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An Analysis of Inclusion in the Field of Special Education

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AN ANALYSIS OF INCLUSION IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

 This review of literature explores the many different aspects of including a student with

disabilities into the general education classroom 100% of the school day. The topics

explored include; the history of inclusion, the social and emotional effects of inclusion,

the active engagement of included students, the importance of social acceptance from

peers, the teachers' attitudes and opinions of inclusion, the students' opinions of

inclusion, and the parents' opinions of inclusion. The goal is to expose some of the

negative outcomes of inclusion because of recent emphasis on inclusion in the last

decade. The researcher found that inclusion should be based on a case-by-case basis and

evaluated annually to decide if each student is able to be included in the general

education classroom.

     Keywords: inclusion, mainstreaming, special education, pullout programs, least

restrictive environment, students with disabilities

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Analysis of Inclusion in the Field of Special Education

In recent years, there has been a drastic change in the area of special education. The idea of inclusive education became internationally acclaimed at a 1990 conference in Thailand when the United Nations promoted the idea of "education for all" (David & Kuyini, 2012, p.157). There has been a strong push towards including all special needs students into a general education classroom "as a means to remove barriers, improve outcomes and remove discrimination" (Lindsay, 2003, p.3). This push was caused by the passing of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990 and 1997 as well is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) in 2004. These acts mandated that students should be taught in the least restrictive environment to the "maximum extent appropriate" (Obiakor, 2011, p.10). The purpose of IDEA is to give every student equal education, even if one of them has special needs. The main philosophy behind inclusion is that of basic human rights. This philosophy implies that peer acceptance should be one of the main outcomes of this type of schooling and thus giving students with disabilities more dignity and a better quality of life (David & Kuyini, 2012). With the push for including each of these students into the general education classes, the question arises if the students are really benefitting from being placed in these classes and where the line should be drawn to start pulling the students out of the regular classroom to offer them more individualized and specialized attention.

The main challenge with the idea of including all students with disabilities in general education classes is that each of these students, just like traditional students, is different and learns in many different ways. Some of these students are nonverbal and

some simply do not have the same intellectual capacity of traditional students (Jacob,

Olisaemeka & Edozie, 2015). Disabilities vary from very mild learning disabilities to

extreme emotional disturbances or severe impairments. Students with severe emotional

disturbances often have outbursts and can become violent to anyone in their path. All of

these reasons are why it is quite important to study whether or not inclusion is effective

for all students.

Throughout this thesis there will be terminology that is commonly used in the

field of education. The first of these terms is the term *inclusion*. For the purposes of this

thesis, the term inclusion means including special education students in the general

education class for 100% of the school day. The term *mainstream* means including

special education students in the general classroom for part of the day and having them in

a special education class for the other part of the day. The term *least restrictive*

environment (LRE) means "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with

disabilities…should be educated with children who are not disabled, and… special

classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular

educational environment should occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is

such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services

cannot be achieve satisfactorily" (Douvanis & Hulsey, 2002, p. 1). Finally, the term

pullout program will mean that the special education student will be pulled out of the

general education classroom and placed into a specialized program. A pullout program is

generally used for elementary schools because in secondary school, the students usually

change classrooms on a normal basis and would not need to be pulled out. They would

just go to their special education class for the periods that they need individualized

instruction.

The topic of inclusion will always be debated in the field of special education.

There are pros and cons for including all students in the general education classroom.

Lindsay (2003) points out that much of the research has focused on either the students'

rights or the effectiveness of their education, and the focus needs to be on both of these

outcomes when it comes to inclusion. The purpose of this thesis is to expose some of the

negatives of inclusion, but also discuss some of the positives that exist because of

inclusion. There is not one answer to the debate concerning the placement of student

with disabilities, but research can be done to see how the education system can better

serve students with special needs. Through research of previous studies I will identify

the social and emotional effects of inclusion, I will identify if included students are

actively engaged with their learning, and identify the opinions of inclusion from teachers,

students, and parents. Through this research, I hope to answer the following questions:

1. What are the social and emotional effects of inclusion?

2. Are included students actively engaged in their learning?

3. What do teachers, students and parents have to say about inclusion?

To answer these questions, I will compare and discuss studies done all over the world in

this field. Each study has limitations, as it is quite difficult to study students with special

needs because of the many laws protecting their privacy. Even with each study's

limitations, I hope to make a clear depiction of the positives and negatives of inclusion as

well as discuss some changes that could be made to better serve students with disabilities.

Methodology

This thesis will primarily utilize literature to research the topic. Previous research that has been done will be combined with existing theories to discuss the positives and negatives of inclusion. All of the literature used will be taken from databases that provide peer reviewed scholarly sources, such as the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database. ERIC, which guided the researcher to the proper sources, is a database used strictly for education. Each piece of literature used will be examined for credibility using the database Scopus. The literature will be discussed in full detail and compared using different sources. The comparison of literature will be discussed with some recommendations of how the school system can better serve students with severe disabilities.

Some key words that were searched in the databases to find scholarly research were: "inclusion," "mainstreaming," "effects," "students," and "disabilities" as well as a combination of these words. Searching these key words and phrases was found to be the most effective way to research the topic at hand. Many scholarly sources were found in the research process, but were discarded in this thesis due to the amount of limitations that the study contained. If the study had more than four limitations pointed out by its authors, the study was thought to have too many limitations.

History of Inclusion

The debate of inclusion is not restricted to the school system; it has been taken to the courts many times in the past, and will most likely be something that will continue to be taken to the courts in the future. The reason for bringing many of these issues to courts, even as far as the Supreme Court, is because it is a topic that is easily debated because of the wording the courts have chosen to use. The problem arose when Congress

wrote the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. This act was the forerunner to IDEA and it did not give an absolute definition of LRE nor did it give a definition to mainstreaming. The actual definition of these terms was left up to the highest jurisdiction courts in the geographical area of the schools (Douvanis & Hulsey, 2002). Since Congress did not choose to define these terms, the definition could vary depending on where each student lived. Many cases wound up going all the way up to the Supreme Court to give the final say on the issue.

Between 1983 and 1999 there were ten popular cases taken to the Supreme Court, which helped to set the tone of what was meant by the terms LRE and mainstreaming. These cases were; Roncker v. Walter in 1983, Daniel R. R. v. State Board of Education in 1989, Greer v. Rome in 1991, Oberti v. Clementon in 1993, Sacramento v. Rachel H. in 1994, Light v. Parkway also in 1994, Clyde v. Puyallup in 1997, Hartmann v. Loudoun also in 1997, Hudson v. Bloomfield Hills again in 1997, and Doe v. Arlington County in 1999 (Douvanis & Hulsey, 2002). Each of these cases had its similarities, most of them being parents of a student with disabilities fighting the local school board or state for pulling their child out of the general education classroom. In the cases in 1983 and 1989, the results were similar in coming up with two questions to be asked when deciding if a student should be in an inclusive classroom or a segregated classroom. The questions were in regards to whether or not the student can be properly educated in an inclusive setting with extra aids and whether or not the student was being mainstreamed to the maximum extent appropriate (Douvanis & Hulsey, 2002).

The court's ruling on each of the cases has gone back and forth on favoring the parents or the school system, proving that including special needs students into the

classroom can be a hypersensitive concept to argue in the court system. The rulings of

the courts have said that the IEP committee must be able to rationalize not placing the

student in the general education setting. Contradictory to that, the courts have also came

to the conclusion that "inclusion is a right not a privilege" in the case of Oberti v.

Clementon where the student was disruptive in a general education setting and the school

wanted to place him in a more restrictive setting (Douvanis & Hulsey, 2002). The courts

always look for an educational benefit for all students involved in the case. If the courts

see that no educational benefit is coming from placing a student in a general education

setting, they are likely to rule towards placing the student in a more restrictive

educational setting. The courts also look for whether the student is violent or rowdy in a

general education setting. If the student tends to be violent or rowdy, the courts are also

likely to lean towards placing the student in a more restrictive environment (Douvanis &

Hulsey, 2002).

Literature Review

This review of literature will discuss many areas of inclusion of special education

students in the general education classroom. The goal of inclusion is for special needs

students to be in the general education classroom 100% of the day, whereas a mainstream

philosophy would keep special education students in the general education classroom for

part of the day and a special education classroom for the other part. The topics to be

covered in this review are: 1) the academic and social effects of inclusion, 2) the

importance of social acceptance from peers, 3) the importance of communication in the

educational environment, 4) the active engagement of included students 5) the teachers'

attitudes and opinions toward inclusion, 6) the students' opinions of inclusion, and 7) the

parents' opinions of inclusion. Each of these areas needs to be taken into account when

discussing if inclusion is the best option for students with disabilities.

Academic and Social Effects of Inclusion

Much research has been done in the area of the academic and social effects of

inclusion on both the general education population and the special education population.

In fact, much of the reason that there is such a large push for inclusion is so that special

needs students can get social interaction with general education students. Krull, Wilbert,

and Henneman (2014), studied students with classroom behavior problems (CBP) and

classroom learning difficulties (CLD) and the effects that their disabilities had on them

socially. The study was conducted by using a questionnaire given to students asking

which of their classmates they would classify as mean, which they would like to sit next

to, as well as questions about their own academic self-concept. The results clearly

indicated that not only did their peers socially exclude the students with CBP and CLD,

but the students with disabilities had a low academic self-concept.

Another study conducted by Frederickson, Simmonds, Evans, and Soulsby (2007)

found that students classified by their schools as having special needs were four times

more likely to be socially rejected by their peers and students who had formerly attended

special needs schools were not as likely to be selected as popular by their regularly

progressing peers. Also backing up these results were Tekinarslan and Kucuker (2015)

who were researching if the *Children's Loneliness Scale* was a valid way to determine if

a student felt lonely. Their results indicated that the *Children's Loneliness Scale* was in

fact valid. In the midst of their research, they observed that students with disabilities had

a significantly higher chance of feeling lonely in an inclusive class because they felt

rejected by their peers. In fact, Veck (2013) found that many adults with autism still live with traumatic experiences they encountered in their inclusive school settings due to bullying.

Students with learning disabilities cope with their disabilities in many different ways. Some students use the avoidance method of coping where they simply forget about their disability and do not try to overcome it. Firth, Greaves, and Frydenberg (2010) studied a group of students from seventh to ninth grade with learning disabilities. These researchers wanted to discover a coping strategy that is best for students of this age. They found the most common strategy for students was nonproductive, but there was also a large number of students who used a productive strategy. These students may have had difficulties in the classroom, but they had a talent in sports activities or in art. The students focused all of their attention on the sport or art and completely disengaged themselves when it came to academics. The reason for many of them doing this was because they wanted to feel like they fit in somewhere. The students felt that even though they were mildly rejected in the academic side of school, they could be a hero in the area of sports or art (Firth et al., 2010). Many famous athletes have used this same coping strategies and are now successful in life, but there are also many people who have used this strategy and now fall short because of their lack of focus in school. The study found that rather than students avoiding their disability, they needed special attention to find strategies to help them succeed in the classroom. The researchers suggest a coping program to allow for students in these situations to become proactive for finding a solution to their needs (Firth et al., 2010).

Harrower (1999) indicated that most research in the area of inclusion has been focused on students with minor learning disabilities and not students with severe disabilities. Harrower discovered that many students with disabilities were socially excluded because their peers without disabilities did not know how to interact with them. Even though the main purpose of including these students in the general education classroom is to enhance their social skills, these students were not advancing in any of the content areas in which they were placed in an inclusive classroom. They were not acquiring skills needed to function as adults, which is what special education classrooms usually offer.

Antia, Jones, Luckner, Kreimeyer, and Reed (2011), found different results than the previous studies listed. Antia et al. researched students who were deaf or hard of hearing and the effects that their disability had on them socially. This study concluded that there was no correlation between negative social skills and being deaf or hard of hearing.

Fletcher (2008) noted that there was not much research about the effects of having a student with an emotional disorder in a general education classroom. Fletcher pointed out that these students might have outbursts that can disturb the learning environment. Fletcher's (2008) study found that students who had a classmate with an emotional disorder had lower standardized test scores in the areas of math and reading than the students who did not have classmates with emotional disorders in the math and reading classrooms. This suggests that students' outbursts may have disturbed the learning environment enough to inhibit the learning of classmates.

Fletcher's findings encouraged Friesen, Hickey, and Krauth (2009) to research if

other types of disabilities affected the test scores of non-disabled students as well. Their

findings suggested that students with learning disabilities and emotional disabilities

significantly affected the math and reading test scores of non-disabled peers, but that

students with other disabilities had either positive or no effect on their non-disabled

classmates' test scores. To differ from Friesen et al.'s findings, Peetsma, Vergreer,

Roeleveld, and Kartsten (2001) found that students with disabilities who were in

inclusive classes had higher test scores in just the area of mathematics. The students that

were strictly in special education classes had much higher scores in the area of

psychosocial development of motivation. Students who were placed in inclusion classes

in this study tended to deteriorate in the area of motivation (Peetsma et al., 2001).

The Importance of Social Acceptance from Peers

        Peer acceptance is something that almost everyone strives for, as it is human

nature to desire to be accepted by peers. To be accepted by peers is to have positive

relationships with those around oneself. A study by Sip Jan Pijl and Per Frostad (2010)

has suggested that there is a positive correlation with peer acceptance and self-concept.

This means that if one is highly accepted by his or her peers, his or her self-concept will

be high; but if his or her peers do not accept him or her, he or she is not likely to have a

high self-concept. Previous research assumed that the correlation of peer acceptance and

self-concept did not apply to students with moderate to severe learning disabilities (LD)

because these students did not understand the level at which they are accepted by their

peers. The study suggested this assumption wrong, revealing that students with moderate

to severe LD still show a moderate correlation between peer acceptance and self-concept

(Pijl & Frostad, 2010.) Parents and teachers of students should not underestimate how

important it is for students with moderate to severe LD to be accepted by his or her peers.

The peer acceptance and self-concept correlation is not just limited to students with LD. There is limited research on peer acceptance of students with other disabilities, but there are few results that suggest students with behavior problems are not as popular as students without disabilities, and students with autism or who are hard of hearing have more feelings of loneliness than their peers without disabilities (Pijl & Frostad, 2010). Because the correlation of the findings of this research, putting all of it together suggests that it is more likely for students with disabilities to feel isolated. The feelings of isolation leads to less of a sense of belonging at school and can eventually have a negative impact on motivation, self-concept, and school performance (Pijl & Frostad, 2010).

Pijl and Frostad's (2010) study used 498 students ages 12-13 in Norway. This age allowed for the students to be enrolled in school long enough to realize who fit in and who did not. Researchers asked each student write down his or her five best friends in class as well as to rate their self-concept on a scaled questionnaire. The results fully supported the authors' hypothesis that students with disabilities were less accepted than students without disabilities.

The results of the study suggested that there was a moderate correlation between social acceptance and student self-concept. The study compared the results of the peer acceptance activity with the results of self-concept questionnaire in three areas. It compared general self-concept, academic self-concept, and social self-concept. The results showed an absence of correlation between general self-concept and peer acceptance, but a moderate correlation between peer acceptance and academic and social

self-concept for students with moderate LD. A possible reason for the absence of a

correlation between general self-concept and peer acceptance could be that general self-

concept is not fully dependent on what happens in school life. Relationships with

parents, siblings, grandparents, and others all play a role in general self-concept. Both

academic and social self-concept are more dependent on the student's school life and

therefore has more of a correlation to the peer acceptance of other students (Pijl &

Frostad, 2010.)

Another study on the social acceptance of students with disabilities was

conducted in India. In the country of India, there is a more general negative attitude

towards people with disabilities. India believes that one born with disabilities, is born

with a curse or it is the result of past deeds (David & Kuyini, 2012). The study's goal

was to prove that merely placing students with disabilities in general education

classrooms did not automatically promote peer acceptance from students without

disabilities. The study wanted to ensure that schools were doing enough to promote the

acceptance of students with disabilities in the general education classroom. The results of

the study were that different classroom practices were able to predict the level of peer

acceptance from students without disabilities to students with disabilities (David &

Kuyini, 2012). However, because the study was done in a part of India where there are

many people from small tribes attending each school, this was a major limitation of the

study. Many of the students were already familiar with the students with disabilities

before they were placed into the general education classroom. The results are still

important to note because there was a correlation between teaching styles and peer

acceptance, rather than simply being all high peer acceptance (David & Kuyini, 2012).

Importance of Communication in the Educational Environment

Whether it is verbal or nonverbal, most living things on planet earth communicate. A dog can bark to signal to its owner that it needs to use the bathroom, a cat may purr to tell its owner that it loves him or her, and a human can wave to greet another human; these are all forms of communication. If there was no communication whatsoever, the world would be completely different. How else would a person request something from someone or how would a teacher teach content? Communication is a key aspect of our day-to-day lives, even if it is not typical verbal communication.

There are many different types of communication disorders that may affect someone that has disabilities. Children with communication disorders most often show delays in or inability to use one or more of the following areas of communication: articulation, fluency, language comprehension, language production, morphology, phonology, pragmatics, semantics, syntax, or voice (Jacob et al., 2015). In all of these areas, a delay or inability to use could be detrimental to a child's learning in its own way. The different parts of language production all contribute to a child's ability to read, and help the child stay on task for the most amount of time possible. A child that has delays in these areas could get frustrated with trying to get his or her teacher or fellow peers to understand and either disengage from the lesson or take up crucial class time trying to get his or her point across. It is important to note that if a child struggles with language comprehension, semantics or pragmatics which all have to do with meaning in some form or another, he may get confused during instruction and be too embarrassed to tell the teacher or simply go about life thinking the wrong thing because what he understood the teacher said was not what the teacher actually said (Jacob, Olisaemeka, & Edozie, 2015).

Communication is a part of everyday life and usually involves a sender, a receiver, and some sort of purpose or content. People with multiple or severe disabilities often have their own way of communicating. These students will usually use gestures to signal certain things, and it may take a few tries to figure out what the gestures mean. For example, for one student banging his head may mean that he has a headache, but for another it may mean that she does not want to do something (Downing, 2001.) The students with these types of disabilities need to be placed in classrooms where the education team can teach communication in the appropriate manner. Simple things such as greetings, saying goodbye to others, and how to request things can be taught by the educator in the appropriate setting. Educators can assess how a student refuses something, and if the refusal was inappropriate, the teacher can help the student to adapt a new way.

Many students with severe disabilities throw themselves on the floor or hit things when they are trying to communicate no or they do not want to do something, but close attention can be given to adapt these behaviors and make them more appropriate for the general education setting. Many students who have trouble communicating use the picture exchange communication system, or PECS, and that is something that needs to be taught. A student needs to learn how to communicate using this system during school and at home. It takes a community to help a student with disabilities communicate effectively, and that community needs to know that what these students are trying to tell them is worth the effort (Downing, 2001.)

Students who have communicative learning disabilities often use assistive technologies, like the PECS system, to help them to perform everyday tasks (Adebisi,

Liman, & Longpoe, 2015). Glasses are even considered an assistive technology to people

who have poor vision. Assistive technology offers students the opportunity to achieve

success in writing, reading, mathematics, spelling, organization and even helps to foster

peer acceptance for children who otherwise would not have had the opportunity to excel

in these areas (Adebisi et al., 2015). It is important that when teachers introduce the idea

of assistive technology into the classroom, that they communicate that it is to enhance the

student with disabilities' skills and not replace them. There are many forms of assistive

technologies that help to grow the ability to communicate within the learning

environment. There are tools that allow students to speak into a microphone and their

oral language be transposed into writing in order to do assignments and there are also

tape recorders that allow students that need to hear what their teacher said multiple times,

the ability to do so (Adebisi et al., 2015). The help of assistive technology has helped the

inclusive classroom become more of a possibility for students with learning disabilities to

be able to communicate.

Active Engagement of Included Students

In a student-centered classroom, the very core of the learning process revolves

around the active engagement of the students (Zhou, 2010). Teachers are in the

classroom to teach the material. It is evidently up to the students in that classroom to be

actively engaged in the learning process in order to gain their own knowledge. While

teachers can adjust their teaching to make it easier for students to be engaged, the learner-

centered classroom being successful is dependent on the students' effort to learn. There

are different theories as to what active engagement really is and many different

researchers have studied it. Most of the researchers would agree that active engagement

is the degree to which the students invest themselves in the learning environment (Zhou, 2010).

Researchers have found that there are many contributing factors to active engagement. The most profound factor of active engagement is that of the student's character. Extroverted students are more likely to engage themselves in classroom activities because they are more active (Zhou, 2010). Extroverted students tend to take more risks and not hold back, whereas an introverted student is a little more shy and reserved. This is why extroverted students have more verbal engagement in the classroom. Another important factor in the active engagement is the student's self-concept. There is a mutual relationship between a student's self concept and that student's engagement in the classroom (Zhou, 2010). A student with a low self-concept will be less likely to engage themselves with classroom activities as well as interact with teachers and fellow students (Zhou, 2010).

The factors of engagement are not concluded with just the student's character and self-concept. There are many other factors that can contribute to the engagement of a student as well. These factors include the attitude, interest, motivation, and anxiety level of each student (Zhou, 2010). These factors are known as affective factors and they may change based on the subject being taught, the time of year, or even time of day.

Classroom environment has a very large connection with the degree of engagement of students. Zhou (2010) states, "The effect of classroom environment on students' engagement is rather noticeable, worthy of great concern" (p. 21). The class size and arrangement of desks can have an effect on the comfort level of students in the classroom. It is common that in a larger class, students are less likely to be engaged in

learning activities because of a fear of being wrong and therefore being embarrassed. The class size also coincides with the interpersonal relationships factor towards engagement of students. With a smaller class, students get more one-on-one attention and are able to feel more comfortable with their teacher and peers. When students feel more comfortable, they are more likely to feel confident in engaging in learning.

One last, but important factor that contributes to the active engagement of learners is the teacher's role in the classroom. A teacher's instructional practices can have a positive or negative effect on student's engagement in learning. Some researchers believe that teachers need to instruct less so that learners can take more responsibility for their own learning and make decisions to conduct learning (Zhou, 2010). There is also a need for teachers to make a more non-authoritarian presence in the classroom so that students are less defensive about learning and more comfortable expressing their learning freely. When teachers give positive feedback it encourages students to engage and keeps their attitudes high and motivation to learn high (Zhou, 2010).

Not only was much research conducted in the area of social and emotional effects of inclusion but also the active engagement of the included students throughout the course of an inclusive class. Clearly, there are many different factors concerning the engagement of learners in a classroom but having disabilities in a classroom with students without disabilities can heighten the effects of the factors. Of course, every student will not be actively engaged for 100% of the class time, but most general education students know when it is necessary to pay attention. The researchers studied active engagement because it is a big indicator as to whether or not students will succeed academically in classes. Yilidiz (2015) conducted a study to determine just how much

time students with disabilities spend on task as compared to how much time they spend off task or causing disruptions. The results showed that the students were only on task for nearly half of the time that they were supposed to be. The other time was spent off task or causing disruptions within the class. The research also found something interesting: their time spent off task was not always entirely their fault. The research found that the teachers of these classes did not change their teaching methods to adapt to the students' needs. The fact that the teachers did not adapt their methods to the students' needs could have been a partial cause to the classroom disruptions, but much of the time still should have been spent on task (Yilidiz, 2015).

In 2008, Bentley followed a young girl named Lynda who had a severe disability. The observer found that many of Lynda's peers interacted well with her after her mother came in to talk about her disability with them. Even though Lynda was placed in an inclusive classroom, she would often spend time hitting herself or looking out the window. Lynda's paraprofessional would take many exclusionary actions instead of aiding her in the inclusive process.   During all of this time, Lynda was not actively engaged in the inclusive setting (Bentley, 2008).

Feldman, Carter, Asmus, and Brock (2016) conducted a study that followed high school students with severe disabilities to record how much time the students spent in the regular classroom and their proximity and interaction with students without disabilities. This study was inspired by the idea that inclusion is necessary in order for students to gain proper social skills. It followed students through their general education classes and only recorded the observation if the student was present for more than twenty minutes of the class. The results found that the students were only in class for 84% of the time,

mainly in the middle of the class period. This was mainly caused by arriving late or

leaving early in order to eliminate bad behavior in the crowded passing times between

class. Not only did Feldman et al. (2016) find that students with severe disabilities were

only present in their inclusive class for 84% of the time, but they also found that in that

time that the students were in class, they were only placed in proximity to non-disabled

students in less than half off the classes. This shocked the researchers, and led them to

question what these students were gaining by being in these classrooms if they are not

present a lot of the time, and rarely placed in proximity to a non-disabled peer.

　　　　Another study was conducted by Gallagher and Odozi (2015) to observe whether

or not the students with disabilities who were placed in inclusion classes were actively

engaged with the lesson that was being taught. The students in this observation were

followed from the grade that they started in, ranging from second to fifth grade, and

continuing on to the following grade. The students that were observed had a significantly

less amount of engagement in the class lesson as opposed to the class as a whole. The

reason for this non-engagement could stem from the fact that the disabled students could

not keep up with the fast pace or because they simply did not want to complete the work.

　　　　An interesting study was conducted by Giannola (2012). This study compared the

engagement of disabled students in a secondary vocational school compared to an

academic school. The students were much more inclined to participate and excel in the

vocational school because they often had a special student-teacher connection and they

were able to relate what they were learning to real life activities. Although, in both

situations it was found that the students with disabilities often lacked some of the basic

skills needed to excel in either class (Giannola, 2012).

Teachers Attitudes and Opinions of Inclusion

A teacher's attitude toward having a student with disabilities in his or her classroom can make a colossal difference in the education of that student. A study conducted by Kaur, Noman, and Awang-Hashim (2016) pointed out that up until about ten years ago when someone spoke of a student with *special needs* they were implying a student with physical disabilities. Ten years ago that term broadened to incorporate students that have cognitive or behavioral challenges that cause learning difficulties. Up until the term broadened to include all types of learning difficulties, including a student with special needs only required having special equipment and rearranging the framework of the classroom. Since the term *special needs* encompass students with cognitive and behavioral difficulties, teachers are now required to incorporate complex and thorough strategies to educate these students (Kaur et al., 2016).

Kaur et al. (2016) observed a teacher in Thailand who had a student with special needs in her class to see what instructional strategies were most effective when teaching this student. The researchers made sure to note that all students with disabilities are different so some of the strategies that worked for this teacher and student pair may not work for others, or the strategies would need to be adjusted in order to work for another student. The study found multiple strategies in three areas that seemed to be an effective way to teach this student. The strategies are divided into three categories: socio-emotional strategies, cognitive strategies, and physical strategies (Kaur et al., 2016).

To incorporate socio-emotional strategies, the teacher simply displayed a positive attitude toward the student with disabilities. The teacher also did not show annoyance when the student asked repetitive questions. Instead she would listen and answer the

questions in a way that would benefit the rest of the students as well or would have

another student answer the question. Since the student in this classroom was unable to

properly function independently, the teacher often scheduled her work time so that she

was able to spend time with the student during non-instructional times and even

accompany her to lunch. The teacher assigned different students to guide the student to

the bathroom when she needed to go. The last socio-emotional strategy that this teacher

implemented was assigning responsibility to the student with special needs to help other

students with classroom chores in order for her to feel more of a sense of value (Kaur et

al., 2016).

　　　　Not only did the teacher in the Kaur et al. (2016) study implement socio-

emotional strategies to guide her learning, she also implemented cognitive and physical

strategies as well. The teacher adjusted the student's assignments to fit her development

so that if the class were working on double-digit addition, the student would be working

on single-digit addition. The student also worked on a first grade reading level instead of

second grade. The student was allowed to work at her own speed and also take breaks

when necessary. The teacher incorporated the student's interests into the learning

experiences and provided worksheets with dotted letters to help with her handwriting.

The teacher often repeated and re-emphasized important information to help with the

student's long-term memory. Lastly, in order to incorporate physical strategies, the

teacher stayed in close proximity to the student at all times, arranged all students' desks

in groups, and had an exclusive display board just for that one student's work (Kaur et

al., 2016).

　　　　The student that was observed in Kaur et al. (2016) study was able to be properly

included because of the strategies that the teacher implemented. The researchers

concluded that the teacher's attitude toward the student really played a central roll in the

successful implementation of this student's inclusion in the general education population.

Teachers start to have changing attitudes towards inclusion when they realize that they do

not have much of a choice in the matter and need to accept all of the students in their

classroom. According to the researchers, teachers have the ability to regulate their

teaching styles, and make adaptions to their methods in order to accommodate all of their

students (Kaur et al., 2016).

A teacher has a lot of influence in all of his or her students' lives. It is more likely

that when a student has a lot of respect for a teacher, that student will complete all of his

or her work than if the student does not respect the teacher. A study by Lesar, Cuk, and

Pecek (2014) suggested that academic and social effects of inclusion could be predicted

based on the general education teacher. Many researchers only look at the learning

environment, the psychological variables, and home variables that may affect a student's

learning, but widely overlooked is the fact that good relations between a teacher and a

student can help predict the student's academic achievement (Lesar et al., 2014).

With the new push toward inclusion when it comes to special education, general

education teachers will often have a student in their classrooms who they are not fully

equipped to teach. Teachers are increasingly expected to accommodate students with

diverse learning needs by differentiating their instruction (Coady, Harper, & De Jong,

2016). This fact often intrigues researchers to dig deeper into teachers' attitudes of

having these students in their classes and what it takes to be a good inclusive teacher. In

a study by Idol (2006), it was found that in schools where there was more of a

mainstream approach many of the teachers were in favor of mainstreaming with hopes of becoming 100% included. In this same study the schools that were observed that practiced 100% inclusion usually kept a special educator in the classroom at all times and a co-teaching method was used to instruct the class. A follow up study conducted in 2011 by Hwang and Evans surveyed teachers about their attitudes towards inclusion and if they would be willing to take on a special education student in their general education classroom. The results showed that a little over half of the teachers in the survey were quite positive on their thoughts towards inclusion. However, only 30% of the teachers were actually willing to take on a special needs student. The researchers found that the majority of that 30% had ten or less years of experience, possibly indicating that pre-service teacher education is giving new teachers more positive training on inclusion (Hwang & Evans, 2011).

The research on teachers' attitudes toward inclusion is being conducted all over the world. A study of teachers' attitudes in Portugal found that the majority of the 68 preschool teachers surveyed had a genuinely positive attitude towards inclusion, and that teachers who had a previous student with special needs were less likely to adapt their behavior to implement inclusive practices (Dias & Cadime, 2016). While the results in Portugal were highly positive, the results of a study conducted in Spain were a bit different. Rodríguez, Saldaña, and Moreno (2012) sent a questionnaire to teachers in both mainstream and special education schools. They found that the teachers in the special education schools were very confident in their teaching abilities when teaching students with autism, whereas the teachers in the general education classes felt as though they lacked knowledge to properly teach their students with autism.

The communication with parents was also found to have a big correlation to the teachers' feelings of needing more knowledge. The teachers in Turkey were found to have similar feelings as the teachers in Spain. Previous research indicated that the reason inclusion was failing in Turkey was because teachers were unable to implement the knowledge that they learned into a realistic setting (Melekoglu, 2013). Melekoglu's (2013) study found that the implementation of an interaction project being added to a pre-service education class calmed the nerves of pre-service teachers when it came to interacting with students with disabilities.

There are many concerns that teachers have when it comes to inclusion. Petersen (2016), decided to discuss the fears that special education teachers have when it comes to inclusion, and the teachers were certainly not shy to express them. One of the teachers' main concerns was that with the push for inclusion, the special education teachers are now required to teach their students with severe disabilities all of the standards that the general education teachers teach. The concern is that it takes much longer for special needs students to grasp a concept, and it is nearly impossible to keep up with the general education population. Because the students are often at a much lower level than the age of the student would suggest, the teachers showed concern that if they gave their students the assessment for the grade they were supposed to be in they would just get frustrated and upset that they could not do it. Lastly, another concern that special education teachers had was that the students with severe disabilities lacked many life skills that they needed. The teachers felt it was more important to teach their students how to conduct themselves in a job interview than to teach them how magnets attract (Petersen, 2016).

There are many skills to be a positive and encouraging teacher in the world of inclusion as well as special education. Studies done by Watkins and Donnelly (2014) and Ruppar, Roberts, and Olsen (2015), observed teachers in inclusive schools to determine what traits were common in teachers who seemed to have inclusion mastered. The findings of these two studies were quite similar. Each of the studies found that good inclusive teachers: valued lifelong learning, collaboration, and support to all of their learners. The studies urged that teachers often do not get enough credit for all that they do and that adding Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings for their students with disabilities onto teachers' plates is just another thing that they have to do to continue to be effective teachers.

Students' Opinions of Inclusion

While it is quite important to look at professional opinions in the area of inclusive education, it is also quite important to look at the students' opinions when it comes to their own education. If it is believed that students who are placed in special needs schools are being excluded and devalued, why not ask the students who are actually going through this and whose education is being affected by this notion (Messiou & Hope, 2015). In a study conducted by Messiou and Hope (2015), students were pulled into focus groups and asked their opinions on how they would like to learn and any constructive feedback that they had for their teacher. They gave their input and the researchers organized it into groups. The school staff heard the student voices, and the teachers were proactive to incorporate more of what the students wanted in their learning. The school saw more enthusiasm towards learning coming from their students, and the

grades started to increase. This proves how important a student's opinion on his or her own education is.

A literature review by Miller, Garrio, and Mershon (2005), stated that if a student is unhappy with the placement that is given to him or her, it could affect the educational process immensely. The results from this literature review found that depending on the age and disability of the student, their preferences varied. There were many reasons why many students preferred a pullout program. Some of these reasons included more individualized help that was offered, the fact that it was quieter and easier to focus, and some students even felt that their general education teacher embarrassed them.

Not only is inclusion affecting the students with the disabilities, but it is affecting the students without disabilities as well. Bebetsos, Zafeiriadis, Derri, and Kyrgiridis (2013) were curious as to how students without disabilities would react to students with disabilities in their physical education classes. The researchers posed a hypothetical situation to classes of general education physical education classes. The hypothetical situation was that a student named John who had disabilities joined their class. The students were to rate whether they would be happy about it or not. The results were a generally positive attitude until the idea of a competition came into the mix. The students were positive about the student simply being in the class, but once it came time to tell whether or not they would like that hypothetical student being on their team for a competition, the students were less likely to want the student on their team because they did not feel like the hypothetical student would be up to par with the particular skill in the game (Bebetsos et al., 2013).

Not only do students have an opinion about inclusion in elementary and secondary schools, but they also have an opinion about how well they are included in higher education. This opinion may be the best of them all because the students really know their disability by the time they reach university level. Kioko and Makoelle (2014) noticed a gap in research of the experiences of disabled students in higher-level schooling, the research focuses more on the accessibility that disabled students have to higher education. The two researchers interviewed students and professors from the University of Winchester in the United Kingdom to get a clear, firsthand account of the effectiveness of inclusion at the university level (Kioko & Makoelle, 2014).

The University of Winchester has many support structures in place for disabled students, but listening to the students' invisible voices allows researchers to understand the sometimes hidden barriers that these students face day in and day out. The researchers sought to achieve an understanding of the conditions in which learning takes place, even in places where support structures are set up (Kioko & Makoelle, 2014). The study sought to evaluate three aspects of the university's inclusive practices including learning and teaching experiences, examination support, and relationships and communication. Each of these areas of inclusion is imperative for students to feel included in their learning and feel equal to their peers. Evaluating each area can give a better understanding where each and every student needs more special accommodations (Kioko & Makoelle, 2014).

The first interview from Kioko and Makoelle's (2014) study was in the area of learning and teaching experiences. One of the deaf students once felt as though she had to apologize for her disability when she gave faculty a microphone device in order for her

to hear them. A professor felt that while an email is sent out at the beginning of the

semester listing the students with disabilities and their needs, the email should also

include the responsibilities of lecturers in terms of the categories. The lecturer felt as

though while it is his responsibility to teach the learning objectives, he should be

informed of the nature of the disability and what a professional would do to help that

student. Another issue pointed out by a disabled student was the accessibility of her

classes. The student ensured that she sent out an email in the beginning of each semester

that emphasized her need for accessible classrooms. She expressed in her interviews that

she often felt excluded if the lecture was moved to a room that was inaccessible therefore

causing her to miss the lecture of the week (Kioko & Makoelle, 2014).

The next suggestion in Kioko and Makoelle's (2014) study was to hear students'

voices when it came to their learning and examination support. This is an important area

because the idea of inclusion is to include students into a regular education classroom

with proper support in order to succeed in the classroom. Many of the participants in the

study had a note-taker assigned to them for various reasons. The note-taker would be

responsible for taking notes for the student if the student wasn't physically able to do it.

The students that had these note-takers explained that it was sometimes very hard for

them to start all over each semester with a new note-taker because they had to learn each

other's styles. Some of the students said that they would struggle if the note-taker didn't

capture the main points of the lecture, and the students would have a hard time studying

for an exam (Kioko & Makoelle, 2014).

Lastly in Kioko and Makoelle's 2014 study was the area of communication and

interpersonal relationships. Communication and good relationships are key to any kind

of teaching, but they are even more important when it comes to inclusive teaching. The results of the study found that most of the communication failure came from the different departments. Student services would send out and email to each of the departments informing them of the students with disabilities and a brief description of the disability. The departments were to then relay the information to the lecturers. Some of the participants expressed no concern while others expressed some concern about this strategy. Some of the participants felt as though the brief description did not inform the lecturers how to properly support the student in their classes; it simply gave information on the student's disabilities. The lecturers expressed that their relationships with the students were key in finding out how to best support the student, but this was harder if a student was shy about his or her disability (Kioko & Makoelle, 2014).

While the conclusion to Kioko and Makoelle's 2014 study can be helpful to expose the hidden voices of disabled students that are included in classes there, only some of the information can be generalized to fit all universities. The main issue that the University of Winchester faced was the issue of inaccessible facilities, communication and personal effort. The researchers also pointed out that just as educational practices are continuously changing, so are the needs of disabled students and that is why the processes used in including students should be continuously adapted (Kioko & Makoelle, 2014).

Parents' Opinions of Inclusion

Not as much research has been done in the area of the parents' opinions of inclusion as the other topics discussed in this literature review. Parents always want what is best for their children, so they will usually agree with what the professionals think

would be the best in terms of their child's education. One study conducted in 1995 by

Green and Shinn discussed parents' satisfaction with their students' resource room.

Although the researchers thought that the parents would fight for their students to be

reintegrated in the inclusive classroom, their opinions actually were quite different than

expected. Parents concluded that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their

child's resource room experience. They also mentioned that they saw a much higher self-

esteem in their child and their child enjoyed reading much more. The parents feared that

if their student were to be reintegrated into the general education classroom that he or she

would not be able to get the amount of extra time that he or she needs (Greens & Shinn,

1995).

      A study conducted by Elton-Chalcraft, Cammack, and Harrison (2016) gathered

parents' thoughts on inclusion in India. The researchers of this study compared the

opinions of two mainstream schools and two special needs schools to see which school

made more parents, teachers and students content with learning in the school. Overall,

the parents' and children's general consensus was in favor of the special needs school and

suggested that children with disabilities and children without disabilities should not be

educated together in a mainstream school. The reason for this consensus to be negative

toward mainstream schools was basically because of the resources provided for the

children with disabilities at the various schools (Elton-Chalcraft et al., 2016).

      The main concern that parents have when it comes to inclusion was that methods

of mainstream schoolteachers are not suitable for students with special needs. Many

times when a student is having difficulty with a certain task or grasping a concept, he is

sent to a resource room in order to get extra time on it. Most of the teaching that was

observed in the mainstream classes was the teacher lecturing the class while the students

copied down what was on the screen. The parents are concerned that when their children

are sent out, they miss the content being taught and then the cycle repeats itself therefore

making the standards unachievable (Elton-Chalcraft, 2016). The next large concern is

that parents feel as though their children are not getting the individualized attention that

they need. Teachers have a lot on their plates and it is hard for them to teach a classroom

full of general education students as well as give the students with special needs the

individual attention needed. In one instance in Elton-Chalcraft et al.'s 2016 study, a

parent expressed concern that their child's teacher accused the student of being lazy

because she could answer everything when it was done orally, but she was unable to put

things down on her own piece of paper.

Parents, teachers, and students all agreed on another huge issue of the Indian

mainstream schools in Elton-Chalcraft et al.'s (2016) study. They agreed that the

curriculum was not aligned for students with special needs. On most IEP's that students

with disabilities have, one of the accommodations is extra time to complete assignments

and other things of that nature. Students with disabilities need the extra time to process

the information and write or speak things because they are often move a little slower or

think a little slower. Parents are concerned that their child cannot keep up with the rigor

of the mainstream school's curriculum. There are tests given on a set schedule and the

students simply cannot keep up no matter how hard they try. The parents are also

concerned that their children with special needs are being mistreated at mainstream

schools. There are many general education students who are nothing but nice to students

with disabilities, but all it takes is the few that simply do not understand why the student

with disabilities doesn't understand the content or moves a little slower and makes fun of the student for it. A parent's worst nightmare is their child being bullied at school. The final concern that the parents of this study had was that mainstreaming was only possible for mildly disabled students. The parents believe it is more possible with students with only mild disabilities to keep up with the curriculum and not be picked on so much by the other students (Elton- Chalcraft, 2015).

Most previous studies were studies only asking parents of students with disabilities their opinions of inclusion. One area of opinions towards inclusion is the opinions of the parents are general education students whose children are being educated in an inclusive setting. Since inclusion is affecting all students, all students and parents' opinions should be taken into consideration. Vlachou, Karadimou, and Koutsogeorgou (2016) noticed this gap in research and decided to fill the gap with a study of their own. The researchers knew that parents have a huge impact on their children's education, so their opinion on how their children are educated should have a large impact as well. Parents can inadvertently pass their views on to their children through words, gestures, and actions in real life situations. This is called parent socialization (Vlachou et al., 2016). Because of parent socialization, the students can have the same feelings toward being taught in an inclusive setting as their parents have.

Vlachou et al. (2016) interviewed 40 parents whose children attended an inclusive school in Greece. These parents' views on the idea of their children being placed in an inclusive environment varied based on the effects they thought it would have on their children. One of the first questions asked by the researchers was where they feel students with special needs should be placed for schooling. Almost half of the parents said that

students with special needs need to be placed in a special school where there is a

psychologist there to support them. Other parents gave ideas of the students with special

needs being educated in mainstream settings, resource room settings, special schools, or

even educated at home. Most of the parents were not even aware of the fact that their

child was being educated in an inclusive school and/or there was such a thing as inclusive

education (Vlachou et al., 2016). The parents had many reasons for thinking that special

schools may be better for students with disabilities including: separate schools had better

and more support for them, they were staffed with special education teachers, and they

may be able to maintain a better emotional balance being surrounded by peers who have

similar academic and functional abilities. The parents felt that, especially in secondary

school situations, students with disabilities should only be mainstreamed if they could

keep up with the pace of general education classes (Vlachou et al., 2016).

   The comments from parents of general education students were widely varied

when it came to the effects of inclusion. Just about half of the parents thought that

inclusion could have positive social effects on students without disabilities because of the

exposure to this population of students and how to treat them, but they felt as though it

would not have a positive effect on the students without disabilities academically. The

other half of the parents thought that there could be positive social and academic effects

for their student being educated with students with disabilities in their class. While most

of these effects are positive, more than half of the parents pointed out that their child's

safety could potentially be undermined (Vlachou et al., 2016).

   After asking the parents about the effects of inclusion, the researchers asked the

parents if they had any suggestions of how students with disabilities can be better

educated in an inclusive setting. More than half of the parents suggested that more

specialized staff should be hired in addition to extra training for pre-existing staff. The

parents felt as though the infrastructure of the schools could also be improved as well as

the school's need for appropriate materials such as personal computers and learning

materials to better serve the students with disabilities (Vlachou et al., 2016).

Ceylan and Aral (2016) also noticed that there was not much research on the

parents' views of inclusion for their special needs students. The two researchers decided

to interview mothers whose children attend inclusive third, fourth and fifth grade classes

in elementary schools in Turkey. The researchers knew that families have just as big of

an influence on inclusive education as teachers do, and they wanted to make sure that

parent voices were heard when it came to inclusive education practices. The interviews

consisted of asking the mothers for their input on: the meaning of inclusion, similarities

and differences, disability groups, suggestions on inclusive education, adjustments in the

educational environment and suggestions, required support types, and issues experienced

paired with suggestions to improve those issues. The mothers shared their opinions with

ease and the researchers pieced their responses together (Ceylan & Aral, 2016).

Many of the mothers voiced that in order to have successful inclusion special

education support needs to be provided to the teachers, while some suggested decreasing

class size (Ceylan & Aral, 2016). As far as educational environment, many of the

students' teachers had already arranged seating arrangements, gave homework according

to the child's level and one even gave private lessons to the child. Four of the mothers

interviewed said that their teacher did not adjust the educational environment at all. Most

mothers did not have suggestions on how to adjust the educational environment, but some

suggested for the teacher to be more tolerant with grades and some suggested forming

groups with higher achieving students mixed in to all the groups rather than having one

group of higher achieving students (Ceylan & Aral, 2016).

One final question asked by interviewers in Ceylan and Aral's 2016 study, was if

the mothers encountered any problems in inclusive education. While five mothers stated

that they did not encounter any problems with inclusive education, six mothers did have

problems with it. The three main issues were issues with the lessons being taught, issues

enrolling their child into the school, and issues with transporting their child to and from

school. One mother mentioned that she worried her child may be getting lost in the

shuffle and is at risk of not benefitting from the education provided. The mothers who

experienced issues with their child's inclusive education were the ones to offer

suggestions such as the teacher being more understanding, providing guidance for general

education students to be more understanding of their disabled peers, and a legal solution

to getting the special needs students accepted into the school (Ceylan & Aral, 2016).

Ceylan and Aral (2016) took all of the mothers' interviews into account to come

up with the results from their study. The first thing that they noticed was that many of

the mothers' definitions of inclusion were inaccurate and they had little knowledge on the

subject. When it came to discussing similarities and differences between students with

and without disabilities, many of the mothers focused on the students' similarities. The

researchers juxtaposed these interviews with research from another study on parents of

general education students and found that while those parents focused on similarities in

appearance, they also focused on differences in behavior and in academics. The

researchers believe that the difference between these two studies is simply because of the

impact that disabilities have on learning (Ceylan & Aral, 2016).

Most of the suggestions that the parents had in this study were suggestions to improve educational support in the school (Ceylan & Aral, 2016). The main reason for this is because inclusion can only be made possible if the proper support is in place. The researchers believe that the reason many mothers stated that the teachers made no adjustments to the educational environment is that the teachers had little knowledge about the requirements of children with special needs. Overall, Ceylan and Aral's (2016) study found three main conclusions. The first conclusion stated that mothers with children who have special needs need to be informed of inclusion and inclusive practices through interactive meetings before their child is enrolled in an inclusive class. Secondly, special education support services like resource rooms and teacher assistance can be provided in inclusive schools. Lastly, the opinions of mothers who have special needs students in inclusive schools should be evaluated with quantitative and qualitative research so that more than one data collection method is used (Ceylan & Aral, 2016).

Conclusion

With the many ins and outs of the education world, it is important for professionals to analyze each area when considering the best method of education. There are many different variables that go into the education process for each child, with or without disabilities. The best-case scenario environment for a child to be educated in is a classroom with a hard-working and caring teacher that has great communication skills and differentiates instruction for every child's learning styles, as well as positive support through the administration at the school, other children with similar family backgrounds, and a supportive and helpful family. To be realistic, the likelihood of all of this to fall

into play each and every year of a child's educational career is quite rare. A family may love their student's teacher one year, and then the next years have a million complaints about the new teachers. This is true even for students without disabilities and a 4.0 grade point average. When it comes to students with disabilities, the importance of the whole educational system working together becomes even greater.

Students with disabilities need a peaceful, supportive, and loving environment to succeed to the best of their ability. Each child with special needs is unique, and they all have different things that help them to succeed and different things that cause them to want to give up. Parents, teachers, other students, and even the administration all see the students in a different light. An administrator may see a fidgety, and nervous student, while a parent may see a completely comfortable, not afraid to throw a temper tantrum student. Communication between all of the different parts of the educational team can help to ensure that the student with disability's environment is one to help the student succeed. All of this is the reason why each of these people's opinions should be taken into account when it comes to deciding if the special needs student should be included into the general education classroom for 100% percent of the school day.

After taking the opinions of parents, teachers or other educational professionals, and even other students into account, it is also important to take the success of all of the students in the class, and the benefits to the students into account. Even if the teachers and parents think the student will be able to handle being included into the general education classroom, it is still possible that the student may disrupt the learning environment for the rest of his/her peers or the student will get lost in the mix and not fully grasp the content being taught. As previously stated, all students with disabilities

are different, just like all students without disabilities are different. Each of the students

will learn the standards at different paces or with different styles and it would be unfair to

the rest of the class to tailor all of the lessons towards the one student with disabilities.

The different court cases discussed suggest that many things come into play when

it comes to inclusion. In various occasions, parents won the case and the student would

be able to be enrolled in an inclusive class, but there were also various occasions where

the parents lost the case and the child needed to be enrolled in a special needs school.

Through these court cases, the definition of inclusion was changed many times, and the

parameters through which a child was considered for inclusion was also changed.   New

problems that both sides of the case argue when it comes to inclusion are exposed with

each case and that is why the parameters need to be changed. With each special needs

child being different, come different reasons for the parents to argue towards inclusion

but also different reasons for the school district to argue against inclusion.

The research behind the social and academic effects of inclusion help to see if

including these students into the general education classroom actually benefits them

socially. The main reason to show this is because most of the reason for the push towards

inclusion is so that the students can be socially emerged with students their age and

become more socially aware. The research from Krull et al. (2014), Frederickson et al.

(2007), Tekinarslan and Kucuker (2015), and Veck (2013) showed that there were some

instances where the students were actually socially rejected and had a low academic self-

concept due to their social rejection and not being able to keep up with the fast pace of

the general education classroom. In these instances it leaves the researcher to ponder

whether placing these students into the general education class is really worth it or not.

Fletcher (2008) and Freisen et al. (2009) also researched and found that students taught with students that had emotional behavior disorders and learning disabilities had lower standardized test scores in math and reading than students who did not have those students in their classroom. There could be many reasons as to why this was the result of their studies, but the general education students need to be taken into consideration when considering what is best for the education of all students.

Any student that is not accepted by his classmates can have feelings of loneliness which can lead to a traumatic educational experience. Since special needs students are already different from their peers, it is important for them to feel accepted by them so that they do not have this traumatic experience. Anybody that has been through a school system in the United States knows that bullying is a real issue, and bullies tend to pick on vulnerable students. Pijl and Frostad's (2010) study found a correlation between peer acceptance and low academic and social self-concept. If the student already has a low self-concept in two areas, there may be a downward spiral effect.

The next issue with inclusion that was discussed in this thesis was the question of whether or not students that were placed in a general education classroom were engaged in classroom learning. If the student is not engaged, there is essentially no point in that student being in the classroom because the purpose of being in a class is to learn. Students with disabilities are already at risk of not being actively engaged in the classroom considering Zhou (2010) found a negative correlation between students' academic self-concept and their active engagement in class, and Pijl and Frostad (2010) found that students with disabilities have a low academic self-concept when their peers do not accept them. Yilidiz (2015) found that students with disabilities were only

actively engaged for about half of the time they were supposed to, and they spent the

other half of the time doing things that were off task. Yilidiz (2015) only took into

account the times that the students were in class, but Feldman et al. (2016) discovered

that on average students with disabilities were only actually in class 84% of the time they

were supposed to be. Not only did Feldman et al. (2016) discover that these students

were only present in class for 84% percent of the time, but they also found that these

students were only placed in close proximity to a nondisabled student for less than half of

the time. Since another purpose of inclusion is to expose students to nondisabled peers,

the question arises if inclusion is effective.

A teacher's job is to educate all students in his or her class to the best of his or her

ability. Teachers are part of the educational team involved in making sure students are

learning. With the help of paraeducators, administrators, students' families, and other

faculty members, teachers can help to make students the best that they can be. A

teacher's attitude can really affect the way that he or she teaches. Kaur et al. (2016)

pointed out how inclusion has changed in the last ten years from including physically

handicapped students to now including cognitive or behavioral difficulties, and teachers

have to come up with strategies to include all students. Teachers are expected to

increasingly differentiate their instruction and incorporate all learning needs (Coady et al.

2016). In Hwang and Evans' 2011 study, only 30% of the teachers were willing to take a

special needs student into the classroom. This would suggest that many teachers may not

feel equipped to teach a student with special needs or may not support the idea of

inclusion.

Teachers are the people that experience inclusion day in and day out while in the

classroom. Classroom teachers implement the strategies and are the ones who assess the

students' learning, so they are essentially the people who see if their students are

progressing in the ways that they are supposed to. This being said, teachers' opinions

should be taken into account to see what they truly feel on the matter of inclusion.

Petersen's (2016) study highlighted many concerns brought up by teachers. Students

with disabilities are required to learn the same standards as general education students

when they are in an inclusive classroom, students with disabilities learn slower than

general education students, and some students with disabilities lack life skills that they

need to excel are all concerns that teachers had about including students with disabilities.

These are valid concerns for a teacher to have considering he or she is required to teach

all students to the best of his or her ability. If teachers are spending most of their time

with the students with disabilities in their classroom, the general education students will

not learn as much as they could. On the other hand, if teachers teach as much as they can

to general education students, the students with disabilities may fall behind.

     The next important opinion that can often be overlooked is the opinions of the

actual students. Both students with disabilities and students without disabilities are

affected by including special needs students into the classroom. It was suggested by

Messiou and Hope (2016) that students are more likely to be more enthusiastic about

learning when their voices are heard and they learn how they would like to learn. Of

course, all decisions cannot be placed in the hands of students because they are simply

minors and cannot make all decisions for themselves, but allowing them to have their

voices heard is an important aspect to ensuring their education is successful.

     According to Miller et al. (2005) if a student is unhappy with his placement in

either special education classes or the general education classroom, his education can be immensely effected. When students start to get older and understand their disability more and more, they may feel as though they should get a choice between being included in the general education program or get to be in a pullout program. Students often prefer pullout programs because it is easier to focus, they get more help, and they do not feel embarrassed (Miller et al., 2005). As students with severe disabilities start to grow older, it is easier for them to understand that they are different. They may get frustrated when they cannot answer a question as fast as a general education peer can, or get upset when they start to fall behind. When these feelings start to emerge, it can cause a low academic self-concept and cause a student to give up on learning all together. Giving a student a positive environment, with more one-on-one help can help a student to feel more comfortable learning and more motivated to learn.

Students without disabilities that are part of an inclusive class can be affected by including their special needs peers in their class. Bebetsos et al. (2013) found that students were positive about having a special needs student in their physical education class until the idea of competition came into play. Students did not want to lose the competition and stated that they would not choose that student for their team. The students felt as though the student with disabilities would slow down their team and cause them to lose. This can suggest what may happen in the classroom. Students may feel as though students with disabilities are slowing down their learning and may generate negative feelings towards them. The negative feelings could possibly turn into mocking or negative comments that make their peers with disabilities feel inferior.

Inclusion is also incorporated into the higher education. By the time students

reach higher education, they are usually fully aware about their disability and either try to

hide it, or are vocal about it and let their professors know about it. Students in the Kioko

and Makoelle (2014) study had trouble with accessibility, struggled to adjust to a new

note taker each semester, and difficulty getting the lecturer to understand their disability.

Most students with disabilities understand there are going to be things that their other

classmates can do that they simply cannot do, but valuing student input about their

education is a great way to encourage them by treating them as though they have a voice

in their own education. Listening to their feedback can help learning communities see

the hidden problems that these students face day in and day out, and sometimes the

adjustments that need to be made are very simple and inexpensive but could change these

students' educational career.

Lastly, parents and families also make up the educational team needed to help

students succeed in school. Parents and families continue to implement strategies used in

the classroom at home. Parents want what is best for their children, and are often willing

to fight for what they believe to be best for their student. Studies by Greens and Shinn

(1995), Elton-Chalcraft et al. (2016), Vlachou et al. (2016), and Ceylan and Aral (2016)

all discussed the opinions of the parents of students with disabilities and the parents of

students without disabilities. These studies had differing conclusions, because all of the

parents had differing experiences when it came to their child being educated in an

inclusive setting. The parents of students with disabilities and students without

disabilities often had views that differed because they each wanted what they felt was

best for their child. The parents of general education children did not often like the idea

of inclusion because they felt as though their students were not getting as much education

as they could, while the parents of students with disabilities wanted their children to be

included because they felt as though it made their child feel more normal and gave them

better social experiences.

      With all of the different opinions about inclusion it is hard to pinpoint exactly

who knows best and whose opinion to value the most. Parents want what they feel is best

for their children, teachers have a professional opinion of education, and students are the

people who actually live through the effects of the decisions for their education.

Different strategies can be implemented causing experiences that can be either positive or

negative. Valuing each opinion equally, while also looking at the different effects that

could possibly could come from including a student into the general education classroom

should be looked at and evaluated for each student that has the potential to be included.

All disabilities, schools, teachers, and home lives are different, and that is why each

situation should be evaluated. Evaluation should continue through all years that the

student is in school because it is possible for all opinions and the effects that inclusion

can have on the student to change.

      "It is important to consider the cultural manifestations, to recognize each

person as an individual, and to acknowledge that the ideal of constantly reaching

out to all might not be realized" (Kioko & Makoelle, 2014, p. 114). There will

never be one answer to whether or not inclusion is the best choice to educate students

with disabilities. Different studies have shown many positive and negative outcomes of

the idea of inclusion, and some of the different outcomes have been in different areas of

student achievement. This thesis attempted to point out more of the negative effects of

inclusion on students and their classmates, simply to expose these truths more because

they are often left in the dark with the recent emphasis for every school to become an inclusive school. The purpose of the paper was not to say that inclusion is a terrible idea, but it was to say that more things should be taken into account when discussing the idea of including special needs students into a general education classroom 100% of the school day.

Limitations

Like all studies, this literature review had its limitations. For one, this thesis is only a literature review that does not have its own study. Having its own study could have solidified some of the findings of the parents, teachers, and students' views on inclusion could have given the researcher more to evaluate. This thesis also had studies that were not conducted in the United States. The different cultures of the countries where the studies were conducted could have made different outcomes than if the studies would have been conducted in the United States. Lastly, all of the studies discussed in this study had limitations of their own. While their limitations were taken into consideration when choosing with studies to place in this thesis, it is still necessary to point out that each study had limitations.

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