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Teachers' Perceptions of the Barriers and Facilitators to Inclusion: A Regional Survey

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Teachers' Perceptions of Facilitators and Barriers to Inclusion: A Regional Survey

Graduate Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

Of the School Psychology Program

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By

Hillary Kretz-Harvey

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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Abstract

This study examined teachers' perceptions of facilitators needed to include students with special needs. The Teachers' Opinions of Inclusive Education Needs Survey (TOIENS) was developed for this study in order to examine teachers' perceptions of facilitators to inclusion. Results found that teachers identified material and personnel supports, preservice and inservice training, and environmental/classroom features as all similarly necessary. Discrepancies were found, however, between identified facilitators and the availability of them. Personnel supports were generally considered to be available in the school districts, but several necessary material supports, training, and environmental/classroom features were considered to be unavailable.

In 1975 Congress passed the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142), which required that students with disabilities be educated in the “least restrictive environment” (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Since the inception of this law requiring free appropriate public education for all students, emphasis has been placed on moving students with disabilities out of segregated classrooms and into less restrictive general education classrooms with their non-disabled peers. This demand for special needs students to be educated to the maximum extent possible in educational environments that allow interaction with typically developing peers has continued for more than two decades now. Most recently in a reauthorization of Public Law 94-142, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (Public Law 105-17) reemphasized the requirement of inclusive education and mandated that all states must develop personnel systems in order to prepare their teachers to work with individuals with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

The legislation for inclusion has, and will continue to have, an impact on the education of students with disabilities. Furthermore, this legislation also has an impact on the role of general education teachers. With mandates requiring that special needs students be educated to the greatest extent possible in general education classrooms, general education teachers are increasingly becoming the responsible party for educating all students. With general education teachers’ increased role in educating students with special needs, it is essential that they are capable of successfully including all students in their classrooms. Therefore, insight into teachers’ perceptions of what they need in order to facilitate successful inclusive environments for special needs students may help schools make necessary changes in their inclusive education practices.

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusion

The attitudes that general education teachers hold toward the inclusion of special needs children in the general education classroom can have a significant impact on the effort they put forth to create successful inclusive environments. In order for inclusion to be effective, general education teachers must be receptive to including special needs students in their classrooms and be willing to make necessary instructional changes to help these students succeed. Without the support of general education teachers, inclusive educational environments will likely not benefit the students they are meant to serve. Past research has indicated that much resistance has been seen in regard to inclusion (e.g., Sklaroff, 1994). Some educators even went so far as to demand that the movement toward full inclusion be stopped completely due to their concerns about the “inordinate amount of time and resources” that they perceived would be involved in the full inclusion of students with disabilities (Sklaroff, 1994).

Presently, the research related to teachers' attitudes toward inclusion varies. For example, Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) conducted a meta-analysis of 28 survey reports regarding teachers' perceptions of inclusion from 1958 to 1995, and found that, overall, approximately two-thirds of general education teachers were supportive of the idea of inclusion. However, teachers were differentially supportive depending on the disability of the child to be placed in their classroom. Their meta-analysis indicated that teachers were most supportive of including students with learning disabilities, and least supportive of including students with emotional disturbance or mental retardation (Scruggs & Mastropieri). Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2000) surveyed educators in England, and similarly found general education teachers to have predominantly positive attitudes toward inclusion. Avramidis and his colleagues likewise found less positive attitudes toward the inclusion of students with emotional and behavioral

difficulties, but found that teachers who had more experience with inclusive programs held significantly more positive attitudes than teachers who had little or no experience with inclusive programming. They found that professional development was also significantly related to teacher attitudes: teachers with substantial training in special education held more positive attitudes than those with little or no special education training. Gender, age, teaching experience, geographic location of the school, size of the school, and size of the classroom were examined and not found to be related to attitudes toward inclusion. (Avramidis et al., 2000)

While some studies have suggested that teachers generally hold positive attitudes toward inclusion (Avramidis et al., 2000; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996), others have indicated negative attitudes toward inclusion (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham, 2001; Heflin & Bullock, 1999; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991). In particular, Semmel et al. found that both regular and special education teachers did not prefer inclusion, and rather preferred pull-out services over the consultant teacher model. Teachers in their study generally viewed the regular education classroom as inadequate for meeting the needs of students with mild disabilities. Although teachers indicated that they believed students with mild disabilities had the right to be included, less than one-third of the teachers agreed that a regular education classroom placement would be effective for students with mild disabilities. (Semmel et al., 1991)

Similarly, Daane, Bierne-Smith, and Latham (2001) found that both teachers and administrators believed that students with disabilities could not receive effective instruction in general education classrooms. Respondents in this study indicated that although all students have a basic right to be included, students with disabilities could not receive an appropriate education in inclusive settings. Furthermore, they found considerable apprehensiveness on the part of both

teachers and administrators with regard to the acceptance of inclusion, no matter what the category of disability (Daane et al., 2001).

Heflin and Bullock (1999) examined teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of students with emotional and behavioral disorders. In general, they found results in line with those of Semmel et al. (1991) and Daane et al. (2001). That is, teachers were skeptical as to their ability to effectively educate students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Although teachers were willing to try to include students with emotional and behavioral disorders, they did not feel it would be an effective means of educating these students (Heflin & Bullock, 1999).

Teachers' Perceptions of the Facilitators to Inclusion

Research suggests that general education teachers' attitudes toward including students with special needs may be impacted by their perceptions of facilitators to inclusion. Teachers have more positive attitudes toward inclusion if they have experience working in inclusive classrooms and special education training (Avramidis et al., 2000). Many teachers, however, believe that they lack the necessary experience, as well as supports necessary for effective inclusion of students with special needs (Avramidis et al., 2000; Boyer & Bandy, 1997; Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormick, & Scheer, 1999; Daane et al., 2001; Heflin & Bullock, 1999; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Several key facilitators to inclusion have been identified in the literature, which may in turn impact the effectiveness of the inclusion of special needs students in the general education classroom.

The first major facilitator to inclusion identified throughout the research was training. Multiple studies have indicated that teachers believe that they lack the training, both preservice and inservice, necessary to successfully include students with special needs (Avramidis et al., 2000; Boyer & Bandy, 1997; Buell et al., 1999; Daane et al., 2001; Heflin & Bullock, 1999;

Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Typically, teachers express a need for more training on how to deal with specific learning difficulties and how to manage students' behavior (Avramidis et al., 2000; Buell et al., 1999; Daane et al., 2001; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Teachers also indicated a desire for training related to collaboration between special and general education teachers and for training related to IEP development (Avramidis et al., 2000; Boyer & Bandy, 1997; Buell et al., 1999; Heflin & Bullock, 1999). Training related to program modification, assessing academic progress, adapting curriculum, and using assistive technology were also indicated as areas of need (Buell et al., 1999; Heflin & Bullock, 1999).

Another facilitator to the inclusion of special needs students in the general education classroom identified in these studies was a lack of material resources and personnel supports (Avramidis et al., 2000; Boyer & Bandy, 1997; Buell et al., 1999; Heflin & Bullock, 1999). Teachers indicated a need for access to material resources, such as curriculum materials and classroom equipment (Avramidis et al., 2000; Buell et al., 1999), and for well-trained classroom aides in the general education classroom (Boyer & Bandy, 1997; Buell et al., 1999; Heflin & Bullock, 1999).

Other facilitators commonly identified included planning time and classroom size (Avramidis et al., 2000; Daane et al., 2001; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Research found that teachers reported a lack of available planning time necessary for successful collaboration between general and special education teachers (Avramidis et al., 2000; Daane et al., 2001; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Research indicated that classroom size was also a significant barrier to inclusion, and teachers felt that class sizes needed to be reduced in order to appropriately serve students with disabilities in the general education classroom (Avramidis et al., 2000; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996).

In general, research on teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of special needs students in the general education classroom is inconclusive. While some studies suggest that teachers hold positive attitudes toward inclusion (Avramidis et al., 2000; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996), other studies find less than positive attitudes toward the inclusion of special needs students (Daane et al., 2001; Heflin & Bullock, 1999; Semmel et al., 1991). It does appear, however, that teachers' negative attitudes may be due to their perceptions of a lack of the facilitators necessary to include students (Avramidis et al., 2000; Boyer & Bandy, 1997; Buell et al., 1999; Daane et al., 2001; Heflin & Bullock, 1999; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). If teachers receive the necessary training and supports, their attitudes toward including students with disabilities may become more positive, and in turn, including these students may become more effective and successful. Much of the present research tends to focus narrowly on teachers' perceptions of inclusion, without critically examining what teachers perceive they need to make inclusive education successful. Research that does address the barriers to successful inclusion tends to do so in a less than comprehensive fashion. Thus, a comprehensive investigation into teachers' perceptions of the facilitators to successful inclusive education is warranted. As such, this research study was designed to examine teachers' perceptions of the facilitators they need to successfully include students with special needs. In the present study, facilitators were operationalized as the availability of necessary curriculum materials, personnel supports, preservice and inservice training, and environmental aspects. This research addressed teachers' gender, ethnicity, age, grade level, and number of years teaching with regard to their perceptions of their needs, as the majority of the research studies examined did not indicate that such variables were addressed.

Method

Participants

The participant pool consisted of a total of 291 general education teachers (grades K through 12) from two school districts in western New York State. Administrators from one rural school district and one suburban school district agreed to allow their teachers to participate in this research study. The rural school district had one elementary school and one junior/senior high school with a total district enrollment of approximately 1,200 students. Approximately 16% of students in the rural district were students with special education classifications. The suburban school district had three elementary school buildings, one middle school, and one high school, with a total district enrollment of approximately 4,600 students. The suburban district had approximately 14% of students identified with special education classifications. The local urban school district declined participation in this study. Between the two school districts, there were a total of the 291 general education teachers who were possible participants. Thirty percent of these eligible teachers ($n = 88$) returned completed surveys.

Measures

For this study, a survey titled the Teachers' Opinion of Inclusive Education Needs Survey (TOIENS) was developed by this author (see Appendix A). The TOIENS was constructed based on the facilitators to inclusion found in the literature and was designed to assess general education teachers' perceptions of what their needs are for successfully including special needs students in the general education classroom. In order to determine its preliminary effectiveness, it was first pilot tested with a panel of five general education teachers who were not from the school districts included in this study. Feedback from the pilot study aided in the final construction of the survey.

The TOIENS consists of 5 main categories of possible facilitators: material supports, personnel supports, preservice training, inservice training, and features of the classroom and school environment. There are a total of 43 items pertaining to the facilitators for including special needs students. These items asked teachers to rate on a 3-point Likert-type scale their belief of how needed is the specific item. Ratings were “Extremely Necessary” (1), “Moderately Necessary/Sometimes Needed” (2), and “Not Necessary” (3). These items also asked teachers to check a box for each item as to whether or not it is available in their district, with the exception of the preservice items. Two write in options were also available under each category of facilitators. The survey also included eight questions designed to gather demographic information and two questions used to acquire information on the teachers’ experience with special needs students and their perceptions of how easy it is to include special needs students.

Procedures

A copy of the TOIENS, and a letter describing the research study and their voluntary participation (see Appendix B) were distributed in the mailboxes of all general education teachers in the participating districts. Participants were asked to complete the survey within one week and return it to the main office in their building, where sealed drop-boxes were provided. Bright red reminder notices were distributed two days later into all general education teachers’ mailboxes in the participating districts in an attempt to increase participation. The main office in the buildings had extra copies of the survey available for teachers who may have misplaced their initial copy of the survey. In a further attempt to increase participation, all participants were eligible to be entered in a drawing to win a fifty-dollar gift certificate to an educational supplies store.

Results

Descriptive Analyses

Thirty-two percent of the participants in this study ($n = 28$) were from the rural school district, and 68% ($n = 60$) were from the suburban school district. Seventy-five percent of participants in this study were female ($n = 66$) and 25% of participants were male ($n = 22$). Ages of participants ranged from 22 to 62 years, with a mean age of 42 years. Approximately 58% of respondents in this study had 15 or more years of teaching experience. Forty-five percent of participants taught at the elementary level (grades K through 5) and 55% taught at the secondary level (grades 6 through 12).

Of this sample of participants, 95.5% reported they had a special needs student in their class at some point during their teaching career. Table 1 displays the breakdown of the percentages of teachers who reported experience with the various special needs. In general, teachers' experience with specific disabilities was relatively consistent with the expected incidence rates for the disabilities. For example, approximately 89% of teachers had experience with students who had the high incidence disability of specific learning disabilities and only 17% had experience with students who had the lower incidence disability of traumatic brain injuries.

Table 2 presents teachers' ratings of the ease of including special needs students in the general education classroom. Interestingly, the low incidence disabilities of hearing impairments and autism were rated as the easiest special needs to include, with respective percentages of 77.8% and 71.6% of teachers rating them as such. The higher incidence disabilities of specific learning disabilities and speech-language impairments were also rated as relatively easy to include, with 62.4% and 51.1% of teachers rating them as such, respectively. The lower

incidence disabilities of mental retardation and multiple disabilities were rated as relatively hard to include, with 71.9% and 67.2% of teachers respectively rating them accordingly.

Analyses of facilitators in terms of material and personnel supports are shown in Table 3. Table 3 describes the percentages of teachers identifying facilitators as either “Necessary” or “Not Necessary”, as well as whether they were “Available” or “Not Available” in their school district. The mean percentage of teachers identifying Material Supports as a necessary facilitator was 91.2%, and the mean percentage of availability was 58.3%. The overall percentage of teachers identifying Personnel Supports as a necessary facilitator was 94.5%, and the corresponding overall percentage of availability was 83.4%. Therefore, while both material and personnel supports were fairly equally identified as necessary facilitators, personnel supports were much more available (83.4%) in these school districts than the material supports (58.3%). Of the material support facilitators, appropriate curriculum materials and access to multiple curricula were rated as the most necessary facilitators. Approximately 68% of teachers indicated that they had access to appropriate curriculum materials in their district, and approximately 48% reported access to multiple curricula. Reading support staff, special education support staff, and principal/administrative support were rated as the most necessary personnel facilitators. Of these three facilitators, approximately 90% indicated that special education support staff and principal/administrative support were available in their district, but only 76% indicated that reading support staff was available to them.

Analyses of the inservice and preservice training facilitators are displayed in Table 4, and it describes the percentages of teachers identifying training facilitators as either “Necessary” or “Not Necessary”. For inservice items, the percentage of teachers identifying them as “Available” or “Not Available” in their school district are also presented. The overall percentage of teachers

identifying Inservice Training as a necessary facilitator was 90.6%, and the corresponding overall percentage of availability was 39.1%. The overall percentage of teachers identifying Preservice Training as a necessary facilitator was 94.5%. Of the inservice training items, training for teaching students with learning disabilities and training for managing the behavior of students were identified as the most necessary inservice training facilitators. Approximately 44% of teachers indicated that these two facilitators were available to them in their districts. For preservice training items, 100% of the teachers rated training related to knowledge of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) as necessary during undergraduate and graduate training. Two other preservice items rated as most necessary were undergraduate and graduate experience with students with disabilities and behavior management training. Both inservice and preservice behavior management training was identified as a necessary facilitator for the successful inclusion of special needs students.

Presented in Table 5 are classroom and environmental facilitators. Similar to Tables 3 and 4, Table 5 describes the percentages of teachers identifying classroom and environmental facilitators as either “Necessary” or “Not Necessary”, and as “Available” or “Not Available” in their school district. The overall percentage of teachers identifying these items as necessary facilitators was 94%, and the corresponding overall percentage of availability was approximately 52%. Of these facilitators, the items identified as most necessary were adequate planning time, adequate classroom space, small class size (number of students in class), and accessible stairways and ramps. Approximately 74% of the teachers indicated that stairways and ramps were accessible in their district, 58% indicated that they had adequate classroom space and planning time, and only 38% indicated that they had small class size available in their district.

Mean Comparisons.

Mean comparisons for the ease of inclusion ratings of special needs students compared by grade level of the teacher are displayed in Table 6. Significant mean differences between elementary and secondary level teachers were found for their ratings of the ease of including students with speech/language impairments ($t_{74} = -3.34, p \leq .01$). Significant mean differences were also found for their ratings of the ease of including students with mental retardation ($t_{54} = -1.19, p \leq .05$) and students with traumatic brain injury ($t_{46} = -2.44, p \leq .05$). Secondary level teachers rated all three of these categories of students as more difficult to include in the general education classroom than elementary level teachers did.

Significant mean differences found for need ratings compared by the teachers' gender are presented in Table 7. Significant mean differences according to gender were found for the facilitators of multiple curricula ($t_{84} = 3.77, p \leq .01$), special education journals ($t_{76} = 2.83, p \leq .01$), inservice training in assistive technology ($t_{84} = 2.69, p \leq .01$), and the environmental/classroom feature of time to meet with included students' families ($t_{83} = 2.67, p \leq .01$). Female teachers rated access to multiple curricula, inservice training in assistive technology, and time to meet with students' families as more significantly needed than male teachers. Male teachers, however, identified access to special education journals as more significantly needed than female teachers did.

Significant mean differences between grade levels for facilitator need ratings are presented in Table 8. Significant mean differences according to grade level were found for the facilitators of multiple curricula ($t_{83} = -3.19, p \leq .01$), a full-time classroom aide ($t_{82} = -2.67, p \leq .01$), preservice training on adapting curriculum ($t_{84} = -2.90, p \leq .01$), and time to meet with

included students' families ($t_{82} = -3.58, p \leq .01$). For all four of these facilitators, elementary level teachers indicated these to be more needed than teachers at the secondary level.

Inferential Analyses.

Correlational analyses for years of teaching experience and age of teacher with the ease of inclusion ratings are displayed in Table 9. Years of teaching experience and age of the teacher were significantly correlated with the ease of including students with multiple disabilities ($r = -0.27, p = .05$ and $r = -0.29, p = .05$) and the ease of including visually impaired students ($r = -0.27, p = .05$ and $r = -0.26, p = .05$). These results indicate that as teachers' years of experience and age increased, they rated students with multiple disabilities and visual impairments as more difficult to include in the general education classroom.

Correlations between the ease of including special needs students and the 43 facilitators were also examined. The need rating for family participation and involvement was significantly correlated with teachers' ratings of the ease of including students with orthopedic impairments ($r = -.37, p \leq .01$) and the ease of including students with specific learning disabilities ($r = -.34, p \leq .01$). Teachers who rated students with orthopedic impairments and specific learning disabilities as easy to include also rated family participation as a necessary facilitator. The need rating for preservice training in behavior management was significantly correlated with teachers' ratings of the ease of including students with traumatic brain injuries ($r = -.41, p \leq .01$) and multiple disabilities ($r = -.35, p \leq .01$). Teachers who rated students with traumatic brain injuries and multiple disabilities as easy to include also rated preservice behavior management training as a necessary facilitator. The need rating for adequate collaboration time was significantly correlated with the ease of including visually impaired students ($r = -.36, p \leq .01$), such that teachers rating adequate collaboration time as necessary also rated students with visual

impairments as easy to include. The ease of inclusion rating for students with traumatic brain injuries was significantly correlated with the need rating for accessible stairways and ramps ($r = -.38, p \leq .01$), the need rating for access to multiple curricula ($r = -.40, p \leq .01$), and the need rating for assistive technology ($r = -.39, p \leq .01$). Teachers who rated students with traumatic brain injuries as easy to include, likewise indicated a need for accessible stairways and ramps, access to multiple curricula, and access to assistive technology. Lastly, the ease of including students with an emotional disturbance was significantly correlated with the need rating for access to special education journals ($r = -.37, p \leq .01$), such that teachers rating students with an emotional disturbance as easy to include also indicated a need for access to special education journals.

Discussion

Results of this study revealed that material and personnel supports, training, and classroom and environmental features are all fairly equally perceived by teachers to be necessary facilitators for the inclusion of special needs students. Responses regarding the availability of these facilitators to teachers, however, did not indicate equal availability. Similar to the prior research by Avramidis et al. (2000) and Buell et al. (1999), teachers in the present study identified material resources as necessary for successfully including students. More than 90% of the teachers in the present study reported that material supports are necessary facilitators, and approximately 58% indicated that they are actually available to them in their school district. Therefore, more than 40% of teachers did not have access to material supports deemed necessary for including special needs students. Consistent with prior research, the present study found that appropriate curriculum materials and access to multiple curricula were identified as the top two most necessary material supports, with corresponding availabilities in this study of approximately 68% and 48% respectively. In contrast, personnel supports were identified as more widely available to

teachers than the material supports. For the top three personnel supports identified in the present study, approximately 90% of teachers indicated that special education support staff and principal/administrative support were available to them in their district, and approximately 76% indicated that reading support staff were available.

The findings regarding training facilitators were particularly noteworthy. While more than 90% of the teachers reported inservice training to be necessary, more than 60% indicated that it was not available to them in their school district. Similar to the prior research findings (Avramidis et al., 2000; Buell et al., 1999; Daane et al., 2001; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996), teachers identified inservice training for teaching students with specific learning disabilities and for managing the behavior of students as particularly necessary, but only 44% indicated that such training was available to them in their school district.

Similarly consistent with prior research, teachers also identified preservice training related to Individualized Education Plans and behavior management, as well as experience with students with disabilities, as important components for undergraduate and graduate training prior to employment as a general education teacher. Results of the present study further found that more than 40% of the teachers did not have adequate planning time and adequate classroom space, and more than 60% did not consider themselves to have a small enough class size in terms of the number of students. These three facilitators were identified by teachers in the present study as the most necessary environmental/classroom features, and are consistent with those identified in the previous research (see Avramidis et al., 2000; Daane et al., 2001, Scruggs & Mastropiere, 1996).

Overall, these results suggest that the teachers in this study perceived that material and personnel supports, preservice and inservice training, and environmental and classroom features

are all necessary facilitators for the successful inclusion of special needs students. The sample of teachers in this study indicated, however, that material supports, training, and environmental/classroom facilitators were not adequately available to them.

The present study did have several key limitations that should be considered. One of which was the relatively small sample size. Only 88 teachers out of 291 completed the survey. There was a 30% participation rate, but a larger sample may provide more substantial results. A second limitation was that the sample was from one area in New York State. A sample from across the country may provide a different array of results. Lastly, this study did not include teachers from urban school districts, due to the local urban district declining participation. All of these characteristics of the present sample limit the generalizability of these results and should be considered when designing future studies.

With the present limitations considered, this study also has several important implications. One of which is that the inclusion of special needs students may be perceived as a more difficult task by teachers who perceive a lack of available facilitators. This, in turn, may impact the actual successfulness of inclusion. Whether or not these facilitators are actually necessary may not be what is most important, but rather it may be the teachers' perceptions of their importance and whether they feel they have access to them that impacts teachers' effort and the actual success of inclusion.

A second implication of the present research is that teachers need to be better informed of the facilitators available to them and how to obtain such access in their school district. Because availability ratings varied within each school district, it suggests that teachers may not be aware of facilitators that are available to them or how to access them. In addition, teachers may not be clearly communicating their needs to their principals and administrators. Teachers in this study

generally indicated that they perceived themselves to have principal and administrative support, but also indicated that they did not have necessary inservice training available. Better communication between teachers and administrators about what teachers perceive they need in order to successfully include students may remedy some of the availability issues.

Lastly, this research indicates the need for continued training in order for teachers to effectively work with students who have disabilities. Behavior management training and training for teaching students with specific learning disabilities, in particular, were identified as areas of need. Teachers in this study also identified preservice training for working with special needs students as important.

Further research regarding these implications could provide beneficial information. Specifically, a treatment outcome study in which facilitators identified as not available are made available to teachers, would be informative. Research into the actual versus perceived availability of facilitators in school districts would also be of interest.

Table 1

Percentage of Teachers With Experience by Special Needs Categories

<u>Special needs classification</u>	<u>Percentage of Teachers</u>
Autism	47.7
Hearing impairment	71.6
Orthopedic impairment	26.1
Traumatic brain injury	17.0
Deaf-blindness	22.7
Mental retardation	26.1
Visual impairments	54.5
Emotional disturbance	77.3
Multiple disabilities	33.0
Specific learning disabilities	88.6
Speech-language impairments	76.1
<u>Other health impairment</u>	<u>73.9</u>

N = 88

Table 2

Participants' Ratings of the Ease of Including Special Needs Students

Special needs classification	Ease of Inclusion Percentages		
	Relatively Easy	Moderate	Relatively Hard
Autism	71.6	28.4	0
Hearing impairment	77.8	17.3	4.9
Orthopedic impairment	48.4	35.5	16.1
Traumatic brain injury	14.2	22.4	63.3
Deaf-blindness	17.9	28.6	53.6
Mental retardation	8.8	19.3	71.9
Visual impairments	56.3	31.0	12.7
Emotional disturbance	9.7	26.8	63.4
Multiple disabilities	9.8	23.0	67.2
Specific learning disabilities	51.2	35.7	13.1
Speech-language impairments	62.4	29.9	7.8
Other health impairment	49.8	35.7	15.5

N = 88

Table 5

Participants' Ratings of Classroom and Environmental Facilitators

Facilitator	Percentages			
	Necessary	Not Necessary	Available	Not Available
Small class size (number of students)	97.7	2.3	37.5	62.5
Adequate classroom space	97.8	2.3	58.0	42.0
Appropriate layout of chairs/tables	96.5	3.5	64.0	36.0
Adequate number of lifts/elevators	90.5	9.5	64.7	35.3
Accessible stairways/ramps	97.6	2.4	73.8	26.2
Chalk boards at different positions				
around the room	77	23.0	34.5	65.5
Adequate planning time	98.9	1.2	58.0	42.0
Adequate collaboration time	96.6	3.4	48.9	51.1
Time to meet with included students'				
families	93	7.1	44.7	55.3
Family participation/involvement	94.1	5.9	40	60

Mean need = 94%

Table 7

Selected Facilitators Showing Significant Mean Differences for Need Ratings Compared by Gender of Participant+

Facilitator	Male (n=22)		Female (n=66)		M Dif.
	M	SD	M	SD	
Multiple curricula	1.9	0.7	1.4	0.5	0.5**
Special ed. journals	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5**
Inservice assistive tech.	2.1	0.7	1.6	0.6	0.4**
<u>Time to meet w/ family</u>	1.7	0.7	1.3	0.6	<u>0.4**</u>

** $p \leq .01$

+Because of the large number of comparisons, only those which were found to be significant are listed

Table 8

Selected Facilitators Showing Significant Mean Differences for Need Ratings Compared by Grade Level of Participant⁺

Facilitator	Elementary		Secondary		M Dif.
	M	SD	M	SD	
Multiple curricula	1.3	0.5	1.7	0.7	-0.4**
Full-time aide	1.2	0.4	1.5	0.7	-0.3**
Preservice curric. adapt.	1.2	0.5	1.5	0.6	-0.3**
Time to meet w/ family	1.2	0.4	1.6	0.7	-0.4**

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$

⁺Because of the large number of comparisons, only those which were found to be significant are listed.

Table 9

Correlations for Years of Teaching Experience and Age of Teacher with Ease of Including Special Needs Categories+

Special needs category	Correlations	
	Years Teaching	Age of Teacher
Autism	.01	.07
Hearing impairment	-.06	-.11
Orthopedic impairment	-.06	-.07
Traumatic brain injury	.27	-.21
Deaf-blindness	-.05	.04
Mental retardation	.06	.12
Visual impairments	.27*	-.26*
Emotional disturbance	-.16	.17
Multiple disabilities	-.27*	-.29*
Specific learning disabilities	.03	.05
Speech-language impairment	.18	.15
Other health impairment	-.12	-.14

* $p \leq .05$

+Ease of including the special needs categories were recoded.

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Time to meet with included students' families	1	2	3	—
Family participation/involvement	1	2	3	—
Other _____	1	2	3	—
Other _____	1	2	3	—

Thank you for completing this survey! _

Appendix B

Dear General Education Teacher,

I am currently a graduate student in the School Psychology Program at Rochester Institute of Technology. I am conducting a study on inclusive education in Western New York, and I need your help. It is absolutely vital for school psychologists, administrators, and other school-based professionals, to hear about your needs when you attempt to include students with special needs. As general education teachers increasingly assume the primary responsibility for the education of special needs students, it is essential that you are provided the supports and resources you think are necessary. This survey asks you to provide information as to what you need to facilitate successful inclusion. I hope that this information will help school psychologists and school administrators to assist teachers to successfully include students with special needs in the general education classroom.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Your school psychologist and building administrator will not know whether or not you chose to participate. No identifying information on any teacher will be collected (such as names, addresses, school name), only group data is sought.

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. By providing this information you may be able to help schools make the changes necessary for successful inclusive practices. Please feel free to write in other needs or to add information you think would be helpful. I would be more than happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about this Study. I can be reached at (585)594-5489 or by e-mail at hk9684@rit.edu.

As a token of my appreciation for teachers who choose to participate, I will be conducting a random drawing for the chance to win one of three \$50.00 gift certificates to an educational supplies store of your choice following the collection of all surveys. If you would like to be included in this drawing please fill out the separate blue form provided and include it with your survey. This identifying information will immediately be entered into the drawing box, and will be separated from all surveys prior to review of the data. Please return the completed survey by _____.

Sincerely,

Hillary Kretz
School Psychology Graduate Student
Rochester Institute of Technology

