

ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS TOWARDS INCLUSION IN TODAY'S SCHOOLS

By Bobbie Jo Capetillo-Pena

The "Attitudes and Beliefs towards Inclusion in Today's Schools" project examined a potential relationship between the beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive practices of elementary administrators and the general education teachers and special education teachers who work with them. Approximately, 200 Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised (SACIE-R) scale surveys were sent to teachers and administrators split across seven elementary schools within a Midwestern school district. 23 surveys were returned completed and with participant consent forms signed. 22 of the participants were teachers and one was an administrator. The teachers and administrator varied in their experience levels from beginner teachers with 5 years of experience to experienced teachers/administrators with 30 plus years of experience. The SACIE-R scale survey was given to each of the participants in order to determine their beliefs, concerns, and attitudes towards inclusive practices. Overall scores were determined on the surveys with possible scores ranging from 15-60; the higher the score the more positive dispositions towards inclusive practices. Means and ranges were found per educator type such as special education teachers, regular education teachers, English Language teachers, and administrators. The SACIE-R also can be broken into three different factors including sentiments, attitudes, and concerns. Means and ranges per factor were found as well. The overall findings were that all 23 teachers and administrator had positive dispositions towards inclusive practices with a mean overall score of 46.57. The lowest score was 38 and the highest score was 54. The special education teachers had more positive dispositions towards inclusive practices than the regular education teachers did by 3.5 points. Since only one administrator participated only one school's data could be compared between the teachers and administrators. The administrator had an overall score of 45 and the mean of the teachers at the same school was 48.2. The administrator has positive dispositions towards inclusive practices and the teachers have even more positive dispositions towards inclusive practices by 3.2 points.

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by

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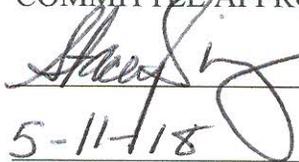
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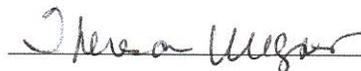
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This thesis is first dedicated to me. It is an example of all the hard work that I have put forth over the years to arrive at this place in my life. I also dedicate this thesis to Jesse and Parker Pena, who have been loving, patient, and supportive throughout my educational journey; without them, I am not sure I would have persevered through and made it to this point. Last, I dedicate this thesis to my late mom, who instilled in me a hard work ethic and my love for children.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion of elementary school teachers and principals. This study defined inclusion as the teaching of age-and grade-appropriate general education curriculum to students with disabilities using the necessary supports and aids to ensure their academic, behavioral, and social success within the neighborhood school that they would attend if they did not have a disability (Shyman, 2015). The study attempted to examine if there was a relationship between the beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive practices of principals and the teachers who work within the same building. The teachers included both special education teachers and general education teachers.

In the past, institutions and “training schools” were used to educate and care for students and people with disabilities. The “training schools” turned into asylums that later became overcrowded and unlivable. Early on, the societal perspective about people with disabilities was to keep them “out of sight, out of mind.” Many people believed that people with disabilities could not learn (The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, n.d.). More information about the history of special education can be found in chapter two.

In recent years, inclusion has become a more popular practice. Society now believes that individuals with disabilities can learn. Many pieces of legislation have been passed over the years; these pieces of legislation have given many rights to individuals

with disabilities. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act mandated that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) (Martin, 2005). A free and appropriate education means that students with disabilities receive an appropriate education that is equivalent to that of their nondisabled peers following an Individualized Education Program (IEP) (Zirkel, 2015). An Individualized Education Program is a legal document that outlines what supports, modifications, accommodations, and/or procedures are appropriate for a student with a disability that will provide meaningful benefit to the child in order to receive a free and appropriate education (Zirkel, 2015). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students with disabilities be served in the least restrictive environment (LRE) (The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, n.d.). The LRE means that children with disabilities are educated with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent that is appropriate (Shyman, 2015). Furthermore, the children have access to the general education curriculum with the necessary supports, accommodations, and services (Shyman, 2015). A more extensive history of important legislation leading to the many rights of individuals with disabilities and requirements of special education can be found in chapter two.

However, even with inclusion becoming a more popular practice, there are educators and teachers who are unwilling to implement it. Some teachers are unwilling to teach students with disabilities in the regular education classroom or have negative beliefs about doing so. There are many reasons teachers are unwilling to implement inclusion within their classrooms. Some of the most common reasons are the perceived

unreasonable expectations and responsibilities regular education teachers already have placed on them, limited to no training or education in how to implement inclusive practices, and a lack of administrator's support (Fuchs, 2010; Smith & Smith, 2000). Other reasons and barriers to teachers implementing inclusion can be found in chapter two.

Importance of Inclusion

In the 21st century, there are more opportunities for individuals with disabilities in many aspects of their lives due to technology advancements, extra funding, legislation that has been passed, and better education. When including students with disabilities in the regular education setting, there are many benefits both for the students with disabilities and for their peers. It teaches nondisabled peers how to communicate with students with disabilities and helps to develop more positive attitudes towards individuals with disabilities (Hicks-Monroe, 2011). On the other hand, it improves students with disabilities' social interaction, language development, and can encourage appropriate behavior (Hicks-Monroe, 2011). In addition, it also allows nondisabled peers and students with disabilities to work together and to learn from one another. Furthermore, everyone can begin to form relationships with one another (Hicks-Monroe, 2011). Lastly, everyone has a sense of belonging when everyone is included within the regular education classroom (Hicks-Monroe, 2011).

As previously stated, IDEA requires that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and that they receive FAPE. For many students, especially those with mild disabilities, this means they receive their education within the

regular education classroom with their nondisabled peers. Accommodations and modifications to the activities, curriculum, teaching styles, and/or environment should be made per the student's Individual Education Program (IEP), which outlines the student's needs.

Overview of Related Research

Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion did not always match with their willingness to teach in an inclusive classroom. For example, even though some teachers held positive attitudes towards inclusion, they were unwilling to actually implement inclusion within their classroom (Hwang & Evans, 2011). The teachers' unwillingness to teach in an inclusive setting may have to do with the common barriers that were found.

Common barriers to inclusion have been described in the literature. Those barriers include teachers not having sufficient training in inclusion and teachers needing more support in the areas of class size, collaboration, and planning time (Fuchs, 2010; Hsien, Brown, & Bortoli, 2009; Hwang & Evans, 2011). More details on other barriers to inclusion can be found in chapter two under the section describing previous research findings. Overall, many of the studies focused on surveying teachers at a variety of grade levels. Regardless of the grade level, survey results suggested common barriers to inclusion and teachers' ability to teach in an inclusive setting. These barriers included inadequate training, a need for more reliable support, and an increase in planning and collaboration time (Smith & Smith, 2000).

A study conducted by MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) looked at the principal's role in inclusion; this study found that the principal played a central role in promoting

positive inclusive beliefs within the school. Their study suggested that the principal could help remove some of the common barriers previously discussed (MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013). An earlier study conducted by Barnett and Monda-Amaya (1998) found that principals viewed inclusive education as most appropriate for students with mild disabilities. The results showed that the teachers were not adequately prepared to implement inclusive practices in their classrooms and that the principals were not adequately prepared to implement or support inclusive education (Branett & Monda-Amaya, 1998).

Question(s) the Research Will Attempt to Answer

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine if there was a relationship between the administrators' beliefs and attitudes and the general education and special education teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive practices at the elementary school level.

Definition of Key Terms

In this section, key terms that were used within this study are defined. Many of these terms can be defined in several ways; however, these definitions are how the terms were used within this study.

- **Inclusion**-The teaching of age- and grade-appropriate general education curriculum to students with disabilities using the necessary supports and aids to ensure their academic, behavioral, and social success within the neighborhood school that they would attend if they did not have a disability (Shyman, 2015).

- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**-Children with disabilities are educated with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent that is appropriate. Furthermore, the children have access to the general education curriculum with the necessary supports, accommodations, and services (Shyman, 2015).
- **Free and Appropriate Education**-Is the central pillar of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); FAPE interlocks with LRE, tuition reimbursement, and compensatory education; a student with a disability has the right to receive a free and appropriate education that is the equivalent as their nondisabled peers following an individualized education program (Zirkel, 2015).
- **Individualized Education Program**-Is a legal document that outlines what supports, modifications, accommodations, and/or procedures are appropriate for a student with a disability that will provide meaningful benefit to the child in order to receive a free and appropriate education (Zirkel, 2015).
- **Principal or Administrator**-The educator who is the head of the school; he or she is the authority figure within the school.
- **General Education Teacher**-Teaches the general education curriculum such as mathematics, reading, science, and social studies. For this study, general education teachers will include the physical education teachers, art teachers, and music teachers.
- **Special Education Teacher**-Teaches students with a wide range of learning, physical, or mental disabilities; sometimes follow alternative curricula and standards to meet the needs of the students they teach.

- **Early Childhood Education**-Education that focuses on educating children in their preschool and primary years (birth through age 8); employs a well-rounded curriculum including academics, social-emotional development, physical development, etc.; teaches the whole child.

Methodology

In order to answer this research question, a quantitative study was conducted. A Likert-scale survey was used to collect data on administrators', general educators', and special educators' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion. The Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education-Revised (SACIE-R) is the Likert-scale survey that was used. The SACIE-R uses a 4-point scale, which helps deter participants from choosing neutral answers (Forlin, Earle, Loreman, & Sharma, 2011). For more details about how the SACIE-R was developed, see chapter three.

A quantitative methodology was used in order to compare and contrast the data from each of the three categories of the SACIE-R from each of the participant groups. The three categories of the SACIE-R are sentiments, attitudes, and concerns in relation to inclusive practices (Forlin, et al., 2011). Mean scores were found for the general education teachers, English Language teachers, special education teachers, and administrators. Ranges were also calculated to see if there were scores on the extreme positive end of attitudes towards inclusion or on the extreme negative end of attitudes towards inclusion. For more information about the methods used to analyze data for the study, see chapter three.

Results

Of the 210 surveys that were distributed to the seven elementary schools, there was a return rate of 13.33%, or 28 returned surveys. However, 4 of the returned surveys could not be used for data analysis due to not having participant consent forms signed. One survey could not be used due to two of the questions not being answered. Therefore, the final usable return rate was 11% of the distributed surveys.

Furthermore, there was an uneven distribution of participant types who returned the surveys. Only 1 administrator chose to participate in the study; therefore, 4% of the data will represent an administrator and only 1 school can be used to examine if there was a relationship between the administrators' beliefs and attitudes and those of the general education and special education teachers who work within the same building. The majority of the participants were regular education teachers, 17 of the 23, or 74%.

The mean score from the Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised (SACIE-R) Scale was 46.57, overall. The highest score possible would be a 60. For more specific results from the SACIE-R, see chapter four.

Discussion of Results

The results of this quantitative study show that all of the teachers and administrators have positive beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion; however, the differing scores also vary in how positive their beliefs and attitudes are towards inclusion. The SACIE-R can have scores ranging from 15 to 60, with higher scores demonstrating more positive beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion. Overall, all of the scores were above the halfway mark of 30. The lowest score was a 38, with the majority of the scores

ranging from 43 to 54. Furthermore, it does appear that there is a relationship between the administrator's positive beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion and all of the teachers, regardless of their type. For more information on the major results of this study, see chapter five.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion of elementary administrators, general education teachers, and special education teachers in a district located in the Midwest. Inclusion can be defined in many different ways; however, in this study, inclusion is the teaching of age-appropriate general education curriculum to students with disabilities using the necessary supports and aids to ensure their academic, behavioral, and social success within the neighborhood school that they would attend if they did not have a disability (Shyman, 2015). In the past, students with disabilities have been placed in institutions, segregated schools, and even kept at home out of the public's eye (Thompson, 2015). However, in recent decades, inclusion has become a more popular practice worldwide due to the many pieces of legislation that have been passed (Brandes, McWhirter, Haring, Crowson, & Millsap, 2012). Even though inclusion has become a more popular practice worldwide, there are teachers and administrators who are unwilling to implement inclusive practices due to a variety of common barriers (Hwang & Evans, 2011).

This quantitative study focused on the beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion of elementary general and special education teachers and the administrators who lead those teachers. The researcher was seeking to determine if there is a relationship between the

administrators' beliefs and attitudes and the general education and special education teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive practices within the same school.

History of Issue

The rights and standard of living for people with disabilities has changed drastically over the past two centuries. In the 19th century, it was not uncommon for all students to stay home since it was not required to attend school (Bursztyn, 2007). Therefore, many children with disabilities were forced to stay at home (Thompson, 2015). However, if the children with disabilities did not stay at home, it was believed that institutions would help to educate students with disabilities to lead productive lives (Thompson, 2015). One such institution was the Willowbrook State School (Bursztyn, 2007). Willowbrook State School was one of the largest state-run institutions in New York for people with developmental disabilities in the early 1970s (Bursztyn, 2007). It opened in 1947 and by 1965 the institutions housed six thousand residents (Bursztyn, 2007). Overcrowding, poor living conditions, and quality of life quickly became an issue for the individuals living here (Bursztyn, 2007).

In 1918, all states had compulsory education laws in place, which meant it was required for children to attend school (Bursztyn, 2007). However, the “normal” schools were still seen as places to educate “normal” students; it was thought that students with disabilities could not be educated here (Spaulding & Pratt, 2015). It was common for teachers to believe that students with disabilities learned differently and that they would be best supported in segregated schools and/or classes (Spaulding & Pratt, 2015).

By the early 1950s, hope and possibilities for people with disabilities surfaced. During this time, parents started to organize and demand services for their children (Spaulding & Pratt, 2015). They created community services, educational, and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. There was a push made for federal laws to be passed to ensure mandate free education for *all* children (Spaulding & Pratt, 2015).

Over the course of the next four decades, many laws were passed to give rights to individuals with disabilities. The following paragraphs will include some of the most important pieces of legislation that were passed as they pertain to education and the journey to more inclusive practices. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 put multi-billion-dollar funds toward helping states and local schools educate children who are “educationally disadvantaged children” (The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, n.d.). In 1973, The Rehabilitation Act- Section 504 protected individuals with disabilities from discrimination in all federally assisted programs (Martin, 2005). This meant that students in public schools who had a disability could not be discriminated against since it was a federally funded program; their needs needed to be met. Finally, on December 9, 1975, the United Nations General Assembly Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons was passed (The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, n.d.). According to the United Nations Human Rights (1996-2018), this gave human rights and fundamental freedoms to people with disabilities and they could not be discriminated against. The Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons promoted higher standards of living, self-dignity, and full employment.

With the passing of the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons, disabled persons have the right to education, vocational training, and rehabilitation (U., 1996-2018). This meant students with disabilities had the right to be educated.

In addition, in 1975, The Education of All Handicapped Children Act was passed (Martin, 2005). The Education of All Handicapped Children Act mandated that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive setting. Furthermore, this Act required that an individualized education program (IEP) be developed with goals, objectives, and services. In 1990, this Act was re-titled the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (LaNear & Frattura, 2007). IDEA still guides special education today.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) required that schools serve the education needs of students with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990 and prohibits discrimination in employment, public services, public accommodations, and services operated by private entities and telecommunications (Bursztyn, 2007.). The 1997 IDEA amendments required that schools report the number of students with disabilities served by race/ethnicity and further demanded that students were educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE), which could be the regular education classroom for some students with disabilities (Bursztyn, 2007).

Another significant change in the education of students with disabilities occurred in 1986. There was a major shift in how educators perceived special education, and the roots of inclusion started. Educators wanted students with disabilities in the regular

education classroom rather than “pulled out” or in special placements (The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, n.d.). At this point, they tried integration. During the 1990s, with the push for LRE, there was a move from integration to more inclusive practices. Then, in 2004, IDEA raised standards and mandated zero reject (LaNear & Frattura, 2007). All students with disabilities needed to receive appropriate education in the LRE. There were procedural due process safeguards put into place and parent participation was encouraged (The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, n.d.). The perceptions of inclusion are mixed to this day; however, throughout history legislation has been passed to ensure more equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Defining Inclusion and its Importance

What is inclusion? In 1990, the term “inclusion” became the most desirable approach to education (The Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities, n.d.). However, as previously stated, inclusion can have many different definitions. In this study, inclusion is defined as the teaching of age-appropriate general education curriculum to students with disabilities using the necessary supports and aids to ensure their academic, behavioral, and social success within the neighborhood school that they would attend if they did not have a disability (Shyman, 2015).

Why inclusion? All students have the right to a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment; it is the law. For many students, being fully included within the regular education classroom is necessary in order for them to receive FAPE in the LRE. However, many schools and districts do not educate the majority of their special

education students within the general education classrooms (Hansen & Marrow, 2012). There are a variety of reasons for schools and districts not educating students with disabilities within the general education classroom; however, the only ethical and lawful reason a student with a disability should not be educated within the general education classroom is if their individual needs cannot be met in that environment with support, accommodations, and modifications. This would mean that their LRE would potentially be a special education classroom rather than the regular education classroom.

Furthermore, inclusion can be beneficial for both students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. They can learn side by side and from one another as well. For example, students with disabilities can learn appropriate behaviors from their nondisabled peers (Hicks-Monroe, 2011). Furthermore, they can work on language development and increase their social interactions (Hicks-Monroe, 2011). In addition, by engaging in social interactions with nondisabled peers, students with disabilities could improve their social confidence, interactions, and have a more in-depth integration into the community (McMurray & Thompson, 2016). Students with disabilities will eventually become adults with disabilities who will be part of the community and by being educated within the general education classroom everyone has a sense of belonging (Hicks-Monroe, 2011). Society needs to embrace them, encourage them, and learn with and from them.

In addition, according to Tkachyk (2013), students without disabilities receive the most gain from learning in fully inclusive classrooms. By learning in an inclusive environment, the students without disabilities learn about tolerance and acceptance since this environment would model and expect both (Tkachyk, 2013). By having students both

with and without disabilities within the regular education classroom, the students without disabilities begin to embrace, encourage, and learn from the students with disabilities.

Theoretical Underpinnings of Inclusion

Throughout history, society has been putting labels on individuals. The label of “disability” was made by nondisabled people (Jones, 1996). Furthermore, those making this label may have limited contact with people with disabilities during their lifetime. For some, this label can be considered negative and makes it appear as though people with disabilities are different from those without disabilities (Jones, 1996). The label affects how people perceive individuals with disabilities and how they are treated (Jones, 1996). When a label can be given to something, like a person, typically then items with the same label are grouped together based on commonalities (Jones, 1996). In today’s society, people are very different from one another. Likewise, individuals with disabilities are also very different from one another. However, with this label, people begin to make stereotypes and generalizations about individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, when this label came about, limited research was done which led to limited understanding of disability. The interventions focused on rehabilitation rather than liberation for these individuals (Jones, 1996).

Jones (1996) proposes three models to explain and understand students with disabilities. The first is known as the functional limitations framework (Jones, 1996). This framework focuses on disabling conditions and gives the individuals a sense of powerlessness; it tries to give the students strategies for dealing with their limitations. The limitations define the student and what they are not capable of from this perspective

(Jones, 1996). The disability is central and defines who the student is; the environment is ignored. This is a cookie cutter type perspective; it ignores individual needs, various levels of limitations, and individualism (Jones, 1996). The students with disabilities are alienated and treated differently by people who hold this perspective, which leads them to being a minority group.

The second model that tries to explain and understand students with disabilities is the minority group paradigm (Jones, 1996). In order for there to be a minority group, commonalities of experience exist amongst the members, which in this case would be having a disability. However, minority group status is difficult to have since there are varieties of disabling conditions, and they have limited opportunities to come together as an actual group (Jones, 1996). This perspective focuses on alienation and discrimination, but it does acknowledge the environmental factors that can affect the individuals, their group identification, and power structures (Jones, 1996). The minority group paradigm also tries to justify setting these individuals apart from the others (Jones, 1996). This perspective is more encompassing than the first model since it does look at the social and psychological consequences of disability, but it is still limiting.

The third perspective is social constructivism, which is an expanded model that includes individuals with and without disabilities (Jones, 1996). This model celebrates the uniqueness of the individuals and focuses on social change and transformation (Jones, 1996). It acknowledges that non-disabled individuals' attitudes about disability can actually turn an individual's characteristics into actual handicaps (Jones, 1996). The disability is a limitation, nothing more; it should not define the person since it is

something that can be overcome (Jones, 1996). This perspective challenges the previously held beliefs of disability since it thinks more inclusively and looks at the quality of the individuals' interactions with the environment and those around them (Jones, 1996). This perspective is more of an inclusive perspective than the previous two.

Part of social constructivism is looking at individualism. Individualism is the belief that problems with learning come from activities and practices rather than the actual individual (Dudley-Marling, 2004). Society today is very individualized; it looks at each person's individual successes and failures as a direct result of that individual's efforts rather than other factors that could have affected the success and/or failure (Dudley-Marling, 2004). Part of the problem is that society looks at it as everyone needs to do better than everyone else; it is a very competitive world (Dudley-Marling, 2004). Other factors that can affect success and failure include the environment and the people with whom one interacts.

Students with learning disabilities (LD) have been looked at through the perspective of medicine and psychology as something that needs to be fixed rather than through the perspective of sociology and anthropology, which would focus on the interactions those students have with their environment and the people around them (Dudley-Marling, 2004). If the latter perspective would be used, the environment could be altered in order to help students with learning disabilities succeed.

The institutions that society has put into place help to define our beliefs and how society views the people within it. The institution of "school" is not natural or normal,

but rather a human creation (Dudley-Marling, 2004). In the school setting, teachers look at and focus on the rate of learning rather than the actual learning that is taking place; the focus is on mastery of skills (Dudley-Marling, 2004). For students with learning disabilities (LD), their rate of acquisition of skills and knowledge may be slower, but that should not define them or label them as failures. The label LD comes to life in the school setting; these students do not have LD on their own. Society has labeled and defined them as being LD (Dudley-Marling, 2004). Teachers need to see the individual student rather than the label when working with students with disabilities. The labels that are being put on students with disabilities may influence the teachers' and administrators' beliefs and attitudes towards including them within the regular education classroom.

Explanation of Opposing Viewpoints

Some teachers and parents believe that students with disabilities take up too much time for misbehaviors, accommodations, and modifications (Ross-Hill, 2009). At first, planning may take longer, and it will be an adjustment, but it is the law under IDEA that educators make the necessary accommodations and modifications outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) (Ross-Hill, 2009). Teachers will need more time to plan for the accommodations and modifications they will need to make within the classroom. However, they should use the special education teachers as a tool or resource and collaborate with them.

Some educators and parents believe that students with disabilities will be dangerous, disruptive, or distracting. In one study, 79.6% of the staff interviewed in a middle school in Southeast USA believed that educating students with disabilities in the regular

education classroom would be disruptive (Santoli, Sachs, Romey, & McClurg, 2008).

Any student, with or without a disability, can be dangerous in today's society.

Furthermore, any student can be disruptive and distracting in class. With the appropriate behavior management strategies in place, the disruptions and problem behaviors could be handled in a timely manner. In many of today's schools, there are already Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in place. There are three different tiers available depending on the behavioral needs of the students. Tier I supports are school wide and in place for all students (PBIS.org, 2017). In addition, if students with a disability have any additional behavioral needs, they will be outlined in their IEP under their Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP).

In order to have an inclusive classroom, teachers have expressed they will need more time to plan and collaborate with the special education teacher (Fuchs, 2010). With the many different mandates and expectations from districts, teachers already feel they are very thin on time (Fuchs, 2010). They are implementing new curricula, attending meetings, adjusting to large class sizes, and meeting higher standards (Smith & Smith, 2000). By having an inclusive classroom, they need even more time to plan and collaborate in order to make the necessary accommodations and modifications within the classroom. Even if they are co-teaching with the special education teacher, they will need more time to plan together (Fuchs, 2010). How this time will be made within the school day or how teachers will be compensated will need to be determined by each school or district administrator.

Furthermore, many teachers feel they do not have sufficient training or knowledge on how to work with students with disabilities within the general education classroom (Smith & Smith 2000; Fuchs, 2010). They also feel that their administrators do not support them enough to get the necessary training (Fuchs, 2010). This also is reflected in the amount of time teachers commit each school year and their willingness to attend a training or class on how to teach students with disabilities.

Finally, a study conducted by Santoli, et al. (2008) found that 76.8% of the staff believed that most students with disabilities should not be educated in regular education settings. Furthermore, 80% of the staff believed the students with disabilities lacked the necessary skills needed to master the regular education classroom content (Santoli, et al., 2008). The staff included general and special education teachers, para-professionals, and administrators at the middle school level. However, 44.6% of the staff thought inclusion was a desirable practice for regular education students; and 57.9% believed it was a desirable practice for students with disabilities (Santoli, et al., 2008). The staff had similar concerns as teachers in other studies in regards to enough time to consult with other professionals and plan instruction.

Description of Previous Research Findings on Perceptions

In a study conducted by Fuchs (2010), there were five participants; these participants included three sixth grade teachers and two second grade teachers. Data for this study were collected through discussions, interviews, and observations. Each teacher completed one discussion, one interview, and one observation (Fuchs, 2010). The findings included that all five participants were unwilling to participate in inclusion due

to what they perceived as unreasonable expectations already in place for general education teachers (Fuchs, 2010). Furthermore, these teachers felt that they would need either more training or formal education on how to accurately implement inclusion (Fuchs, 2010). In addition, they felt there was a lack of support from their administrators in a variety of areas including training, class size, collaboration, and planning time (Fuchs, 2010). All of these areas are essential in order for inclusion to be implemented. If teachers perceive these areas as current barriers for implementing inclusion, then there needs to be changes made so that these barriers no longer exist. Perhaps, this would lead to more teachers willing to implement inclusion within their classrooms.

Hsien, Brown, and Bortoli (2009) found that of 36 general and special education teachers in Victoria, teachers with higher levels of educational qualifications in special education had more positive attitudes and beliefs about inclusion. Furthermore, teachers with Master's level qualifications were more likely to think of inclusion as a positive change to the education system. On the other hand, teachers with a Bachelor's Degree were less likely to have favorable attitudes and beliefs towards inclusion (Hsien, Brown, & Bortoli, 2009). These findings are not surprising since in the previous study by Fuchs (2010), the teachers shared that they felt they needed further education or training in order to implement inclusion. By having a Master's level qualification, one would have received more education and training possibly in special education.

Hwang and Evans (2011) conducted a study in Korea with 33 Korean general education teachers from three different primary schools shared their attitudes towards and willingness to accommodate students with disabilities. A questionnaire was distributed to

the general education teachers and 29 of them were returned fully completed (Hwang & Evans, 2011). The four that were not fully completed were excluded from the data analysis. The results showed that 41.37% of these teachers had positive attitudes towards inclusion programs, 34.47% perceived inclusion negatively and one fourth of the participants were neutral (Hwang & Evans, 2011). This means that only 12 of the 29 teachers held positive attitudes towards inclusion (Hwang & Evans, 2011). Furthermore, 55.16% of the teachers were unwilling to teach students with disabilities within their classes (Hwang & Evans, 2011). Similarly, to other findings, the teachers felt they did not have enough time to meet the needs of students with disabilities. 89.64% of the teachers felt they did not have the proper training to successfully implement inclusion (Hwang & Evans, 2011). Based on the studies conducted by Fuchs (2010), Hsien, Brown, and Bortoli (2009), and Hwang and Evans (2011) these barriers to inclusion are apparent in Korea, Victoria, and the United States.

MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) conducted a study by having one hundred and eleven elementary school teachers' complete questionnaires. Their study looked at teachers' attitudes and behavior toward inclusion of students with social, emotional, and behavior difficulties (SEBD). The findings showed that the principal played a key role in the influence on the beliefs and behaviors of the teachers (MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013). School principals had a central role in promoting an inclusive belief within their schools. Furthermore, teachers who had attended more in-service training sessions had more positive feelings towards inclusion than those who had attended fewer (MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013). In addition, those with more experience teaching were less willing to

work with children with SEBD (MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013). To conclude, more training opportunities appear to continue to lead to more positive attitudes and feelings towards inclusion. Professional development in this area should be a priority if inclusion is something that the principal wants implemented within the school.

Osiname (2018) and Thompson (2015) found that principals play a key role in the implementation of inclusion within the schools they oversee. Osiname (2018) found that the principals believed that their leadership was a key factor in having and maintaining a positive and inclusive school environment. Change within schools typically begins with the principals; therefore, they were key in encouraging their teachers to read books, attend meetings, and embrace the change (Osiname, 2018). Thompson (2015) states that principals must possess the necessary knowledge, leadership and interpersonal skills to accomplish the schools' goals, which can include inclusion. Principals must understand the legal and technical aspects of special education (Thompson, 2015). According to MacFarlane & Woolfson (2013), Osiname (2018), and Thompson (2015), principals play a key role in the attitudes and beliefs towards inclusion of the teachers within the schools they work in.

Ross-Hill (2009) conducted a study in the United States that looked into the attitudes of elementary and secondary regular education teachers in relation to inclusion. The participants of this study included 73 teachers from three different elementary and secondary schools in rural, southeastern USA (Ross-Hill, 2009). The teachers completed the Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC). Findings showed that most teachers either supported the practice of inclusion or had a neutral

consensus towards it (Ross-Hill, 2009). These findings are very different from the findings of Hwang and Evans (2011), since 34.47% had a negative attitude towards inclusion and over 55% were unwilling to implement inclusion within their classrooms. Is this due to more formal education, more time to collaborate, leaders who have positive attitudes towards inclusion, or some other reason?

Smith and Smith (2000) analyzed the beliefs and difficulties of inclusion in early childhood from the perspective of six regular education teachers that were randomly selected. Three of these teachers claimed to be successful with inclusion and three claimed to be unsuccessful (Smith & Smith, 2000). These teachers participated in four semi-structured interviews about their current experiences with inclusion. The results showed a strong shared belief in inclusion; similar to the positive attitudes and support for inclusion found in southeastern, USA (Smith & Smith, 2000). However, these teachers felt they need more adequate training, more reliable support, more time to meet the increased planning and collaborative demands, and better consideration of classroom load factors such as class size, ratios, etc. (Smith & Smith, 2000). These barriers to inclusion seem to be very common amongst the majority of the studies. Finding ways to remove these barriers could increase the teachers' willingness to participate in inclusion. However, not every school district has the funds or ability to remove all of these barriers and not every teacher would be willing to go through trainings or give up more of their time.

Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2000) conducted a study in England that included a sample size of 81 primary and secondary teachers. The results showed that

teachers who were already involved in implementing inclusive practices within their classrooms had more positive attitudes towards inclusion overall (Avramidis, et al., 2000). Furthermore, the results showed the importance of having opportunities for professional development in inclusion, which led to more positive attitudes towards it (Avramidis, et al., 2000). Since the need for more training and knowledge in inclusion seems to be a barrier to teachers having positive dispositions towards implementing inclusion, these findings help support that.

Bruster (2014) looked at the perspectives of inclusion from high school general and special education teachers that were involved in inclusive settings. The results showed that the special education teachers clearly had more positive dispositions towards inclusion than their general education colleagues (Bruster, 2014). The data was collected using the Opinions Relative to the Integration of Students with Disabilities in order to measure the perceptions of the teachers (Bruster, 2014). In the Ross-Hill study (2009), the STATIC was used in order to collect similar data from regular education teachers; those findings showed that the teachers had either a positive or neutral perspective towards inclusion. Are these findings different due to different instruments being used to collect the data? Are the results more valid from one instrument over the other? This could be further researched or possibly be a limitation to the research thus far.

Common barriers were found across the studies conducted by Fuchs (2010) and Smith and Smith (2000). The teachers expressed that they would need training that is more adequate, more reliable support, more time to meet the increased planning and collaboration demands, and more administrator support (Fuchs, 2010; Smith & Smith

2000). In studies conducted by Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2000) and MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) the findings indicated teachers with more in-service training sessions or with more opportunities for professional development in inclusion had more positive attitudes towards inclusion. Furthermore, Hsien, Brown, and Bortoli (2009) found that teachers with higher levels of educational qualifications in special education had more positive attitudes and beliefs towards inclusion. It appears that more education, professional development, and training helped increase the positivity that the teachers had towards inclusive practices.

Critique of Research

Parents' beliefs. Research can be conducted to show the feelings parents have about inclusion. Since one of the opposing viewpoints of inclusion includes parents' beliefs and/or attitudes, additional research is necessary to affirm or negate this view. Parents of students with disabilities should be included in this research as well as parents of nondisabled peers. Do they both have concerns? Are they similar?

Opposing viewpoints. Many of the articles and studies found support the current thesis. More research needs to be conducted to see if there are other opposing viewpoints or if there have been other studies that found more positive attitudes and beliefs about inclusion. Currently, there are only two studies included in this literature review with at least half the participants having either a positive attitude or neutral consensus toward inclusion.

Gaps in the Research

Many positive changes have happened for individuals with disabilities over the past four decades. Previously, individuals with disabilities were kept “out of sight, out of mind” by being kept at home or placed in institutions and segregated schools (Bursztyn, 2007). In recent years, inclusion has become the popular practice in special education. However, different teachers, principals, schools, and districts have varying beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion.

According to Fuchs (2010) and Smith & Smith (2000), teachers felt there were common barriers to implementing inclusion within their classrooms. These barriers included inadequate training, a need for more support, increased planning and collaboration time, and more administrator support (Fuchs, 2010; Smith & Smith 2000). However, in studies conducted by Avradmidis et al. (2000) and MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013), some of those barriers seemed to be removed and more positive attitudes came about when in-service trainings were available and professional development in inclusion was available.

Furthermore, lack of administrators’ support was one of the barriers mentioned by teachers. Some research has been conducted on administrators’ beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion, but they were included in the general data presented (Santoli, et al., 2008). It was unclear what their beliefs and attitudes toward inclusion were since the data was not broken down in a manner that one could study just the administrator data. MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) found that the principal played a key role in the

influence on the beliefs and behaviors of teachers; therefore, the principals had a central role in promoting an inclusive belief within their schools.

This study included one administrator's beliefs and attitudes toward inclusion listed separately for analysis purposes. This quantitative study examined the beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion of elementary administrators, general education teachers, and special education teachers in a district located in the Midwest. The results of this analysis may be used to examine whether the administrator's beliefs and attitudes toward inclusion have a relationship with the teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward inclusion.

Importance of Study

The future of special education. As society moves forward in the 21st century, there are more opportunities available for individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are able to learn, communicate, and be productive members of society. They are part of each community and should be embraced. By educating students with disabilities side by side with their nondisabled peers, they begin to learn how to work together, form working and personal relationships, and have a sense of community and belonging. Individuals with disabilities will still be within the community after their school years, and should already be a part of the community when in school.

By conducting this study, it may raise awareness of the beliefs and attitudes toward inclusion in this area. Teachers and administrators may even change some of their beliefs and attitudes toward inclusion after participating in the study. Education is the key to making change. If this study helps to educate individuals in this area, then perhaps attitudes and beliefs that are more positive toward inclusion will occur and change will

come. By conducting this study, it may help begin conversations amongst coworkers about inclusion and what inclusive practices would look like within their school.

It is the law. Students with disabilities have the right to a FAPE in the LRE. For many students, this means that they are educated right next to their nondisabled peers in the general education classroom while receiving the necessary accommodations and modifications. However, many teachers, schools, and districts feel that they are unable to do this because of funding constraints and lack of teacher training. Regardless of the reason, it is not acceptable. The only reason a student with a disability should not be educated within the general education classroom is that his/her individual needs require that he/she be educated in a different environment.

How This Study Fits Within the Research

This quantitative study is similar to many of the previous studies since it looked at the attitudes of teachers in relation to inclusive practices; however, it also looked at the possible relationship between administrators' attitudes and dispositions towards inclusion and those of the teachers that work within their buildings. Most of the studies in this field looked at general education teachers' and special education teachers' attitudes and dispositions towards inclusion, but they did not look at the administrators.

If a relationship was found between the administrators' attitudes towards inclusion and the special and regular education teachers who work with those administrators, this could suggest that further research should be done to see how strong of a relationship there is between the two. Perhaps, it could lead to removing one of the barriers of inclusion in school, limited administrator support.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Context of Study

Previous research conducted in the area of inclusive beliefs showed that there were many factors that affected positive attitudes towards inclusion by general education teachers. Some of those factors included experience level, education level, gender, and previous experience working with students with disabilities (Hsien, et al., 2009). Furthermore, there were common barriers found that prevented teachers from wanting to implement inclusive practices including perceived unreasonable expectations, a need for more formal training, lack of administrator support, and more collaboration and planning time (Smith & Smith, 2000, Fuchs, 2010, Hwang & Evans, 2011).

In addition, previous research showed that about half of teachers interviewed and/or surveyed have negative or neutral attitudes towards inclusion (Hwang & Evans, 2011). One study showed up to almost 80% of staff believed that educating students with disabilities in the regular education classroom is disruptive (Santoli, et al., 2008). Studies conducted by Santoli, et al. (2008) and MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) explored the principal's role in inclusion. MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) found that the principal played a key role in the influence on the beliefs and behaviors of the teachers. Thompson (2015) and Osiname (2018) also believe that principal's play a key role in promoting inclusive cultures within the schools they work at.

This quantitative study continued the research on the administrators' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive practices. The researcher examined if there was a relationship between the dispositions of the administrators and the teachers who work in the same buildings as them. The relationship may be similar beliefs and attitudes between the administrators and the teachers, or it could show that they are exact opposites.

As previously stated in the history of special education section, institutionalization and "out of sight" type philosophies have been followed in the past. Students and people with disabilities were segregated and placed in institutions in early years so that they were "out of sight" to the public (Bursztyn, 2007). Now, federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE) per their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (LaNear & Frattura, 2007). For many students with disabilities, this means that they are educated right next to their same age, peers without disabilities. When principals believe that inclusion is the best practice, when appropriate per their IEP, they promoted an environment where everyone, including teachers, parents and students, helped to address the challenges inclusive practices may present (Osiname, 2018). However, there are varying beliefs by general education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators in believing that inclusion is the best practice for all students.

Setting

The study took place within a large Midwestern United States School District. To ensure confidentiality the school district will be referred to as SD throughout the research

study. SD serves over 10,000 students in grades PK through 12. A diverse group of students are served by SD including approximately 55% white, 20% Hispanic/Latino, 15% Asian, 5% African American, and 5% two or more races. SD consists of 26 schools, 13 of which are elementary schools. The study focused on seven of the 13 elementary schools.

Data was collected in a variety of settings. The Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised (SACIE-R) scale survey was distributed in paper form at the seven elementary schools with directions to complete at participants' earliest convenience in whichever setting was most convenient for the participants. Therefore, the teachers and administrators were able to complete the survey at school, home, a child's sporting event, a coffee shop, or any other place that was convenient for them.

Participants

IRB Approval was received to conduct this study at a Midwestern School District, SD (see Appendix A). SD is made up of 13 elementary schools, including two charter schools. A convenience sample was used. All 13 of the elementary schools were assigned a random number, 1 to 13, by picking the name of each school out of a basket. The first school picked was given number 1, the next number 2, and so on until all 13 schools were assigned a number. Next, a randomized number generator on the computer was used to determine which seven schools would be used in the study. For example, the first number generated was 6, so the school assigned number 6 was included within the study.

At each of the seven elementary schools, all special education teachers, regular education teachers, and administrators received a consent form (see Appendix B) and a survey (see Appendix C). The regular education teachers also included the physical education teachers, art teachers, and music teachers at each school. The number of teachers on staff at each school varied. However, all together, about 210 participants received a survey within the study.

Twenty-eight surveys were completed and returned to the researcher. However, four of the surveys did not have a signed consent form attached; therefore, the data could not be used. One survey also had two questions that were not answers; therefore, the data could not be used since a comprehensive score could not be calculated. Of the 23 usable participant surveys received, two of the participants were special education teachers, 17 were regular education teachers, three identified themselves as English Language Learner teachers, and one was an administrator. 20 of the participants were female and three were male. The mean years of experience for the participants was 19.6 years with a range of 30 years. The lowest number of years of experience was 5 years, and the highest was 35 years. Four of the participants had a Bachelor's Degree, 18 of the participants had a Master's Degree, and one of the participants had a PhD.

Question

Is there a relationship between the administrators' beliefs and attitudes and the general education and special education teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive practices at the elementary school level? There are a variety of factors that could affect the beliefs and attitudes of the participants including years of experience, gender, and

highest level of education attained. However, this study focused on examining the possible relationship between the administrators' beliefs and attitudes and the teachers' beliefs and attitudes.

Methodology

In order to answer the research question, a quantitative study was conducted. A Likert-scale survey known as the Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised (SACIE-R) was used in order to collect data on administrators', general education and special education teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion. There were 15 statements in the survey that are rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Forlin, et al., 2011).

Originally, the researcher was going to use the Opinions Relative to the Integration of Students with Disabilities (ORI), which was previously known as the Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming (ORM); The ORM was developed in 1979 by Larrivee and Cook. In 1995, the ORM was updated to the ORI by Larrivee and Antonak (Antonak & Larrivee, 1995). However, the researcher was unable to gain permission to use the data instrument and needed to find an updated survey since this particular instrument was over 20 years old.

The researcher consulted with her advisor to find a recent and valid data collection instrument. The Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised (SACIE-R) scale was the survey that the researcher and advisor discussed using. The researcher attempted to secure permission via email and was not able to make contact. The advisor attempted to make contact with the authors as well and

was unable to. However, the researcher's advisor has permission to use the tool for other research; therefore, the researcher was able to use the SACIE-R for this study.

The SACIE-R is a Likert-scale survey. Likert-scale was originally developed by Rensis Likert in 1932 (Whitaker, 2011). Likert-scale surveys are the most common method for measuring attitudes and perceptions. Typically, questions are ranked in a scale based on the participant's degree of agreement with the statement (Whitaker, 2011). There can be a variety of options in the Likert-scale from a 3-point scale, 4-point scale, 5-point scale, etc. As previously mentioned, the SACIE-R is a 4-point scale.

Originally, the SACIE was a 60-item scale that combined three different Likert-type scales. Then, the scale was reduced down to a 19-item scale by a panel of international experts in inclusive education (Forlin, et al., 2011). The SACIE scale went through a four-stage review process. The first stage involved sending out the 19-item SACIE in a first attempt to validate it (Forlin, et al., 2011). The second stage involved revising the items on the SACIE. The third stage adding eight new items for testing in order to strengthen the attitudes factor and also improve the reliability for the attitudes factor (Forlin, et al., 2011). The final stage, stage four, involved a final reduction and validation of the current 15-item SACIE survey (Forlin, et al., 2011).

The current SACIE-R is comprised of 15 questions. Each of the questions can be answered on a 4-point Likert-Scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Three different factors are represented by the 15 questions. Five questions are in relation to concerns, five are in relation to attitudes, and five are in relation to sentiments. A sub score can be determined for each of the three factors; scores range from 5-20 in each of

the categories, depending on how each question is answered. Overall, comprehensive scores which relate to overall confidence can range from 15-60; typically, a higher score would mean more positive dispositions towards inclusion. To see the full version of the SACIE-R, see Appendix C.

A quantitative study was used in order to compare and contrast the data from each category of the SACIE-R with different subgroups of the participants. First, the overall scores for each participant on the SACIE-R were calculated. Scores could range from 15-60, as previously stated. Next, the researcher found the mean scores for the general education teachers, special education teachers, and English Language Learner teachers for each of the schools. The scores were calculated for each educator type. Then, a mean score was calculated for all of the participants. Means could not be calculated for the administrators since only one administrator participated. Ranges were also calculated to see if there were scores on the extreme positive for inclusion or on the extreme negative.

Means and ranges were calculated for each of the categories: concerns, attitudes, and sentiments. Again, the data was broken down by educator type. Based on the scores in the concerns factor, the researcher determined which concerns were most common for these participants. For more specific results and analysis, see chapter four. For more information on the implications of the analysis, see chapter five.

Argument for Appropriateness of this Method to Answer the Question

The most common use for Likert-scale instruments is to measure attitudes and perceptions, which is what this study was measuring. Data was collected on the attitudes of the teachers and administrators of each of the seven schools. In order to efficiently

collect data, in a timely manner, this researcher chose to use a Likert-scale survey known as the SACIE-R. Since there were approximately 200 potential participants, it would have been very time consuming to interview all of them. Collecting data through the SACIE-R surveys was much more time efficient for the participants too since it only took them about 10 minutes to complete rather than taking 20-30 minutes to participate in an interview.

Explanation of How the Data from this Method Answers the Question

Once the SACIE-R was scored, the overall scores were used to determine if there were any relationships between the administrators' scores and the teachers' scores. The overall scores could range from 15-60; the higher the score the more positive dispositions the participant had towards inclusive education.

Since only one administrator participated in the study, the comparison could only be done with one of the schools. This particular comparison is what would best answer the research question. However, the overall scores were compared by educator type as well to look for other possible trends and relationships. The educator types included were special education teachers, regular education teachers, English Language Learner teachers, and administrator. After the overall scores were calculated, means and ranges were calculated by school and by educator type.

Next, sub-scores were also calculated for each of the factors including the concerns, attitudes, and sentiments. Means and ranges were found between educator types for each of the seven schools. The teachers and administrators identified common concerns. The concerns included having an increased workload and that it would be

difficult to give appropriate attention to all students in an inclusive classroom. These concerns fit in with the previous research findings.

IRB

The Institutional Review Board is responsible for reviewing all research studies that will involve human participants. This quantitative study involved human participants; however, this research study involved minimal risk to the participants and was approved by the Institutional Review Board, see Appendix A. The majority of the data collected is displayed and analyzed in a group rather than using individual data that could more easily be traced back to the individual participants. For example, data was grouped by educator type such as special education teachers, regular education teachers, and English Language Learner teachers. The administrator's data was used individually since there was only one administrator that participated, so the data was coded so that it cannot easily be traced back to the individual participant.

In order to keep confidentiality, pseudonyms were used for the school district, the elementary schools, and the participants. Pseudonyms for the schools are School One through School Seven. The school district's pseudonym was SD or it is referred to as a Midwestern school district. In addition, teacher names were not collected during any part of the data collection so the researcher did not know which data was from which teacher or administrator. Demographic information was collected based only on the teaching assignment (general education teacher, special education teacher, or administrator), years of experience, highest degree held, and gender.

Timeline

In November 2017, the researcher contacted the district office to receive permission and approval to perform the study within the district. The district approved the study. Next, the study was presented to the IRB in December, 2017 and approval was given by the IRB on December 6, 2017. Since the researcher could not obtain permission to use the original data collection instrument, the ORI, the researcher needed to find another data collection instrument.

A modification form was submitted to IRB to change the survey tool used from the ORI to the Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education (SACIE-R) scale. Approval was given in early March, 2018. The researcher made copies for all the potential participants in early March.

The SACIE-R surveys were distributed in mid-March, 2018. The surveys were asked to be returned in two weeks from when they were distributed. Due to a low return rate, the researcher extended the deadline to April 6, 2018. Data analysis began thereafter and was completed in mid-April. The study was completed and submitted for format review on April 27, 2018.

Reliability and Validity

The Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised (SACIE-R) has been through a four-stage validation process. In the first stage, a 19-item survey was sent out to 297 pre-service teachers from four different institutions in four different countries including Canada, Hong Kong, Australia, and Singapore (Forlin, et al., 2011). Inter-item consistency according to Cronbach's alpha represents the degree to

which items appear on each factor and to measure the common set of theoretical constructs (Forlin, et al., 2011). The reported alpha value of .83 was for the reduced scale of 15 items by the 297 respondents; this indicated a high level of inter-item consistency (Forlin, et al., 2011). The reliabilities of each of the three subscales were also calculated and equaled .86, .86, and .70 (Forlin, et al., 2011).

In the second stage, revisions and reduction occurred that reduced the SACIE down to 15-items. This survey was distributed to 227 pre-service teachers from three different institutions in Hong Kong, Australia, and Singapore (Forlin, et al., 2011). The inter-correlations between the three factors were less than 0.30, which suggested that the factors were each independent issues related to inclusive education (Forlin, et al., 2011). However, there was a lack of balance between the scales; the attitudes factor was under represented (Forlin, et al., 2011). The whole scale reliability was still .85 despite the weakness in the representation of the attitudes factor (Forlin, et al., 2011).

In stage three, eight more items were added to strengthen the attitudes factor of the survey and improve the reliability of the attitudes factor. Therefore, the new scale had 23 items (Forlin, et al., 2011). This 23-item survey was distributed to 186 pre-services teachers from Canada and Hong Kong (Forlin, et al., 2011). Factoring was conducted using a correlation matrix. The resulting three-factor structure with the most consistent reliabilities consisted of 15 items. Each factor had equal representation between the components of sentiments, attitudes, and concerns in relation to inclusive education (Forlin, et al. 2011). The relative proportions for the three factors were 23.4%, 19.4%, and 15.5% (Forlin, et al., 2011).

In the final, stage four, the final reduction occurred to have the revised 15-items (Forlin, et al., 2011). Five hundred forty-two pre-service teachers from nine different institutions in Canada, Hong Kong, India, and the United States were used for this final validation. Internal reliability according to Cronbach's alpha was acceptable for the overall SACIE scale with a score of .74 (Forlin, et al., 2011). Internal reliability was also acceptable for each of the individual subscales according to Cronbach's alpha; sentiments was .75, attitudes was .67, and concerns was .65 (Forlin, et al., 2011).

Chapter 4

Results

The question the researcher attempted to answer with this quantitative study was to examine whether there was a relationship between administrators' beliefs and attitudes and the general education and special education teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive practices at the elementary school level. In order to gather data on teacher and principal beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion, the researcher used the Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education-Revised (SACIE-R) Scale. The SACIE-R Scale is a 4-point Likert-scale survey; since it is a 4-point scale, it should help deter participants from choosing a neutral answer (Forlin, et al., 2011). For more information on the SACIE-R see chapter 3 or the full survey can be found in Appendix C.

Overall Results

The researcher brought 210 surveys to both general education and special education teachers and administrators within seven different elementary schools within a Midwest school district. The surveys were placed within their mailboxes to be completed within two weeks at their earliest convenience if they chose to participate in the study. The deadline was extended once with a follow-up email giving the participants two more weeks to complete the survey if they chose to. Twenty-eight of the surveys came back completed; this is a 13.33% return rate. However, 4 of the surveys were turned in without a signature giving consent for the data to be used. One of the surveys was also returned with two of the questions left unanswered, so the data could not be used since an overall

score could not be calculated. Therefore, 23 surveys were used in the data analysis; this is 11% of the distributed surveys.

Furthermore, of the 23 completed surveys, only 1 of them was completed by a current administrator representing 4% of the data. Seventeen of the participants identified themselves as regular education teachers, which represents 73.9% of participants. Two of the participants identified themselves as special education teachers which represents 8.7% of the data. Three of the participants identified themselves as English Language Learner teachers representing 13% of the sample. The following pie graph shows the breakdown of type of participants.

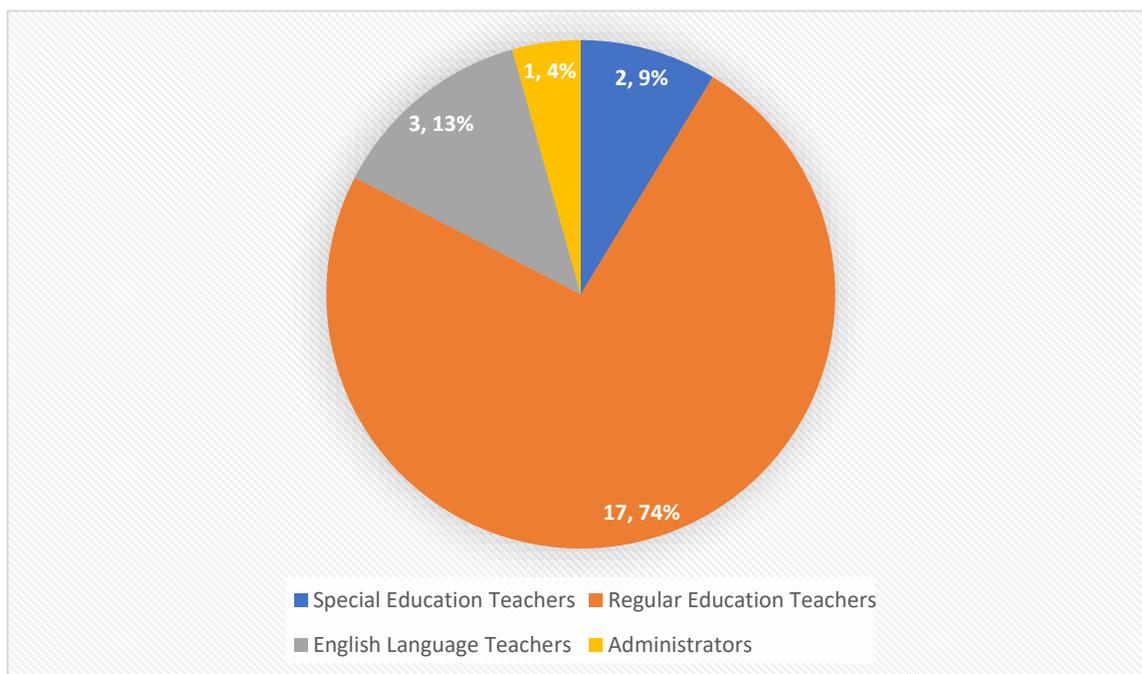


Figure 1. Display of data showing the breakdown of each type of participant within the study.

The SACIE-R is comprised of 15 questions. Each of the questions can be answered on a 4-point Likert-Scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Three different factors are represented by the 15 questions. Five questions are in relation to concerns, five are in relation to attitudes, and five are in relation to sentiments. A sub score was determined for each of the three factors; scores can range from 5-20 in each of the categories, depending on how each question is answered. Overall, scores can range from 15-60; typically, a higher score would mean more positive dispositions towards inclusion.

Overall, the mean score of the 23 participants was a 46.57. The highest possible score would be 60, which would mean the most positive dispositions towards inclusion. The scores ranged from 38 to 54. The mean score of the 17 regular education teachers was 46.29. The mean score of the two special education teachers was 48.5. The score for the administrator was 45. Finally, the mean score of the three English Language Learner teachers was 47.3. Table 1, depicts the ranges for each group of educators as well as the mean scores.

Table 1

SACIE-R Scale Score Means and Ranges by Participant Group

Participant Group	Low	High	Range	Mean
RET (17)	38	54	16	46.29
SET (2)	46	51	5	48.5
ELT (3)	43	51	8	47.3
Admins (1)	-	-	-	45
Overall (23)	38	54	16	46.57

Note. Ranges > 5 are in boldface. There was only 1 administrator therefore, no data is present for low, high, or range recorded. RET- Regular Education Teachers; SET= Special Education Teachers; ELT= English Language Learner Teachers; Admins= Administrators.

Results: School One

There were 37 potential participants from school one including one administrator and 36 regular and special education teachers. There were two completed surveys returned which is a 5.4% return rate. One of the participants was a regular education teacher and the other was a special education teacher. There was no administrator data to represent this school.

The mean overall score for School One was 46.5. The highest possible overall score would be a 60, which would be very positive dispositions towards inclusion. 46.5 would be positive dispositions towards inclusion. The range between the two teachers' scores was 1. Each category can have a high score of 20 and a low score of 5. The mean score in the concerns category was 12.5. The mean score in the attitudes category was 16.

The mean score in the sentiments category was 18. Table 2 displays means and ranges of the data for each category by educator type. Due to the fact that there was only one special education teacher and one regular education teacher that participated, ranges could not be calculated.

Table 2

School One Means and Ranges by Category

PG	CM	CR	AM	AR	SM	SR
RET (1)	4	-	15	-	18	-
SET (1)	11	-	17	-	18	-
Admins (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall (2)	12.5	3	16	2	18	0

Note. Ranges could not be calculated for RET and SET since there was only 1 participant per group. No administrator participated so there is no data to report for administrators. PG= Participant Group; CM= Concerns Mean; CR= Concerns Range; AM= Attitudes Mean; AR= Attitudes Range; SM= Sentiments Mean; SR= Sentiments Range; RET= Regular Education Teachers; SET= Special Education Teachers; Admins= Administrators.

Results: School Two

There were 37 potential participants from School Two including one administrator and 36 regular and special education teachers. There were two completed surveys returned which is a 5.4% return rate. Both of the participants were regular education teachers. There was no administrator or special education teacher data to represent this school.

The mean overall score for School Two was 49.5. The highest possible score would be 60, which would be very positive dispositions towards inclusion. 49.5 demonstrates positive dispositions towards inclusion for this school overall. The range between the two teachers' scores was 3. Each category can have a high score of 20 and a low score of 5. The mean score in the concerns category was 14.5. The mean score in the attitudes category was 17.5. The mean score in the sentiments category was 17.5. Table 3 displays the data for each category separated by educator type; however, due to the lack of special education teacher participants or an administrator participant, dashes can be seen on the table across those categories.

Table 3

School Two Means and Ranges by Category

PG	CM	CR	AM	AR	SM	SR
RET (2)	14.5	1	17.5	1	17.5	1
SET (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Admins (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall (2)	14.5	1	17.5	1	17.5	1

Note. No administrator participated so there is no data to report for administrators. No special education teachers (SET) participated so there is no data to report for SET. PG= Participant Group; CM= Concerns Mean; CR= Concerns Range; AM= Attitudes Mean; AR= Attitudes Range; SM= Sentiments Mean; SR= Sentiments Range; RET= Regular Education Teachers; SET= Special Education Teachers; Admins= Administrators.

Results: School Three

There were 15 potential participants from School Three including one administrator and 14 regular and special education teachers. There were four completed

surveys returned which is a 26.7% return rate. All four of the participants were regular education teachers. There was no administrator data to represent this school nor will there be special education teacher data to report.

The mean overall score for school three was 43.75. The most positive dispositions from the SACIE-R would have a score of 60. An overall score of 43.75 would still mean positive dispositions towards inclusion. The range between the four teachers' scores was 9. The mean score in the concerns category was 13.25. The mean score in the attitudes category was 15. The mean score in the sentiments category was 15.5. Table 4 displays the means of each category separated by educator type. However, there was no administrator data nor special education teacher.

Table 4

School Three Means and Ranges by Category

PG	CM	CR	AM	AR	SM	SR
RET (4)	13.25	3	15	10	15.5	4
SET (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Admins (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall (4)	13.25	3	15	10	15.5	4

Note. Ranges > 5 are in boldface. No administrator participated so there is no data to report for administrators. No special education teachers (SET) participated so there is no data for SET. PG= Participant Group; CM= Concerns Mean; CR= Concerns Range; AM= Attitudes Mean; AR= Attitudes Range; SM= Sentiments Mean; SR= Sentiments Range; RET= Regular Education Teachers; SET= Special Education Teachers; Admins= Administrators.

Results: School Four

There were 38 potential participants from School Four including one administrator and 37 regular and special education teachers. There were four completed surveys returned which is a 10.5% return rate. All four of the participants were regular education teachers; one of the participants has experience as an administrator but is not currently an administrator. There was no administrator data to represent this school nor special education teacher data.

The mean overall score for School Four was 48.75. The SACIE-R comprehensive score can range from 15-60. A score of 48.75 demonstrates a positive disposition towards inclusion. The range between the four teachers' scores was 10. The SACIE-R is broken into three categories including concerns, attitudes, and sentiment and each category can have a score ranging from 5 to 20. The mean score in the concerns category was 14.25. The mean score in the attitudes category was 16.75. The mean score in the sentiments category was 17.75. In Table 5, the means and ranges for each category are displayed by educator type; however, there are no administrators or special education teachers from this school. Dashes can be seen across the administrator and special education teacher rows since no data was obtained.

Table 5

School Four Means and Ranges by Category

PG	CM	CR	AM	AR	SM	SR
RET (4)	14.25	5	16.75	5	17.75	4
SET (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Admins (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall (4)	14.25	5	16.75	5	17.75	4

Note. No administrator participated so there is no data to report for administrators. No special education teachers (SET) participated so there is no data for SET. PG= Participant Group; CM= Concerns Mean; CR= Concerns Range; AM= Attitudes Mean; AR= Attitudes Range; SM= Sentiments Mean; SR= Sentiments Range; RET= Regular Education Teachers; SET= Special Education Teachers; Admins= Administrators.

Results: School Five

There were 30 potential participants from School Five including one administrator and 29 regular and special education teachers. There were five completed surveys complete which is a 16.7% return rate; however, three of the surveys did not return with signed consent forms so the data could not be used. Therefore, the usable return rate is 6.7%, or two completed surveys. Both of the participants were regular education teachers. There was no administrator data to represent this school nor will there be special education teacher data.

The mean overall score for School Five was 47. A score of 47 means positive dispositions towards inclusion; the highest possible score would be 60. The range between the two teachers' scores was 14. The SACIE-R is comprised of three different categories including concerns, attitudes, and sentiments. Each category can have scores

ranging from 5 to 20. The mean score in the concerns category was 14. The mean score in the attitudes category was 17.5. The mean score in the sentiments category was 15.5. Table 6 displays the ranges and means of each category of the SACIE-R and it is broken down by educator type. However, dashes can be seen in the rows for administrators and special education teachers since no data was obtained.

Table 6

School Five Means and Ranges by Category

PG	CM	CR	AM	AR	SM	SR
RET (2)	14	10	17.5	1	15.5	3
SET (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Admins (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall (2)	14	10	17.5	1	15.5	3

Note. Ranges > 5 are in boldface. No administrator participated so there is no data to report for administrators. No special education teachers (SET) participated so there is no data for SET. PG= Participant Group; CM= Concerns Mean; CR= Concerns Range; AM= Attitudes Mean; AR= Attitudes Range; SM= Sentiments Mean; SR= Sentiments Range; RET= Regular Education Teachers; SET= Special Education Teachers; Admins= Administrators.

Results: School Six

There were 25 potential participants from School Six including one administrator and 24 regular, English Language, and special education teachers. There were six completed surveys returned which is a 24% return rate. Three of the participants identified themselves as English Language (Learner) teachers, one as a special education teacher, one as a regular education teacher, and one as an administrator.

The mean overall score for school six was 47.67. The highest score on the SACIE-R is a 60, which would mean the most positive dispositions towards inclusion. A score of 47.67 means positive dispositions towards inclusion. The range between the six teachers' scores was 8. The mean score in the concerns category was 13.5. The mean score in the attitudes category was 17. The mean score in the sentiments category was 17.17. Table 7 displays the ranges and means of each category across the different educator types. For the regular education teacher, special education teacher, and administrator data ranges cannot be calculated since there is only 1 number in each category; this is displayed on the table using a dash.

Table 7

School Six Means and Ranges by Category

PG	CM	CR	AM	AR	SM	SR
RET (1)	15	-	15	-	18	-
SET (1)	16	-	19	-	16	-
ELT (3)	12.66	1	17.66	5	17	2
Admins (1)	12	-	15	-	18	-
Overall (6)	13.5	4	17	5	17.17	2

Note. Ranges could not be calculated for RET, SET, and admins since there was only 1 participant per group. PG= Participant Group; CM= Concerns Mean; CR= Concerns Range; AM= Attitudes Mean; AR= Attitudes Range; SM= Sentiments Mean; SR= Sentiments Range; RET= Regular Education Teachers; SET= Special Education Teachers; ELT= English Language Learner Teacher; Admins= Administrators.

Results: School Seven

There were 28 potential participants from School Seven including one administrator and 27 regular and special education teachers. There were four completed surveys returned which is a 14.3% return rate; however, one of the surveys did not return with a signed consent form so the data could not be used. Therefore, the usable return rate is 10.7%, or three completed surveys. All three of the participants were regular education teachers. There was no administrator or special education teacher data to represent this school.

The mean overall score for school seven was 43. A score of 43 demonstrates positive dispositions towards inclusion; however, the highest possible score on the SACIE-R is a 60, which would demonstrate the most positive dispositions towards inclusion. The range between the two teachers' scores was 7. The SACIE-R can be broken into three categories including concerns, attitudes, and sentiments. Each category can have a score ranging from 5 to 20. The mean score in the concerns category was 10.33. The mean score in the attitudes category was 17.33. The mean score in the sentiments category was 15.33. Table 8 displays the ranges and means of each category across the different educator types. Since all the participants were regular education teachers, there is no administrator data included.

Table 8

School Seven Means and Ranges by Category

PG	CM	CR	AM	AR	SM	SR
RET (3)	10.33	1	17.33	5	15.33	3
SET (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Admins (0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall (3)	10.33	1	17.33	5	15.33	3

Note. No administrator participated so there is no data to report for administrators. No special education teachers (SET) participated so there is no data for SET. PG= Participant Group; CM= Concerns Mean; CR= Concerns Range; AM= Attitudes Mean; AR= Attitudes Range; SM= Sentiments Mean; SR= Sentiments Range; RET= Regular Education Teachers; SET= Special Education Teachers; Admins= Administrators.

Conclusion

The SACIE-R Scale is a 4-point Likert scale that ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. There are 15 items on the scale and three categories represented on the scale. Of the 28 individuals who returned completed surveys, the researcher was able to use 23 surveys due to 4 missing signed participant permission forms and 1 not completing the entire survey. The mean score was 46.57, overall. The range of scores was 16. In chapter 5, the results will be interpreted and analyzed and implications will be discussed.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Research Question

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine if there was a relationship between administrators' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion and general education and special education teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion at the elementary school level. The researcher wanted to determine if there was a potential relationship between the administrator and the teachers, both special and general education, within the same building.

Method

In order to answer the research question, a quantitative study was conducted. The researcher collected data using a Likert-scale survey known as the Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Practices Revised (SACIE-R) Scale. It is a 4-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree; this was to deter participants from choosing a neutral response (Forlin, et al., 2011). In total, there are 15 questions on the survey. There are three categories covered: sentiments, attitudes and concerns (Forlin, et al., 2011). For more details about the SACIE-R and the methodology, see chapter three or Appendix C.

Major Findings

The results of this quantitative study show that all of the teachers and the one administrator who participated have positive beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion;

however, the scores vary in how positive their beliefs and attitudes are towards inclusion. The SACIE-R consists of 15 questions and each question has 4 different response options. Therefore, scores can range from 15 to 60. The higher the score the more positive beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion the participant has. The lowest score in this study was a 38, which is still over the halfway mark, which suggests more positive beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion. The majority of the scores fell between 43 and 54, which indicate higher scores. Furthermore, special education teachers were found to have more positive dispositions towards inclusive practices than regular education teachers by 3.5 points. A possible reason for the higher scores could be the increased training, knowledge, and skills that special education teachers receive in their programs, helped to increase their dispositions towards inclusive practices.

School Six was the only school that can compare data between the administrator and the teachers. The administrators score was 45. The mean score of all the teachers was 48.2. The teachers from this school showed similar concerns compared to the administrator. The top two concerns by the teachers and administrator were giving appropriate attention to all students in an inclusive classroom and having an increase in the workload if students with disabilities are within the regular education classroom. Furthermore, the teachers' attitudes appeared to be the same or even more positive towards inclusion than the administrator. Lastly, the teachers' sentiments were either the same or within 2 points of the administrators.

The concerns expressed by the participants of this study were consistent with those of teachers and administrators in numerous other studies including Fuchs (2010),

Smith and Smith (2000), and Santoli, et al. (2008). The most prominent concern by teachers, both regular education and special education was that the teacher's workload would increase if students with disabilities are within the regular education class. The administrator in this study also had a similar score that expressed concern that the teachers' workload would increase if students with disabilities were within the regular education classroom. Fuchs (2010), Smith and Smith (2000), and Santoli, et al. (2008) also reported teachers expressing their concern for an increase in the time and work needed when students with disabilities are in the regular education classroom.

Another concern that the teachers, both regular education and special education, and the administrator expressed as evidenced by survey responses was that it would be difficult to give appropriate attention to all students in an inclusive classroom. This is a similar concern to that found by Hwang and Evans (2011). Hwang and Evans (2011) reported teachers felt they did not have enough time to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Based on their concern, by not having enough time to meet the needs of students with disabilities, this could mean they would not be able to give appropriate attention to all students within the classroom.

One inconsistency found between this study and two other studies, is that only 8 of the 23 (34.8%) teachers and administrators expressed concern about not having adequate knowledge and skills required to teach students with disabilities. Fuchs' (2010) found that many teachers felt they did not have sufficient training or knowledge to work with students with disabilities and that the administrators did not support the teachers enough to get the necessary training. Furthermore, Hwang and Evans' (2011) found that

89.64% of teachers felt they did not have proper training to implement inclusion. This study had a significantly lower number of teachers and administrators with this concern.

Strengths of the Study

One strength of this study is that an updated, recent, and valid data collection instrument was used. The Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised (SACIE-R) survey was from 2011.

A second strength of this study is that participants needed to make a decision in regards to agreeing or disagree with each statement on the SACIE-R since there was no neutral response as an option. This really encouraged the participants to think about the concerns, attitudes, and sentiments they have in relation to inclusive education. The survey instrument is known as a forced-choice 4-point Likert scale (Forlin, et al., 2011). Therefore, the results should represent a more accurate range of whether they have more positive beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion or possibly negative beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion.

A third strength is that the SACIE-R is a validated data collection instrument. When initially developed, the SACIE-R had 60 items on it and was administered through a series of refined surveys. The final 15-item scale that was used for this survey was validated using 542 pre-service teachers. The pre-service teachers were from nine different institutions in four different countries including Hong Kong, Canada, India, and the United States (Forlin, et al., 2011). For more information on the validation process see chapter 3.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations to this study that must be addressed. The two limitations include the small sample size of the data collected and the nature of survey data. Survey data is perceptual rather than observational, which can be limiting.

The first limitation to the study was that the sample size was fairly small, especially in regards to the administrators. There were approximately 200 potential participants for the study including regular education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators. There were seven elementary schools included in the study; therefore, only seven administrators could potentially represent the administrator data, which is a small sample size. Furthermore, only one administrator did complete the survey; therefore, only one school's data could be compared between the teachers and the administrator. Due to it being a small sample size, the results cannot be generalized to other districts.

A second limitation was in the nature of survey data. Survey data only is perceptual rather than observational, which can be limiting. When using a survey, data is limited to question/item responses. Therefore, expansion or explanation of responses are not obtained. In addition, the interpretation of the questions on the survey will depend on the experiences, education level, and possible biases the participants have; this can result in inaccurate results if the participant did not fully understand the questions or terms used. Furthermore, the participants may feel that they should respond in a particular way and may not be honest in their answers leading to biased results.

Implications for Practice

Based on previous research findings by Fuchs (2010), MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013), and Smith and Smith (2000) as well as the results of this study, there are several implications for practice. Survey results suggested teachers are concerned in regards to their workloads increasing and it being difficult to give appropriate attention to all students in an inclusive classroom. Based on these concerns, additional time for the increased workloads and additional time to collaborate with special education teachers would be necessary to help educators move towards more supportive dispositions toward inclusive practice.

Furthermore, survey results indicated about 30% of the participants in this study expressed concern about not having adequate knowledge and skills to teach students with disabilities. Based on this concern, the implication for practice would be adding additional training and support for educators in inclusive practices. With the additional training and support, the teachers may feel more confident to provide appropriate attention to all students within an inclusive classroom. The principals, paraprofessionals, and colleagues could give their support. Furthermore, with additional training, the teachers would feel they have the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the students with disabilities. With the additional training and support, the teachers may become supportive of inclusive practices and more willing to implement them within their classrooms.

Implications for Future Research

Although the findings of this study suggest that there may be similar beliefs and attitudes toward inclusive practices between administrators and teachers who work within the same buildings, further research needs to be conducted that utilizes a larger sample size. Replicating this study with a larger sample size would further confirm or deny a potential relationship. A larger sample size could include more schools within one district, or it could look across several school districts providing the possibility for generalization.

Due to the low return rate of surveys from administrators, only one of the seven, it is impossible to generalize the findings to answer the research question. In order to have a higher return rate by administrators, a larger sample size would need to be used; this means, there would need to be more schools involved within the study. One way to have more schools included within the study would be to use more than one district since this researcher only used seven schools within the same district. Another option to have more administrators in the study would be to include all levels of schools rather than just the elementary level.

APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval



Date: 12/6/2017
To: [REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED] Institutional Review Board
Protocol Title: Attitudes and Beliefs Towards inclusion in Today's Schools
Protocol Number: [REDACTED]
Protocol Approval Date: 12/6/2017
Protocol Expiration Date: 12/5/2018

On behalf of the [REDACTED] Institutional Review Board for Protection of Human Participants (IRB), I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved. This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities as outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Your research has been approved as NON-EXEMPT under the following federal category governed by 45 CFR 46.110: Expedited Category 7

Non-exempt research is subject to compliance with federal regulations and [REDACTED] policies regarding the use of human subjects as described in the IRB Application materials. In conducting research under this protocol, the researcher agrees to:

- Submit a Modification Request Form and secure approval before making any changes to the protocol.
- Submit a Continuing Review Form prior to the expiration date to extend the protocol beyond the end date.
- Report to the IRB any unanticipated risks the research subjects or deviations from the procedures as described in the protocol as soon as they are identified.
- Complete an IRB Closure Form when the research is completed.
- All IRB forms may be found on the [Sponsored Programs and Faculty Development website](#), completed, and sent electronically to [REDACTED].
- As required by [REDACTED] record retention policy, please retain all research data and signed consent forms for seven years after completion of the study.

Please contact me if you have any questions (PH# [REDACTED] or e-mail: [REDACTED]).

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
IRB Chair

cc: [REDACTED], Bobbi Jo Capetillo-Pena

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX B
Participant Consent Form

Dear Educator,

Bobbie Jo Capetillo-Pena, a Special Education graduate student at the [REDACTED], is conducting a study to examine the possible relationship between the beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive practices of elementary administrators, general education teachers, and special education teachers. This will be a quantitative study that will compare the beliefs and attitudes of the administrators and the general education and special education teachers they work with. She would appreciate your support in this research study by participating in a survey. No identifiable data will be shared and the survey can be completed anonymously; at no time, will you be asked to identify yourself by name.

I do not anticipate that your allowing me to use any of this data will present any medical or social risk to you. I anticipate that the completing of the survey will take approximately 10 minutes of your time. Information gathered in this study may benefit you, your colleagues, and possibly even your students. By taking this survey, it may spark conversations within your school about inclusion and how to better meet the diverse needs of the students you are working with.

The information gathered will remain confidential. I will not release the information I gather in any way that would identify you or your school. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time and to request that none of your data be used.

Once the study is completed I will be glad to share the results with you. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact:

Bobbie Jo Capetillo-Pena
Special Education Graduate Student

[REDACTED]

If you have any questions or concerns, you may also contact the instructor:

[REDACTED]

If you have any complaints about your treatment as a participant in this study, please call or write:

[REDACTED]
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants

[REDACTED]

Although the Chairperson may ask your name, all complaints are kept confidential.

I have received an explanation of the Inclusion study and how my data will be used and agree to participate. I understand that participation in this study is strictly voluntary.

(participant signature)

(date)

APPENDIX C

Sentiments, Attitudes, and Concerns about Inclusive Education- Revised and Demographic Data

The following statements pertain to inclusive education which involves students from a wide range of diverse backgrounds and abilities learning with their peers in regular schools that adapt and change the way they work in order to meet the needs of all.

Please circle the response which best applies to you.

	SD Strongly Disagree	D Disagree	A Agree	SA Strongly Agree
1	I am concerned that students with disabilities will not be accepted by the rest of the class.			SD D A SA
2	I dread the thought that I could eventually end up with a disability.			SD D A SA
3	Students who have difficulty expressing their thoughts verbally should be in regular classes.			SD D A SA
4	I am concerned that it will be difficult to give appropriate attention to all students in an inclusive classroom.			SD D A SA
5	I tend to make contacts with people with disabilities brief and I finish them as quickly as possible.			SD D A SA
6	Students who are inattentive should be in regular classes.			SD D A SA
7	I am concerned that my workload will increase if I have students with disabilities in my class.			SD D A SA
8	Students who require communicative technologies (e.g. Braille/sign language) should be in regular classes.			SD D A SA
9	I would feel terrible if I had a disability.			SD D A SA
10	I am concerned that I will be more stressed if I have students with disabilities in my class.			SD D A SA
11	I am afraid to look directly at a person with a disability.			SD D A SA
12	Students who frequently fail exams should be in regular classes.			SD D A SA
13	I find it difficult to overcome my initial shock when meeting people with severe physical disabilities.			SD D A SA
14	I am concerned that I do not have the knowledge and skills required to teach students with disabilities.			SD D A SA
15	Students who need an individualized academic program should be in regular classes.			SD D A SA

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix C (Continued)**Demographic Data Collection:**

Gender:

How many years of experience do you have as a teacher?

How many years of experience do you have as an administrator?

What position do you currently hold? (Regular education teacher, special education teacher, or administrator- specific grade level is not necessary)

What is the highest level of education that you have completed? (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, etc.)

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