

MIRROR OF SENSITIVITY BETWEEN RECEIVING AND SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER IN REGULAR EDUCATION TOWARD INCLUSION

¹Zandra Zarate-Paruginog, Ed.D
Regional Education Program Supervisor
Quality Assurance Division, Region 3 DepEd
DepEd Region 3, Pampanga, Philippines
zandra.paruginog@deped.gov.ph

²Paquito A. Figuero, JR.
Public School District Supervisor
Schools Division Office, Olongapo City
SDO Olongapo City, Philippines
paquito.figuero@deped.gov.ph

Abstract—Inclusion of special education students in the regular education setting is a very complex and interesting topic in education. Often times it is at the center of debate amongst administrators, teachers, and parents. Each person has their own ideas and attitudes about what is best for all children. Multiple research studies have revealed that there are many different factors for positive and negative teacher attitudes toward inclusion. This study examined and analyzed receiving teacher in regular education and special education teacher attitudes toward inclusion. This research also assessed on the profile variables such as position, years of teaching experience and subjects handled. Descriptive analysis method of research was used since questionnaires served as the major instrument in analyzing the data. Results of the survey were tabulated with frequencies and percentages for each response reported and for more in-depth analysis and interpretation correlation was applied. Interview was randomly administered to validate responses and gather enough evidence to test the null hypothesis for rejection or acceptance. The results of this study indicated the positive and negative attitudes of special education teachers and receiving teachers in regular education about inclusion. The results revealed some significant relationships in attitudes reported by receiving teacher in regular education and special education teachers. The results of this study also identified possible factors behind the teacher attitudes on inclusion.

Keywords— inclusion, attitudes, receiving teacher, regular education

1. Introduction

The Department of Education in its mission to provide quality, equitable, culture-based and complete basic education and anchored to the World Declaration on Education for All, has continuously improves its programs, either for regular students or those with special conditions and needs. Talking about quality, equitable and complete basic education to students with special needs and conditions, the department, through Republic Act 7277- The Magna Carta for Disabled Persons amended by R.A 9442, Art 1 Sec 5 states that the ultimate goal of SPED shall be the integration or mainstreaming of learners with special needs into the regular school system and eventually into the community, has never stopped looking for the best ways to educate students with special needs, hence, inclusion was adopted in 1997, striving to educate as many children as possible and with limited funds to build a separate special education infrastructure to cater to the need of children with disabilities.

The SPED program of DepEd provides a holistic approach in catering to the needs of learners with various exceptionalities. This program ensures that learners with exceptionalities will have access to quality education by giving them their individual and unique learning needs. This initiative caters to learners with visual impairment, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, learning disability, autism

spectrum disorder, communication disorder, physical disability, emotional and behavioral disorder, multiple disability with visual impairment, and to those who are orthopedically handicapped, chronically ill, and gifted and talented. Up to date, DepEd has recognized a total of 648 SPED Centers and regular schools offering the program—471 of which are catering to Elementary students and 177 are catering to High School students. The Education Department has recorded around 250,000 enrollees with certain exceptionalities at the elementary level and around 100,000 at the high school level in School Year (SY) 2016-2017.

Inclusion of special education students in the regular education setting is a very complex and interesting topic in the field of education. Often times it is at the center of debate amongst administrators, teachers, and parents. Each person has their own ideas and attitudes about what is best for all children. The researcher felt that it is important to examine both regular education and special education teacher attitudes and concerns about inclusion. The findings from such a study will help identify the professional development opportunities and resources teachers need in order to commit to inclusion. Also, knowing teacher attitudes and concerns about inclusion will help administrators in developing a strong inclusive setting for all students and teachers in their school.

This study sought to determine the attitudes of receiving teachers in regular education and special education teacher toward inclusion.

Specifically, the study attempted to answer the following query: (1) the profile of the respondents in terms of their position, number of years teaching and subjects handled; (2) Attitudes do regular and special education teachers hold about inclusion in terms of teacher training and cooperation; (3) attitudes do regular and special education teachers hold about inclusion in terms of students with disabilities and special education services; (4) significant difference in the attitudes of regular and special education teachers in handling students with disability; (5) implication of the findings to the training needs of receiving and special education teachers in regular education toward inclusion.

Throughout the past two decades there has been a strong movement to include students with disabilities in the regular education classrooms. This movement has been met with both support and concern from teachers, administrators, and parents. While there are many benefits of inclusion, it also has its challenges. One of the biggest challenges seems to be the varied attitudes held by teachers. Currently, it appears that the most popular attitude held by teachers is that inclusion is positive for students but there is a need to provide a continuum of resources for students with disabilities that may sometimes include a more restrictive setting. Their needs would, therefore, be better met in a more restrictive setting such as the special education classroom.

2. Methodology

This study utilized the descriptive-survey quantitative type of research for it aimed to find out the attitudes of regular and special education teachers toward inclusion through the use of questionnaire. The basis as to whether an enhancement training would be proposed depends on the analysis of the responses reflected in the questionnaire and unstructured interview.

There were twelve (12) teachers in the selected high school and sixteen (16) teachers in selected elementary SPED Centers comprised the total sample of respondents. This study was conducted in the Schools Division Office of Olongapo City, Philippines for the School Year 2018-2019.

3. Data Analysis

Data from the survey were tabulated and recorded using spreadsheet program organized using frequency distribution. Likewise, percentage were calculated and reported using tables. Furthermore, cross-tabulation were completed to compare the significant difference between the regular education and special education teacher's responses toward inclusion.

The respondents involved in this study have a total of twenty-eight (28). Overall, 50 % of the total respondents are general education teachers and 50 % are special education teachers.

Table 1 shows that most of the general education teachers' years of teaching experience is 0-5 years that comprised 28.57% of the population. These years are considered the prime years of teacher's life where he learns to define by self-worth and productivity. It is very observable that majority of the respondents are new in the service and their experience could still be classified as merely in the starting stage. This conforms to the data in age groups wherein the respondents are relatively young. However, to be new in the service does not necessarily mean immature in experience. There are teachers who are very aggressive in improving themselves despite their being new in the service. The performance of new teachers as observed during instructional supervision are comparable to the experienced ones. On the other side, we must see that there is a need for a lot trainings and professional development so as to attain the maximize education of the children under this program of education.

A. Personal Data

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

A	Position in School	Frequency	Percentage
1	General Education Teacher	14	50
2	Special Education Teacher	14	50
	Total	28	100%

B	Total Years of Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Gender Education Teacher			
1	0-5	4	28.57
2	6-10	3	21.43
3	11-15	1	7.14
4	16-20	1	7.14
5	21-25	3	21.43
6	Greater than 25	2	14.29
	Total	14	100%
Special Education Teacher			
1	0-5	1	7.14
2	6-10	4	28.57
3	11-15	4	28.57
4	16-20	4	28.57
5	21-25	1	7.14
6	Greater than 25	0	0
	Total	14	100%

There are also 3 teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience or 21.43% of the total population and 3 teachers with 21-25 years of teaching experience or 21.43% of the total

population. The figures show that most respondents are relatively young in the teaching profession. Therefore, it can be surmised that in terms of physical and mental agilities, they are really capable to perform.

In terms of special education teachers' years of teaching experience, 6-10 years, 11-15 years and 16-20 years got the same frequency of 4 for a total of twelve teachers, with 28.57% of the total population for each year bracket. The figures show that the length of teaching experience of special education teachers is equally distributed. Thus, it can be construed that they can have a collaborative discussion and assistance from one another.

In terms of teacher training and cooperation most of the respondents had the same perception. On one hand, both general education teachers and special education teachers believed that general education teachers have the instructional skills and educational background to effectively teach students with disabilities in general education classroom with both have weighted mean of 3.57 and qualitative description of agree. They also perceived that they need to collaborate in order for inclusion to be successful with weighted mean of 4.21 for general education teachers and 4.71 for special education teacher and qualitative description of strongly agree. Likewise, both general education and special education teachers agreed that they have administrative support in planning and preparation time, to meet the needs of students with disabilities in their classroom with a weighted mean of 3.93 for general education teachers and 3.64 for special education teachers. More so, they are comfortable in team teaching of content areas with special education teachers with a qualitative description of agree and a weighted mean of 3.93 for general education teachers and 3.79 for special education teachers. In addition, they strongly agreed that special education teachers provide support for all students in the general education classroom with weighted mean of 4.21 for general education teachers and 4.43 for special education teachers. Furthermore, they agreed that they are frequently check for monitoring with a weighted mean of 3.86 for general education teachers and 3.64 for special education.

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Lastly, they agreed that they are contented with the development of students with disability with a weighted mean of 3.64 for general education teachers and 3.79 for special education teachers.

On the other hand, they only fairly agreed in terms of the assistance of special education teachers to students with disabilities in general education classroom with weighted mean of 2.93 for general education teachers and 2.64 for special education teachers. Another, table shows that general education teachers agreed that they are provided with ongoing training and in-service in order to prepare them to feel competent in teaching students with disabilities with weighted mean of 3.57, while special education teachers just fairly agreed on this matter with weighted mean of 3.29 this implies that special education teachers want more trainings for general education teachers. Lastly, general education teachers strongly agreed on their openness for correction and assistance coming from special education teachers with weighted mean of 4.29, while special education teachers just agreed on this matter with weighted mean of 3.86.

Talking about students with disabilities and special education services, regular education teachers and special education teachers agreed that students with disabilities actively participate in classroom activities with all their peers with weighted mean of 3.57 for regular education teachers and 4.41 for special education teachers. Also, they strongly agreed that inclusion improves social skills of students with disabilities with weighted mean of 4.36 for regular education teachers and 4.43 for special education teachers.

Likewise, they agreed that students who spend half of their school day or more in the resource room get their academic needs met adequately with weighted mean of 3.71 for regular education teachers and 3.93 for special education teachers. In addition, they strongly agreed that a continuum of services need to be provided in order to effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities with 4.36% weighted mean for regular education teachers and 4.57 weighted mean for special education teachers. More so, they agreed that students with disabilities benefit from being included in their general education classroom with weighted mean of 3.57 for regular education teachers and 4.14 for special education teachers.

Meanwhile, regular education teachers and special education teachers strongly disagreed that students with disabilities are not accepted by their peers with weighted mean of 1.29 for regular education teachers and 1.43 for special education teachers. Similarly, they just fairly disagreed that the special education classroom should only be used as a resource when the general education teacher cannot adequately meet the needs of the students with disabilities with weighted mean of 2.93 for regular and special education teachers. Correspondingly, they just fairly agreed that students with cognitive disabilities are able to actively participate in general education classroom learning activities with weighted mean of 3.07 for regular education teachers and 2.7 for special education teachers. Furthermore, they fairly agreed that students with learning disabilities are able to actively participate in general education classroom learning activities with weighted mean of 3.00 for general education teachers and 3.29 for special education teachers. Lastly, regular education teachers fairly agreed with weighted mean of 2.79 that although inclusion of students with disabilities is important, the necessary resources are not available in our school for it to succeed, while special education teachers disagreed on this matter with 2.5 weighted mean.

The difference between the attitudes of regular education and special education towards teacher training and cooperation had a low or slight relationship with *p-value* of 0.364145 and the null hypothesis failed to reject. The result is not significant at $p < 0.05$. This means that the attitudes of the two groups of respondents towards inclusive education relative to teacher training and cooperation are almost at the same level of agreement. Thus, the null hypothesis then failed to reject. Similarly, difference between the attitudes of regular education and special education towards students with disabilities and special education services had a low or slight relationship with *p-value* of 0.364005 and the null hypothesis failed to reject. The result is not significant at $p < 0.05$. This means that the attitudes of the two groups of respondents towards inclusive education relative to students with disabilities and special education services are almost at the same level of agreement. Thus, the null hypothesis was basically failed to reject.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

There was an equal number of respondents from general education teacher and special education teacher. Most of the general education teachers have 0-5 years of teaching experience, while special education teachers have four teachers with 6-10 teaching experience, four teachers with 11-15 teaching experience and four teachers with 16-20 years of teaching experience. Based on the results of this study, the majority of special education and regular education teachers have positive attitudes toward inclusion. Special education teachers also stated more than regular education teachers that the regular education teachers would be concerned about the

overall classroom performance by including special education students in the classrooms. The majority of teachers in this study agreed that students with disabilities actively participate in classroom learning activities. Both regular education and special education teachers agreed that students with emotional and/or behavioral disabilities, cognitive disabilities, and learning disabilities all participate in learning activities within the general education classroom.

However, the special education teachers agreed more than the regular education teachers that students with cognitive disabilities can actively participate in meaningful learning activities. Both regular education and special education teachers agreed that students with learning disabilities are the most involved in classroom learning activities. The regular education teachers Overall, the majority of participants felt that students with and without disabilities can benefit from inclusive classrooms and increase their social skills and form friendships with each other. Most of the study participants report that they felt there is administrative support to meet the needs of students in inclusive classrooms. The majority of teachers agreed that they are agreed significantly more than the special education teachers that students with disabilities have more behavior problems and need more assistance than the general education classroom can provide currently receiving enough ongoing training, in-services, or resources to feel comfortable teaching students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The majority of teachers in this study agreed that collaboration between special education teachers and regular education teachers is extremely important to help make inclusion successful. Many teachers also felt that more time is needed for staff to prepare and work together to plan curriculum and implement strategies to make inclusion successful. Finally, the participants in this study reported that they do believe inclusion can be successful with collaboration, a continuum of services, and when placement decisions are made based on individual student needs. There is no significant difference between the attitudes of receiving teachers in regular education and special education teachers toward inclusion (teacher training & cooperation / students with disabilities & special education services).

The following recommendations were drawn from the results and summary of the findings as follows: a) This research recommends additional collaboration and planning time be provided for special education, regular education teachers and other school staff members. This would allow teachers to work together to develop strategies and curriculum to meet the needs of students with and without disabilities in inclusive classrooms; b) The administration needs to increase support and provide ongoing staff development and in-services to help staff feel competent in teaching students with and without disabilities in inclusive classrooms; c) The administration should provide additional resources and support (materials, staffing, etc...) to special education and regular education teachers to build successful inclusive classrooms; d) Additional research studies should focus on

specific disabilities (emotional and/or behavioral disabilities, cognitive disabilities, severe cognitive disabilities, autism, and learning disabilities) and the effects of the different disabilities in inclusive classrooms; e) The result of this research must be submitted/reported properly and be the basis of conceptualizing enhancement training both for receiving teachers in regular education and special education teachers.

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