. R., &Wallen, N. E. (1996).*How to design and evaluate research in education*
    (3rd.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Friend, M. (2000).Myths and misunderstandings about professional
    collaboration.*Remedial and Special Education, 21,* 130-132.

Friend, M., & Cook L. (1992). It's my turn: The ethics of collaboration. *Journal of*
    Educational and Psychological Consultation, 3, 181-184.

Friend, M., & Cook, L. (1996).*Interactions: Collaboration Skills for Professionals* (2nd
    ed.)*.* White Plains: Longman.

Fuchs, D., Fuchs L. S., & Fernstrom, P. J. (1993). A Conservative Approach to special
    education reform: Mainstreaming through transenvironmental programming and
    curriculum-based measurement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 30, 149
    – 177.

Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S. (1995). What's "special" about special education? *Phi Delta*

Kappan, 76, 522-530.

Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S., & Stecker, P. M. (2010).The "blurring" of special education in
a new continuum of general education placements and services. *Exceptional Children*, 76, 301-323.

Fullan, M. (1994).*The new meaning of change* (2nd.). New York: Teachers College
Press.

Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2003).*Educational research: An introduction* (7th
ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Gartner, A., &Lipsky, D. K. (1997). Beyond special education: Toward a quality system
for all students. *HarvardEducational Review, 57,* 367-395.

Gaylord-Ross, R. (1990). *In issues and research in special education.*New York, NY:
Teachers College Press.

Gersten, R., Keating, T, Yovanoff, P., & Harris, M. (2001).Working in special education:
Factors that enhance special educators' intent to stay. *Exceptional Children, 67*(4), 549-567.

Gibson, S., &Dembo, M. H. (1984). Teacher efficacy: A construct validation. *Journal of
Educational Psychology, 76,* 569-582.

Glomb, N. K., & Morgan, D. P. (1991).Resource room teachers' use of strategies that
promote the success of handicapped students in regular classrooms.*Journal of Special Education, 25,* 221-235.

Goor, M. B., &Schwenn, J. O. (1995).Administrative programming for individuals with
problem behaviors. In F. E. Obiakor& B. Algozzine (Eds.), *Managing problem behaviors in the 21st century: Perspectives for special educators and other*

professionals (pp. 240-267). Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

Green, S. B., Salkind, N. J., &Akey, T. M. (2000).*Using SPSS for Windows: Analyzing and understanding data.*(2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Hallahan, D. P., & Kauffman, J. M. (2005). *Special education: What it is and why we need it.* Boston MA: Pearson Allyn and Bacon.

Hardman, M. B., Drew, C. T., Egan, M., & Wolfe, B. (1983).*Human exceptionality.*Boston, MA: Allyn& Bacon.

Heller, H. W., Spooner, M., Spooner, F., &Algozzine, R. (1992). Helping general educators accommodate students with disabilities. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 15,* 269-274.

Hines, R. A., (2001). *Inclusion in Middle School.Champaign.* IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Hunt, P., Soto, G., Maier, J., &Doering, K. (2003). Collaborative teaming to support students at risk and students with severe disabilities in general education classrooms.*Exceptional Children, 69*(3), 315-332.

IDEA (2005).Sec. 300.8 Child with a Disability. Retrieved from http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/,root,regs,300,A,300%252EB

Imber M., & Van Geel T. (3rd Ed.)(2004). *Education Law.*New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Irmsher, K. (1995). *Inclusive Education in Practice: The Lessons of Pioneering School Districts.* (Report No. ISSN-0095-6694). Eugene OR: Oregon School Study Council, University of Oregon.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments, 20 U.S.C., §167, Sec. 1400, et

seq. (1990).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Amendments of 1997, 20 U.S.C., § 33,

    Secs.1400-1485, et seq.

Jaeger T. P., Bowman A. C., (2002). *Disability Matters: Legal and Pedagogical Issues of*

    Disability in Education. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Jaeger T. P.,& Bowman A. C., (2004). *Disability Matters: Legal and Pedagogical Issues*

    of Disability in Education. Library of Congress Cataloging: U.S.

Jordan A., (1994). Classroom teachers' instructional interactions with regular, at-risk, and

    exceptional students. *Remedial and Special Education*.18 (2), 82 – 93.

Jordan, R., & Powell, S. (1984). "Whose curriculum? Critical notes on integration and

    entitlement." *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 9,* 27-39.

Kauffman, J. M., Mostert, M. P., Trent, S. C., &Hallahan, D. P. (1998).*Managing*

    classroom behavior: A reflective case-based approach (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn&

    Bacon.

Kerns, G. M. (1996). Preparation for role changes in general education and special

    education: Dual certification graduates' perspectives. *Education, 117,* 306-310.

Klinger, J. K., Vaughn, S. Schumm, J. S., Cohen, P., Forgan, J. W. (1998). Inclusion or

    Pull-out: Which do students prefer? *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 31*(2), 148.

Kochhar, C. and Erickson, M. R. (1993). *Business Education Partnership for the 21ˢᵗ*

    Century: A practical guide for school improvement. Gaithersburg: Aspen

    Publishers.

Kupper, L. (1997). *The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997:*

    Curriculum. Washington, DC: National Information Center for Children and

Youth with Disabilities.

Larrivee, B. (1982). Factors underlying regular classroom teachers' attitudes toward

mainstreaming.*Psychology in the Schools, 19,* 374-379.

Larrivee, B., & Cook, L. (1979).Mainstreaming: A study of the variables affecting

teacher attitude.*Journal of Special Education, 13,* 315-324.

Lipsky, D. K., & Gartner, A. (1996). Inclusion, school restructuring, and the remaking of

American society.*Harvard Education Review, 66*(4), 769-796.

Liston, A. (2004). *A qualitative study of secondary co-teachers.* Orange, CA: Argonsy

University.

Little, J. W. (1994). Teachers' professional development in a climate of educational

reform-systematic reform: Perspectives on personalized education. *Educational

Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 15*(2), 129-151.

Little, M. E., & Robinson, S. M. (1997). Renovating and refurbishing the field experience

structures for novice teachers. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 30*(4), 441-443.

Lombardi, T. P., &Hunka, N. J. (2001).Preparing general education teachers for inclusive

classrooms: Assessing the process.*Teacher Education and Special Education,

24*(3), 183-197.

Maccini P., & Charles A. H., (2000).Effects of a Problem Solving Strategy on the

IntroductoryAlgebra Performance of Secondary Students with Learning

Disabilities.*Learning Disability Research and Practice 15, Winter 2000,* 10- 21.

Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, T. E. (2001).Promoting inclusion in secondary

classrooms. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 24(4),* 265-274.

Mastropieri, M. A.,&Thomas E. S., (2000).*The Inclusive Classroom: Strategies for*

Effective Instruction. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

McIntosh, R., Vaughn, S., Schumm, J. S., Haager, D., & Lee, O. (1994).Observations of students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms.*Exceptional Children, 60*(3), 249-261.

Mercer C. D., (1997).*Students with learning disabilities*. Upper Saddle River, N. J. : Prentice Hall.

Merkt W. (2011).*Decatur City Special Educator in Alabama*.

Metcalf-Turner, P., &Fischetti, J. (1996). Professional development schools: Persisting questions and lessons learned. *Journal of Teacher Education, 47,* 292-299.

Minke, K., Bear, G. G., Deemer, S. A., Griffin, S. M. (1996). "Teachers' experiences with inclusive classrooms: Implications for special education reform." *The Journal of Special Education, 30,* 152-186.

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Handicaps.(1987). *National directory of special education personnel preparation programs.*Washington, DC: Author.

O'Neil, J. (1994). Can inclusion work? A conversation with Jim Kauffman and Mara Sapon-Shevin.*Education Leadership, 52,* 7-11.

O'Neil, J. (1995). Can inclusion work? A conversation with Jim Kauffman and Mara Sapon-Shevin.*Education Leadership, 52,* 7-11.

Office of Special Education Programs.(1999). IDEA *1997 Training Module.* Retrieved from www.ed.gov/offices/osers/osep

OSEP, 1999. *Office of the Special Education and Rehabilitative Services*. Retrieved from www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/products.html

Patterson, J., Bowling, D., & Marshall, C. (2000). "Are principals prepared to manage special education dilemmas?" *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 613.*

Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 343 F. Supp. 279 (E.D., Pa, 1972).

Peterson, K. (2002). The professional development of principals: Innovations and opportunities. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 38*(2), 213-232.

Pitts D., (1999). How us Court Works: Brown Vs Board of education. The Supreme Court Decision that Changed a Nation.*Issues of Democracy*, Vol 4, 38 – 48.

Praisner, C. L. (2000). "Attitudes of elementary school principals toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classes." Lehigh University: *Dissertation Abstracts International, 61*(7).

Praisner, C. L. (2003). Attitudes of elementary school principals toward the inclusion of students with disabilities.*Exceptional Children, 69*, 135-145.

Public Law (107 - 110). *Public Law.* Retrieved from
http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/107-110.pdf

Reynolds, M. C., & Birch, J. W. (1997).The interface between regular and special education.*Teacher Education and Special Education, 1,* 12-27.

Rhys, H. J. (1996). The principal's role in special education: Building-level administrators' knowledge of special education issues as these apply to their administrative role (Doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas, 1996). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 57*(07A), 2785.

Rigden, D. W. (1996). What teachers have to say about teacher education. *Perspective:*

Council for Basic Education, 8(1), 106-118.

Sage, D. D., &Burrello, L. C. (1994). "Leadership in educational reform: An administrator's guide to changes in special education." Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Salend, S. J. (2000). Strategies and Resources to evaluate the impact of inclusion programs on students. *Intervention in School and Clinic,* 35 (5), 264 – 270.

Salend S. J. (2001). *Creating Inclusive Classrooms: effective and reflective practices*. Upper Sandle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Salend, S. J. (1994). *Effective mainstreaming: Creating inclusive classrooms* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: MacMillan.

Salend, S. J. (1999). So what's with our inclusion program? Evaluating educators' experiences and perceptions.*Teaching Exceptional Children, 32*(2), 46-54.

Schumm, J. S., Vaughn. S., Gordon, J., &Rothlein, L. (1994). General education teachers' beliefs, skills, and practices in planning for mainstreamed students with learning disabilities. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 17*(1), 22-37.

Schumm, J. S., York, J., & Tunidor, M. (1995). Issues raised in the name of Inclusion: Perspective of educators, parents and students. *The journal of the Association for persons with Severe Handicap*, 20, 31 – 44.

Scott, B. J., Vitale, M. R., & Masten, W. G. (1998).Implementing instructional adaptations for students with disabilities in regular classrooms: A literature review.*Remedial and Special Education, 19*(2), 106-119.

Scruggs, T. E., &Mastropieri, M. A. (1996). Teacher perceptions of mainstreaming/inclusion, 1958-1995: A research synthesis. *Exceptional Children,*

63(1), 59-74.

Snell, M. E., &Janney, R. (1993).*Including and supporting students with disabilities within general education.* In program leadership for serving students with disabilities (pp. 219-262). Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Tech.

Soodak, L. C., Podell, D. M., & Lehman, L. R. (1998). Teacher, student, and school attributes as predictors of teachers' responses to inclusion. *The Journal of Special Education, 31,* 480-497.

Stainback, S., & Stainback, W. (1987)."Facilitating merger through personnel preparation."*Teacher Education and Special Education, 10,* 185-190.

The Alabama State Department of Education, 2012. *Education*. Retrieved from www.alsde.edu/home/Default.aspx

Theoharis J. C. & Theoharis G., (2008). Creating inclusive schools for all students. *The* School Administrator, September 2008, p 24 – 30.

TnGov (2008). *Rules of State Board of Education.Chapter 0520- 1-9 Special education program and services.* Retrieved from www.t.gov/sos/rules/0520/0520-01/0520-01-09.pdf

Turnbull, H. R. II., (1993). *Free appropriate public education: The law and children with disabilities.* Denver, CO: Love Publishing.

U. S. Department of Education (2001). *Twenty-third annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Jessup, MD: Education Publications Center.

U. S. Department of Education (2002). No Child Left Behind. Washington, DC: Retrieved from www.nochildleftbehind.gov

Vaughn S., Gordon, J., Gordon, S., & Rothlein I., (1994). General Education teachers' beliefs, skills and practices in planning for mainstreamed students with learning disabilities. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 17 (1), 22 – 37.

Vaughn, S., & Schumm, J. S. (1994).Middle school teachers' planning for students with disabilities.*Remedial and Special Education, 15* 152-161.

Walsh, J., & Snyder, D. (1994). Cooperative teaching: An effective model for all students. *Case In Point, 2,* 7-19.

Walther-Thomas, C. S. (1997). Co-teaching experiences: The benefits and problems that teachers and principals report over time. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 30,* 395-407.

Webster's New World Dictionary (2nd ed.) (1998). New York, NY: Random House.

White, A. E., & White, L. L. (1992).A collaborative model for students with mild disabilities in middle schools*. Focus on Exceptional Childr*en*, 24*(9), 1-10.

Wigle, S. E., & Wilcox, D. J. (1996). Inclusion: Criteria for the preparation of educational personnel. *Remedial and Special Education, 17*(5), 323-328.

Will M. (1986). Educating students with learning problems; A shared responsibility. *Exceptional Children, 52,* 411-415.

Winzer, M. A. (1993).*The history of special education: From isolation to integration.* Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Wood, J., (1993). *Mainstreaming: a practical approach for teachers*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Merrill Publishing Company.

Yell, M. L. (1995). Least restrictive environment, inclusion, and students with disabilities: A legal analysis. *Journal of Special Education, 28,* 389-404.

York, I., &Tunidor, H. (1995). Issues raised in the name of inclusion: Perspectives of

educators, parents, and students. Journal *of Association for Persons with Severe*

Handicaps, 20, 31-44.

Ysseldyke, J. E., Thurlow, M. I., Wotruba, J. W., &Nania, P. A. (1990). Instructional

arrangements: Perceptions from general education. *Teaching Exceptional*

Children, 22(4), 40-48.

Zigmond, N., & Baker, J. (1990). Mainstream experiences for learning disabled students

(Project MELD): Preliminary report. *Exceptional Children, 56,* 176-185.