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Administrator and Teacher Attitudes Toward Inclusion

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Administrator and Teacher Attitudes Toward Inclusion

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by

Heather LeMay

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ABSTRACT

Administrator and Teacher Attitudes Toward Inclusion

by

Heather LeMay

This study was designed to examine the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion in the classroom. Specifically this study analyzed grade level, years of teaching experience, and levels of education to examine the manner in which these factors relate to attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion.

Participants in this study were located in 3 school districts in East Tennessee. All data were collected through an online survey distributed to prek-12 teachers by way of email from school principals. The analysis of data was based on the responses of 183 teachers and administrators from these 3 school districts. Findings indicated that education level did not play a significant role in the attitudes, training, or resources dimensions of the study. However, participant role and years of experience did play a significant role in the participants' attitudes toward inclusion. Administrators held more positive attitudes toward inclusion than teachers and reported having more resources on inclusion than teachers. Those participants with 0-15 years of experience held more positive attitudes on inclusion than those with 16-30 plus years of experience.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family and friends who have stuck by me through life's adventures and overwhelming odds. While hard work and dedication have made this opportunity possible, the love and support I have received from those who spend each day with me has helped make my dream come true.

First, I would like to recognize my mother, Pamela LeMay. You have put up with so much from me since I was born, but through it all you were my biggest supporter. You never doubted me or my abilities. You unwavering support and encouragement have kept me going even when I thought I was not going to be able to make it. I don't know where I would be without you. Your confidence in me has given me the courage to follow my dreams. I will be forever grateful.

Second, I would like to recognize my dad, Michael LeMay. You have been right next to Mom the entire time, quietly listening to me as I struggle through the some of the toughest times in my life. You are always there when I need you. You have made this dissertation possible, literally by building me an office to write in. I had a place to go that I called my own and that made all the difference. Your wisdom has been invaluable but so has your ability to be a sounding board when I needed ideas. I would not be here if it was not for you and Mom and I don't think thank you is enough to express my full gratitude. I love you both so much.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Inclusion is a highly controversial topic in schools in part due in part to a lack of a clear outline from federal mandates on how inclusion should be implemented in each school (Bosch, 2015). The first law guiding special education was the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) in 1975, which advocated mainstreaming children with disabilities, but did not mandate the inclusion tenants (Coates, 1985). In 1990 the EAHCA was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (Rivera-Tubbs, 2012). Jenkins (2012) stated that IDEA made guidelines for Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and provided stipulations regarding equal access to the general education setting regardless of the child's disability. One of the requirements of IDEA was that students be placed in the least restrictive environment (LRE) if they were not eligible for a general education placement. If a general education placement was ruled out then a multidisciplinary team would meet to determine the most appropriate placement for the student (Lorio, 2011). While there are many provisions in the law mandating the inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education setting the extent to which they are included is not dictated. School administrators determine the range of services possible in the school, and the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team determines which services provide the LRE for the student. There are a variety of ways that inclusion can be implemented which means that inclusion is not a universally applied program. Some follow a partial inclusion model by which students attend some classes but the majority of the time spent in a general education setting is in specials classes, electives, lunch, and school wide events (Bosch 2015). Other schools may not practice any form of

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inclusion and may not have any time by which students with disabilities are in a general education setting. Inclusion has the potential to reach a large number of students at a variety of levels. While the primary purpose of inclusion should be to meet the academic needs of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, it also has the potential to serve as a way to teach social skills and to model the appropriate behavior of their typically developing peers. Inclusion falls under a broad spectrum of possibilities. The law lays out no specific mandates as to how inclusion is to be implemented in each school (Williams, 2015). The extent to which each student is served within an inclusive setting becomes an IEP team decision and within the model of inclusion that the school or district follows.

Statement of the Problem

According to Washington (2010), the decision on which model of inclusion to follow is completely the prerogative of the administrator in each school. Therefore, it is important to examine administrators' and teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. If administrators or teachers have an overall negative attitude, they are probably not implementing a large amount of inclusion in their school; thus students could be missing out on opportunities to grow and learn from their typically developing peers (Bruce, 2010). Some administrators or teachers may have an overly positive view; their schools potentially could be implementing full inclusion which may not be what is best for the student with disabilities to be in that setting full time. It is, therefore, important to identify the perceptions of these administrators and teachers.

This study was designed to examine the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion in the classroom. Specifically this study analyzed grade level, years of teaching experience, and levels of education to examine the manner in which these factors relate to attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion.

Definition of Terms

To ensure a clear understanding of terms used in the study, the following list of definitions are included.

1. *Dimension 1*: Refers to the participant's personal attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education setting.

2. *Dimension 2:* Refers to the participant's perceptions of the resources provided whether it be paraprofessionals, learning strategies, hands on materials for learning etc.

3. *Dimension 3*: Refers to the amount of training administrators and teachers have on inclusion and implementation of inclusion either provided through their collegiate studies, on the job training, or provided by their school district.

4. *Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)*: The administration of Special education and related services provided in accordance with an IEP, are free to the family, and meet standards of the State Department of Education (Wright & Wright, 2007).

5. *Inclusion*: The placement of students with disabilities in general education classrooms with students without disabilities who are also the same age (Reynolds & Fletcher-Janzen, 2000).

6. *Individualized Education Plan (IEP)*: A plan written for educating each child with a disability, prior to being placed in a special education program (Reynolds & Fletcher-Janzen, 2000).

7. *Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):* "Legal requirement to educate children with disabilities in general education classrooms with children who have no disabilities, to the maximum extent possible" (Wright & Wright, 2007, p. 427).

Research Questions

1. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

2. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

3. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1 (Attitudes toward Inclusion) on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

4. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

5. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating year of experience?

6. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

7. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

8. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

9. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

Significance of the Study

Bosch (2015) stated that a negative perception towards inclusion can be related to a lack of resources and training provided to teachers and administrators. Bosch noted attitudes toward inclusion directly affect the successfulness of the inclusive setting. Teachers report feeling that school administrators do not offer adequate support for inclusion students. Bosch also noted this lack of support leaves teachers overwhelmed and insecure about their ability. If the reasons behind a negative perception can be revealed, support can be offered in those areas. This new support could potentially change attitudes and perceptions and increase the effectiveness of an inclusive setting.

Limitations and Delimitations

There are certain limitations and delimitations that exist in regard to this study. The population of this study was delimited to all teachers and administrators in three school districts in East Tennessee during the 2016-2017 school year. Due to the delimitations the responses and data may not reflect the attitudes and perceptions of other teachers and administrators in the surrounding area, state or nation. Limitations of the

study were that all teachers and administrators in all three districts were invited to participate in the survey. However, those who chose not to participate may have different responses than those who chose to participate.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1: Introduction includes the Purpose of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Significance of the Study, Research Questions, Limitations, Definition of Terms, and Organization of the Study. Chapter 2: Literature Review includes the Introduction, History of Special Education and the Law, Inclusion, Strengths of Inclusion, Weaknesses of the Inclusion, Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusion, and Administrators' Attitudes towards Inclusion. Chapter 3: Methods includes the Research Design, Population, Development of Survey Instrument, Data Collection Procedures, Research Questions and Null Hypotheses, Data Analysis, and a Summary. Chapter 4: Results includes the Introduction and presentation of the data for Research Questions 1–24. Chapter 5: Findings includes the Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusions are reviewed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study was designed to examine the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion in the classroom. Specifically this study analyzed grade level, years of teaching experience, and levels of education to examine the manner in which these factors relate to attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion.

In order to understand this study in the proper context, a review of literature was conducted. This literature review begins as a historical timeline that lists pertinent laws and court cases related to special education followed by inclusion, inclusion models, benefits and weaknesses of inclusion, and finally, research on teacher and administrator perceptions on inclusion.

Laws Related to Special Education

Examining the legislative battles fought for children with disabilities is vital in understanding the evolution of special education in the realm of public education. For this reason, several landmark court cases and laws have been reviewed and are presented below.

Plessy v. Ferguson

In 1896 the Supreme Court handed down a decision that solidified the concept of separate but equal (Gasman & Hilton, 2012). This decision made segregation not only acceptable, but a social norm, especially in southern states (Rubin, 2016). *Plessy v.*

Ferguson was the first case presented before the Supreme Court that argued segregation (Elliot, 2001).

In 1892, an African American male, Plessy, refused to give his seat up on a train (Swann-Wright, 2013). Plessy was 7/8 white and 1/8 African American, though those whom interacted with him could not detect his race (Gasman & Hilton, 2012). Homer Plessy felt he was entitled to every right that was secured to the citizens of the white race. After refusing to give up his seat he was forcibly removed from the train by law enforcement and placed in a local jail. Homer Plessy's court case was heard at a state level before arriving at the Supreme Court by which it was supported and upheld (Swann-Wright, 2013). The court ruled that it was legal for states to provide separate facilities for African Americans as long as they were equal.

This court case made it constitutional for states to segregate based on race (Rusthoven, 2014). This directly discredited the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee to equal protection of the law. The court ruling of separate but equal strengthened the states' role of controlled segregation and discrimination (Foy, 2008). Foy reported this ruling led to rapidly increasing Jim Crow laws in the following years. Vasillopulos (1994) stated that not one time during the ruling or proceedings did the court recognize that the segregation itself was an admission of inequality. *Plessy v. Ferguson* remained an active law until 1954 when the Supreme Court overturned the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

It is also important to note that during this era of segregation based on race, children with disabilities were also segregated based on ability-disability dichotomy. Inclusion was not yet a philosophy and practice in our educational system.

Brown v. Board of Education

In 1950 an African American man named Oliver Brown attempted to enroll his 8 year old daughter in a white school (Warren, 1954). This decision was made because of the school's proximity to his home since the all black school was more than a mile away. After being refused admission to the school based on race, Brown, with the help of other African American families and NAACP, sued the Topeka School District.

Before the Supreme Court in 1952 and 1953, special counsel Thurgood Marshall argued that segregated public schools violated the 14th Amendment's right to equal protection. Marshall contended that public school settings that were segregated could not be made equal, hence depriving students of the protection that these laws provide. The basis for the argument rested on Marshall's statement that segregation based on a child's race deprived the minority group of equal educational opportunities. Warren argued that the court's decision of the doctrine of separate but equal set in place by *Plessy v. Ferguson* has no place in the field of public education. The plaintiffs were, therefore, deprived of equal protection set in place by the 14th amendment.

The ruling made by the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education* has been a landmark decision in special education law (Perry, 2005). While the focus of *Brown v. Board of Education* was on racial desegregation, cases directly following *Brown v. Board of Education* include those for students with disabilities. Special education owes debt to and was born out of the civil rights movement (Skiba et al., 2008). In the wake of *Brown v. Board of Education*, other legislation provided equal access to education such as separate special education classrooms and ability grouping that was keeping students segregated from their white peers. Pickren (2004) stated that *Brown v. Board of*

Education was a shining moment in the United States for the Civil Rights Movements and all minority groups. Pickren noted nearly 50 years later, the promise of *Brown. v. Board of Education* has yet to be fulfilled. *Brown v. Board of Education* asserted a need for equal opportunities in the realm of education for students who were previously excluded (Ferri & Connor, 2005) and laid claim to the idea that segregation was harmful and inherently unequal. The case and the aftermath have been critiqued for more than 50 years and there is no doubt that the case had a significant and lasting impact on American schools and children (Shealey et al., 2005b).

PARC v. Common Wealth of Pennsylvania

The 1971 case of *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* contested the law that allowed schools the right to deny services to students who have not attained the mental age of 5 years old by the time they have enrolled in first grade (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996). PARC argued that students with intellectual disabilities were not being afforded the opportunity to receive publicly supported education and that the state was ignoring and delaying their obligation to provide public education to these students (Yell, Rogers, & Rogers, 1998). This exclusion from public education was in direct violation of the equal protection clause in the Fourteenth Amendment. Several witnesses testified on behalf of the plaintiffs, stating that all children with intellectual disabilities are capable and can benefit from a training and education program. The witnesses also stated that education cannot be solely defined as the instruction of academics, which allowed the introduction of experiences such as

vocational, functional and adaptive skills including learning to clothe and feed themselves.

The state came to a consent agreement to provide access to free public education to children with intellectual disabilities through the age of 21. The case established a standard that each child must be offered an education appropriate to their learning capabilities in the least restrictive environment (Martin et al., 1996). The consent also stated it would provide education programs most like those offered to peers without disabilities (Yell et al., 1998). This ruling goes hand in hand with another pivotal court case that came the following year, *Mills v. Board of Education.*

Mills v. Board of Education

In the year following PARC another court case ruled in favor of students with disabilities. In 1972 the parents of seven children, ranging in age from 8 – 16 with a variety of metal disabilities, sued the District of Columbia public school system. The suit was filed on behalf of all out-of- school students with disabilities (Yell et al., 1998). These parents represented students that had a range of disabilities from behavior issues, epilepsy, physical impairments, intellectual disability, and hyperactivity.

The District of Columbia school system refused to enroll students and even expelled others solely on the basis of their disabilities (Martin et al., 1996). The school district stated that over 12,340 students were not going to be served in the 1971-1972 school year due to budget. The U.S. District Court ruled that school districts were prohibited by the Constitution from deciding that their funding was inadequate. Under the protection of the Fourteenth Amendment, inadequate resources were not a reason to deny

service to students with disabilities. The burden of insufficient funding should not fall heavier on the children with disabilities than their peers without disabilities. The class suit charged the school district with denying students access to public school without due process (Yell et al., 1998). The ruling of *Mills* was far reaching and pivotal in that children with disabilities would now have a form of education that was not only meaningful to them but equal (Martin et al., 1996). It also meant that if there was a change in their status for reasons such as expulsion, transfer, suspension, or reassignment, each child was entitled to full procedural protections. These protections include notice of changes, ability to gain access to school records, and the right to be represented by legal counsel at a hearing to determine changes to the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The safeguards introduced by *Mills* became the framework for the due process component of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (Yell et al., 1998). By the year 1973 over 30 federal court decisions had upheld the foundational principles of *PARC* and *Mills.*

Education of All Handicapped Children Act

President Ford signed the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA, Public Law 94-142) into law on November 29, 1975. This law mandated for the first time that children with disabilities be provided with free appropriate public education (FAPE) (Jimenez, Graf, & Rose, 2007). PL 94-142 was a landmark case because it guaranteed access to public education to children, who prior to this legislation, were excluded because they did not "fit" into schools (Keogh, 2007). While there are several important aspects of this law, one of the largest challenges was making the curriculum accessible to

students with disabilities. The law sought to provide support in that area by using an

initiative called Universal Design for Learning (Jimenez et al., 2007). This called for

teachers to make the curriculum accessible to each student no matter their ability level,

learning style, or culture. In addition to the mandate that provided access to general

education settings PL 94-142 also provided several other mandates (Thomason, 2009).

These mandates include:

> 1. All children ages 5-18 have access to a free appropriate public education setting
> with a focus on special education. They must also have nondiscriminatory
> evaluation procedures for children with disabilities to be identified and to aid in
> placement decision.
>
> 2. Students with disabilities are to be educated in accordance with their
> established Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Plans must be developed by a
> team that includes the parents as well as educational professionals and the student
> when appropriate.
>
> 3. Educational services provided to the student must be conducted in the Least
> Restrictive Environment (LRE).
>
> 4. Parents and students must be given access to procedural due process.
>
> 5. Parents must participate in shared decision making in regard to the student
> (p.24)

The PL 94-142 provided federal funding to states to aid in educating students with

disabilities (Yell et al., 1998). In order for each state to receive funding they were

required to submit a plan to the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped. This plan was

to outline the procedures to be used to educate students with disabilities in accordance the

guidelines set by the Education of All Handicapped Children Act. If the plan was

approved, federal funding would be provided to each state with the understanding that the

state would guarantee a free appropriate public education. All but one state, New

Mexico, submitted plans that were eventually approved. New Mexico decided not to

accept these funds and was later sued by the New Mexico Association for Retarded

Children. The plaintiffs won, which required New Mexico to provide a free appropriate

public education. Soon afterwards New Mexico submitted a plan for approval.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act was renamed the Individuals

with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990 (Rivera-Tubbs, 2012). Along with

defining the rights of students and parents with disabilities this legislation also increased

the amount of public school special education programs. The Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act provided federal funding to cover the costs that incurred from educating

students with disabilities, for instructional services, and assessment in public schools

(Lorio, 2011). Since the P.L. 94-142 legislation, there were several amendments to the

law. Each change expanded special education while clarifying its intentions. Jenkins

(2012) stated that IDEA made guidelines for FAPE more clear and provided stipulations

for improved outcomes and equal access to the general education setting regardless of the

child's disability. This initiative also created thirteen distinct disability categories for

children to be served under and allowed for the establishment of an Individualized

Education Plan (IEP) that would meet the unique needs of each student. An additional

amendment to IDEA in 1997 made the primary focus outcomes of students with

disabilities (Lorio, 2012).

IDEA was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) in 2004, though most still refer to this piece of legislation by IDEA. Under IDEIA schools were responsible for remaining in compliance with the law in order to receive federal funding (Lorio, 2011). The 2004 IDEIA illustrated these six principles:

1. Free appropriate public education (FAPE)

2. Appropriate Evaluation

3. Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

4. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

5. Parent and Student participation in decision making

6. Procedural Safeguards (p.27)

One of the main foci of IDEIA was that students be placed in the least restrictive environment (LRE) if they were not eligible for a general education placement. If a general education placement was ruled out, then a multidisciplinary team would meet to determine the most appropriate placement for the student (Lorio, 2011). In IDEIA, the least restrictive environment was defined as:

> To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (The 108th Congress, 2004, STAT. 2878 p. 118)

IDEIA required that, in the event that a student was placed in a setting other than a general classroom, the appropriate placement would be chosen with the understanding that while services continued the goal would remain of gradually moving the student to

the least restrictive environment (Lorio, 2011). The assimilation of students without discrimination based on their disability was encompassed in the term "Inclusion" (Chandler, 2015).

No Child Left Behind

The next significant piece of legislature to follow IDEA was the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). On January 8th, 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act that redefined the roles of K-12 public schools and sought to close the achievement gap that existed between students of low socioeconomic status and their peers. NCLB was created for the purpose of helping all children, regardless of race, economic status, ethnicity, or disability reach full potential (Kaufman & Blewett, 2012). Savich (2008) stated that NCLB was put into law to ensure that all children would have an equal, fair, and significant opportunity to high quality education. The NCLB also sought to ensure grade level achievement in core subject areas by all students by the year 2014 (Washington, 2011). Therefore, all students, by the year 2014, would need to achieve a score of proficient or above on state mandated tests (Webb, 2006). The philosophy of inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education classroom was present in NCLB (Harris, 2009). As well as higher standards set for students with disabilities, NCLB called for less exclusion and more inclusion (Savich, 2008). Chandler (2015) echoed these words by stating that NCLB created academic achievement standards that school districts and local schools were held to, ensuring their academic achievement is high and that student with disabilities are not under-served and remained

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in appropriate placement. NCLB mandated that all students be taught a challenging curriculum (Gloeckler & Daggett, 2004). Hallahan, Kauffman, and Pullen (2009) noted the need for high standards was a necessary and positive change for education, however, educators were teaching standards to the students with disabilities that matched their current grade level, which did not match the children's current performance levels.

Washington (2011) proclaimed that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and No Child Left Behind were two of the most significant federal statutes. Although they both have similar goals of improving education, the approach is different. It is important to understand these differences when looking at the history of educational legislature. IDEA focuses on children with disabilities, while NCLB encompasses all children. IDEA is very specific and focuses on educating a child through an individualized education plan (IEP), and has an emphasis on specific services. NCLB approaches education with a more global view by focusing on closing achievement gaps, test scores, and scores of all demographic groups to specific levels.

Self-Contained Classroom

Today's special education classes serve a wide variety of disabilities ranging from mild, such as learning disabilities, to medically fragile students with severe to profound disabilities. The education of these students often happens in a special classroom or even in separate schools (Washington, 2010). The setting, that has only students with disabilities, is called a self-contained classroom. Self-contained classrooms provide academic instruction on the core subject areas of math, social studies, reading, science, and literacy. However in the past two decades, special education advocates have pushed

to have students with disabilities educated in a general education setting with support.

According to Kurth, Born, and Love (2016) little is known about what happens in a self-contained classroom. The purpose of a self-contained classroom is to provide grade level content at the present functioning level of the students. While academics remain the priority, skills such as home living, budgeting, job skills, personal hygiene, and other life skills are a focus of this classroom as well. Self-contained classrooms have an average of 5-15 students, considerably fewer than a general education setting. Self-contained classrooms are served by a special education teacher and para-professionals (Lane et al., 2005). The students represented in these classrooms have been tested and evaluated by an IEP team along with evaluation professionals and have been identified with a severe to profound disability. Students in a self-contained classroom represent 1% of the school population and do not take state mandated tests. Instead, these students participate in portfolio assessments to show growth. In most schools students in a self- contained classroom participate in inclusion through school wide assemblies, meals, extracurricular activities, and elective classes.

Philosophy of Inclusion

Over the past several decades there has been an increased educational interest in inclusion (Ryan, 2010). Inclusion has been a part of the education system for some time now, and is generally associated with students who have special needs, are exceptional, or differently-abled. The inclusion of students with disabilities has been the central theme of policy debates in education, especially in reference to student access to the general education setting (Obiakor, 2011). Inclusive education implies that regardless of

strengths, weaknesses, or ability levels all students become part of the school community. Inclusion is based on the principle that all students are valued for their unique abilities and are accepted as important members of the student body. According to Harris (2009), schools have a duty to include students with disabilities in the general education setting to the maximum extent possible.

One aspect that makes inclusion challenging for school districts is the lack of a universal definition or clearly defined policy at the federal level (DeMatthews & Mawhinney, 2013). The word "inclusion" does not exist in IDEA and is rarely used in case law. The widely accepted understanding of inclusion comes from the definition that IDEA gives to the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The lack of a clear definition coupled with broad language allows districts to implement inclusion according to perceptions of least restrictive environment. According to DeMatthews and Mawhinney, school districts have a large amount of flexibility when drafting policies and programs related to inclusion. Though there may not be a set of characteristics that specifically describe inclusive settings, one defining practice is that students with disabilities should be in the general education setting to the maximum extend appropriate and not isolated in special classes (Washington, 2010).

The Inclusive Setting

The term "inclusion" indicates that students with disabilities should be educated alongside their age-appropriate peers in a general education setting. Jenkins (2012) stated that content should be taught to students in inclusion by a highly qualified, general education teacher who provides accommodation in accordance with the child's IEP. For

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over two decades, inclusion has been gaining momentum. Jenkins explained that the

expansion of inclusive education practices have spurred new research. More students than

ever are being educated in an inclusive setting. Approximately 96% of general education

teachers have taught a student with disabilities at some point in their classroom.

Approximately 95% of students with disabilities ages 6-21 are being served in regular

schools. In addition, 59% of students with learning disabilities are receiving their

instruction in a general education setting. In today's schools, more than ever, students

with disabilities are being served in a general education setting by general education

teachers. In spite of the drawbacks or weaknesses, inclusion offers a large amount of

strengths as well.

Inclusion Models

CoTeaching

Throughout the years, instructional practices have been developed to meet the

needs of students with disabilities in a general education setting through inclusion. This is

a shift from the traditional model by which students with disabilities were served solely

in self-contained classrooms. This shift occurred after federal legislation required that

students be served in the Least Restrictive Environment (Murray, 2012). This reform

expanded the responsibility of educating students with disabilities from just special

education teachers. Inclusion broadened the role of the special education teacher and

made collaboration between special education and general education teachers a

requirement in order to deliver instruction in an effective inclusive setting. This model of

collaboration and delivery of instruction is called coteaching (Volonino & Zigmond, 2007).

In 1995 the National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion reported that the most frequently used special education service delivery model for inclusive classrooms was coteaching. Since that study, the popularity of coteaching has only increased (Murray, 2012).

Coteaching provides the opportunity for students with disabilities to be educated in a general education classroom by a highly qualified teacher. Kloos and Zigmond (2008) cited numerous researchers (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2002; Sanders & Horn, 1998) who have shown that "highly qualified teachers significantly increase student performance for students without disabilities in the general education classroom. In these settings, teacher quality contributed more to student achievement than did any other factor, including student background, class size, and class composition" (p.12).

Coteaching typically indicates that two teachers share a classroom. One teacher is the special education teacher and the other is the general education teacher or content area teacher. The premise of the model lies in the ability of these two teachers combing their expertise; the general education teacher's expertise in the core knowledge of the subject and research based instructional techniques, and the special educations teacher's expertise in the area of the adaptation or modification of curriculum and instruction students with various disabilities (Murray 2012). As stated by Kloos and Zigmond (2008)

> Theoretically, coteaching draws on the strengths of both the
> general educator, who understands the structure, content, and
> pacing of the general education curriculum, and the special

educator, who identifies the unique learning needs of individual students and enhances curriculum and instruction to match those needs. Coteaching accomplishes multiple objectives. First, students with disabilities are taught the general education curriculum by a general education content specialist. Second, it provides students with disabilities (and their at-risk but not-yet-identified peers) greater access to that curriculum through the special education teacher who provides help and support (Thousand & Villa, 1989) (p. 13).

Fattig and Taylor (2008) identified additional advantages to coteaching. Coteaching allows teachers to model team work for students. Students are able to see two adults in their rooms working in tandem, problem solving, and communicating. Coteaching also meets the needs of a greater variety of students by designing curriculum adaptions to meet the different learning needs of all students in the class, not just students with disabilities. Classroom teachers are usually responsible for multiple things such as grading papers, providing feedback, and creating lessons, but coteaching allows for a division of some of these responsibilities. Lastly coteaching aids in the management of challenging behaviors. Teachers can share ideas on addressing challenging behaviors as well as use the expertise of the special education teacher to identify the cause of the behaviors and hopefully extinguish them.

Coteaching has several configurations that administrators and teachers can choose to use. Scruggs, Mastropieri, and McDuffie (2007) identified these models as follows:

- One teach, one assist (or "drift") – This is a model by which one teacher, (usually the general education teacher) takes primary responsibility for delivering instruction, and student support is provided by the special education teacher when needed.

- Station teaching – the co-teachers collaborate in the creation of centers that address the skills they are teaching, and the co-teachers provide support to individuals at the different stations.

- Parallel teaching - a model by which co- teachers divide the class either into homogeneous or heterogeneous groups and provide instruction at the same time to the different groups.

- Alternative teaching- is a model similar to the idea of pull out instruction, by which one the teachers takes a small group into a different setting to teach or reteach a concept to a select group of students for a limited time.

- Team teaching (or interactive teaching) – is characterized by both co-teachers equally share the teaching responsibilities and are both actively involved in the leading instructional activities (p. 392).

The most popular model utilized in schools is the one teach, one assist model (Cook & Friend, 1995; Scruggs et al., 2007; Zigmond & Magiera, 2001). The most logical reason for this occurrence is because the one teach, one assist model does not require extensive training and is simple to implement. Traditionally, the general education teacher, also known as the content expert, is the one providing instruction to the entire class while the special education teacher circulates the room and provides support for individual students. This model allows more students to receive support and allow for the continuation of instruction (Murray, 2012). The drawback of this method is that it is very expensive to implement and does not always fully exploit the entire skill set of the special education teacher as well as other coteaching models do.

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Benefits of Inclusion

According to Bailey and Winton (1987), research supports the positive effects of the inclusion of children with disabilities. The benefits of inclusion are not only to children with disabilities but to typically developing children, classroom teachers and the community as a whole. Inclusion not only maximizes growth, but builds a sense of community as well. Washington (2010) stated that inclusion benefits students with disabilities as well as teachers and society. Inclusion provides students with disabilities the opportunity to belong to a diverse human family, a diverse environment that is not only stimulating but provides opportunities to learn and grow. Inclusion provides the opportunity to develop friends, enhance self-respect, be educated with peers of the same age, and models of positive behavior and learning. When implemented properly inclusion has the potential to scaffold learning for students with disabilities and help them reach academic levels that were previously out of reach. A study by Fedrico et al. (2000) showed not only social but academic growth of students with disabilities in an inclusive setting. Teachers reported that at the beginning of the year students with disabilities wanted the teacher to read the majority of the material aloud. However, as the year progressed these students relied less on their teacher. Teacher participants agreed that their new independence was due to the high standards placed on them in the inclusive setting.

Inclusion benefits general education students with the opportunity to experience diversity. Along with acceptance, inclusion teaches general education students that everyone is unique with different learning styles, as well as promotes empathy and the ability to be sensitive to others' limitations (Washington, 2010).

Inclusion also helps teachers appreciate diversity. When teachers recognize that all students have strengths and understand the importance of differentiated and individualized instruction, they increase opportunities for learning as well as enhance accountability for all students, not just students with disabilities. Inclusion benefits the overall school community by promoting social values and equality (Washington, 2010).

Weaknesses of Inclusion

While inclusion can benefit some students with disabilities, this is not always the case. Not all students with disabilities will show progress in a general education setting. Some disabilities can have the opposite effect and hinder student progress instead of allowing those students to grow and flourish. In this situation, the student would be better served in a self-contained classroom that can meet the needs of the individual (Washington, 2010). Crossley (2002) argued that the academic benefits should not be the sole consideration for an inclusion placement, but the social benefits that the student with disabilities can acquire as well.

Other researchers have also found issues with the inclusion movement. Zimmerman (2002) stated that even though there are many educators who agree with the premise of inclusion, it can also create a backlash for teachers. Zimmerman suggested that one area of concern was how teachers provide students with disabilities the services they require, while still educating the rest of the students. Teachers often perceive having students with disabilities in their classroom as a disadvantage to other general education students in that class.

Bateman and Bateman (2002) stated while observing inclusion programs, there were notable disadvantages. Some inclusion advocates report that regardless of the student's behavioral challenges he or she should be included in a general education setting. This creates a large disadvantage when the student becomes disruptive which causes the teacher to frequently stop and address the behavior. The frequent interruptions cause teaching to become sporadic and does not allow academic content to be taught at the pace needed. Irmsher (2005) suggested that educators and parents believe that the inclusion of students with disabilities can lower the standard of learning in the classroom.

Therefore, inclusion is found to have both strengths and weaknesses for students. Each situation must be looked at on an individual basis and a decision made that is appropriate for every child who will be a part of the general education setting, including the student with the disability.

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusion

Successful integration of students with disabilities into a general education setting were found to be affected by teachers' attitudes toward inclusion (Darrow, 2009) and are predictive of effective teaching in an inclusive classroom (Kuyim & Desai, 2007). Ross – Hill (2009) concluded that when it came to the inclusion of students with disabilities, more resistance came from general education teachers than special education teachers. A study from Bennett (1996) showed that overall attitudes of general education teachers toward inclusion were negative. This is a direct contrast of the generally positive attitudes toward inclusion held by special education teachers.

Familia-Garcia (2001) assessed attitudes of general education teachers towards the inclusion of students with disabilities into their classrooms. Over 50% of the teachers in the study refused to implement inclusive practices within their classroom because they believed these practices would not work. More than 80% of the teachers stated that if forced to work with students with disabilities in an inclusive setting they would change schools or retire.

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) studied over 10,000 general education teachers were surveyed to gain an understanding of teachers' attitudes towards educating students with disabilities in their classrooms. Two thirds of the teachers accepted the general idea of teaching students with disabilities in their classrooms. Over half of the teachers surveyed also agreed that inclusive practices were beneficial for students with disabilities. However, it is noted that one-fourth of those teachers doubted their teaching abilities to work with students with disabilities and did not feel they had adequate training to meet the needs of students with intellectual or behavioral disabilities.

The attitudes of teachers towards students with disabilities influence their interactions with students, thus affecting the growth and academic progress of that student. Students with disabilities who are perceived negatively by teacher may be subjected to lower expectations, higher levels of criticism, and more negative attention (Bosch, 2015). Negative attitudes can also lead to less positive reinforcement from teachers. Negative attitudes held by general education teachers can be attributed to the overwhelming demands placed on teachers by adding students with disabilities to their classrooms.

The successful implementation of an inclusive classroom is directly dependent on the attitudes and perception of teachers and administrators (Bochenek, 2008). Bennett (1996) indicted that a negative attitude held by general education teachers was directly related to an unsuccessful integration of students with disabilities. According to Subban and Sharma (2005) general education teachers expressed a need for more in depth information on the correct way to include students with disabilities. A lack of experience or knowledge on the inclusive classroom has been a leading reason general education teachers are reluctant to embrace the concept of inclusion (Bosch, 2015). Vaidya and Zaslavsky (2000) reported that general education teachers were unaware of the challenges they would encounter when creating inclusive classroom settings. Further, Bosch (2015) stated that general education teachers were unprepared and unsure of how to meeting the educational goals of students with disabilities.

Another factor adding to negative perceptions of inclusion by general education teachers is the severity of the student's disability. A literature review was completed by Avramidis and Norwich (2002) of general education teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with more severe disabilities. Avramidis and Norwich stated that the implied responsibilities and obligations associated with students with severe disabilities became an overwhelming concern to general education teachers. Negative attitudes held by teachers were exacerbated by the concern of the responsibility of inclusion students. The study by Darrow (2009) revealed that the severity of the disability influenced teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities. Further, Kavale (2000) reported that the perceptions teachers had toward teaching the individual were affected by the severity of the disability. These studies supported the conclusion that negative

attitudes held by general education teachers can adversely affect the implementation of inclusive practices.

Harris (2009) stated that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion might be the determining factor in the ultimate success or failure of inclusion programs. One of the most important factors in determining the success of the program is teacher attitudes towards inclusion. General education teachers are an integral part of positive implementation of inclusion practices. Harris supported the concept that teachers are the key to successful inclusion programs. Positive attitudes by teachers coupled with a commitment to teaching students with disabilities are pivotal in determining the extent to which students with disabilities are accepted as part of the school community.

Another important role in the development of positive attitudes towards inclusion is teacher preparation. (Harris, 2009). Teacher preparation affects the levels of knowledge and confidence general education teachers have to meet the needs of the diverse learning styles represented in their classroom by students with disabilities. The level of support that teachers receive also influences teacher attitudes towards inclusion. Research by Kavale and Forness (2000) stated the main reasons general education teachers hold negative attitudes towards inclusion are inadequate training, lack of support, and a lack of time to collaboratively plan with other teachers, both general and special education.

Administrators' Attitudes toward Inclusion

Well-trained teachers as well as well-trained administrators are the key pieces to implementing the mandate of inclusion and LRE (Harris, 2009). Administrators must have a pedagogical, legal, and cultural knowledge (Collins & White, 2001). Guzman and

Schofield (1995) cited the principal as critical for the successful implementation of inclusion. Administrators must display a positive attitude and commitment towards inclusion as well as possess the skills and knowledge to lead staff in the development and creation of an inclusive learning environment (Harris, 2009). Early research, conducted in the 1980s by Leibfried (1984) and Sergiovanni (1984), indicated that administrators play a major role in shaping teachers' behaviors, attitudes, and the overall school climate. A climate of acceptance for all students is only created when administrators have a positive attitude towards inclusion. Research indicated that administrators with positive attitudes were more willing to provide opportunities for students with disabilities to remain in a general education setting (Harris, 2009). The effectiveness of inclusion relies heavily on the principal.

Attitude is also imperative to the successful implementation of inclusion. Gameros (1995) examined administrators' attitudes and found a vital part of an inclusive school environment to be their vision and leadership. A study by Villa, Thousand, Meyers and Nevin (1996) surveyed 680 regular educators and administrators in the United States. The research concluded that administrators who had more positive attitudes toward inclusion were directly associated with more experience with students with disabilities, greater administrative support, and more time for collaboration. York and Tunidor (1995) also reported that principal attitudes are critical. Interviews were conducted asking administrators, teachers, parents, students, and support staff their perceptions toward inclusion and factors that aid in the successful implementation on an inclusive program. Factors that were perceived by participants as necessary were adequate time for collaboration, skills, and attitudes.

Praisner (2000b) studied 750 elementary school administrators from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Praisner developed a web-based survey called the Principal and Inclusion Survey (PIS) to determine the extent that experience and training attributed to administrators' attitudes towards inclusion. Four hundred and eight surveys were returned. The purpose of the study was to determine whether collegiate special education classes earned, age, and years of service had any correlation to administrators' attitudes towards inclusion. Neither a positive nor negative view was shown which determined that administrators were noncommittal. A neutral attitude was determined by 76.6% neutral attitude, 21.1% positive attitude, and 2.7% negative attitude on inclusionary practices. Praisner concluded that despite administrators not supporting inclusion, most administrators were open to the idea. The study did reveal a positive correlation between attitudes towards inclusion and school credit and training. Praisner's study also revealed one in five administrators favored inclusion.

A combination of experimental research and survey was used by Abernathy (2012) in a mixed methods survey to assess the attitudes of administrators in the southeastern region of the United States towards the inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education setting. The study consisted of 32 participants who were given a pretest, intervention, and a post test. The intervention contained a model consisting of learning modules with activities pertaining to collaborative problem solving, communication in problem solving, and best practices in behavior intervention and classroom management. Abernathy used the Administrators and Inclusion (PIS) survey developed by Praisner (2000a) to measure whether program factors, experience, and training affected administrators' attitudes toward the inclusion of students with

disabilities in a general education setting. After the intervention and post-test, Abernathy was able to conclude that an overwhelming number of administrators, 95.2%, believed that the experience of students with severe to profound disabilities was enhanced when a school educated all types of students. The data showed that 81.0% of administrators felt that genereal education teachers could do a great deal to help students with severe to profound disabilities within a general education setting. The study also reported 100% of administrators responded positively to the idea that all students would benefit from interaction with students with disabilities.

A study was conducted of Texas high school administrators' attitudes towards students with disabilities inclusion into the general education setting by Farris (2011). A quantitative study was conducted by using a survey to collect data. Farris chose to utilize the Administrators and Inclusion (PIS) survey developed by Praisner (2000b). The survey was administered electronically and distributed to administrators through their email. Three hundred ninety-five administrators completed the survey. After analyzing the data, Farris was able to conclude that the amount of training, and college credits relating to special education had a direct correlation to the administrators' attitudes towards inclusion. Farris also noted that the administrator felt that students with disabilities should be included in a general education setting. However, when administrators were asked about their support for inclusion based on specific disabilities, the more severe disabilities received less support for inclusion in a general education setting. Farris reported that administrators opted for the Least Restrictive Environment with the proper support from school staff for students with mild to moderate disabilities.

Inzano (1999) surveyed 300 administrators in New Jersey on their attitudes towards inclusion. The survey population included 100 administrators across 3 settings: urban, rural, and suburban. An analysis of the data revealed that there was no correlation between geographic location and experience on attitudes towards inclusion. The study also revealed that 88% administrators agreed that students who are delayed 1-2 academic years or having learning disabilities should be educated in a general education setting. The discrepancy came in regard to students with mild/ severe disabilities. Only 17% of administrators said that those students should be educated in a general education setting.

Ramirez (2006) surveyed Texas administrators' attitudes toward inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education setting. The survey used was created by Praisner (2000a) which was later adapted to meeting the needs of the research conducted by Ramirez. The research was conducted to determine whether there was a correlation between percentage of students in special education, gender, age, and campus size. The data revealed no correlation between percentage of students in special education, gender, age, and campus size and administrators' attitudes. The data did reveal that there was a significant correlation between the attitudes of administrators towards inclusion and special education training and experience they possessed. In conclusion, administrators in Texas had an overall positive attitude towards inclusion. This is supported by the 73 of the 108 administrators surveyed reporting a more positive attitude than negative attitude. Ramirez stated this information could be important to the implementation of inclusion models.

Along with principal attitudes toward inclusion, a strong vision and mission is another imperative component to a successful inclusive education program (Harris,

2009). Inclusion places rising expectations on administrators, which require constant action in order for their program to be effective. Administrators are required to design, manage, and lead programs for students with and without disabilities. The ability to lead these programs is determined by an ability to evaluate these inclusive settings. These responsibilities create a climate by which administrators must encourage all stakeholders to have a positive attitude toward inclusion.

According to Greyerbiehl (1993) there were several critical components that administrators were missing in order to successfully implement inclusion. These components included poor communication, poor leadership strategies, lack of teacher support, and negative attitudes and beliefs towards inclusion. Other limitations included insufficient staffing, lack of materials, inadequate time for collaborative planning, rigid expectations in a general education setting, and a fear that inclusion would be a disadvantage to general education students.

Administrators play a vital role in the effective implementation of the inclusion programs within their school. Though they do not deliver direct instruction and are not often integrated in the daily classroom setting, they are responsible for creating a positive school culture. Research indicates that a principal's vision and mission for the school directly impacts the implementation of inclusive programs. Teachers look to the administrators for guidance and support, thus a principal's attitude toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education program is important (Williams, 2015).

Summary

The inclusive classroom has been developing for over 65 years (Bruce, 2010).

The inception of IDEA and NCLB have required teacher and administrators to determine

the most appropriate placement for each student with disabilities. Though inclusion in a

general education setting is goal, the law mandates that students be educated in the Least

Restrictive Environment. For some this is not a general education setting, but a self -

contained classroom instead. However, for the majority of students with disabilities, the

goal is to meet their educational needs in a general education setting. Inclusion is based

on the principle that all students are valued for their unique abilities and are accepted as

important members of the student body (Obiakor, 2011). Both the benefits and the

weaknesses of inclusion have been outlined in this chapter. Several models of inclusion

are available for administrators and teachers to implement in their school setting. In spite

of the several models of coteaching, the most popular model utilized in schools is the one

teach, one assist model (Cook & Friend, 1995; Scruggs, 2007; Zigmond & Magiera,

2001). Numerous studies, both qualitative and quantitative, have been conducted on

teacher and principal attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities in a

general education setting. The results of these studies were summarized in this chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was designed to examine the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion in the general education classroom. Specifically this study analyzed grade level, years of teaching experience, and levels of education to examine the manner in which these factors relate to attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion. This chapter outlines the research methodology used in this study including the research design, population, development of survey instrument, data collection procedures, research questions and null hypotheses, and data analysis.

Research Design

This descriptive, quantitative research design used a survey to assess teachers' and administrators' perceptions of inclusion across three dimensions. These dimensions include resources, training, and attitudes. A survey was developed and tested prior to use. This survey was used to collect the data used to determine the answers of the research questions and the null hypotheses that accompany them.

Population

The population of this study was administrators and teachers from school districts in the Middle to East Tennessee region. These districts included Greeneville City, Putnam County, and Johnson City Schools. Greeneville City schools is comprised of 4 elementary schools. Each elementary school has one administrator and between 20-30 teachers. Greeneville City Schools has 1 middle school with two administrators and 48 teachers. Lastly, there is 1 high school with three administrators and 68 teachers. Putnam

County Schools is comprised of 18 schools broken down into 11 elementary schools, four middle schools, and three high schools. The 11 elementary schools have either one or two administrators in each building and a range of 17-33 teachers. The four middle schools have three administrators in each building and between 37 and 53 teachers. Two of the three high schools in Putnam County have six administrators and between 90-100 teachers each. The third high school has three administrators and 42 teachers. Johnson City Schools is comprised of 8 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 1 high school. Each elementary has one or two administrators and a range of 19-36 teachers. The two middle schools each have three administrators and between 50 and 60 teachers. There is only one high school with seven administrators and 105 teachers.

Instrumentation

The researcher developed the survey instrument (see Appendix A) for this study to answer the 9 research questions. The questionnaire was designed to measure teachers' and administrators' perceptions of inclusion across the three dimensions of resources, training, and attitudes. The survey instrument included a qualifier that outlined for participants that the survey was designed to obtain input from teachers' and administrators' regarding their perceptions of inclusion.

The survey instrument was developed using statements that directly related to one of the three dimensions of the research questions. Data on teachers' or administrators' attitudes toward inclusion were collected from items 1-4, 10-11, 13-19, and 21. Items 5, 8, 9, 12, and 22 collected data related to the teachers' and administrators' resources in regard to inclusion. Data with respect to teachers' and administrators' training on

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inclusion were obtained from items 6, 7, and 20. Demographic information was obtained from items 23-27.

Individuals who participated in the survey were asked to indicate their strength of agreement with each item. They completed the survey by inserting the answer that best represented their level of agreement based on a 5-point Likert-type scale using Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

A survey development activity was conducted with educators to ensure that all survey items were clear, easy to understand, and asked for the appropriate information. The teachers' responses and feedback were used to revise the survey.

Data Collection

A letter (see Appendix B) was sent to the superintendents of Greeneville City, Putnam County, and Johnson City Schools to obtain permission to complete the research for this study. Paper surveys were handed out to administrators during district wide administrator meetings. After receiving the required permission, 75 school administrators were contacted and asked to distribute the survey by email to the teachers in their schools. Due to the large number of teachers represented, the most efficient way to distribute the surveys was by email.

A cover letter (see Appendix C) was attached to each survey to inform participants of the purpose of the survey and assure them that their answers and identity would remain anonymous. Administrators were asked to complete the survey during the administrators' meeting. Completed surveys were placed in a supplied envelope by

participants. If administrators chose not to participate, they were still instructed to place

their survey back in the envelope as to not identify who did and did not participate. The

surveys were then collected and returned to the researcher by mail. Surveys that were

conducted locally were picked up in person by the researcher.

An online survey was distributed to teachers through email via an online survey

system. Teachers were provided with the same cover letter (see Appendix C) and asked

to complete the online survey. Responses from the online survey were sent to researcher

through the online survey company. Participants were asked to complete the 27-item

survey. A reminder was sent to participants to encourage response from those who had

not responded.

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

Nine null hypotheses were used to answer the 9 research questions regarding

teachers' and administrators' perceptions of inclusion:

1. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward

Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

H_o1: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes

toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

2. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward

Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of

experience?

H_o2: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

3. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1 (Attitudes toward Inclusion) on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

H_o3: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1 (Attitudes toward Inclusion) on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

4. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

H_o4: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

5. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating year of experience?

H_o5: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating year of experience?

6. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

H_o6: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

7. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

H_o7: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

8. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

H_o8: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

9. Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

H_o9: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

Data Analysis

Data from the survey instrument were analyzed through a descriptive, quantitative research design. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) data analysis software

was used to conduct all data analysis procedures for this study. Research questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8 were analyzed using independent sample t-tests. Research questions 3, 5, and 9 were analyzed using Analysis of Variences (ANOVAs). Findings of the data are analyses are represented in Chapter 4. A summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future practice and research are presented in Chapter 5.

Reliability and Validity

For research to be sound, researchers must take time to address the validity and reliability issues within their study. Validity refers to the extent to which the concept was accurately measured (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The other measure of quality in quantitative research is reliability. This refers to the accuracy of the instrument that the researcher is using. It also refers to the extent the researcher gets the same results repeatedly when using the same instrument. The survey was field tested to ensure that items were easy to understand, and asked participants for the correct information. This field test was implemented to increase reliability and increase the likelihood of consistent answers from participants.

Summary

This study examined teachers' and administrators' perceptions of inclusion across three dimensions: resources, training, and personal attitudes. Teachers and administrators from 3 school districts across East Tennessee were used as the population. The instrument used to collect and analyze data was a survey that was administered either

through paper pencil or an electronic copy. Independent sample t-tests and ANOVAs

were used to analyze the survey items.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study was designed to examine the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion in the classroom. Specifically this study analyzed grade level, years of teaching experience, and levels of education to examine the manner in which these factors relate to attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion. Participants included 183 teachers and administrators in three districts in Tennessee.

The data were presented and analyzed through nine research questions and nine corresponding null hypotheses from a 27-item survey using a 5-point Likert-type scale. The remaining three items were demographic questions that were answered through multiple-choice responses. The survey was distributed initially with a reminder email sent one week later. Across the three districts, 612 teachers were asked to participate as well as 69 administrators. Participants were advised that all responses were confidential and the demographic information collected did not identify participants in the study.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

H_o1: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean scores for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, differed between administrators and teachers. A survey instrument was used to measure the attitudes of both administrator and teacher participants. The mean score on Dimension 1 was the test variable and the grouping variable was the role of the participants. The test was significant, $[t(183) = 2.96, p = .003]$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. See Figure 1 below. There was a statistically significant difference in the attitude scores of teachers ($M = 3.24$, $SD = .62$) and administrators ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .47$). Administrators held more positive attitudes toward inclusion than teachers. The effect size was small ($\eta^2 = .06$). Therefore, participants' role did play a significant role in scores on the attitudes dimension of the survey.

Figure 1. Comparison of Attitudes Toward Inclusion of Administrators and Teachers.

Note: o = 1.5 to 3 times interquartile range.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

H_o2: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean scores

for Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, differed between participants with differing

years of experience. A survey instrument was used to measure the attitudes of both

teachers and administrators with 0-15 years of experience and 16-31 plus years of

experience. The mean score on Dimension 1 was the test variable and the grouping

variable was the role of the participants. The test was significant, $[t(183) = 2.07, p =.$

040]. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. See Figure 2 below. There was a

significant difference in the years of experience scores of 0-15 years (M = 3.40, SD =

.54) and 16-31 plus years (M = 3.21, SD = .65). Those with 0-15 years of experience held

more positive attitudes toward inclusion than those with 16-31 plus years of experience.

The effect size was small (η^2 = .04). Therefore, participants' years of experience did play

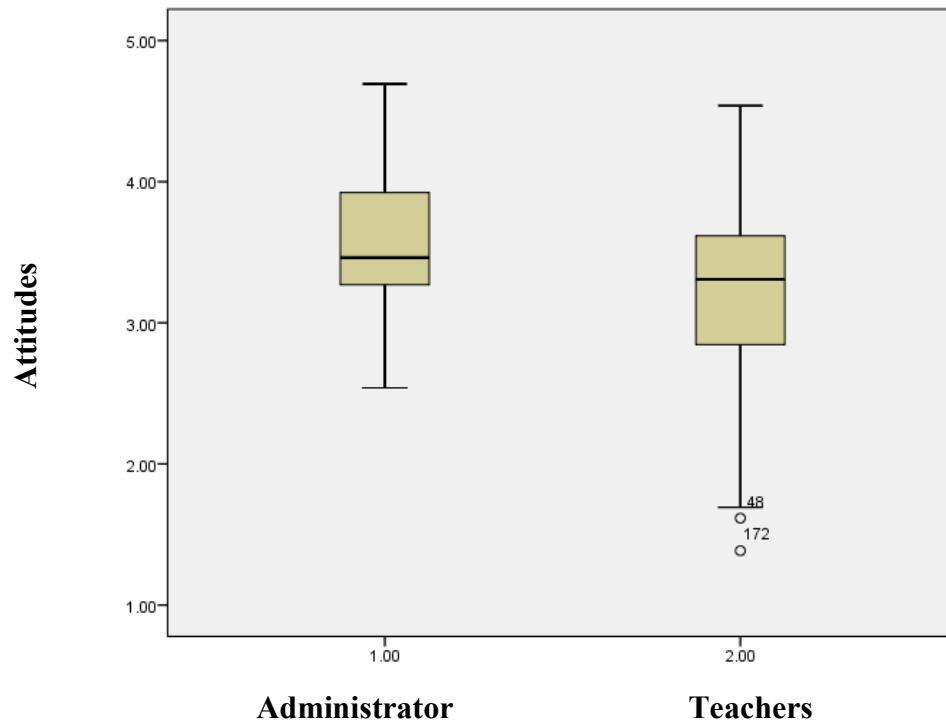a significant role in scores on the attitudes dimension of the survey.
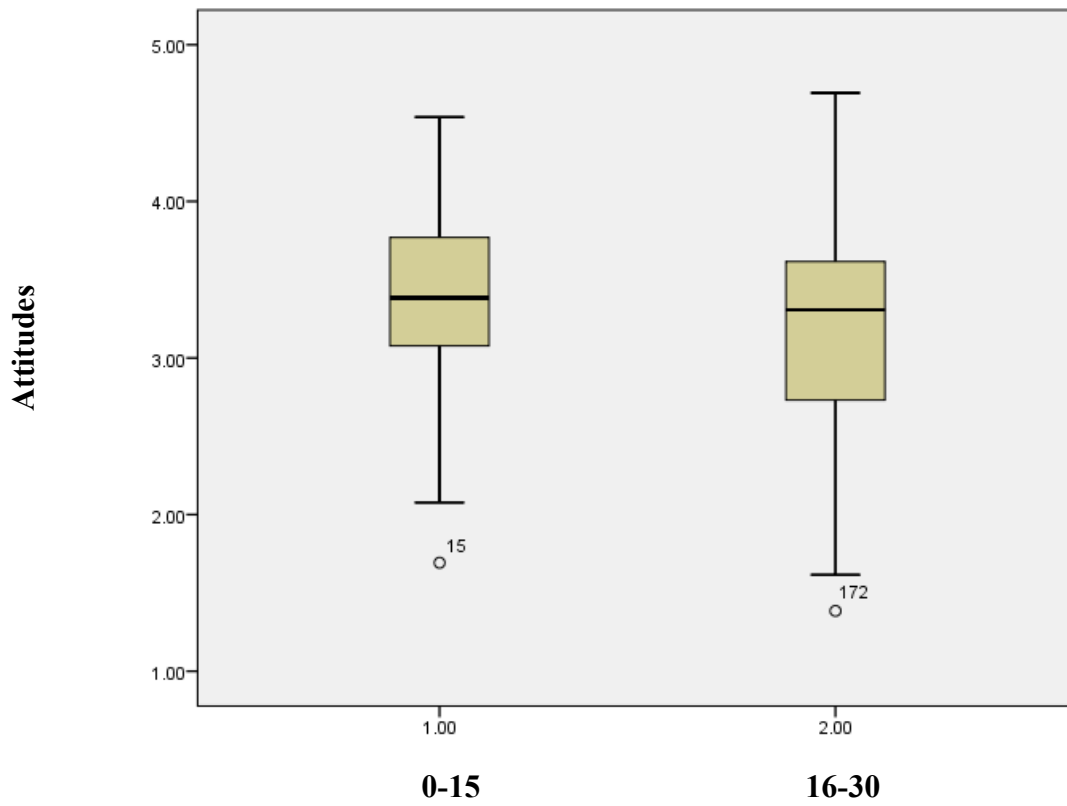
Figure 2. Comparison of Attitudes Toward Inclusion and

Years of Experience

Note: o = 1.5 to 3 times interquartile range

Research Question 3

 Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1

(Attitudes toward Inclusion) on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of

education?

H_o3: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 1, Attitudes

toward Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the attitudes toward inclusion of the participants based on their level of education (Bachelor's, Master's, and a combined category of Educational Specialist and Doctorate degrees). The independent variable was the level of education and the dependent variable was the participants' attitudes toward inclusion. The one way ANOVA, $F(2, 183) =1.79$, $p = .170$ was not statistically significant. Therefore, H_o3 was retained. The strength of the relationship between attitudes toward inclusion and level of education was assessed by n^2 was small (.01). The results indicated that attitudes toward inclusion were not significantly affected by education level. The means and standard deviations for the three education level groups are reported in Table 1.

Table 1.

Means and Standard Deviations of Attitude Levels of Education Groups

Education Level	N	M	SD
Bachelors	50	3.25	.59
Masters	95	3.27	.62
EDS and Doctorate	40	3.46	.61

Research Question 4

Research Question 4: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

H_o4: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean scores for Dimension 2, Resources toward Inclusion, differed between administrators and teachers. A survey instrument was used to measure the resources of both administrator and teacher participants. The mean score on the resources test was the test variable and the grouping variable was the role of the participants. The test was significant, [t(183) = 2.02, p = .045]. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. See Figure 3 below. There was a statistically significant difference in the resources scores of teachers (M = 3.02, SD = .614) and administrators (M = 3.27, SD=.59). Administrators reported having more resources provided for inclusion than teachers. The effect size was small (η^2 = .04). Therefore, participants' role did play a significant role in scores on the dimensions of the survey.

Figure 3. Comparison of Training on Inclusion of Administrators and Teachers

Note: o = 1.5 to 3 times interquartile range

Research Question 5

Research Question 5: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

H_o5: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean scores for Dimension 2, Resources for Inclusion, differed between participants with differing years of experience. A survey instrument was used to measure the attitudes of both teachers and administrators with 0-15 years of experience and 16-31 plus years of experience. The mean score on the resources test was the test variable and the grouping variable was the years of experience of the participants. The test was not significant, [$t(183) = .72$, $p = .474$]. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. See Figure 4. There was not a significant difference in the years of experience scores of 0-15 years (M = 3.04, SD = .613) and 16-31 plus years (M = 3.10, SD=.62). The effect size as measured η^2 was small (.01). Participants' years of experience did not play a significant role in scores on the resources for inclusion dimension of the survey.
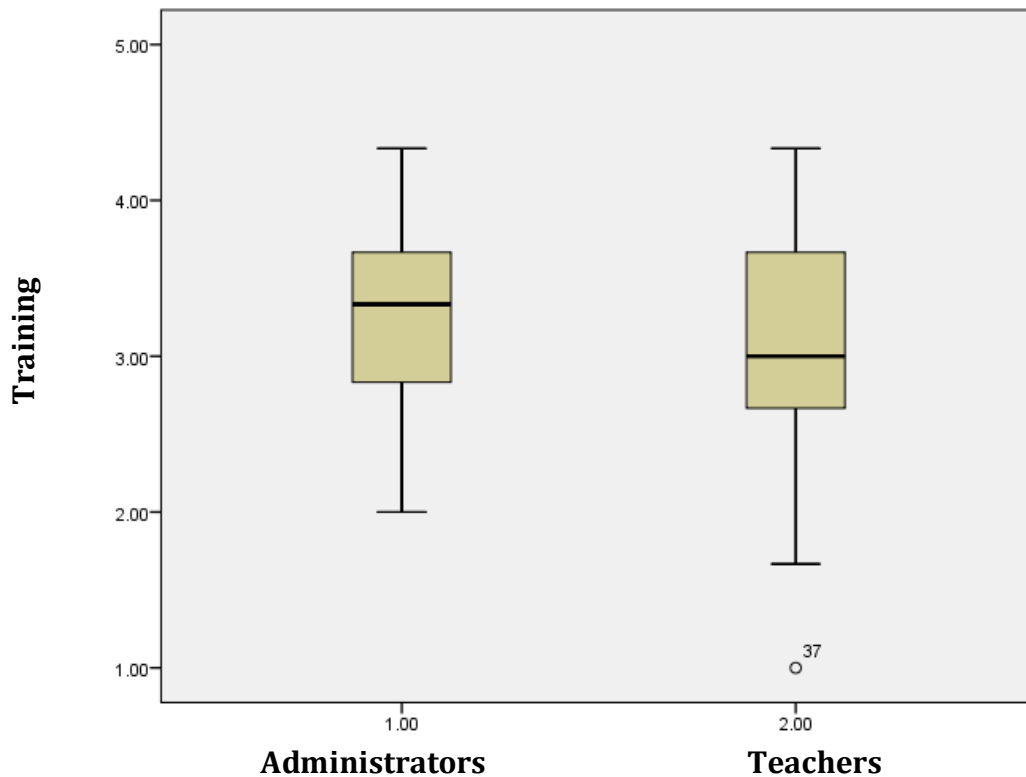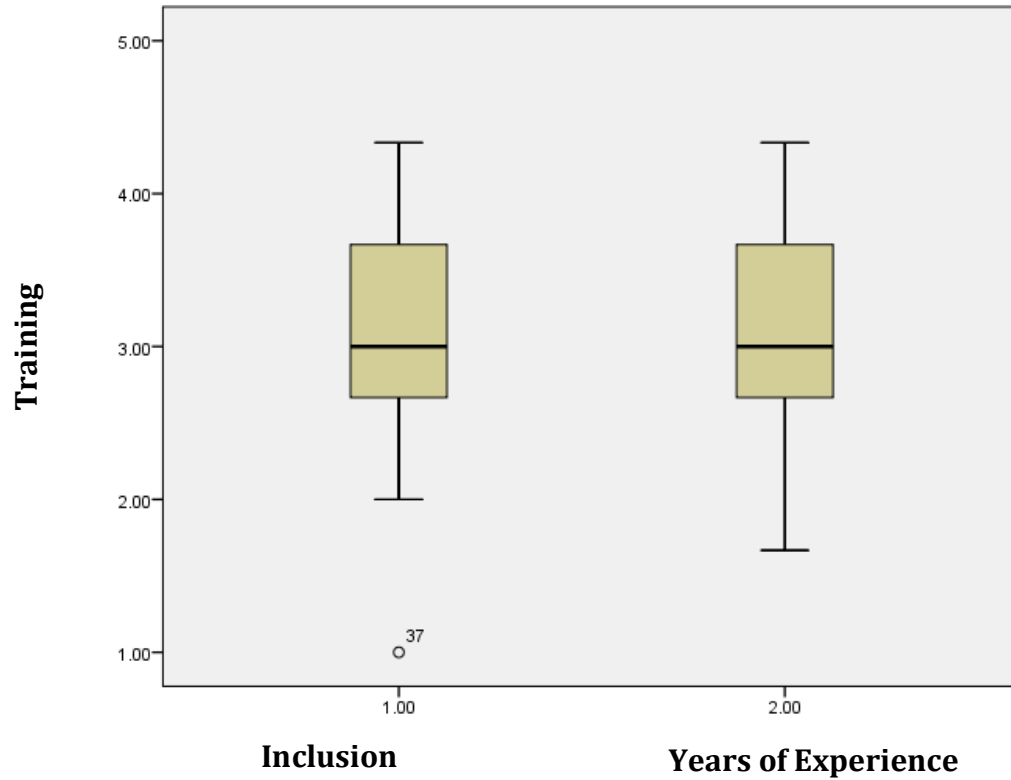
Figure 4. Comparison of Training on Inclusion and Years of Experience

Note: o = 1.5 to 3 times interquartile range

Research Question 6

Research Question 6: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

H_o6: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the resources on inclusion of the participants based on their level of education (Bachelor's, Master's, and a combined category of Education Specialist and Doctorate degrees). The independent variable was the level of education, and the dependent variable was the participants' resources on inclusion. The one way ANOVA, F (2, 183) = 179, p = .170 was not statistically significant. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The strength of the relationship between resources on inclusion and level of education as assessed by n^2 was small (.01). The results indicated that the mean score for Dimension 2, Resources on Inclusion, was not significantly affected by education level. The means and standard deviations for the three education level groups are reported in Table 2.

Table 2.
Means and Standard Deviations of Training Levels of Education Groups

Education Level	N	M	SD
Bachelors	50	2.91	.61
Masters	95	3.09	.61
EDS and Doctorate	40	3.20	.63

Research Question 7

Research Question 7: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

H_o7: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between administrators and teachers?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean scores for Dimension 3, Training on Inclusion, differed between administrators and teachers. A survey instrument was used to measure the training of both administrator and teacher participants. The mean score on the training test was the test variable and the grouping variable was the role of the participants. The test was not significant, $[t(183) = .87, p = .381]$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. See Figure 5 below. There was not a significant difference in the attitude scores of teachers ($M = 2.23$, $SD = .76$) and administrators ($M = 2.67$, $SD = .78$). The effect size as measured by η^2 was small (.01). Therefore, participants' role did not play a significant role in scores on the training on inclusion dimension of the survey.

Figure 5. Comparison of Resources for Inclusion of Administrators and Teachers

Research Question 8

Research Question 8: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two groups indicating years of experience?

H_o8: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey between the two years of experience groups?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean score for Dimension 3, Training on Inclusion, differed between participants with differing years of experience. A survey instrument was used to measure the training of both teachers and administrators with 0-15 years of experience and 16-31 plus years of experience. The mean score on the resources test was the test variable and the grouping variable was the years of experience of the participants. The test was not significant, [t(183) = .30, p = .764. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. See Figure 6. There was not a significant difference in the years of experience scores of 0-15 years (M = 2.59, SD = .75) and 16-31 plus years (M = 2.55, SD = .78). The effect size as measured η^2 was small (.01). Therefore, participants' years of experience did not play a significant role in scores on the training on inclusion dimension of the survey.
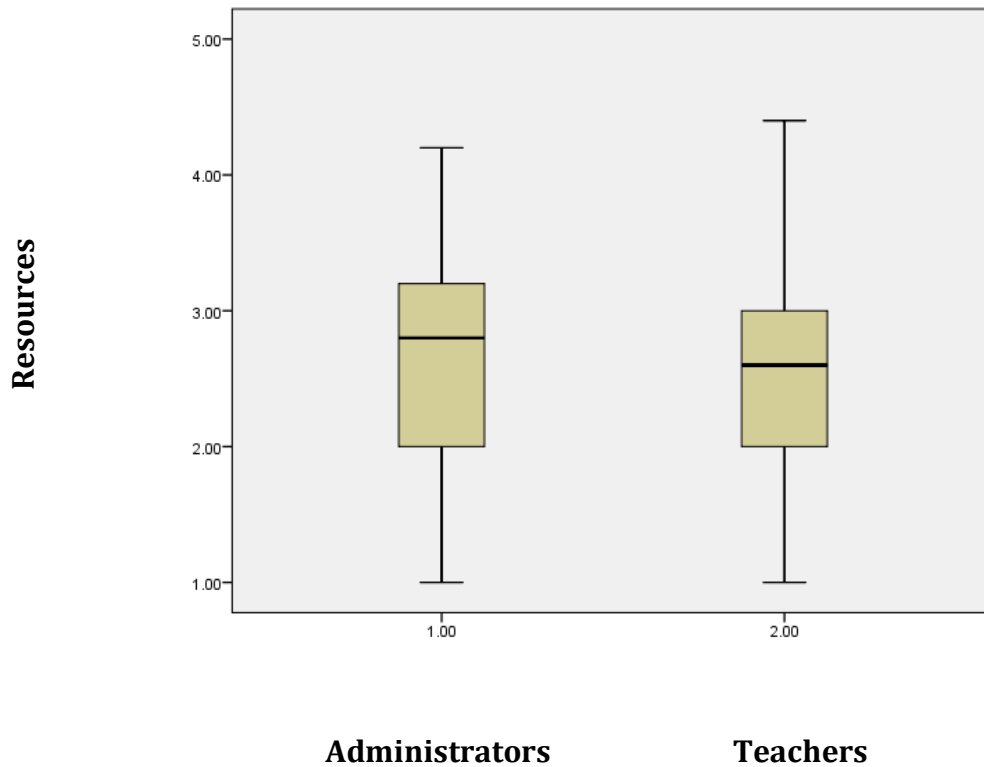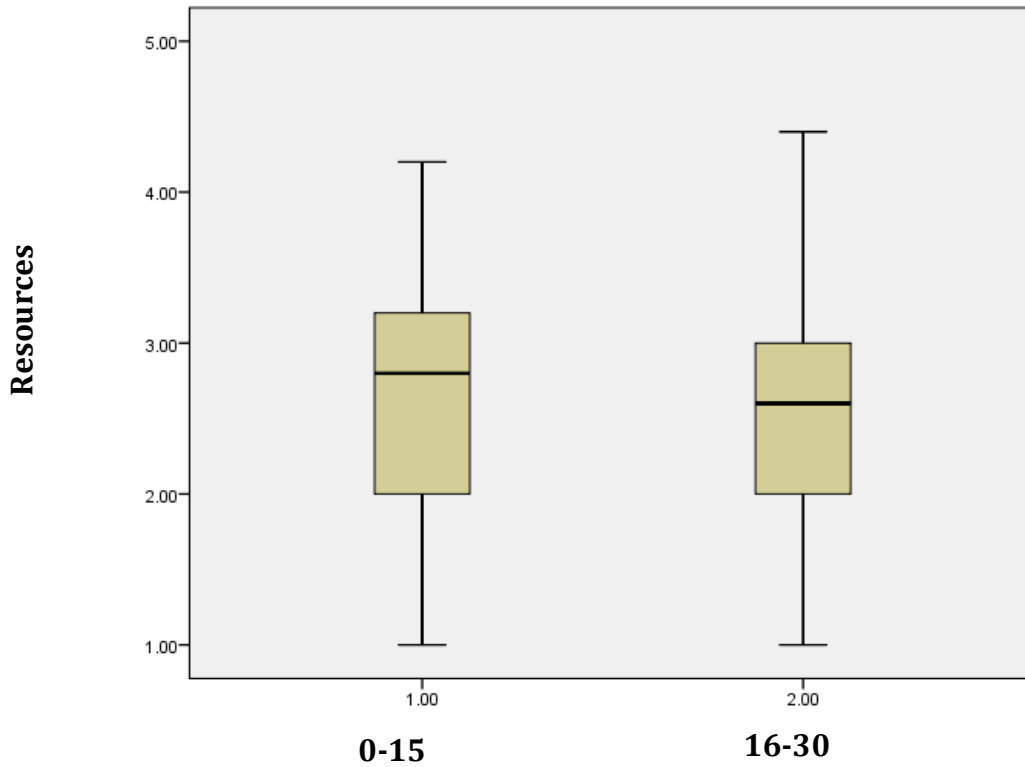
Figure 6. Comparison of Resources for Inclusion and Years of Experience

Research Question 9

Research Question 9: Is there a significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

Ho9: There is no significant difference in the mean score for Dimension 3, Training Provided for Inclusion, on the inclusion survey among participants' levels of education?

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the resources for inclusion of the participants based on their level of education (Bachelor's, Master's, and a combined category of Education Specialist and Doctorate degree). The independent variable was the level of education, and the dependent variable was the participants' scores on the resources for inclusion dimension. The one way ANOVA, $F(183) = 1.45$ $p = .235$ was not statistically significant. Therefore the null hypothesis was retained. The strength of the relationship between attitudes toward inclusion and level of education was assessed by η^2 was small (.01). The results indicated that training on inclusion was not significantly affected by education level. The means and standard deviations for the three education level groups are reported in Table 3.

Table 3.
Means and Standard Deviations of Resource Levels of Education Groups

Education Level	N	M	SD
Bachelor's	50	2.91	.61
Master's	95	3.09	.61
EDS and Doctorate	40	3.20	.63

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND
FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter contains a summary of the findings, conclusions, implications for

practice, and recommendations for future research. This study was designed to examine

the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion in the classroom.

Specifically this study analyzed grade level, years of teaching experience, and levels of

education to examine the manner in which these factors relate to attitudes of teachers and

administrators toward inclusion. This could be helpful for readers who will use this study

as a basis for inclusion implementation within their district. The study was conducted

using data from an online survey collected from three different districts in Tennessee;

Johnson City Schools, Greeneville City Schools, and Putnam County Schools.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were made based on the analysis of the data in this

study. Results showed that across the three dimensions of attitudes, resources, and

training, regardless of demographics, only three of the nine research questions were

found to be significant. Dimension 1, Attitudes toward Inclusion, examined participant's

attitudes about the inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education setting.

Dimension 2, Training on Inclusion, examined the amount of training each participant

had regarding inclusion. Dimension 3, Resources for Inclusion, examined the amount of

resources teachers and administrators received for inclusion. No significant differences

were found based on demographics in resources for inclusion. The only statistically

significant findings were in research questions 1, 2 and 4. A significant difference was found in research question 1, which referenced the different attitudes toward inclusion held by teachers and administrators. The data showed that administrators hold more positive attitudes toward inclusion than teachers do. A significant difference was found in research question 2, which referenced the different attitudes toward inclusion held by teachers and administrators with 0-15 years of experience and 16-31+ years of experience. The data showed that participants who had fewer than 16 years of experience hold more positive attitudes toward inclusion than teachers with 16 or more years of experience. The last significant difference was found in research question 4, which referenced training on inclusion held by teachers and administrators. The data showed that administrators indicated they had more training on inclusion than teachers indicated.

Discussion

All demographic groups reported not having an adequate understanding of the proper implementation of inclusion or enough training on inclusion and students in an inclusive classroom. A lack of experience or knowledge on the inclusive classroom has been a leading reason general education teachers are reluctant to embrace the concept of inclusion (Bosch, 2015). Federal law requires the implementation of the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education setting. According to Subban and Sharma (2005) general education teachers expressed a need for more in depth information on the correct way to include students with disabilities. When teachers do not feel trained or prepared to participate in a program that they are required to implement, this can lead directly to a negative attitude toward inclusion and students in an inclusive

classroom. This was confirmed by Farris (2011) who reported that the amount of training and college credits relating to special education were directly correlated with administrators' attitudes towards inclusion. Administrators play a vital role in the proper implementation of inclusion. Though they do not deliver direct instruction and are not often integrated in the daily classroom setting, they are responsible for creating a positive school culture. Research indicates that a principal's vision and mission for the school directly impact the implementation of inclusive programs (Harris, 2009). Teachers expect to get guidance and support from principals, thus a principal's attitude toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education program is important.

An additional finding was that participants reported not having enough resources to support the education of students with disabilities in a general education setting. Whether it was enough time to plan and prepare with a special education teacher, assistants for the students with disabilities, or support on research-based teaching techniques, participants overall felt that they were not provided with enough assistance to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities in a general education setting.

Recommendations for Practice

The following are recommendations for implementing the inclusion of students with disabilities in a general education setting.

1. College course requirements should include more than one introduction to special education courses. General education teachers, despite obtaining a general education degree, should be required to take a minimum of 9-12 credit hours of special education courses. In school systems today, a large number of

students with disabilities are being educated in a general education setting by a teacher with a general education degree. These teachers are often unprepared to meet the educational needs of these students due to a lack of knowledge on disabilities and effective teaching techniques for students with disabilities. Teachers who feel unprepared to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities due to a lack of training can lead to negative attitudes towards inclusion. This supports the findings of Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996). Participants in the study reported a lack of training on inclusion, as well as reported a lack of basic understanding of disabilities and strategies to support students with disabilities.

2. School districts should provide professional development opportunities on inclusion that are specifically designed for teachers with more than 15 years of experience. This supports the findings of this study which indicated teachers with 0-15 years of experience held more positive attitudes toward inclusion than those teachers with 16 or more years of experience.

3. School districts should provide professional development for general education and special education teachers on the implementation of inclusion, teaching practices, coteaching, and other topics related to inclusion within a general education setting. According to Subban and Sharma (2005) general education teachers expressed a need for more in-depth information on the correct way to include students with disabilities. A lack of experience or knowledge on the inclusive classroom has been a leading reason general education teachers are reluctant to embrace the concept of inclusion (Bosch,

2015). Providing administrators and teachers with support and training on the

implementation framework for that specific district, as well as continual

training throughout the year, can ease the discomfort of the unknown and

provide teachers with tools and strategies to use within their daily practice.

4. School districts should allocate more funds for students with disabilities

served in a general education setting. Findings from this study indicated that

neither teachers nor administrators felt as if there were enough resources to

properly implement inclusion. An increase in funding would allow more

instructional assistants to be with students with disabilities in the general

education setting as well as provide additional learning resources and

technology to meet the needs of multiple learning styles. This allocation for

additional funding should be advocated for by administrators in order to

support all learners within their building.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings and conclusions of this research have enabled the researcher to

identify the following recommendations for future research regarding the implementation

of inclusion in a general education setting.

1. Future researchers could select one school district and provide teachers and

administrators more training on inclusion. This district could be given a survey

prior to the training and then a follow up survey after the training to determine if

attitudes toward inclusion in the classroom shifted due to the increase in training

opportunities.

2. Future researchers could select one district to receive additional resources but no extra training on inclusion. This district could also be given a survey prior to receiving the additional resources and then a follow up survey after to determine if attitudes toward inclusion in the classroom shifted due to the increase in additional resources. This would be helpful in determining which participants value more, training or support and resources.

3. Future researchers could conduct a study to determine whether students with certain disabilities are having more success by looking at student success indicators.

4. Future researchers could conduct a qualitative study to delve deeper into administrator and teacher attitudes toward inclusion as well as the types of training that would be most beneficial. Interviews could be conducted that allow for explanation and expansion of answers.

5. Future researchers could conduct a follow up study to determine which resource teachers express the most need for. Findings from this study indicated that teachers expressed the need for additional resources, but did not specify which resource teachers valued the most. The follow up study would create a more in depth look into the resources teachers indicate would benefit their students most.

6. Future researchers could conduct a follow up study to attempt to determine the difference between administrators' and teachers' attitudes towards inclusion across the dimensions that resulted in a significant difference.

Summary

The statistical analysis reported in this study was based on nine research questions and nine null hypotheses presented in Chapters 1 and 3. Each dimension contained three demographics. The first two dimensions were analyzed using an independent sample t-test and the third was analyzed using a one-way ANOVA. A total of 183 teachers and administrators participated in the study. The level of significance used for the statistical tests was .05. Findings indicated that the role of teacher or administrator, years of experience, or level of education did not play a significant role in the participants' perceptions of training and resources dimensions of inclusion. However, the findings did indicate that there was a significant difference in the attitudes toward inclusion based upon role and years of experience. All participants acknowledged that they did not feel that they had adequate training or understanding about properly implementing inclusion.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: COPY OF TEACHER TECHNOLOGY SURVEY

Welcome to My Survey

Dear Participant:

My name is Heather LeMay, and I am a student at East Tennessee State University. I am working on doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policies Analysis. In order to finish my studies, I need to complete a research project" The name of my research study is Administrator and Teacher perceptions of inclusion.

The purpose of this study is to examine the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward inclusion in the classroom I would like to give a brief survey to teachers and administrators using survey monkey. It should only take about 5 minutes to finish. You will be asked questions about inclusion. However, you may also feel better after you have had the chance to express yourself about inclusion practices. This study may benefit you or others by identifying factors that can increase the effectives of inclusion practices.

Your confidentiality will be protected as best we can. Since we are using technology no guarantees can be made about the interception of data sent over the Internet by any third parties, just like with emails. We will make every effort to make sure that your name is not linked with your answers. Survey Monkey has security features that will be used such as disabled IP address feature and encryption software. Although your rights and privacy will be protected, the East Tennessee State University (ETSU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) (for non-medical research) and people working on this research can view the study records.

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to take part in this study. You can quit at any time or you can exit the online survey form if you want to stop completely. If you quit or decide not to take part, the benefits or treatment that you would otherwise get will not be changed.

If you have any research-related questions or problems, you may contact me, Heather LeMay, at 630-202-5489. I am working on this project together with my teacher Dr. Foley. You may reach her at 423-439-1000. Also, you may call the chairperson of the IRB at ETSU at (423) 439-6054 if you have questions about your rights as a research subject. If you have any questions or concerns about the research and want to talk to someone who is not with the research team or if you cannot reach the research team, you may call an IRB Coordinator at 423/439-6055 or 423/439-6002.

Sincerely,

Heather LeMay

Clicking the AGREE button below indicates

- I have read the above information

- I agree to volunteer

- I am at least 18 years old

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is important.

* 1. Do you agree

◯ Yes

* 2. Special education students who are part of inclusion have fewer behavior reports or office referrals than student who are not in an inclusive setting

○ Strong Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 3. Inclusion students detract learning opportunities from regular education students

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 4. Students with disabilities should only be included in related arts or elective classes

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 5. I have adequate time to plan for the accommodations necessary to meet the needs specified in the student's IEP

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 6. My district provides adequate training on the proper implementation of inclusion

  ○ Strongly Disagree

  ○ Somewhat Disagree

  ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

  ○ Somewhat Agree

  ○ Strongly Agree

* 7. I have an adequate understanding of learning strategies to serve different disabilities including but not limited to autism, down syndrome, dyslexia, learning disability etc.

  ○ Strongly Disagree

  ○ Somewhat Disagree

  ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

  ○ Somewhat Agree

  ○ Strongly Agree

* 8. My district provides adequate funds to support differentiated learning

  ○ Strongly Disagree

  ○ Somewhat Disagree

  ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

  ○ Somewhat Agree

  ○ Strongly Agree

* 9. I am provided with adequate materials/manipulatives to meet different learning styles

  ○ Strongly Disagree

  ○ Somewhat Disagree

  ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

  ○ Somewhat Agree

  ○ Strongly Agree

* 10. Students with disabilities disrupt the learning of general education students

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Somewhat Disagree
- ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ○ Somewhat Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

* 11. An inclusive classroom lowers the academic expectations for general education students

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Somewhat Disagree
- ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ○ Somewhat Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

* 12. General education teachers need more time to collaboratively plan with special education teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Somewhat Disagree
- ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ○ Somewhat Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

* 13. I believe co- teaching of a special education and a regular education teacher is effective

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Somewhat Disagree
- ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree
- ○ Somewhat Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

* 14. I believe inclusion should be an educational practice in all schools

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 15. I see positive results in academics in special education students due to inclusion

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 16. Special Education students who are part of inclusion have fewer behavior reports or office referrals previous to inclusion

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 17. Inclusion students require more teacher attention than regular education students

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 18. My views towards inclusion are positive

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

19. As an educator I think inclusion is an effective practice

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 20. I need more training on inclusion

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 21. I see a positive result in regular education students due to inclusion

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 22. I am provided enough assistance or assistants to adequately meet the needs of inclusion students.

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Somewhat Disagree

○ Neither Agree nor Disagree

○ Somewhat Agree

○ Strongly Agree

* 23. What is your role:

○ Administrator

○ Teacher

○ Special Education Teacher

○ Other (please specify)

[ ]

* 24. Years of Experience

○ 0-15

○ 16-30

○ 31+

* 25. What grade levels are represented at your school?

[ ]

* 26. Level of Education

○ Bachelors

○ Masters

○ EDS

○ Doctorate

27. Additional Comments

[ ]

JOHNSON CITY SCHOOLS
APPROVAL FORM FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

REQUESTOR'S NAME _Heather Finney_

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL _Attitude concerning inclusion_

STEP 1:   RESEARCH REVIEW OF CURRICULUM DIVISION

_____   We temporarily withhold approval of your proposal until you address the questions we have raised
           about it in the attached letter. (Include this form with re-submission of your proposal.)

_____   We conditionally approve your proposal and you may proceed with making contact with
           principal(s) of the appropriate school(s), but it is necessary for you to address the questions we
           have raised about your proposal in the attached letter.

__X__   We approve your proposal. Proceed with obtaining approval of the principal(s) of the appropriate
           school(s).

           _____   3/9/17
           Signature, Curriculum Division Reviewer   Date

STEP 2:   PRINCIPAL'S EVALUATION

_____   I temporarily withhold approval of your proposed research being conducted in my school for reasons stated in
           the attached correspondence. (Include this form with the re-submission of your proposal.)

PRINCIPAL #1: _____   DATE: _____

PRINCIPAL #2 _____   DATE: _____

PRINCIPAL #3 _____   DATE: _____

_____   I approve your proposal. Please forward this form to the Central Office for approval of the Superintendent.

PRINCIPAL #1 _____   DATE: _____

PRINCIPAL #2 _____   DATE: _____

PRINCIPAL #3 _____   DATE: _____

STEP 3:   SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION

_____   I withhold approval of your proposed research being conducted in our schools for the reasons stated in the
           attached correspondence. I am forwarding a copy of your proposal, a copy of this form, and a copy of our
           correspondence to the Curriculum Division reviewer. They will communicate with your further.

✓   I approve your proposal. Proceed with your research according to the conditions agreed upon in the preceding
           sections of this form and your research proposal.

           _____   3-20-17
           Signature of Superintendent   Date

NOTE: The signed copy of this form should be returned to the Curriculum Division for their records.
(Reference: Johnson City Board of Education Policy 4.210)

PUTNAM COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

ENGAGE INSPIRE ACHIEVE

March 11, 2017

Dr. Virginia Foley
Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University
P.O. Box 70550
Johnson City, TN 37614

Dear Dr. Foley:

It is my understanding that Heather LeMay, graduate student at East Tennessee State University, would like to conduct quantitative research study in conjunction with Putnam County School System. I hereby grant permission to have access to PCSS School administrators and teachers within PCSS to obtain the necessary information needed from the completion of the survey. The PCSS administrative and teacher participation of the study is on a voluntary basis and they any time may opt out. Ms. LeMay's agreement with PCSS includes the following commitment to PCSS:

1. A copy of the results of her study to be shared at the conclusion of the study with PCSS;
2. Compliance with FERPA, TN Public Records Act, and PCSS Board Policies;
3. Agree to destroy all PCSS student data, electronically and/or paper;
4. A formal submission of PCSS External Researcher "Statement of Assurances";
5. Involvement of students in the study including, but not limited surveys and/or interviews would require Board Approval; and
6. If any changes occur from the original submitted proposal, PCSS will immediately be notified in writing of the changes and seek permission once again for the study.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the District Office.

Sincerely,

Denette E. Kolbe
Assistant Director of Schools – Teaching & Learning

APPENDIX D: GREENEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS APPROVAL EMAIL

Hi Heather,

We will participate in your research. I will send your survey out to our teachers when you have approval.

Will you be able to share your results with our district?

Suzanne

Suzanne C. Bryant, Ed.D.
Assistant Director of Schools for Instruction
Greeneville City Schools
129 W. Depot St.
Greeneville, TN 37743
Bryants@gcschools.net
Work: 423-787-8000
Cell: 423-823-2080

VITA

HEATHER N. LEMAY

Education: Bachelors of Arts in Education
                                    Tusculum College
                                    Greeneville TN 37743

                                    Master's Degree in Curriculum Development and
                                    Instruction
                                    Tusculum College
                                    Greeneville TN 37743

                                    Ed.D. Educational Leadership
                                    East Tennessee State University
                                    Johnson City, Tennessee, 2017

Professional Experience: Special Education Extended Resource Teacher:
                                    Morristown Tennessee 2012-2015

                                    Special Education Pre- K teacher:
                                    Johnson City Tennessee 2015-2017