TEACHERS ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM.

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Joseph Randall G. Schuster, candidate for the degree of Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction, has presented a thesis titled, *Teachers’ Attitudes Towards Students with Special Needs and Their Inclusive Education Program*, in an oral examination held on April 26, 2013. The following committee members have found the thesis acceptable in form and content, and that the candidate demonstrated satisfactory knowledge of the subject material.

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Abstract

Our attitude impacts our daily lives and is reflected in our behaviour. This study examines teachers’ attitudes about aspects of inclusive education. Attitude towards the inclusive programs, towards students with special needs as well as towards the teachers’ additional responsibilities surrounding inclusive education were examined. Data were collected through a survey instrument using a six point Likert scale. The points were assessed a numerical value to allow the researcher to make calculations of attitude scores. The survey, which included demographic details and questions about attitudes, was administered to a teacher population in East Central Saskatchewan.

The data were analyzed to produce attitude scores of the teacher population toward various aspects of inclusive education. The analysis looked at correlations between demographic characteristics and attitude scores. The only demographic feature that was shown to correlate with teacher attitude was the teachers’ level of education. Overall, average attitude scores were slightly positive. The most positive attitude was towards inclusive programs followed by attitudes towards students with special needs and still positive but weaker were teacher attitudes toward their own responsibilities in regard to their involvement in inclusion.
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Finally, I would like to thank the area school boards and administrators for allowing me access to their schools and to their school personnel without whom, there would be no available localized data.
Dedication

First I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife Gayle for her understanding and support in her realizing the importance of this project to my professional growth.

To my girls, Emory and Lindsey, I want to extend words of love and appreciation for their encouragement and assistance in working with my special needs students and for their knowledgeable contribution to our program’s success.

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# Table of Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................................. i

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................ ii

Dedication .......................................................................................................................... iii

Table of Contents ........................................................................................................... iv

Chapter One – Introduction .......................................................... 1

  Purpose of the Study .................................................................................................. 4

  Definition of Terms .................................................................................................. 5

Chapter Two – Literature Review ..................................................... 7

  Teacher Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education .......................................................... 16

    Gender and age ..................................................................................................... 17

    Teaching experience ............................................................................................. 17

    Grades taught ....................................................................................................... 18

    Teaching in rural and urban settings .................................................................... 18

    Training and education ......................................................................................... 19

    Teachers’ self-assessed competence with inclusion .............................................. 21

  Teachers’ Attitudes concerning Some Professional Issues ....................................... 22

    Time commitment and responsibility .................................................................. 22

    Teacher expectations of students ......................................................................... 23

    Support for inclusion teachers .............................................................................. 24

    Emotional issues ................................................................................................... 26

Other Issues in Inclusion .............................................................................................. 28

Summary ......................................................................................................................... 28
Chapter Three – Method of Study .................................................................31

Development of the Survey .................................................................32

Survey structure..................................................................................33

Assigned values for survey purposes..............................................35

Survey Participants............................................................................38

Procedures .........................................................................................39

Analysis of Data..................................................................................39

Combined demographic features......................................................41

Chapter Four - Results .........................................................................45

Survey Structure..................................................................................46

Attitude Scores....................................................................................48

Demographic Features of Sample.......................................................49

Gender .................................................................................................50

Teaching experience............................................................................51

Grade level taught..............................................................................51

Urban and rural teachers.................................................................52

Additional training and education.....................................................53

Contact time with students with special needs...............................54

Self-rated competence in inclusion...................................................54

Analysis of Teacher Attitudes.............................................................55

Teacher attitudes about students with special needs.......................56

Teacher survey comments...............................................................57

Teacher attitudes toward the inclusive program...............................59
Teacher survey comments..................................................60
Teacher attitudes about added responsibility ....................... 62
Teacher survey comments..................................................63
Correlation of Responses within the Four Categories ..............66
Correlation Between Selected Pairs of Questions .................67
Summary ..............................................................................69
Chapter Five – Discussion and Recommendations .................72
Teacher Attitudes Overall.....................................................72
Demographic Effects on Teacher Attitudes .........................73
Teacher Attitudes Concerning Inclusion ..............................73
Teacher Attitudes Concerning Students with Special Needs ......74
Teacher Attitudes Concerning their Responsibilities ..............75
Teacher Concerns about Other Issues .................................78
Recommendations ...............................................................78
References .............................................................................83

APPENDICES

Appendix A - University of Regina Ethics Approval Letter ..........89
Appendix B - Letter to the Directors of Education ...................90
Appendix C - Letter to Staff Representative ..........................91
Appendix D - Survey .............................................................92
Appendix E - Covering Letter for the Survey ..........................97
## LIST OF TABLES:

3.1 – Questions about attitude toward students with special needs ... 36
3.2 - Questions measuring attitude about inclusive programs ..........37
3.3 - Questions measuring attitude about teacher responsibility .......38
3.4 - Teacher demographic categories........................................40
4.1 - Total Attitude scores ..........................................................48
4.2 - Teacher demographics and corresponding attitude scores ......50
4.3 - Teacher attitude about specific categories .........................55
4.4 - Teacher attitude scores about aspects of inclusion............57
4.5 - Teacher attitude scores about inclusive programs ............59
4.6 - Teacher attitude scores about added responsibilities ..........62
4.7 - Correlations between total attitude and the three variables .....66
Chapter One - Introduction

The doctors said she would never walk on her own or be able to carry on a normal conversation.

Well, they were the experts! What did I know about brain injuries anyway, I was just a phys-ed teacher? As her family watched her steady decline following the accident, they feared that she would not live long enough to graduate from high school. In desperation, they came to me.

I was sceptical about my knowledge but I told them I would try to help. The experts from the head-injury clinic who had evaluated her condition were politely supportive, but silently I am sure, had a chuckle over this well meaning, naïve phys. ed. teacher, who was trying to do what they and their million dollar machines termed “improbable”.

With minimal input from those experts, a great deal of soul-searching and a great amount of research, we started our three-year journey together.

She first came to me in a motorized wheelchair and a computerized communicator on which she typed out what she could not say. With a great deal of frustration we trudged forward inspired by the few successes that often seemed too few and too far between but were nonetheless, successes.

We learned a lot from each other in those few years. Three years later, she walked out of the gym, waved and said “thanks .. see ya”.

What had those doctors missed? Even after viewing the tapes of her workouts and reviewing her program, they could not see how her improvement was possible. How could she have improved through using only a string, a ball and a trampoline that their experts with all their expensive equipment could not predict? The answer to that question had eluded all of us; however, the success was undeniable.

The physical education program that I designed captured the attention of my Principal and the Director of Education. They asked if I would be interested in designing a similar program for other students.
with disabilities. “We would consider your efforts as part of your teaching load,” they said. I remember thinking that the opportunity would be a unique and challenging one so I agreed to their request.

I set to work identifying the variables and factors involved in running such a program. Throughout this initial planning phase, the success of my earlier program was always foremost in my mind. I tried to capture the essential elements of that earlier program and incorporate them into the present program.

If this type of program were offered to elementary school students with special needs, they would be more prepared for the program they would face when entering high school. I decided to target the elementary schools in the immediate vicinity to see if any teachers would be interested in implementing this type of program.

First, I needed to elicit the support of the Director, the Principals and the teachers in the elementary system. Contact was made with the principals to discuss the possible implementation of this new physical education program for students with special needs. With the prospect of having such a program in their school the school principals were very supportive. Some faculty members at the University of Regina were approached to use the implementation of this program as a basis for a Master of Education thesis, and they were supportive as well.

After consulting a number of teachers in the elementary school system and explaining my intent in designing such a program, their
responses seemed somewhat negative. While some teachers were thrilled at the prospect of running such a program, others felt that more time and money was being spent on lower achieving students compared to average students. My assumption that all members of the educational community would be happy about this endeavour appeared to be too optimistic.

I believed that even a well designed program had little chance of success if the people who run it did not fully support it. If I found that there was a prevalent negative attitude towards any aspect of special needs programs or students, then that attitude would need investigating before the program could be adequately designed.

Understanding and assessing this attitude was a priority if my program was to be successful. If there were a negative attitude, I needed to determine if it was directed towards any one aspect in particular and whether there were any commonalities among the people who held similar attitudes.

Hamill and Dever (1998) alluded to teachers’ attitudes and how those attitudes affected programs through their behaviour towards and expectations of students. These attitudes along with teachers’ expectations can have a great impact on students’ self-image as well as on their academic achievements. These expectations may surface as a result of attitudes. If we have a certain stereotypical image of Aboriginal students, or blond-haired students, or students with handicaps, then
this stereotype can influence our expectations of anyone who fits in that category. Alcock, Carment and Sadava (1998) and Tauber (1998) argue that if teachers expect a student to have behavioural problems, or to be disruptive, they may, through their initial impression, formulate an attitude that ensures this self-fulfilling prophecy will occur. If we expect the worst from someone, we may inadvertently increase the likelihood that the worst will happen.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education. With this purpose in mind, the following research questions were posed:

1) Were teachers’ attitudes positive or negative towards the inclusive education program and how strong were those attitudes?

2) Were teachers’ attitudes directed towards the students with special needs and how strong were those attitudes?

3) Were teachers’ attitudes formulated on their perceived added responsibilities in running an inclusive education program?

4) Were attitudes correlated to any of the teachers’ demographic characteristics, in particular: gender, years of teaching experience, and amount of education regarding inclusive education?
Definition of Terms

*Attitude* is defined as a manner of thinking or feeling (Readers Digest Webster’s Canadian Dictionary, 2005). Bunch, Lupart and Brown (1997) expanded this definition to state that *attitude* was also “... enduring and organizing structures of social beliefs that predispose individuals to think, feel, perceive, and behave selectively toward referents or ‘cognitive objects’ of attitude” (p. 5). This definition fits well with the discussion of expectations whose outward expression was a reflection of our pre-disposed conception of the subjects of our attitude. Peoples’ attitudes, therefore, are reflected in what they think, what they say or do not say. In short, attitudes are complex personal reflections of what individuals know or feel about a subject and that reflection may be projected through their behaviour towards that subject as well as through the label that is assigned to them.

*Special Education* refers to the programs and supports available to students with learning and behavioural difficulties and disabilities. Weber and Bennett (1999) described a range of classroom setups as models of special education:

- Regular class with direct service to students or teachers
- Regular class with indirect service to students or teachers
- Regular class with withdrawal assistance
- Part-time regular and separate self-contained class
- Fulltime separate self-contained class.
Bunch (2005) stated that in Canada a form of special education was developed in each province for learners with disabilities. He further explained that an approach to special education was established in all Canadian provinces and generally ran parallel to the regular education system. That is, the special education structures were not fully integrated within schools in the 1980s and early 1990s.

During the 1980s the call for a unified system of education that would serve all students began (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987; Stainback & Stainback, 1984; Will, 1985). In 1994, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) put forth the following definition of inclusive education in the *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action* (UNESCO, 1994)

> The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school. (p. 11-12)

The UNESCO (1994) statement is generally accepted as the definition of *inclusive education* and has been adopted in most countries.
Chapter Two – Literature Review

To realize the value of where we are going, it is advantageous to understand where we have been. What was done in the past in the name of special education has had a direct impact on the practices and procedures of today. The importance of understanding this premise was succinctly stated by Sanche and Dahl (as cited in Noonan, Hallman & Scharf, 2006) who argued that one of the most effective ways of judging the maturity of a society or an educational community is to study how it educates its most vulnerable citizens. This statement suggests that the way we educate students with special needs is to a certain extent, an indication of the maturity of our educational systems as well as society as a whole. This chapter discusses various aspects of that maturity along with the evolution of the special education programs from the exclusive, community based setting to the inclusive educational setting.

Educating people with disabilities and their inclusion in society dates back to the early 1800s (McLeskey & Landers, 2006; Bunch, 2005; Dahl & Haines, www.esask.uregina.ca retrieved 14/03/2011). Most scholars believed that Gaspard Itard’s work with Victor (the wild boy of Aveynon) in 1801, was the beginning of modern special education (see Lane, as cited in Cook & Schirmer, 2003). The principles Itard followed impacted the work of special educators in Europe and by the mid 1800s, those in North America as well.
Zigmond (2003) cited the 1819 court case of McColloch vs Maryland in which the court declared that the government should educate with as little imposition on the individual as possible. However, it was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that the courts interpreted the term little imposition to mean that children with disabilities should be educated in as much of a mainstream setting as possible.

Elizabeth Farrell took up the cause of special education in her New York City classroom. By 1908 her classroom procedures included such practices as individualized instruction, physical manipulation skills, sequencing of related tasks as well as stimulation of the child’s senses. Her writings, classroom procedures and practical experiences in this field of special education aided her greatly as the first president of the Council for Exceptional Children (Cook & Schirmen, 2003).

The years from 1900 to the 1950s were a period of segregation for the special students who the government declared had to be able to benefit from education. Any person who was termed mentally retarded had no services provided at home or at school, but were sent to a residential institution. Educational services for students who were deaf or blind followed a similar course. In 1905, as part of the North West Territories, Saskatchewan’s Commissioner of Education arranged for educational services for blind and deaf students to be provided outside of the Territories in residential schools in Manitoba and Brantford Ontario.
Students who were deaf were sent to Winnipeg until 1929. This policy changed when a school for the deaf was built in Saskatoon (Dahl & Haines, 2007).

Until 1948, only 12% of students with disabilities actually received special education services within the school (McLeskey & Landers, 2006). It was not until 1957 that the Government of Saskatchewan started the Guidance and Special Education Branch of the Department of Education (Sanche & Dahl, 2006).

In 1953 Samuel Kirk (as cited in Cook & Schirmer, 2003), wrote about children who were mentally handicapped. He described features that differentiated a special education program from general education program. Those features, including individualized instruction, careful timing and sequencing of tasks, and meticulous arrangements of the learning environment, were incorporated into the pedagogical philosophies of special education and continue today. Kirk was the first person to coin the phrase learning disabled during a speech in 1963 at a conference in Chicago, Illinois (Saskatchewan Education, 1998).

The civil rights movement of the 1960s and the wave of litigation that followed helped redefine some terms and procedures being used in the name of Special Education. In the early 1960s, legislation in Saskatchewan provided school boards with the ability to establish special classes and even special schools for students with disabilities. These separate schools were designed to meet the needs of students with
intellectual disabilities without placing them in institutions that had been common up to then (Encyclopaedia of Saskatchewan, 2005). Prior to this policy those children with intellectual disabilities from Saskatchewan were sent to a long term facility which had been established in Moose Jaw (Sanche & Dahl, 2006). Legislation allowed school boards to either establish special classes and/or schools for students with disabilities or to send them to the special school in Moose Jaw.

The 1968 report from Emmett Hall, Supreme Court Justice from Saskatchewan, called for the appropriate education for all students. Further, with the emphasis on the rights of persons with disabilities to receive an equal and quality education, disabled students remained in the regular classrooms (Encyclopaedia of Saskatchewan, 2005).

The notion of keeping students in the same community instead of sending them away was the forerunner to the changes that were to come in the 1970s and 1980s over the issue of educating students with special needs. About this time in the United States, the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 further expanded some of the terms being used. In 1990, that Act was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and specifically expanded the idea of educating the special needs student with as little imposition to them as possible. This expression was later changed to educating students with special needs in the least restrictive environment (Artilles, 2003;
Zigmond, 2003), but in many cases a least restrictive environment may have meant that those students were educated in a separate classroom.

The trend of removing students with handicaps to be educated in a segregated classroom continued until the 1980s, even though this practice had been questioned for over 70 years (Williamson, McLeskey, Hoppey & Rentz, 2006). Many felt that permanent exclusion or segregation of children in a school setting may only prepare them for further isolation in adult life (S.E.R.C., 2000). While segregation appeared to be a good idea at the time, opinions began to change with more research into its effects. Rural Saskatchewan schools, in particular those with a sparse population, could not afford separate facilities or classes. In order to educate all students, these school boards were forced to keep all students within the existing classrooms along with the regular teacher because of limited resources. With this philosophy, inclusion began in rural Saskatchewan as early as the 1960s (Sanche & Dahl, 2006).

Keeping special needs students in the regular classroom was supported by Lloyd Dunn (1968). He questioned whether placing students in a separate classroom provided the best educational environment for them. He wrote a number of articles calling for an end to segregation and the establishment of a more inclusive approach to education (Kavale & Forness, 2000). This inclusive education approach was designed to help eliminate some of the students’ isolation as well as
to allow them to feel they played a greater role within the normal classroom. His opinion was further supported by Sheryle Dixon (2005) who stated that students with special needs should be integrated into the general education classroom so they could feel more a part of the overall educational process along side of the typical students.

During the 1970s there was growing awareness that students with special needs could benefit from a wider spectrum of educational programs. The cascade model suggested a variety of special settings. A teacher could choose from complete to partial inclusion for which a student had to qualify for a particular setting (Dahl & Haines, 2007). To qualify for a special needs service, the child must be found to have one of the 13 special education categories and must show that their special need had an adverse impact on their educational performance (Understanding the 13 categories of Sp.Ed. www.understandingspecialeducation.com. Retrieved 14/03/2011)

The Saskatchewan government established a new policy in 1971 outlining procedures for the education of students with special needs (Sanche & Dahl, 2006; Dahl & Haines. www.esask,uregina,ca. Retrieved 14/03/2011). With this legislation in place, the number of student with special needs rose from 1,711 in 1961 being educated by 125 trained teachers, to 5,493 students with 341 trained teachers in 1970 (Sanche & Dahl, 2006). The 1971 United Nations Report on Standards for Education of Exceptional Children supported by new research became
the basis for Saskatchewan to be the first province in Canada to have mandatory special education courses for all pre-service teachers (Sanche & Dahl, as cited in Noonan et al, 2006). Sanche and Dahl reported an increase in the number of special education classes from 329 in 1978 to 1092 in 1989. A total of 155,000 children between 5 and 14 years of age - 4% of all children in Canada - had some form of disability in 2001. Of all those children 2.6% were in Saskatchewan and had mild to moderate disabilities while 1.49% had severe disabilities (Dafna, 2006).

These authors further reported that the 1971 passage of legislation received enthusiastic support from such notable persons as Dr. John McLeod from the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon; as well as Wolf Wolfensberger from York University in Toronto. Lloyd Dunn along with the University of Saskatchewan’s Samuel Laycock published many articles discussing the importance of appropriate education of students with special needs.

In 1972 the Council for Exceptional Children in Canada commissioned a Saskatchewan group to devise a model of special education legislation for all of Canada. The group outlined 33 principles that governments should follow when establishing special education policy. These principles impacted policy decisions throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Special Education consultants, social workers and counsellors became an integral part of program planning and assessment (Dahl &
Haines, 2007). Legislation had to be updated so the government of the United States introduced the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990, which became the cornerstone for inclusion and educational policy (Kavale & Forness, 2000).

With the increasing amount of research in the field of special education, an increasing number of papers reviewing the history of special education appeared. McLeskey (2006) pointed to Wiederholt (1974), Kauffman (1987), Friend (1988), Reynolds, 1989), Shapiro (1993) and Winzer (1993) for their influential writings. These writers also alluded to the relationship between the special education movement and the civil rights movement and its impact on special education practices and policies (McLesky & Landers, 2006).

Historically, the medical model was used to define the special needs of students based on a diagnosed medical condition. In 2007, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education redesigned guidelines for identification and programming for students with special needs based on their individual needs rather than on their assessed condition. By 2008 there were 6,742 students with special needs receiving supplementary services which represented 4.2% of the total student population. There were two assessed levels that students were placed in depending on the level of support or assistance they required. Level I had 47% of the total students with special needs while level II, which required greater
support, had 68% of this total population and some students being classified in both categories (Saskatchewan Education Indicators, 2008).

Reviewing our historical roots can remind us of the importance public policy has played in the development of the quality of services that have been provided for students with special needs over the years (Sanche & Dahl, 2006). From segregated classrooms to integrated classrooms from exclusive education to inclusive education, educational philosophy has come a long way towards the acceptance of all who live in our society regardless of their abilities. Therefore, it is important to understand the impact public policy has had on special education programs. It has also been argued that the success or failure of programs is may be related to the attitude of the classroom teacher (Kavale & Forness, 2000; Stanovich & Jordan, 2002). Ascertaining teacher’s attitudes therefore, is of vital importance.

Attitude may be defined as the way we think or feel which may predispose us to behave in a specific manner towards the subject of our thoughts (Bunch, Lupart & Brown, 1997; Gage, 1984). It is this predisposition that is of primary interest in my study. This predisposition establishes an attitude towards the subject. The subsequent behaviour is the outward expression of that attitude.

Behaviour is one of the visible indicators that an attitude may exist.

The Longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say
or do. It is, more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company ... a church ... a home ... (a school). The remarkable thing is, we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We can not change the past ... we can not change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you ... we are in charge of our own attitudes. 

Swindoll (ND)

As Swindoll suggests, we are all in control of our attitudes that influence our behaviour towards others but do not predispose us to act a certain way. In a similar manner, a teacher having a negative attitude towards students does not mean the teacher will necessarily act negatively towards them (Safran, 1998). How teachers respond depends on how their attitudes are manifested in their behaviour. It is therefore, attitude that is the focus of this thesis.

Teacher Attitudes toward Inclusive Education

The following summary of research on teacher attitudes is reported in the categories of: (a) demographic factors such as age, gender, and location; (b) teaching experience; (c) grades taught; (d) teachers in urban or rural settings; (e) training; (f) self-assessed competence; (g) commitment and responsibility requirements, (h) expectations of students; (i) supports; and (j) emotional issues.
Gender and age.

The Saskatchewan teacher population in 2003-2004 was 34% male and 66% female (Saskatchewan Education, 2006). By 2007-2008, 70% of teachers were female; however, none of this literature revealed any correlation between teacher attitude towards inclusive education and the teacher gender. Smith’s (2000) American study of 140 regular classroom teachers along with 6 special education teachers, found that the 20 to 30 year olds and the 51+ age groups were more accepting of inclusion than teachers in the 31 to 40 yr old group.

Leyer and Tappendorf (2001) found similar results indicating those in their earlier years of teaching along with those in their later years had a greater appreciation of inclusion than those in their middle years of service. This appreciation may be due to a greater exposure to inclusive educational philosophy during the younger teacher’s university years which may have lead to a greater appreciation for inclusion. The older teachers may have had years of experiences within an inclusive setting and therefore appreciate the inclusive environment.

Teaching experience.

In 2005, Canadian teachers had an average of 11 years of teaching experience with the largest percentage having 20+ years of service. At the same time Saskatchewan teachers had an average of 14 years experience (Government of Saskatchewan, 2005-2006). By 2008, 20% of the Saskatchewan teachers had over 25 years experience while 53% had
less than 15 years with an overall average of 14.7 years experience (Saskatchewan Education Indicators, 2008). Being an older and more experienced teaching staff could have an impact on attitudes towards inclusion. Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) found that no other variable was more closely related to attitude than total years of experience. General education teachers viewed their own inexperience in inclusion as a greater concern to them than either administrative support and resources or curricular support (Titone, 2005).

**Grades taught.**

Vaughn, Reiss, Rothlein and Hughes (1999) found that elementary school teachers, whose attitude towards inclusion was relatively positive, believed that they were more knowledgeable about inclusion and more willing to make adaptations to their instruction than were their high-school counterparts. This difference may be due to the elementary programs being less content and more process oriented, which may make them easier to modify. The ease of modification would be an appealing feature for many educators and may explain some of the more positive attitudes in the elementary system.

**Teaching in rural and urban settings.**

The difference in structure between rural and urban settings may be due to smaller class sizes in the rural divisions. In rural areas schools average eight students per class; whereas, urban schools average 25 students per class (Sask. Educ. Indic, 2008). These differences may
account for more variation in instructional practices because smaller class sizes allow teachers more time to attend to each student. The Saskatchewan Education Indicators Report (2008) indicated that 59% of Saskatchewan teachers were working in a rural setting. By having more time to work with the students in the rural schools teachers likely were more comfortable with students with special needs and their programs. This comfort could have been reflected in a more positive attitude towards inclusive education.

**Training and education**

By the early 1990s there were still few teacher training programs in Canadian Universities that focused on educational practices required for any inclusive educational environment (Winzer, 1998; Stanovich & Jordan, 2002). Smith and Smith (2000) found that teachers thought that their undergraduate training did nothing to prepare them for inclusion. Teachers received the bulk of their training through in-service provided by their school divisions (Kavale & Forness, 2000). Teachers needed to receive adequate training in order to develop a comfort level when dealing with the variety of students as well as develop an ability to make required adaptations to the curriculum (Stanovich & Jordan, 2002). Short and Martin (2005) agreed by arguing that the need for in-service education and training was exacerbated by wider variety of students entering the inclusive environment.
Of the teaching population in Canada in 2005, 63% had Bachelor degrees and a further 23% had higher degrees (Lin, 2006). By 2007, 62% of teachers in Saskatchewan had Bachelor degrees along with 37% having higher degrees (Sask. Educ. Indic, 2008). In the 2007-2008 school year there were 952 special education teachers or 9% of the total teaching force (Sask. Educ. Indic, 2008).

In other studies the most negative attitudes were found among teachers with the least amount of special education and experience (Van Reusen & Shoho, 2000). However, many teachers believed their own training/education was not sufficient to aid in their handling of students with special needs (Kavale & Forness, 2000; Titone, 2005).

The University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan require one compulsory course in inclusive education for all elementary teachers seeking their Bachelor of Education degree (www.uregina.ca/gencal, 2013). The University of Regina also introduced the Certificate of Extended Studies in Inclusive Education in special education in 2004. This program is an after degree, 10 course certificate that provides teachers with the special education qualifications as outlined by the Ministry of Education. This certificate may fill the niche that Van Reusen and Shoho’s northern United States study (2000) detected, where 54% of their sample reported having very little or no special education training or classroom experience in teaching or working with students with disabilities.
Criswell et al (1993), as well as, Leyser and Lappendorf (2001) found that special education teachers held the most positive attitudes towards students with special needs and/or inclusion. The authors stated that the most negative attitudes were demonstrated by some regular classroom teachers and vocational teachers.

As teachers’ ability to work with special needs students increased, the number of programs increased along with the number of students enrolled in those programs. Teachers’ confidence in their abilities to handle students and their special programs was reflected in their positive attitude (Bunch, et al, 1997). However, in spite of their positive attitude towards inclusion, some teachers still felt unprepared and lacked sufficient confidence in their ability to work with special students (Titone, 2005).

**Teachers self-assessed competence with inclusion.**

Leyser and Tappendorf (2001), Smith (2000) and Van Reusen, and Shoho (2000) found a significant positive relationship between teachers’ attitudes and how competent teachers felt in their ability to teach students with disabilities. When teachers of students with special needs felt more competent in their teaching, they were more supportive of inclusion than were the regular classroom teachers. Regular classroom teachers on the other hand did not have the instructional skills or educational background to teach students with special needs. The regular teachers, who lacked adequate skills, preferred to send students
with special needs to a special education classroom rather than attempting to include them in their regular classroom activities (Monahan, Marina & Miller, 1996; Odom, 2000).

**Teachers’ Attitudes concerning Some Professional Issues**

**Time commitment and responsibility.**

Naylor (2002) reporting on a study of teacher viewpoints stated that some teachers thought that time spent with students with special needs detracted from the time spent with regular students. He found some teachers thought this loss of attention for the regular students was especially true in inclusive classrooms where there were a higher percentage of students with special needs. Approximately 65% of teachers surveyed by Naylor (2002) in his Canadian study, as well as Short and Martin (2005) in their mid-west American study believed in the concept of inclusion; however, those teachers still had some concerns.

One such concern was the amount of time teachers spent with special needs students. Teachers claimed that students with special needs who appeared to improve within the inclusive classroom may do so because they receive more of the teachers’ time. Teachers reported the viewpoint that this additional time is not only for academic subjects, but also for discipline to enforce desirable behaviour (Naylor, 2002). They further reported that increased time with special needs students takes away from the time a teacher can spend with regular students which
may affect their development (Cook, 2000; Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001; Naylor, 2002). Another concern with the implementation of inclusion was the additional time teachers needed for collaboration with other professionals associated with special needs (Monahan, et al, 1996; Dixon, 2005). This extra time requirement, while being necessary, placed additional strain on teachers’ preparation time by reducing the time available to prepare for regular students in their inclusive classrooms (Milsom, 2006). However, teachers with a more positive attitude actually welcomed more inclusive schools (Naylor, 2002).

**Teacher expectations of students.**

While general support for inclusion is important, Fast (2001), in his Saskatchewan study, suggested that 57% of the public believed that teacher expectations were the most important factor in defining the level of success of students with special needs. Bunch (1997) also stated that teachers may even influence their own expectations by seeing special needs students as contributing to their own problem. Some teachers expected the special needs student to reach a similar level of academic competence as a regular student. This approach may have made the academic goal unattainable for students with special needs. Conversely, it may be argued that exceeding expectations may impede student progress.
Prom (1999) argues that if teachers expectations of the quality of work from students with special needs were similar to the regular students then, attaining this quality would be difficult and likely impossible because students with special needs were not capable of higher quality work (Hammill & Dever, 1998; Smith, 2000, Sp. Ed. Rev. Comm., 2000).

Current literature highlights the need to identify goals and objectives that are appropriate to the needs and abilities of individual students. To that end, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education outlines requirements for Personal Program Plans in the Intensive Needs Pupil Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2008).

**Support for inclusion teachers.**

Since classroom instruction needed to be flexible enough to meet the needs of some students, the regular classroom teacher tended to resist including students with disabilities because of the increased time commitment required and the lack of in-class supports (Heflin & Bullock, 1999). Additional resources that would be needed to assure that student with special needs would receive a program appropriate to their ability level was not easily attainable (Lupart, 1998). Lack of resources could be one explanation for the slower progress of students with special needs along with teachers’ lower expectation. These expectations may be the result of inadequate support given to regular teachers to help them maintain a quality inclusive environment (Hammill & Dever, 1998; Van
Reusen & Shoho, 2000). Some teachers state that students are located in regular classrooms without the supports needed to help the special students experience success or benefit from that classroom experience. The result may be student failure or develop into a discipline problem and subsequently a student is removed from class (Sp. Ed. Rev. Comm., 2000).

Naylor (2002) reports that 72% of teachers thought that school administrations needed to develop a better system of support for teachers. Training and consultation with other personnel who deal with the students with special needs should be a common and continual practice (Bostelman, 1993; Strong & Sandoval, 1999). However, most teachers in this study were reluctant to solicit help for fear that it will be misinterpreted as an admission of inadequacy rather than as professional foresight (Tauber, 1998).

Collaboration was an important process for teachers because it helped alleviate some of the feelings of being under trained (Dixon, 2005). Collaboration was not only to help train teachers but to improve their sense of competence as well as improve their attitude towards inclusion (Stanovich & Jordan, 2002). Naylor’s (2002) survey indicated that when evaluating the types of support teachers valued, 74% wanted reduced class sizes; 53% wanted a trained assistant in the classroom; 27% wanted control over the number of students with special needs in their inclusive classrooms. Sanche and Dahl (2006) found that collaboration
was the number one support teachers wanted, followed by training in modifying the curriculum with emotional support coming third. Collaboration was best used in assisting a teacher to make modifications or adaptations to the existing curriculum (Stanovich & Jordan, 2002). The adaptations a teacher felt compelled to make were in an attempt to create a classroom that had the least restrictions to any student’s learning and where the needs of all students could be met (Hamill & Dever, 1998; Sp. Ed. Rev. Comm., 2000).

By 2008, supports for the inclusive teacher appeared to be on the rise. Special Educator numbers rose to 952, teacher assistant numbers rose to 3,603, speech language pathologists at 98, as well as, counsellors at 135. There were additional assistants put in place which may have an impact on the comfort level teachers feel in handling many issues in the inclusive environment (Sask. Educ. Indic., 2008).

**Emotional Issues.**

One teacher stated that she just wanted to teach but was also expected to be a parent, a nurse and on occasion a social worker to their students. Other teachers felt there was little time left in their day to teach once the social, health, and justice issues were taken care of (SIDRU, 2000). It disturbs some teachers to think of the amount of class time they lose in dealing with non-educational issues.

Placing teachers into inclusive classrooms who were not comfortable there may have resulted in another reason for negative
attitudes towards inclusion. One teacher stated that if they had wanted to teach special education, they would have taken the required courses (Naylor, 2002).

One concern of the under trained or uncomfortable teacher was that the extra resources required for students with special needs, as well as for themselves, were not immediately forthcoming. This lack of resources placed extra pressure on teachers to teach students they did not feel fully prepared to teach and thus concerned with meeting the needs of those students (Heflin & Bullock, 1999; Smith & Smith, 2000).

Hamill and Dever (1998) believed that teachers’ success as professionals was closely linked with their feelings of empowerment and control over their own educational environment. Some teachers felt that they were losing the battle over the ability to schedule their own time within the classroom. This loss of control of time was due in part, to the belief that more students with special needs were being sent into the regular classroom with more diverse problems than ever before (Stanovich & Jordan, 2002). Without adequate support there was just too much drain on teachers’ emotional health. Too many students in classes, unremitting criticism and unrealistic expectations from the community (SIDRU, 2001) combined with the lack of proper in-service and inappropriate adaptations to the curriculum along with inadequate material (Naylor, 2002), all reduced the emotional resources of teachers.
Other Issues in Inclusion

In addition to the above, teachers in Saskatchewan noted additional complexities such as: (1) aspirations of Saskatchewan’s aboriginal people and asserting their rights for equity and culturally appropriate education; (2) education of new Canadians who come as refugees and immigrants requiring staff to function in an EAL type environment; (3) poverty and the impact on children (Sanche & Dahl, 2006; Milsom, 2006). Dealing with these issues on a daily basis depleted teacher’s emotional reserve which was required for better classroom instruction.

SchoolPLUS, the Saskatchewan Learning directive (2002), attempted to address some teacher concerns by identifying support such as counsellors and social workers to help establish a more appropriate level of assistance. Having a well qualified counsellor at immediate disposal, would have eased the load on the classroom teacher and in turn helped stabilize the teachers emotional reserves (SIDRU, 2000).

Summary

In moving from segregation of the 1900s to inclusive education of the 1990’s, the education of students with special needs has been a long and a slow journey. Within the battle to realize that students who were different could still be productive citizens were some minor battles around need versus attitude; as well as will versus stubbornness; and perseverance versus bias. However, as doors opened and programs
changed, the mixing of all levels of students and their abilities produced an educational system that better reflected the surrounding society.

All students need special attention on occasion. All students’ need modifications to instruction at times in order to be sure they fully comprehend the materials they are being taught. While it is true that some students need more time to understand content, it is better to increase available resources that it is to eliminate the number of students that require them.

Most teachers believed inclusion was a good philosophical direction for education; however, they did not feel there were adequate supports to ensure this program’s success. There was ever increasing pressure on the teachers to compensate for this lack of support.

Some increasingly complex issues in education along with their subsequent pressure on teachers came from some minority groups within our society as well as new immigrants coupled with the ever increasing poverty issue and its effects on students. The integration of community resources into the school may have helped alleviate some of this additional pressure on teachers. The inception of SchoolPLUS, was the governments blue print for their direction in addressing some of these new realities.

Critics claimed that full inclusion, if mandated, may spur the privatization of education resulting in an exodus of regular students into the private schools, leaving the public schools to the students with
disabilities (Heflin & Bullock, 1999). In 2008, independent schools had 2673 students’ enrolled or 1% of the total student population (Sask. Educ. Indic., 2008) down slightly from 1.3% in 2001 (The Daily, 2001). It would appear that over that period of time, the inclusive education program was strong enough to maintain its’ public appeal and did not lose ground to the independent schools.
Chapter Three – Method of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers’ attitudes towards various aspects of inclusive education. The intent was not to generalize the results to the rest of the province, only to understand the attitude of teachers in an East Central area of Saskatchewan. I wanted to determine if the attitude that existed was directed towards the students with special needs or towards the inclusive programs or towards the added responsibilities a teacher felt when having to run an inclusive program.

I wanted sufficient quantitative information so I could determine which of the many demographic factors had the best overall attitude. I also wanted to determine which demographic factor correlated the highest to the overall attitude. The only way, I believed that I could retrieve the quantity and specificity of data was in the quantitative data from a survey.

Further with the amount of specific information I was seeking, the timeline would be restrictive if I were to collect qualitative data from methods such as interviews or study groups. The mathematical calculations would be more significant if attained through the quantitative data from a survey.

I believed that my knowledge of the participants as well as the environments and programs in which the study was conducted would be
an asset in interpreting the responses to those survey questions dealing with working conditions and programs.

Once approval was attained from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Regina (see Appendix A) the next undertaking was to seek consent and support from the Directors of Education within the proposed study area. The study area originally consisted of three school divisions. In 2004 the two public divisions amalgamated to form one division. However, contact was originally made with the Director of the public school system as well as the Director of the Catholic school system through a formal letter (see Appendix B) requesting their permission to conduct this study in their division. When their approval was attained, contact was made with the principals in each school in the divisions to advise them of the study and of the Directors’ support. The requests sent to each Principal was to seek their permission to allow a teacher in their respective school to act as a distributor/collector of this study’s survey. Through negotiations with principals and staff, one person from each school was identified to fulfill the role of distributor. After confirmation, a formal letter (see Appendix C) was sent to those representatives with an outline of their responsibilities.

**Development of the Survey**

With the assistance of colleagues the first draft of the survey was completed. To examine accuracy and reliability of this instrument, a pilot group of ten teachers was assembled. Group members were from
different schools and taught in a range of grade levels. This group reviewed the survey and offered their suggestions which were incorporated into the second draft.

From the outset of the survey’s design, one main concern was whether the reader would interpret the intent of the question in the manner in which it was designed. Individual members of the pilot group were interviewed and asked what they thought was the intent of each question. If their interpretation was different than I intended, they were asked to reword the questions to reflect the desired intent. The final draft of the survey was constructed to eliminate as many of the wording inconsistencies as possible. This draft was then sent to a different pilot group of eight teachers. A similar process of interviews to determine understanding of intent was carried out with this group as well. With the completion of this third pilot, changes were made to the survey and the final version was completed (see Appendix D).

**Survey structure.**

The structure was designed to investigate teachers’ attitudes and to determine if those attitudes were associated with any teacher demographic variable. The decision on the survey structure was based more on my thirty years of teaching experience and the overall discussions with the pilot groups than on the literature research.

Identifying the variables was the objective of the first section of the survey. Identifying gender and levels of education were the focus of the
first two questions. It was hypothesized that the more advanced a teacher’s education, the more positive the impact on that teacher’s attitude towards inclusive education. Participants were asked if they attained university education beyond their first degree. Next, participants were to indicate where and for how long they had taught and at which grade levels. They were asked if they had any contact with students with special needs and whether that contact was in an inclusive or a separated classroom. Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of items, which items would the best assistance to them when teaching students with special needs. The last question in that section was for each teacher to indicate the length of contact time he/she had with students with special needs, compared to other teachers in their school. It was hypothesized that extended contact time with students with special needs would correlate positively with teachers’ attitudes.

The second section of the survey provided a number of questions designed to elicit teachers’ opinions. In response to each question, the participant was asked to circle one of the following choices:

SA (strongly agree), GA (generally agree), PA (partially agree),
PD (partially disagree), GD (generally disagree), SD (strongly disagree).

There were some positively worded and some negatively worded questions in an attempt to require respondents to think carefully about their responses. In the design of my survey I was attempting to cause respondents to think about their responses rather than mark items the
same, as described by Charles (1998). Each question required the respondent to decide whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement and to what extent.

The final section of my survey contained two open-ended questions in an attempt to allow each respondent to make additional statements and provide more open-ended responses.

**Assigned values for survey responses.**

After surveys were collected, responses were assigned the following values: SA = 6, GA = 5, PA = 4, PD = 3, GD = 2 and SD = 1. These choices were similar to the Canadian study conducted by Bunch et al (1997). The numbers assigned to the responses were intended to ascertain the degree of positive response. The values for the responses were chosen to allow for mathematical calculations and were not intended as linear values. Each participant’s total score on all questions was calculated (to a maximum of 126) where the higher score would indicate a more positive total attitude.

Questions pertaining to the three different areas under investigation were distributed throughout the survey. This structure was chosen so participants would not develop a certain mind-set due to answering several questions in succession on the same topic.
Table 3-1 Questions measuring attitudes about students with special needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Abridged Question content:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Inclusion can raise classroom standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>have minor discipline and attendance problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Inclusion is disruptive to the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Number of special needs students is increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22e</td>
<td>Increasing due to more problems in students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1 shows the survey questions assigned to measure teachers’ attitude towards students with special needs. Questions 18, 22 and 22e were designed to reflect the teacher’s attitude towards the assessment process used in placing students with special needs into a special program. Teachers were further asked to state their opinions as to whether students with special needs could raise standards within the classroom. The maximum positive attitude score for this section was 30 (5 questions X 6 points each).

Table 3.2 outlines the questions designed to measure teacher’s attitude towards an inclusive program. These questions could elicit a maximum positive score of 72 (12 questions at 6 points each). Question 14 asked teachers if students’ with special needs would receive a better education in a segregated classroom and questions 17c and 17e asked who should be responsible for the modifying the programs within that classroom? Teachers were also asked in question 22a to comment on the effectiveness of student assessment prior to a student being placed in the
special needs category. Questions 13 and 26 were designed to elicit the
degree of agreement teachers had on whether inclusion was a positive or
negative program.

The questions in Table 3.3 were designed to examine teacher
attitudes towards their additional responsibilities when preparing for the
various aspects of special education. Teachers were asked through
questions 21 and 25, if reducing class sizes and having an educational
assistant present, would help alleviate some their additional
responsibilities in the inclusive classroom? Question 15 asked if the
classroom teacher had the main responsibilities in the inclusive
classroom. The questions about teacher responsibilities had a maximum
positive score of 30 (5 questions X 6 points each).
The final section of the survey contained two open-ended questions. One question asked teachers to identify some main challenges faced when teaching students with special needs. The second question asked teachers to provide any additional comments about working with students with special needs, or within a special education program, or comment on any of the questions in the survey. The purpose of these questions was to give participants an opportunity to make additional comments, including their thoughts on whether the response choices were inadequate. These open-ended questions also provided a chance to comment on the survey instrument, the wording of the questions as well as their perceived intent in general.

**Survey participants.**

The population surveyed was 258 teachers who were teaching in 14, K - 8 schools and 2 secondary schools (grades nine to twelve) in the survey area. Six schools were located in small towns with the student population mainly from rural areas, while ten were urban schools. Of the 16 schools, 11 were in the Public School Divisions and 5 were within the Catholic School Division.
**Procedures**

Once the structure of the survey had been completed (see Appendix D) copies were sent to each school representative, in the fall of 2002, along with a covering letter (see Appendix E). This letter stated that staff participation was completely voluntary. Once the surveys were returned to the staff representative he/she removed the covering letter from the surveys and placed them in the collection envelope provided. After one week had elapsed, a reminder was sent to all schools to complete their surveys and return them to their staff representative. By the end of the second week, all completed surveys had been returned to a central collection person, who removed them from their envelopes and placed them together. All surveys were received together so no connection could be made to the participant or their school. Of the 258 surveys distributed, 110 were returned for a return percentage of 43%.

**Analysis of Data**

The statistics on the demographics of the sample were calculated to identify possible relationships between a specific demographic feature as outlined in Table 3.4 and attitude scores. The teachers completing the survey were regular classroom teachers with students with special needs within their class.
Table: 3.4 - Teacher demographic categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Question numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gender:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Males</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Females</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 1 to 9 years</td>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 10 to 19 years</td>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 20+ years</td>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Grade Levels taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. K to grade 8</td>
<td>#5a,b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Grades 9 to 12</td>
<td>#5c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Where they taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Urban</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Rural</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. With added training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. without training</td>
<td>#6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. with education</td>
<td>#6d,e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. without education</td>
<td>#6a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Contact with special needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Average to above average</td>
<td>#9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Below average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Indiv. Competence in ..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. most situations</td>
<td>#27a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. some situations</td>
<td>#27b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. few situations</td>
<td>#27c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores for each section were attained from the responses to the questions as noted by the right side “question number” column.

The total number of males and females from question #2 were calculated first. The number of teachers with teaching experience ranging from 1 to 9 years, 10 to 19 years and 20+ years were calculated
next by totalling questions #3 and #4. These questions also indicated if the teacher’s experiences were in the city or rural environments. Questions #5a and #5b indicated the grade levels the teacher taught. The exposure to students with special needs in an inclusive classroom was indicated by the responses to question #5e and the exposure to them in a separate classroom was indicated by the responses for question #5d. Question #6 revealed the number of teachers who had additional training as well as the type of training that may have assisted them in teaching students with special needs.

The total attitude scores were calculated next by adding all of the responses in the second section of the survey and showing the number of participants in each category as indicated in Table 4.1 on page 48.

The next step was to consider the attitude scores of each demographic group as indicated in Chapter 4, Table 4.2 on page 50. Once the attitudes were calculated for each demographic group, a frequency table was generated. The purpose of this procedure was to attempt to identify any outstanding demographic group as indicated by a substantially higher or lower attitude score.

**Combined demographic features**

Demographic features were combined to see if their combined scores produced any group that stood out from the rest. The total attitude scores of all males with 1 to 9 years experience, then 10 to 19
years and finally 20 to 35 years of experience were calculated. The same calculations were done for the female respondents.

Next, the attitudes of males who belonged in each demographic category were calculated. Those who had additional education, mostly city or rural teaching experience, inclusive classroom experiences, experiences in the separate special education classroom, those who ranked their contacts with students with special needs in the categories provided, and finally the total scores from each of the competencies categories are tabulated as most, some or few situations. The same categories were then calculated for the female attitude scores.

Teachers’ attitudes towards the students with special needs within the designated programs were assessed next. There were five questions used to evaluate this attitude as outlined in table 3.1.

Next, the attitudinal scores of each demographic group towards inclusive programs were calculated. As previously described in Table 3.2, there were 12 questions used to evaluate this attitude. The demographic groupings noted above were used in this calculation as well.

Finally, teachers’ attitudes towards their responsibilities in running an inclusive program and in dealing with the students with special needs were calculated. As noted in Table 3.3, the responses to 5 questions were used to identify this attitude.
For the last three computations, the mean and standard deviation were calculated to see if these measures revealed any outstanding or dominant group.

Teachers’ contact time with students with special needs was evaluated to determine if this factor had any impact on the teachers’ attitude. The attitude scores of teachers’ who rated their contact as below average, average or above average were calculated. A comparison was made between the teacher’s responses to their contact time in question #9 and their rated competence in question #27.

Relationships among the variables were examined next. Did teaching experience correlate with attitude? As their experience increased, was there an attitude change and if so, what direction did it take and was that change significant? The attitudes of teachers in each of the three experience categories were examined to see if they were related and if that relationship was significant.

The relationship between years of teaching combined with additional training and total attitude scores were examined next. First the attitudes of teachers with additional training having one to nine years of experience next those with ten to nineteen years and finally those with twenty or more years were calculated to see if there was a correlation with attitude.

The final set of calculations was to determine if teachers’ overall attitude was related to either their attitude about inclusive programs,
and/or students with special needs and/or their responsibilities for the running and the teaching of these programs.

The final analysis was the examination of the responses to the two open-ended questions at the end of the survey which stated:

33) Identify some of the main challenges faced when teaching students with special needs!
34) Please provide any additional comments about working with students with special needs or special education programs or comment on any of the questions asked.

These statements were examined to see if any themes emerged and what teachers’ perceive to be any challenges to teaching students with special needs.
Chapter Four - Results

Eyes through ears
Can see the light,
Like ears through eyes
That hear the sight.
Joseph Randall George Schuster.

A disability may not be as disabling as another person’s view of it. When considering a disability, what we see may be less disabling than our perception of it and our subsequent behaviour towards it. This perception is reflected in attitudes and behaviours towards those with the perceived disability. Imagine what perceptions haunted Thomas Edison when his teachers thought that he was “too stupid to learn anything”; or Albert Einstein, who was thought to be a dull child by both his parents and teachers; or Agatha Christie who was labelled as dumb because she had difficulty writing and spelling (Saskatchewan Education, 1998). While these individuals went on to have successful and productive lives, they accomplished that their feats in spite of their label. How many other labelled individuals did not?

The purpose of this study was to investigate teacher attitudes towards various aspects of inclusive education. Some questions were posed to determine if that attitude was related to any of the following demographic factors: gender; teaching experience; grade level taught; location of the experience (rural or urban); training and education; contact with students with special needs in an inclusive classroom as
well as teachers’ perception of their own competencies in teaching and managing inclusive education.

**Survey Structure**

In an attempt to determine attitude, 258 surveys were distributed to teachers in fourteen elementary and two secondary schools in three school divisions in east central Saskatchewan in 2002. Two of those divisions have since amalgamated so presently there are only two divisions in the surveyed area. There were 110 surveys returned, for a return of 43%. A review of the literature revealed an average return rate of 54%, ranging from 33% (Jobe, Rust & Brisse, (1996) to 67% (Bunch, et al, 1997) for similar studies, making this return rate an average one.

The total attitude score was calculated from the responses to twenty-one questions using a six point Likert scale. The responses were given values from 1 to 6 with 1 representing strongly disagree to 6 representing strongly agree. The total points a participant could attain was 126 which comprised of a maximum of 6 on each of the 21 questions.

The 6-point Likert scale was chosen because I thought that it would yield a sufficient amount of information that would be easier to analyze. Not having a central or neutral choice on the scale may have created some difficulty for respondents; however, it was their opinions that were being sought, and I wanted to eliminate a neutral choice.
Avamidis, Bayliss and Burden (2000) as well as Monahan, Marina and Miller (1996) used a 5 point Likert scale with a neutral or no-response as the middle choice. In Monahan’s et al survey (1996), 32% of the participants chose the neutral (N) as their first choice of the 25 questions in their survey. Those respondents may have used the neutral choice as a quick response rather than having to decide whether their feelings were in fact positive or negative. The initial pilot group believed that I would receive more accurate data about the way people actually felt if there was no neutral position as a choice. The Special Education Review Committee in their survey in 2000 used a 5 point scale in their study resulting in 15% choosing the neutral position most of the time. Van Reusen and Shoho’s (2000) survey was similar to my survey as they included no neutral choice. They also found a slightly positive attitude score, similar to the results attained by Monahan et al (1996), Avamidis et al (2000) and the Special Education Review Committee (2000).

In the open comment section of my survey there were no negative statements referring to the survey’s structure. The only concern in using the 6 point scale was in differentiating between the meaning of PA (partially agree) and PD (partially disagree). No literature was reviewed that alluded to this type of structure as being problematic. While reviewing the survey and reflecting on potential problems with the scoring scale, the pilot groups believed that a participant would consider their response from a positive perspective. A response of PA therefore
would imply that the participants partially agreed with the statement not that the rest of their opinion was therefore, in disagreement.

**Attitude Scores**

Using the stated values for the Likert scale participants’ total attitude scores were calculated for the second section of the survey. A higher score on this section of the survey was associated with a more positive attitude towards inclusive education. The SPSS statistical program from the University of Regina was used to analyze the data. This program calculated the mean, standard deviation and range of all groupings pertaining to the total attitude scores for each demographic feature. The maximum score was 126 (21 questions with a maximum score of 6 each). The average attitude score of the survey participants was 81 with a range of 56 to 97. While this response was positive, it was only slightly so.

![Table 4 - 1](image-url)
As can be seen in table 4-1, most of the samples scores fell in the 82 to 91 ranges with limited numbers to either side indicating how consistent the participants scored each question.

In Canadian studies done by Jobe et al (1996), Bunch et al (1997), Odom (2000) and Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) respondents had attitude scores between 60% to 70% of their assigned maximum. These studies found positive attitudes similar to the 64% result found in my study. However, Van Reusen and Shoho (2000) in their American study found that over one-half of the teachers in their study had a negative attitude towards inclusion.

The attitude scores had a standard deviation of 8.2, which suggests nearly 92% of the participants interpreted the intent of the questions in a similar fashion. This result reinforces the assumption of accuracy of the instrument used. By comparison, the standard deviation of other studies had Jobe et al (1996) the highest at 24 and Buell et al (1999) at 8.5. The small variance of my study suggests the participants were more consistent the interpretation of the survey questions, giving more credibility to the overall results.

**Demographic Features of the Sample**

In attempting to explain some of the attitude scores, the demographic features as outlined in Table 4.2 were investigated with the noted results.
Table: 4.2 - Teacher demographics and corresponding attitude scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Numbers / % of sample</th>
<th>Mean average of total Attitude score. Out of 126</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Responses</strong></td>
<td>110 (100.0%)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Males (44% of male pop.)</td>
<td>39 (36%)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Females (38% of female pop.)</td>
<td>71 (65%)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Experiences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 1 to 9 years</td>
<td>40 36%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 10 to 19 years</td>
<td>31 28%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 20+ years</td>
<td>44 40%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Levels taught</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. K to grade 8</td>
<td>68 62%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Grades 9 to 12</td>
<td>42 38%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where they taught</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Urban</td>
<td>69 63%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Rural</td>
<td>42 37%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>With added training</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. without training</td>
<td>48 44%</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>With added education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. without education</td>
<td>60 45%</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact with special needs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Average to above average</td>
<td>77 70%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. below average</td>
<td>43 30%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indiv. Competence in ..</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. few situations</td>
<td>21 19%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. some situations</td>
<td>61 55%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. most situations</td>
<td>28 26%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gender**

Table 4.2 section 1 shows that 39 (36%) of the returned surveys were from males and 71 (65%) from females. The 39 males represented 44% of the total male population surveyed, while the 71 females represented 38% of the total female population. The percent of responses
from each gender was similar to the population distribution therefore minimizing any speculated gender bias in the sample. In examining the results pertaining to gender, no significant differences were found between the total attitude scores of the males and females.

**Teaching experience.**

It was predicted that with more emphasis on special education in university training programs in recent years, there would be a more positive attitude in the younger teachers similar to the findings of Jobe et al, (1996). However, there were no differences in attitude scores related to the teaching experience of respondents in my study. This finding is consistent with Van Reusen and Shoho (2000) who found that teaching experience was not a contributing factor when examining attitude.

**Grade level taught.**

When comparing attitude scores by grade level taught, it was thought that there would be a difference in attitudes between elementary and high school teachers. This expectation was based on the assumption that the larger population of women in the elementary schools were more empathetic towards the differences in their young students (Papallia & Olds, 1992) than their counterparts in the older grades.

In February of 2009, during a discussion with Honnalie Spies (personal communication, Feb. 2, 2009), Learning Resources Officer for Good Spirit School Division in Yorkton Saskatchewan, was of the opinion
that most intellectual difficulties became evident early in the elementary school years. As students with special needs began to mature the influences from peer pressure began to be reflected in their inappropriate behaviour in the high school. That subsequent behaviour could have created more problems for the high school teachers. The increasing number of problems in high schools could therefore cause a teacher to have a lesser attitude towards inclusion. Such a result would be similar to the attitude scores Leyer and Tappendorf (2001) indicating that high school teachers had significantly lower attitude scores towards inclusion than did elementary school teachers. The results of my study did not support their findings. Table 4.2 section 3, indicates that elementary school teachers had an average score of 81 while high school teachers had an average score of 80. These results were similar to the findings of the Canadian study done by Bunch et al (1997) as well as Smith’s (2000) American study. There was no significant difference in attitude scores that could be attributed to the grade level taught.

**Urban and rural teachers.**

Due to the larger student population, teachers who teach in an urban school may have greater exposure to complex issues involving students with special needs. This exposure could lead teachers to a greater understanding of the special education processes and hopefully a more positive attitude towards it. This assumption was not supported by the data. Table 4.2 section 4, indicates that the urban teachers had an
attitude score of 81 compared to rural teachers at 83. This difference was not a statistically significant.

**Additional training and education.**

Many participants believed there was a need for more training both in university as well as professionally supported in-service sessions. Buell et al (1999) found that only 29% of the general educators thought that they had adequate education and training to work effectively within an inclusive environment. Van Reusen and Shoho (2000) found that the lack of training did contribute to a more negative attitude. In support of the view of the importance of training, Fast (2001) found that 75% of the population surveyed in Saskatchewan rated teacher education as the most important element in education. My study indicated that 56% of the sample had some additional education and these persons had with an average attitude score of 83, while teachers without additional education had an average score of 78. The study did indicate that additional education appeared to correlate positively with total teachers' attitudes.

As indicated in Table 4.2 section 6, 45% of the sample had university education beyond the Bachelor of Education degree similar to the 47% in Buell's (1999) study. While many teachers had additional education, it was not known if additional education had enhanced the teacher's knowledge about special education specifically. It was expected that this advanced education group would have a more positive attitude
based on the belief that increased knowledge and exposure to program modifications and methodologies would have a positive impact on the participant. This study showed that those with additional education had an average score of 82 while those with only a Bachelor’s Degree had an average of 80. This difference was not statistically significant and is similar to the results attained by Avamidis et al (2000) as well as Van Reusen and Shoho (2000).

**Contact time with students with special needs.**

It was predicted that the more contact time a teacher had with students with special needs, the more positive the teacher’s attitude would be. Table 4.2, section 7 indicates that 70% of the sample rated their contact time as average to above average with an average attitude score of 81. Those with below average contact had an average score of 80. This difference was not statistically significant.

**Self-rated competence in inclusion.**

As the teachers self-rated competency level increased so did their attitude scores as indicated in Table 4.2 section 8. That section also indicates that those who felt competent in handling students with special needs in a few situations had an average attitude score of 77 while those who felt competent in handling those students in most situations, had an average score of 83. This increase in scores may indicate that the more competent a teacher felt in dealing with students with special needs, the higher they rated their attitude; however, these results were not
statistically significant. This finding was similar to Avamidis et al, (2000) who indicated that those who perceived themselves as having general teaching skills appear to hold a more positive attitude towards special education.

**Analysis of Teacher Attitudes**

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if teacher’s attitudes were directed towards students with special needs, towards inclusive programs or towards their added responsibilities in running those programs. The attitude scores along with standard deviations for each of these three areas are presented in Table 4.3. When attempting to ascertain if total attitude scores indicated a concern for any of the preceding three areas under investigation, groups of questions were designed to assess responses that pertained to each of these areas.

Table 4.3 - Teacher attitude scores about specific categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Mean Score: max. of 6</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Students with spec. needs</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Programs</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Teacher responsibilities</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each area’s score was then tabulated using the University of Regina’s SPSS statistical analysis system.
**Teacher attitudes towards students with special needs.**

Teachers’ attitudes toward students with special needs were determined using the average of 5 questions outlined in Table 4.4. The overall average score for all respondents was 4.0 out of a possible 6.

As reflected by the scores for questions 22 and 22e, 81% of teachers generally agreed to strongly agreed, that the number of special needs students were on the rise along with the students having an increasing number of problems. This result was also found in the study done by the Special Education Review Committee in 2000, which found that a growing number of children were coming to school with increasingly complex social, cultural and developmental problems. The increasing number of problems could mean that teachers require additional time to handle student problems; and, therefore, regular students may be deprived of the teacher’s time.

Teachers partially agreed that some students were being placed in the inclusive program because they had minor discipline or attendance problems as indicated by the average score of 4.0 to question 18. This concern of teachers may have an impact on classroom discipline however the results did not indicate that this was a strong concern.

Some teachers believed that students with special needs brought additional problems to school; however, most teachers did not believe that including them in the regular classroom would be disruptive. That opinion is reflected by the average score of 2.4 for question 19.
Table 4.4 - Teacher attitude scores about aspects of inclusion

Scoring: Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Question content</th>
<th>Average score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Inclusion can raise classroom standards</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Some have minor discipline and attendance</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Inclusion is disruptive to the classroom</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Number of special needs students is increasing</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22e</td>
<td>Increasing due to more problems in students</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher survey comments.**

Finally, the responses from 76 teachers to the open ended questions 33 and 34 pertaining to teachers’ attitude towards students with special needs were analyzed. The responses were placed in groups that expressed the same or similar opinions and the responses from the total group were analyzed by evaluating the individual responses.

Most of the teachers’ comments about students with special needs were negative in tone and concern, even though teachers’ average score was positive at 4.0. One of the teachers’ common concerns was with the need for additional discipline due to the behavioural problems these students bring to the classroom (12)\(^1\). The special needs students, therefore, required more one-on-one attention (8) in response to requiring additional management as well as facilitating the development of individualized instruction. This additional requirement for attention

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\(^1\) The number appearing at the end of a comment reflects the number of respondents who expressed identical or similar opinions to that stated.
caused teachers to be engaged away from the regular students and teachers thought that regular students’ education could suffer.

Another concern was the added responsibility for modifying the evaluative process (2) in an attempt to ensure these special students succeed. This pursuit of success may have caused teachers to lower standards within the classroom (2).

The special students’ shorter attention span (12) requires a lot of time and patience (5) as well as repetition of the work covered. This limitation could have an impact on the total amount of class material covered as well as the detail in which it was covered. This situation may have an impact on the curriculum being covered in any specific class.

Even with the number of negative concerns raised, some teachers still saw their work with these special students as rewarding (3). Those teachers stated that it is satisfying when they were able to watch one of their special students grow and change. However, some teachers thought that if the educational system placed as much emphasis and resources into the regular education program then the regular educational system and consequently, society as a whole would reap a greater benefit in the long run (8). I believe the teachers were referring to the possible improvement to the overall educational experiences for the regular student thus graduating better skilled individuals.
**Teacher attitudes towards inclusive programs.**

Table 4.5 indicates that teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive program were positive with an average score of 4.2. This attitude score was calculated using the scores of the 12 questions listed in the table. Upon examining the scores of individual questions, some of the results were noticeably higher than others. Teachers were generally positive about inclusion however one of their main concerns was about their assumed responsibility and/or ability, to modify the curriculum in order to maintain an inclusive classroom.

Table 4.5: Teacher attitude scores about inclusive programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Question content</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Inclusion benefits society</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Teachers .. positive attitude towards inclusion</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Special needs best served in separate room</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Inclusion is beneficial for regular students</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17c</td>
<td>Consultant .. should modify programs</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17e</td>
<td>Collaborative team .. should modify programs</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22a</td>
<td>More students due to better assessment</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22b</td>
<td>... minor discipline and attendance problems</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22c</td>
<td>Less stigma attached to special needs</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Inclusion benefits special needs students</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Teachers have a negative attitude .. inclusion</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Students become productive in society</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers were in 84% agreement that modifications should not be their responsibility alone, but rather that of a collaborative team of teachers, administrators, teacher-aides and other specialists.

Teachers’ recognized that inclusion was beneficial to the students with special needs, the regular education student, as well as society as a
whole. This opinion was reflected in the responses to questions 10, 16 and 23, with average scores of 4.3. Some of this positive attitude may be attributed to the suggestion that inclusion does not carry the same stigma it did a number of years ago as reinforced by the 3.7 response to question 22c.

Teachers were only slightly in agreement with the statement that students with special needs would become productive members of society, as indicted by the score of 3.5 for question 31. Teachers’ were not overly supportive of inclusion as indicated by the 3.3 average for questions 13 and 26.

**Teacher survey comments.**

The procedure for my final analysis of the responses to the open ended questions 33 and 34 was outlined earlier. The following are some comments teachers made in reference to their attitudes surrounding the inclusive educational programs. The comments were placed in groups that expressed similar or identical thoughts.

Some teachers thought that their support for inclusion would be best attained through the reduction in class sizes (8) however for the rest of the teachers only 42% were in agreement with that idea. A reduced class size would assist in keeping all students involved within the class as well as alleviate some difficulties in modifying activities so special needs students could participate more often at the same level as regular students (4). If a student with special needs were sent to a class without
prior knowledge of the teacher, then modifications to the existing program would be more difficult with the student present than if the student arrived after modifications were completed (5). Taking additional time to adapt a program could impact on the development and education of the regular student (3) especially if adaptations needed to be done while continuing to teach that class.

One main benefit of inclusion was the social development of the student with special needs (3). This development was important for special students to feel they belonged in that classroom. This social environment helped them establish acceptable behavioural patterns (2) because they often imitate the behaviour of regular students. Due to the closeness of students during their play time activities in the elementary school setting, teachers felt that inclusion would work better at that level (2) than in high school.

Once this division of interests and behaviours becomes obvious to the regular students, some teachers felt that it may be in the special students’ best interest to have some of their schooling in a separate or segregated classroom (3). Not all students at all levels needed to be or should have been involved in the inclusive classroom (2). In my view, teachers needed to be aware of the diversity required when teaching students with special needs and be prepared with a flexible, success oriented program that was geared to challenge all in attendance.
Teacher attitudes about added responsibilities.

On examining teacher attitudes towards their added responsibilities in administering an inclusive program, Table 4.6 indicates that attitude was only slightly negative with an average score of just over 3. The standard deviation was 1.2, indicating a variance of 20%. This variance may be due to there being only 5 questions used to evaluate this section so any discernable differences in the scoring would exaggerate the range of the scores.

Table 4.6: Teacher Attitude scores about added responsibilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Question content</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Classroom teacher has main responsibility</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Students place additional demands on teacher</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Inclusion OK if reduced class size</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Inclusion OK if assistant present</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Teacher attitude most important to success</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers were in 94% agreement that students with special needs placed additional demands on the teacher as indicated by responses to question 20. This added demand on teachers could be diminished through a sharing of responsibilities as supported by 84% of the teachers. It was initially assumed that two important elements needed to reduce stress levels for the teacher in the inclusive classroom would be to reduce class size and/or have an educational assistant present.
However, a very limited number of teachers agreed. Most teachers agree to strongly agree that it was the classroom teacher who was responsible for modifying the program and, therefore, a collaborative effort would assist in alleviating some stress. A reduction in the stress level may contribute to improving teachers’ overall attitude towards inclusive education.

_Teacher survey comments._

Finally, the responses to the open ended questions pertaining to teachers’ attitudes towards their additional responsibilities in inclusive education were analyzed as described earlier.

Many respondents stated that no time was available for planning a program or designing individual education plans (45). Most of the time a teacher was on his/her own with a wide variety of needs, it was important to feel prepared to handle that variety (2). To assist in the modifications, some teachers thought there was insufficient time for adequate collaboration among themselves, educational assistants or other professionals who deal regularly with students with special needs (7). This lack of collaboration led to conflicts between teachers and the support personnel when deciding on how to best work with the special students or their programs (3). Less conflict would arise if the support personnel were specifically trained in dealing with students with special needs and not just used as a resource person (11) who often did not have adequate resources (10). Another concern involved the need for more
teachers to have more education through university classes and in-service sessions (14). These classes needed to focus on how to modify course content and instruction, which would help teachers handle a wider variety of student needs, and, as a result, teachers could feel more prepared (2). Some teachers stated that they felt intimidated by problems which arise with these students especially with concerns about difficult behaviour and discipline. Some did not feel adequately educated to handle those situations.

Many comments submitted by respondents did not fall into specific categories; however, they are legitimate concerns of teachers. One concern teachers (7) had related to the perception of unrealistic expectations some parents and teachers had about the level of performance the special needs students could have within the inclusive classroom. Some respondents stated that at times other teachers and parents seemed to think the inclusive education program would bring the performance level of the special students in line with regular students. When students with special needs did not reach this expected performance level, then opinions of the parents and other teachers were negative, which tended to block open communication.

According to five teachers, such expectations could have a negative impact on administrative support for programs by bringing unrealistic pressure to bear on school administrators in an attempt to fix this problem. When the administration expected greater things from the
inclusive program and those greater things were not realized, this lack could have a negative impact on the administrative support. Those five teachers stated that the lack of support by the administration would be felt through the lack of funding to alternative programs.

Some other issues that teachers who replied to the survey thought should be mentioned were:

- Fewer community programs would be available which would lead to less support for existing programs for students with special needs (4).
- A need for clearer procedures to follow within inclusive education was needed from the school administration as well as the government (4).
- Teachers, who liked their independence in their classrooms, would rather have proper equipment to do their job better than outside supports such as better budgets (3).
- Success with the program (and with students in those programs) depended on the attitudes of the teachers assistants, the teacher, as well as all others involved in the students development (4).

In conclusion, the overall attitude was positive with an average score of 81 out of 126, with no significant differences in the attitude scores of any demographic category.
Correlation of Responses within the Four categories

Correlations between variables were computed using the SPSS statistical program at the University of Regina. The first column in Table 4.7 is the total attitude scores as they correlate to the three variables of programs, students and responsibilities. The second column is the correlation between the attitude scores towards programs and the other two variables. The third column is the correlation between the attitude scores towards students and the other two variables.

As can be seen from these results there was a high positive correlation between teachers’ total attitude scores and their attitude towards each of the other 3 items.

Table: 4.7: Correlations between total attitude scores and the three variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Attitude</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Programs</td>
<td>.937**</td>
<td>xxxx</td>
<td>.840**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Students</td>
<td>.827**</td>
<td>.840**</td>
<td>xxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Responsibilities</td>
<td>.839**</td>
<td>.902**</td>
<td>.846**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

All items have a high positive correlation with each other at a .01 level of significance, indicating that the results were unlikely to happen by chance alone.

The highest correlation of 0.94 was between total attitude scores and the scores towards the inclusive programs. This level may be due to teachers’ understanding program content better than the other variables,
or may be the result of extensive planning required prior to program implementation.

Teachers’ scores that reflected their opinion concerning their responsibilities in running an inclusive classroom, correlated at .90 with their attitude scores towards programs. As teachers’ attitude toward their responsibilities within inclusive classroom improves, it is likely that attitude about the students within those programs.

Correlation values, while quite high in all three groups, are the lowest in the group of attitudes towards students with special needs. This lower attitude score towards these students may indicate either a lack of positive experiences, or a lack of the number of experiences with students with special needs. Total attitude scores and attitude scores about students with special needs correlated at 0.83 with a 0.01 level of significance.

**Correlation Between Selected Pairs of Questions**

Question 22a asked if teachers believed the tools used to assess students with special needs were better today, and were one reason for more students being identified with special needs. Question 30 asked whether those assessment tools were adequate. By asking these two questions, I assumed that if teachers believed the tests used today were better than yesterday, then teachers should believe those tests were adequate, and these scores should show a positive relationship. The
results supported this assumption as the correlation was at .74 with a significance level of .01.

Teachers would therefore state that the instruments used today to assess students with special needs are better than in the past. Although there may be a number of reasons for there being more special needs students today, one reason for this increased number may be due to the accuracy of the assessment tools and thus more students being identified with special needs.

A further investigation of the possibility of a relationship between question 13 (teachers have a positive attitude towards inclusion) and question 26 (teachers have a negative attitude towards inclusion), indicated a correlation at -.63 and a level of significance of .001. While not a strong correlation, it is significant and indicates the strength of the internal validity of these two survey questions. Participants believed that teachers’ in general had a positive attitude towards inclusion therefore rated question 13 highly positive while rating question 26 negative.

A further correlation between questions 14 (students with special needs are best served in a separate classroom) and question 29 (students’ with special needs are best served in an inclusive classroom) revealed a correlation of -.62 at a level of significance of .01. While these findings are significant, the relationship suggests that teachers do not have a strong attitude about either statement. This variance may be due to teachers’ experiences within an inclusive classroom. If teachers had
limited and/or negative experiences with students with special needs, then they may be biased against the model used in their school.

Even though there were a number of stated difficulties with inclusion, teachers’ overall attitudes as well as their specific attitude towards their responsibilities, were similar and correlated at .84 with a level of significance of .01. This strong positive and significant relationship indicates that teachers’ attitude towards inclusion along with their perceived responsibilities in the inclusive programs were almost identical. Those who are comfortable within inclusive education, also realize their responsibilities in running an efficient program.

**Summary**

Attitude scores were calculated for three different areas. The attitude score towards students with special needs was positive with an average of 4.0 out of 6. Teachers were 90% in agreement that the number of students with special needs were increasing; however, 87% thought this increase was due mainly to the complexity of the problems these students bring to school. Further, teachers were in 75% agreement that the numbers of special needs students could have increased as a result of improvements in the testing and diagnosis procedures.

In the opinion of 60% of the teachers, students with special needs were not disruptive to the overall workings within the inclusive classroom. However, while a number of teachers thought they needed
more one-on-one time with students with special needs, a few teachers were still quite satisfied with their experiences in working in this inclusive environment.

The average attitude score towards the inclusive program was the highest of all three categories at 4.2. The positive support was obvious but teachers’ were concerned with the number of modifications they would need to make to accommodate individual students with special needs. Teachers thought these modifications should not be their exclusive responsibility. Forty-five teachers expressed the opinion that they needed more time to adapt the curriculum to suit the individualized nature of the inclusive program, and that they be given adequate support to accomplish this task.

One-half of the teachers surveyed believed that students with special needs were not guaranteed to be accepted by their peers within the class, nevertheless, 72% of teachers agreed that the inclusive program was beneficial to students with special needs. Seventy percent of teachers thought that the regular students benefited as well for the inclusion policy, and 74% believed that society also benefited.

A few teachers stated that one advantage of inclusive education programs for all students was the social interaction between students with special needs and regular students. This interaction benefited students with special needs by allowing them to see and interact with their peers, which also allowed their peers to gain valuable
understanding about differing needs of other students. Teachers thought this social benefit was strongest in the elementary school where peers were closer together in age and ability.

Some teachers thought they had greater responsibilities placed on them within the inclusive classroom. Teachers were in 70% agreement that most of their additional responsibilities came from students with special needs. The main issues identified were the time required for planning, modifying and implementing programs. Additional time was required for consultation with other professionals who were involved with the students with special needs. This concern could be further complicated by the 44% of teachers who thought they lacked adequate training in special education.

The results of this survey can be used as supportive data for dialogue between educators at all levels, in an attempt to increase the presence of inclusion and to have all involved in that dialogue, starting at the same point.
Chapter 5 – Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers’ attitudes about inclusive education and associated issues. The data were gathered in 2002 and likely do not accurately describe teacher attitudes today. In spite of this limitation, the research process was of great professional value and sparked a number of discussions among my professional colleagues. As well the survey could be used in a similar study with some minor alterations, including references to policy and changes in terminology over the past decade.

The participants in the survey provided no feedback concerning the design and wording of the survey instrument. This suggests that the overall structure posed few barriers to the respondents regarding the intent of the survey.

Teacher Attitudes Overall

The average teachers’ attitude scores were slightly positive. This result was contrary to my expectations following the initial interviews with my pilot groups. I had expected that attitudes would be on the negative side of the Likert scale. It is possible that some teachers did not wish to express beliefs that may have been perceived as unpopular as Heflin and Bullock (1999). Because the respondents to the survey were anonymous and responses could not be connected with individual teachers, I think they responded honestly.
Demographic Effects on Teacher Attitudes

While most demographic characteristics did not appear to have a definite correlation with their attitudes, additional training/education did show correlation. The differences between overall attitude and attitudes of those with additional training is most likely due to greater exposure to educational practices and philosophies and a greater understanding of how inclusion fits in the field of education. Such understanding would likely have a positive influence on teacher attitude. Additional training/education did appear to correlate positively with teacher attitudes as reflected in the score of 83 out of 126 to questions 2 and 6. This result can be used to support a recommendation for additional education for teachers in many aspects of inclusive education.

Additional training was also emphasized by Crawford (2003), in his co-sponsored seminar on Teacher Preparation for Inclusive Education. He discussed a number of effective practices for the classroom as well as ideas in different types of teacher training.

Teacher Attitudes Concerning Inclusion.

This investigation measured the teacher attitude score about inclusive educational programs to be positive having an average of 4.2 out of 6. A number of different questions in the survey were used to evaluate attitude; however, question 17e received the highest support with 83% of the teachers agreeing that programs should be modified by a collaborative team rather than by the individual teacher. The highly
positive response to this question indicates that teachers believed that such a collaborative team approach would create the most appropriate curricula for students. The team would have a range or expertise that was not possessed by individual teachers. As a result of team development a teacher would have more confidence in the program.

Attitudes towards inclusive programs had the highest correlation with overall attitude scores. This result may be due to teachers understanding program content better than they understand students with special needs. This higher attitude score reflected the 70% of teachers who strongly supported inclusive programs compared to the 67% who had strong support for students with special needs.

**Teacher Attitudes Concerning Students with Special Needs**

While teacher attitude scores toward students with special needs were positive those scores were slightly lower than attitude scores towards the inclusive programs. A variety of questions were used to assess attitude within this section. However, the question that drew the most agreement (at 90%) was number 22, which stated the number of students with special needs was increasing. Seventy-five percent of teachers responded in the survey that this increase was partially due to better testing and 87% agreed that a larger variety of problems were being identified.
Teacher Attitudes Concerning Their Responsibilities

Teacher attitudes were positive towards special programs, as well as the students within those programs. However, this positive feeling was tempered by their strong response to questions regarding their perception of their responsibilities when running an inclusive education program. Most teachers supported inclusion as a philosophy, but thought the additional responsibilities in running an inclusive program was too much for them to be expected to handle on their own. Eighty three percent of teachers stated that a coordinated effort with a range of other professionals in special education would be the best assistance for them in the classroom. Further, additional resources, including better trained teacher assistants, and additional time to coordinate activities were given high priority on the teachers’ list of resources. Putting these resources in place would greatly assist teachers in handling those added responsibilities.

Based on my extensive teaching experience in schools, I have found that teachers overwhelmingly exhibit a strong professional ethic of working for the betterment of all students. About 70% of participants agreed that inclusion provided good learning experiences for all students, not just those with special needs.

Students today, however, require more intervention in non-educational areas and therefore require other professional assistance to help them cope. The number and diversity of students with special
needs in Saskatchewan, has risen from 1.8% of the student population or approximately 2200 students in 1991 to 4.2% or approximately 5000 in 2008 (Saskatchewan Education Indicators, 2008). It was due to these increased numbers and diversity that the Government of Saskatchewan adopted SchoolPLUS (Tymchak, 2001) as their main model. This model advocates the integration of a range of community services in the school setting so those services are readily available to all students. The collaboration of professional practitioners in their fields could lead to faster and more collaborative sharing of information and anticipated assistance in dealing with the variety within the student population.

To accommodate this increase in diversity, teachers were expected to develop an individual program plan for each student with special needs as well as adapt their teaching to better suit those students. Teachers, while accepting those responsibilities, thought they could do more for the students if they were given more preparation time as well as other professional assistance to design enhanced student experiences that would help students achieve overall success. The reality of today’s classroom, however, may suggest that teachers may need to rethink teaching strategies rather than directing their time and energies towards modifying course content. Vaughn, Bos and Schumm (2010) discuss how teachers should concentrate on how a student learns rather than exclusively on what they learn. The teacher’s diversity in their teaching
strategies may become the new order of the day and a call for greater flexibility in teaching styles.

While adaptations are good pedagogical practice, some teachers though they did not have adequate education to adapt curriculum to the required level for students with special needs. Attempting to make adequate modifications in the inclusive classroom caused added stress for some teachers. In other cases teachers thought they were supported their role in performing their responsibilities. Some participants did state that their stress could be lessened by having the curriculum modifications done through sharing those responsibilities with other appropriate professionals. How they handled that responsibility depended largely on their attitude towards that shared job.

Another concern teachers identified in the survey was the lack of time they had to work on the modifications and to collaborate with others who were familiar with those students with special needs. In most schools Individual Education Plan (IEP) must be developed for each student with special needs. Some teachers thought IEPs were not being implemented to their fullest potential because of a lack of time and poorly coordinated efforts in their development.

Teachers also identified educational assistants as an important resource to work with students to implement the IEPs for each student. These assistants were very valuable in making decisions for the individual student. The presence of an assistant in an inclusive
classroom could have a positive impact on teachers’ attitudes towards all aspects of inclusion as a result of sharing responsibilities for the design and implementation of the inclusive education programs.

**Teacher Attitudes about Other Issues**

Teachers felt pressured at times by the level of expectations expressed by the parents of their student with special needs. Some parents had the unrealistic expectation that their child would perform at a higher level than she/he was capable of, simply as the result of being in an inclusive classroom. These expectations were clearly a cause of stress for teachers when communicating with parents. Such stress could have a negative effect on teachers’ attitudes towards inclusion.

Another concern teachers expressed was a perceived lack of adequate funding. Some special education teachers feared that financial limitations would result in programs and personnel being reduced. Since teachers believed inclusion was a relatively low profile program, they thought the board might choose to spend their money on higher, more recognized programs. Thus, this loss of money would create tighter resources and less assistance for inclusive teachers and that reduction could have a negative impact on teachers’ attitudes.

**Recommendations**

Some of my colleagues felt that a well prepared teaching assistant in the classroom would help them; however, most teachers have not been educated in coordinating activities nor supervising teaching assistants in
their classrooms. This lack needs to be addressed so all personnel dealing with students with special needs know and understand their individual roles and responsibilities. School divisions can provide professional development opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to develop some of the necessary skills. However, university bachelor of education programs must build the knowledge and skills required for such guidance and supervision into their teacher education programs.

Professional development time would be an excellent opportunity for workshop and other activities to assist teachers in learning about teaching students with special needs in their classrooms. Teachers need to seek opportunities that will expand their abilities with and understanding of these students. These opportunities could be in the form of professional development for in-service teachers or other educational opportunities. For pre-service teachers development of such skills and understanding should become part of all teacher education programs.

Opportunities for teachers to share and discuss classroom successes need to be facilitated within school divisions. The result of sharing successes can be expanded to other teachers and within schools. Individual Educational Plans need to be shared beyond the paper stage with face to face discussion. Teachers need a more complete understanding of emotional issues they could face with student having
special needs. Teachers need to become more familiar with such issues so they can deal with students on an appropriate emotional level.

School administrators could distribute the responsibilities for inclusion among more staff members thus providing other staff a first hand introduction to and an understanding of the complex field of inclusion. To ease the load for beginning and less experienced teachers, an educational assistant could be assigned to work with them in the inclusive classroom at least for a few terms.

The SchoolPLUS model (Tymchak, 2001) for community schools allows for other professionals, such as social workers, public health nurses, justice workers and others, to be involved with students in the school setting. These additional professionals would be available for consultation, as well as, to assist in evaluation and modification of programs and other issues identified by teachers.

School administrators should be aware of pupil-teacher ratios in the inclusive classroom and attempt to keep this level below normal standards as recommended within the Saskatchewan’s Education Act regulations (Government of Saskatchewan, 1995). By monitoring the total number of students and those with special needs in a classroom, the administration could balance class loads so as to allow teachers more time for modifications and explanations required to give special needs students a better opportunity to succeed.
School administrators should continue to encourage teachers to communicate with students’ parents to build a sense of trust and purposeful direction. Newer digital communication could be incorporated to create better opportunities for parents to discuss what their special child was being taught. Certainly email, class or school websites could be useful. As well some divisions have developed password protected sites to allow parents access to student assessment. Such sites can be evolved with parental input to provide information they need. Newer social media may have some role in the future as well. Such electronic site could provide opportunities to know the teachers’ expectations; and, if two-way communication, teachers could come to understand the parents’ expectations. Through this sharing of information, both parties can reinforce appropriate behaviour throughout the special students’ life.

The school board administrators must concern themselves with division wide policies and procedures that will strengthen the classroom instructional practices and the overall education of the students entrusted to their care. Division personnel need to encourage professional development where the main purpose is in the sharing of strategies that have been found to work at many grade levels as well as at specific grade levels. One of the greatest responsibilities a school division has is to provide adequate levels of funding so necessary resources are available at every level including trained personnel to properly utilize those resources.
Inclusive education is a complex field. All stakeholders involved in the challenge of teaching students with special needs have unique roles to play. The Boards of Education need to support this uniqueness through adequate funding and teaching resources. The school administrations need to supply the best available resources for their inclusive classroom and comprehensive professional development for teachers. The teachers need to have compassion, knowledge, and the ability to teach these students to be contributing members of their society at the highest level of which they are capable. All must work together for the sake of the students and their futures.

Finally; to all who enjoy this process we call education, with all its ups, downs and that grey areas in-between; I wish to thank you for your dedication to our children and wish you all the best in your pursuit of excellence.
References


S.P.S.S. (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) [Computer software]. Armonk, NY.


Appendix A – U of Regina Ethics Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES

DATE: November 13, 2001

TO: Randy Schuster
20 Dunning Bay
Yorkton, Saskatchewan
S3N 3X1

FROM: K. McNaughton, Ph.D.
Chair, Research Ethics Board

Re: Investigation into teacher attitudes towards special education programs and special needs students in East Central Saskatchewan

Please be advised that the University of Regina Research Ethics Board has reviewed your proposal and found it to be:

✓ 1. ACCEPTABLE AS SUBMITTED. Only applicants with this designation have ethical approval to proceed with their research as described in their applications. The Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans requires the researcher to send the Chair of the REB annual reports and notice of project conclusion for research lasting more than one year (Section 1F). ETHICAL CLEARANCE MUST BE RENEWED BY SUBMITTING A BRIEF STATUS REPORT EVERY TWELVE MONTHS. CLEARANCE WILL BE REVOKED UNLESS A SATISFACTORY STATUS REPORT IS RECEIVED.

___ 2. ACCEPTABLE SUBJECT TO CHANGES AND PRECAUTIONS (SEE ATTACHED). Changes must be submitted to the REB and subsequently approved prior to beginning research. Please address the concerns raised by the reviewer(s) by means of a supplementary memo to the Chair of the REB. Do not submit a new application. Once changes are deemed acceptable, approval will be granted.

___ 3. UNACCEPTABLE AS SUBMITTED. Please contact the Chair of the REB for advice on how the project proposal might be revised.

K. McNaughton, Ph.D.

C.C. D. Patterson, supervisor
G. Pickard, supervisor

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Appendix B – Letter to the Directors of Education

(Original Letters on U of R letterhead)

Dear Director of Education:

Re: Randy Schuster’s Survey for Thesis work.

Further to our conversation earlier this year, I am seeking your permission to conduct research with the teachers in the schools in your division. I am working on my Masters of Education and my Thesis will investigate teachers’ attitudes towards special education programs in general and students with special needs specifically, as well as their involvement with both.

All responses are anonymous and the identity of the subjects will be known to the researcher and his advisors only. Names of participants and their research data will not be linked in any way. The original data will be available only to the researcher and his advisors. The results will not identify individuals or schools by name.

This project is awaiting approval by the Research Ethics Board of the University of Regina. My thesis must be completed by August, 2001 which is a very tight timeline. If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at 306-585-4775 or by e.mail: research.ethisc@uregina.ca. You may also either of my thesis supervisors: Dr. Garth Pickard, or by e.mail: . or Dr. Donna Patterson at or by e.mail: .

Further to our above noted conversation, I have approached the principals of each school, and have received their approval for this research to be conducted in their school. I have also contacted a teacher in every school, to act as a distributor and collector of the data.

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for your time and consideration. If there is any information that you require, please call me at school at 786-5560 or at home at 783-1203.

Sincerely

Randy Schuster
Appendix C – Letter to Staff Representative

(Original letter on U of Regina letterhead)

Randy Schuster’s Thesis Survey.

To: staff rep.

Dear __________: 

Please find enclosed a set of surveys that we discussed last week. If you would please distribute them to your staff I would greatly appreciate it.

I have also enclosed a staff list for your school in case you required one. When the survey is returned to you, remove the covering letter and place the completed survey in the envelope.

I can not begin to tell you how important your efforts are nor how appreciative I am for your help.

Thanks again.

Randy.
Appendix D - Survey

TEACHER ATTITUDES SURVEY
ON SPECIAL EDUCATION AND STUDENTS
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CO-OPERATION

1) M _____ F _____

2) Please place a (✔) in the space which best describes your present level of education.
   a) Completed __1 __2 __ 3 years University.
   b) Completed B.Ed. __
   PLUS
   c) Additional University classes __
   d) Second Degree or Diploma __
   e) Masters Degree __

3) Total number of years teaching in a school located in a city ______

4) Total number of years teaching in schools not located in a city ______.

5) Total number of years teaching in the following grade groupings:
   a) K – 3 ______ b) 4-8 _____ c) 9-12 ______
   d) separate special education classrooms _____ with an average class size _____
   In the grades you have taught, which ones (✔)
   None   K-3   4-8   9-12
   e) included designated students with special needs     __     __     __     __
   f) the average number of students with special needs in any one classroom.
      __     __     __

6) To teach students with special needs, what additional training DO YOU have: (✔ all appropriate)
   a) __ no additional training.
   b) __ experiences with students with special needs
   c) __ in-service days
   d) __ weekday/end course(s)
   e) __ university course(s)

7) As a teacher in an inclusive classroom which of the following would help you perform your job better. (List in order of importance to you, 1st being the most important, 2nd the next etc. Choose your top 4)

   a) __ more special education classes in my 1st. degree
b) ___ trained local special education consultant
c) ___ teacher aide(s) in the classroom
d) ___ smaller classes
e) ___ lower number of students with special needs in the room
f) ___ more preparation time
g) ___ increased support from administration.

8) Is there a separate classroom for students with special needs in your school? Y. N.

9) Compared to other teachers in your school, would you assume your contact with students with special needs would be

(Please consider both in class and out of class contacts)
below average ___ about average ___ above average ___

For each of the following questions state your opinion. (NOT necessarily, what is or what should be)

Please qualify each statement by circling one of the following:

SA .. strongly agree, GA .. generally agree, PA .. partly agree,
PD .. partly disagree, GD .. generally disagree, SD .. strongly disagree.

10) Inclusion of students with special needs is beneficial to society as a whole.

SA GA PA PD GD SD

11) Appropriate services for special education, as outlined in the Regulations of the Education Act, should be available in every school.

SA GA PA PD GD SD

12) Inclusion of students with special needs, can raise the standards in the regular classroom.

SA GA PA PD GD SD

13) Teachers in general have a positive attitude towards inclusion.

SA GA PA PD GD SD

14) The interests of students with special needs are best addressed in a separate classroom.

SA GA PA PD GD SD

15) The main responsibility for the overall development of a student with special needs, lies with their classroom teacher(s)

SA GA PA PD GD SD

SA strongly agree GA generally agree PA partly agree
16) Inclusion of students with special needs is beneficial to the regular students.  

17) The main responsibility for adapting a course for students with special needs should lie with:  
   a) a Provincial Advisory committee on Special Education  
   b) each provincial special subject council  
   c) local special education consultant  
   d) the classroom teacher  
   e) a collaborative team including parents  

18) In my experience some students are placed in the special education program who have only minor discipline and/or attendance problems.  

19) Having a student with special needs included in the regular classroom may be disruptive to normal procedures.  

20) Having a student with special needs included in their classroom may place additional demands on the teacher.  

21) Students with special needs should be included in a regular classroom only if the class size is reduced.  

22) The number of students identified as having special needs is on the rise  

. IF you answered SA GA or PA to question 22, answer part B.  

(B) The reason(s) for this rise is that  
   a) there are better assessments of students’ abilities, therefore, more students with problems are being identified.  
   b) there are more students with minor discipline or attendance problems being placed in special education programs.  

PD partly disagree GD generally dis. SD strongly dis.
c) there is less stigma attached to having a special need therefore there is less concern about placing students in such programs  SA GA PA PD GD SD

d) there is more money available to run special programs therefore more programs are being developed  SA GA PA PD GD SD

e) there are more students with more problems coming to school than in the past  SA GA PA PD GD SD

23) Inclusion of students with special needs is beneficial to those students  SA GA PA PD GD SD

24) Including students with special needs can lower standards in the regular classroom.  SA GA PA PD GD SD

25) Students with special needs should be included in a regular classroom only if there is a teacher aide present.  SA GA PA PD GD SD

26) Teachers, in general have a negative attitude towards inclusion.  SA GA PA PD GD SD

27) In all situations dealing with student(s) with special needs I think that my experiences are adequate [✓ the most applicable]

a) to handle most situations ___
b) to handle some situations ___
c) to handle only a few situations ___

28) The Provincial Government through Saskatchewan Education presently spends an adequate amount of time and money on special education.  SA GA PA PD GD SD

29) Students with special needs should be included in the regular classroom.  SA GA PA PD GD SD
30) Students are adequately tested before being identified as having special needs.

31) Once students with special needs have left the school system, most will have received the skills needed to become productive members of society.

32) In an inclusive classroom, a teacher’s success with students with special needs is determined by the teacher’s attitude.

33) Identify some of the main challenges faced when teaching students with special needs.

34) Please provide any additional comments about working with students with special needs or special education programs or comment on any of the questions asked!

... thanks for your time.. randy.
Appendix E – Covering Letter for Survey

Re: Survey for Randy Schuster:

Dear Colleague:

I am a graduate student at the University of Regina and am working towards my Masters of Education degree. Your Director of Education has given me permission to invite all of the teachers in your area to participate in a survey that I designed as the major part of my research. The main purpose of this research is to determine teacher’s attitudes towards special education and students with special needs. Your participation is critically important to the continuation of my theses.

This survey will take about 20 minutes to complete. Its completion is completely optional and if you choose not to complete the survey, it will not be viewed negatively. I am asking for your opinion about special education and students with special needs.

When done, please return the completed form to __________________ who is my contact person on your staff and they will return same to me.

Please note: for the purpose of this survey:

- Designated student with special needs, refers to only those students identified as having special needs as outlined in the Regulations of the Education Act.
- Inclusion: refers to having a designated student with special needs in your regular classroom.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact me at 306-786-5560 (o) or 783-1203 (h). You may also contact the Ethics Board of the University of Regina and talk to the Chair at 306-585-4775 or email: research.ethics@uregina.ca. You may also contact one of my supervisors: Dr. Garth Pickard at ________ or email: ________, or Dr. Donna Patterson at ________ or email ________.

Thank you for your time and dedication to my project.

Sincerely

Randy Schuster.