Teachers and the Inclusive Classroom

A Meta-Synthesis

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Abstract

This meta-synthesis of teachers and inclusive classrooms examines the relationship between the inclusive classroom and teachers that feel successful at teaching in an inclusive classroom. Teachers of inclusive classrooms have expressed how they feel more successful after having training and support in relationship to having an inclusive classroom. However, without training and support by their administration, teachers do not feel prepared to teach in an inclusive classroom due to the extra time and support students with disabilities may require. Inclusive classrooms could be very successful if all teachers felt as though they had the tools, education, and support needed to teach an inclusive class.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In inclusive classrooms, teachers adapt their instructional practices so that all students, including students with special learning needs, achieve in ways that are meaningful (Andrews & Lupart, 2000; Hutchinson, 2007; Loreman, 1999). According to Wright's Law the IDEA statute and implementing regulations emphasize the requirement to educate children with disabilities in regular classes with their nondisabled peers:

> Inclusive education of students with disabilities is a matter of human rights, whereby access to quality education is coupled with respect and equity in the learning environment. Effective inclusive teachers hold positive attitudes towards children with disabilities, are skilled in delivering curriculum to a diverse population of students and feel confident in their ability to promote inclusivity in their classrooms (Berry, R.A.W., 2010).

For quite some time we have been hearing about inclusive classrooms and what that should be like. It seems that there is a recurring theme according to many studies , the theme that many teachers feel ill equipped to handle such classrooms. However, with the right training, professional development, field work, and confidence needed to teach in an inclusive classroom we can in theory have successful inclusive classrooms. Teachers have been interviewed, observed, and surveyed all with the hopes in finding that magic button that will help achieve conducive inclusive classrooms.

The Regular Education Initiative (REI) was the precursor to the idea of the inclusive classroom. It was proposed in 1986 by Madeline Will, then secretary for the Office of Special

Education and Rehabilitative Services. The movement was to increase the practice of

mainstreaming, to eliminate the removal of students with disabilities from the general education

classroom, and place students in a general education classroom that could accommodate all

students (Will, Madeline, 1986).

The idea of inclusion is supposedly implemented, but this is not necessarily the case.

Research indicates that teachers know a limited amount about the practice of inclusion, but don't

practice inclusion for many reasons. Therefore, inclusion as it is to be a given right, is not

occurring as it should.

1.2 Author's beliefs and experiences

Six years ago I went back to school to become a special education teacher. I was inspired

to go back to school after substitute teaching in several special education classrooms that ranged

from intensive needs to resource rooms. Along the way there I acquired my general education

degree and was hired as a general education teacher in a third grade classroom. For the next three

years while teaching third grade for two years, and second grade for one year I worked on

obtaining my special education endorsement and then decided to obtain my Masters in Special

Education.

Over the past year I have worked as a teacher in a co-teaching environment that

integrated all students into a single educational setting and which provided services to students in

the classroom rather than removing them to receive services. By this I mean that students that

receive additional services that they would normally get outside the classroom, have a

paraprofessional with them and stay in my classroom instead of being removed from the general

education classroom for services. Initially, in order to help me obtain my special education

endorsement and to fulfill my practicum requirements, as well as pilot a new type of co-teaching

classroom at our school, a special education teacher and myself were to share a classroom

fulltime to accommodate students with IEPs as well as general education students. So, the other

teacher and I set out to teach "our" students in a type of co-teaching situation where all students

receive assistance and no students would be singled out.

In theory, this sounds great, but in reality it didn't seem to go smoothly. While all my

students had two teachers in the room at all times ready to help them, the co-teaching element

was non-existent. Only one of us, myself, was responsible for the recording and tracking of

assessments and assignments, the contacting of parents, and all of the small day to day stuff that

teaching a general education classroom consists of.

On the other hand, I had very small input towards student's IEP's and their accommodations.

While it did fulfill the requirements for my practicum, that is all it fulfilled. Our working

together did not flow seamlessly, even though we were compatible personally. Even after

offering to let her teach whatever she'd like and to restructure our classroom to best suit the

needs of our "co-teaching" and students, there were no changes made.

Soon after my practicum class was over our school gained two young girls with intensive

needs in second grade. In addition, another special education teacher whose case load dealt with

Kindergarten and first grade became very ill and had to have her caseload reduced significantly.

It was at this time that the other teacher's case load became larger and she would no longer be

able to "co-teach" with me. She is now only in my room for one hour out of the day to teach a

small group of students a district approved reading replacement program from our core reading

program. Other various aides are in and out of the room to provide support and teach a small

group a language supplant program, also a replacement program from our district core reading

program, for another hour out of the day.

 Students with IEPs from other classes also come to my classroom to receive a supplant

reading program that I teach, with the help of another teacher, during that time to a wide range

of students, some with IEP's and some with below average reading scores. During reading

students are broken into three groups and taught the same supplant program at various levels.

During math I teach all students including any students with IEPs with the help of a

paraprofessional.

While I like the fact that students are being able to stay in the general education

classroom, I find that how they are being taught is a bit frustrating. They are expected to learn

using core programs or the same supplant program with little to no modifications for their needs.

Frustration is what I have heard from most teachers when it comes to inclusive classroom

settings. Many teachers don't feel that they have the resources or time necessary to assist

students with disabilities while they assist students normally in the general education setting.

This years' experience has led to me wanting to know more about teacher and

students feelings about inclusive classrooms. It has also led me to formulate the following

research questions:

1. What elements are needed for a teacher to have a successful inclusive classroom?

2. What training do general education teachers need to be successful in teaching in an inclusive classroom?

1.3 Purpose of this meta-synthesis

One purpose was to review the literature on teachers and students in inclusive classrooms and what elements are necessary to have a successful inclusive classroom according to general education teachers. A second purpose was to determine what supports teacher find necessary in an inclusive classroom and how to obtain those supports. My final purpose in conducting this meta-synthesis was to identify significant themes that emerged from this body of literature, and to connect these themes to my own experience and my future experiences in special education as well as the general education classroom.

2.1   Selection criteria

The 22 journal articles included in this meta-synthesis met the following selection criteria:

1. The articles explored issues related to inclusive classrooms.

2. The articles explored issues related to teachers and inclusive classrooms.

3. The articles explored issues related to how teachers feel about inclusive classrooms.

4. The articles explored issues related to how students feel about inclusive classrooms.

5. The articles were published in peer-reviewed journals and thesis papers.

6. The articles were published between 1994-2016

2.2.1 Database searches

In winter and spring of 2016, I conducted systemic searches of four databases that index articles related to special education, inclusive classroom, and teacher and student views on inclusive classrooms. The four databases include the: (a)Education Resources Information Center (ERIC, Ebscohost) ; (b) Academic Search Premier; (c)Digests (ERIC); and (d)Pro Quest. Searches were conducted using the following g specific search terms:

("Inclusive Classrooms" or "Inclusive Education")

("Teachers") And ("Inclusive Classroom")

("Special Education") And ("Inclusive classroom")

("Special Education") And ("Teachers")

("Inclusive Classrooms") And ("Teachers")

("Inclusive Classrooms") And ("Students")

The various database searches yielded a total of 22 articles that met my selection criteria (Beacham, N., & Rouse, M, 2012; Black-Hawkins, K., Florian, L., 2012; Berry, R.A.W., 2010; Cameron, D.L., 2014; Gebhardt, M., et al., 2015; Gökdere, M,. 2012; Hastings, R. P., & Oakford, S., 2003; Specht, J.,et al., 2016; Killoran, I., 2014; Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005; Litvack, M.S., Ritchie, K.C., & Shore, B.M. 2011; Logan, B.E., & Wimer, G. 2013; Michele Wilson Kamens, Susan J. Loprete & Frances A. Slostad, 2003; Monsen, J.J., Ewing, D.L., & Kwoka, M., 2014; Ross-Hill, R. 2009; Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R., 2001; Sharma, U., & Sokal, L., 2015; Swain, K.D., Nordness, P.D., & Leader-Janssen, E. M., 2012; Wilkins, T., & Nietfeld,

J.L., 2004; Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B., 2002; Baglieri, S., 2008; Giangreco, M. F., Doyle, M. B., 2015).

2.2.2 Ancestral searches

An ancestral search involves reviewing the references lists of already published works to locate information and literature relating to one's topic of interest. I conducted ancestral searches using the reference lists of the previously retrieved articles. These ancestral searches revealed no additional articles that met my specific selection criteria and would be used in my meta-synthesis.

2.3 Coding procedures

I used a coding form to categorize information presented in each of the 22 articles. This coding was based on: (a) publication type; (b) research design; (c) data sources; and (e) findings of the studies.

2.3.1 Publication type

I evaluated and classified each articles according to publication type (e.g., research study, descriptive article, opinion piece/position paper, annotated bibliography, review of the literature.) *Research studies* employ systematic methods to gather and/or analyze quantitative and/or qualitative data. *Descriptive articles* describe experiences but do not employ systematic methods to gather and analyze data. *Opinion pieces/position papers* explain an author's opinion about a particular issue, these articles may support or advocate for particular educational objectives, political views, policy positions, or philosophical ideas. *Annotated bibliographies* include a list of articles on a given topic with a brief summary of each piece of work. Reviews of literature summarize and synthesize the themes of previously published works on a particular topic (Table 1).

2.3.2 Research design

I classified each study by research design (i.e., quantitative research, qualitative research, mixed methods research). *Qualitative* researchers use language to describe experiences and to tell people's stories. *Mixed Methods* research combines quantitative and qualitative research methods within a single study. *Quantitativ*e researchers collect and analyze numerical data (Table 2).

2.3.3 Participants, data sources, and findings.

I identified the participants in each of these studies (e.g. pre-service teachers, general education teachers, undergraduate and graduate students). I also identified the data sources that

were analyzed for each study (e.g., interviews, observations, surveys, scales). Finally, I

summarized the findings of each study.

2.4 Data analysis

In part to complete this meta-synthesis I analyzed the 22 articles included in this

meta-synthesis. I first identified significant statements within each article. For the purpose of this

meta-synthesis, I searched and defined significant statements that addressed issues related to: (a)

teachers confidence in teaching in an inclusive classroom, (b) education of teachers for an

inclusive classroom, and (c) information teachers needed to feel successful in a special needs

classrooms. I then developed a list of non-repetitive, non-overlapping (verbatim) significant

statements with (paraphrased) formulated meanings. These (paraphrased) formulated meanings

represented my interpretation of each significant statement. Finally, I grouped the formulated

meanings from all 22 articles into theme clusters (or emergent themes). These emergent themes

represented the essence of the entire body of literature.

3. Results

3.1 Publication type

I located 22 articles that met my selection criteria. The publication type of each article is

identified in Table 1. Nineteen of the 22 articles (86%) included in this meta-synthesis were

research studies (Beacham, N., & Rouse, M, 2012; Black-Hawkins, K., Florian, L., 2012; Berry,

R.A.W., 2010; Cameron, D.L., 2014; Gebhardt, M., et al., 2015; Gökdere, M,. 2012; Hastings, R.

P., & Oakford, S., 2003; Specht, J.,et al., 2016; Killoran, I., 2014; Leatherman, J.M., &

Niemeyer, J.A., 2005; Litvack, M.S., Ritchie, K.C., & Shore, B.M. 2011; Logan, B.E., & Wimer,

G. 2013; Michele Wilson Kamens, Susan J. Loprete & Frances A. Slostad, 2003; Monsen, J.J.,

Ewing, D.L., & Kwoka, M., 2014; Rodkin, P.C., Farmer, T.W., Acker, R.V., Pearl, R., Thompson,

J.H., & Fedora, P., 2006; Ross-Hill, R. 2009; Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R., 2001; Sharma, U., &

Sokal, L., 2015; Swain, K.D., Nordness, P.D., & Leader-Janssen, E. M., 2012; Wilkins, T., &

Nietfeld, J.L., 2004). Three of the articles (14%) were opinion/position papers (Avramidis, E., &

Norwich, B., 2002; Baglieri, S., 2008; Giangreco, M. F., Doyle, M. B., 2015).

Table 1

Author(s) & Year of Publication	Publication Type
Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B., 2002	Opinion Piece/Position Paper
Baglieri, S., 2008	Opinion Piece/Position Paper
Beacham, N., &Rouse, M. 2012	Research Study
Black-Hawkins, K., & Florian, L. 2012	Research Study
Berry, R. A.W., 2010	Research Study
Cameron, D.L., 2014	Research Study
Gebhardt, M. F., & Doyle, M.B., 2014	Research Study
Giangreco, M. F., Doyle, M. B., 2015	Opinion Piece/Position Paper
Gökdere, M,. 2012	Research Study

Hastings, R. P., & Oakford, S., 2003	Research Study
Specht, J., McGhie-Richmond, D., Loreman, T., Mirenda, P., Bennett, S., Gallagher, T., Young, G., Metsala, J., Alyward, L., Katz, J., Lyons, W., Thompson, S., & Cloutier, S., 2016	Research Study
Killoran, I., Woronko, D., & Zaretsky, H., 2014	Research Study
Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005	Research Study
Litvack, M.S., Ritchie, K.C., & Shore, B.M. 2011	Research Study
Logan, B.E., & Wimer, G. 2013	Research Study
Michele Wilson Kamens, Susan J. Loprete & Frances A. Slostad, 2003	Research Study
Monsen, J.J., Ewing, D.L., & Kwoka, M., 2014	Research Study
Ross-Hill, R. 2009	Research Study
Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R., 2001	Research Study
Sharma, U., & Sokal, L., 2015	Research Study
Swain, K.D., Nordness, P.D., & Leader-Janssen, E. M., 2012	Research Study
Wilkins, T., & Nietfeld, J.L., 2004	Research Study

3.2 Research design, participants, data sources, and finding of the studies

       As previously notes, I located 19 research studies that met my selection criteria

(Beacham, N., & Rouse, M, 2012; Black-Hawkins, K., Florian, L., 2012; Berry, R.A.W., 2010;

Cameron, D.L., 2014; Gebhardt, M., et al., 2015; Gökdere, M,. 2012; Hastings, R. P., & Oakford,

S., 2003; Specht, J.,et al., 2016; Killoran, I., 2014; Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005; Litvack,

M.S., Ritchie, K.C., & Shore, B.M. 2011; Logan, B.E., & Wimer, G. 2013; Michele Wilson Kamens,

Susan J. Loprete & Frances A. Slostad, 2003; Monsen, J.J., Ewing, D.L., & Kwoka, M., 2014; Ross-Hill,

R. 2009; Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R., 2001; Sharma, U., & Sokal, L., 2015; Swain, K.D., Nordness, P.D.,

& Leader-Janssen, E. M., 2012; Wilkins, T., & Nietfeld, J.L., 2004). The research design, participants,

data sources, and findings of each of these studies are identified in Table 2.

Table 2

Authors	Research Design	Participants	Data Sources	Findings
Beacham, N. & Rouse, M. 2012	Qualitative	367 Student teachers	Pre and Post Questionnaire	If pro-inclusion attitudes are to be sustained, it is necessary for inclusion specialists to work closely with mainstream teacher education colleagues to examine the structure and content of teacher education courses together.
Black-Hawkins, K., & Florian, L. 2012	Qualitative	Two Scottish Primary Schools teachers	Observations and Interviews	Members of the academic community must take responsibility to bridge the gap by seeking out and working with the craft knowledge of teachers
Berry, R. 2010	Quantitative	60 graduate students	Surveys	Teachers need to accept that fairness toward students varies depending on student needs and that teacher

				perception and acceptance of an inclusive classroom can greatly impact their abilities to teach successfully in an inclusive classroom.
Cameron, D. L., 2014	Mixed Method	17 Inclusive Classrooms teachers	Observations and Interviews	General education teachers devote most of their time toward whole class instruction and relied on paraprofessionals for the instruction of students with severe disabilities. Paraprofessionals were shown to have most of the responsibility for the majority of the instruction and curricula planning for the disabled students.
Gebhardt, M., Schwab, S., Krammer, M., & Gegenfurtner, A. 2015	Qualitative	191 General education teachers and 130 special education teachers	Multi-item questionnaire	Inclusive practices were acceptably implemented from the teacher perspective in elementary schools, but there are several problems within the teamwork of the teachers in secondary schools. To implement a good practice in teamwork in inclusive classes it is necessary that every teacher has insight into inclusive work and practice
Gökdere, M,. 2012	Qualitative	68 In-service elementary teachers and 112 Pre-service elementary teachers	Observations and questionnaires	Professional development workshops and seminars on special education and inclusive education would improve the knowledge of in-service elementary teachers and enhance the qualification of the inclusive practices.
Hastings, R. P., & Oakford, S. , 2003	Quantitative	93 University students studying for professional	Self-Report Questionnaire	Teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special needs depended upon the supports,

		teaching qualifications		appropriate resources, and training. Teachers also favored having students that had intellectual disabilities rather than having students with emotional and behavioral problems.
Specht, J., McGhie-Richmond, D., Loreman, T., Mirenda, P., Bennett, S., Gallagher, T., Young, G., Metsala, J., Alyward, L., Katz, J., Lyons, W., Thompson, S., & Cloutier, S., 2016	Quantitative	1490 Preservice Canadian teachers	Learning and Teaching Questionnaire	Canadian teachers graduating believe that all students belong in the regular education classroom and feel prepared after leaving the Faculties of Education to teach in an inclusive classroom setting.
Killoran, I., Woronko, D., & Zaretsky, H. 2014	Quantitative	Four classes of students from two different teacher-preparation programs within the Faculty of Education at York University in Toronto, Canada	Pre and Post Survey	Preservice students shifted towards inclusion after taking an inclusion course. The information they received help to shift their attitudes from the position that inclusive classroom settings are a privilege to that of, it is actually a human right.
Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005	Qualitative	Preservice and in service teachers	Initial interviews, observations, field notes, post interview	Teacher's attitudes were influenced by previous experiences in inclusive classrooms. In addition, the teachers indicated that preservice training, support from administrators and resource personnel were key to the success of an inclusive environment.
Litvack, M.S., Ritchie, K.C.,	Quantitative	360 students in four Montreal	Attitudes Toward	Feeling comfortable with classmates with disabilities

& Shore, B.M. 2011		area elementary schools	Disabled Persons (ADTP) Scale-Form	was challenging and high-achieving students felt that they learned less due to those students being included in their classrooms
Logan, B.E., & Wimer, G. 2013	Qualitative	203 Georgia teachers	8-item survey pertaining to beliefs about inclusion	Teachers attitudes toward inclusion were more favorable for high school teachers compared to K-8 and middle school teachers. There was no differences in teacher attitudes towards inclusion between middle and K-8 teachers.
Michele Wilson Kamens, Susan J. Loprete & Frances A. Slostad 2003	Quantitative	71 General education teachers	Survey	The study provided specific content and implications desired for restructuring teacher education and staff development programs for general education teachers.
Monsen, J.J., Ewing, D.L., & Kwoka, M. 2014	Quantitative	95 General education teachers and 2,514 students	Questionnaire	Teacher attitudes towards inclusion increased with greater support from resources, access to specialist staff, and training.
Rodkin, P.C., Farmer, T.W., Acker, R.V., Pearl, R., Thompson, J.H., & Fedora, P., 2006	Quantitative	948 students from the metropolitan Chicago area and North Carolina and included 107 students with mild disabilities	Multi-method survey	Students with mild disabilities tend to view classmates who have strong prosocial characteristics as being the "coolest" in inclusive classroom settings.
Rose-Hill, R., 2009	Quantitative	73 teachers from three public elementary and secondary school in rural, southeastern USA	Scale of Teacher's Attitudes Towards Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC)	Most teachers support the practice of inclusion in the general education classroom, but overall the results of the study were mixed. The results from the study were mixed in reference to the support of inclusion in different grade levels, subject area and

				whether or not the inclusive classroom was full or partial.
Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R. 2001	Quantitative	122 elementary and secondary majors enrolled in a course entitled Survey of Special Education and 72 undergraduate special education majors enrolled in a course entitled Overview of Special Education	48 item inclusion inventory pre and post class	The attitudes of preservice teachers toward inclusion can be influenced by a course. Teacher training in inclusive classroom setting at preservice and inservice levels must address student differences and then provide ways to adapt classroom methods and skills to best suit students with all levels of needs and abilities.
Sharma, U., & Sokal, L., 2015	Quantitative	28 Pre-service teachers from Australia and 60 pre-service teachers from Canada	Survey at pre and post stages of the course	Attitudes improved after the course, their concerns also declined, and they become more confident in their ability to teach in an inclusive classroom
Swain, K.D., Nordness, P.D., & Leader-Janssen, E.M., 2012	Quantitative	Undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory special education course	38 item pre-and post-instruction survey	Preservice teacher perceptions can be positively impacted by observing and working in an inclusive school with teachers who are effective at teaching and accommodating students with disabilities.
Wilkins, T., & Niefeld, J.L. 2004	Quantitative	89 middle school teachers from four schools	Survey	Teachers with higher levels of perceived expertise in special education had more favorable attitudes toward inclusion.

3.2.1 Research design

Four of the 19 studies (21%) included in this meta-synthesis employed a qualitative

research design (Beacham, N. & Rouse, M. 2012; Black-Hawkins, K., & Florian, L. 2012;;

Gökdere, M,. 2012;; Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005;). Fourteen of the studies (74%)

used a quantitative research design (Berry, R. A. W. 2010 ; Gebhardt, M., Schwab, S., Krammer,

M., & Gegenfurtner, A. 2015; Hastings, R. P., & Oakford, S. , 2003; ; Killoran, I., Woronko, D.,

& Zaretsky, H. 2014; Logan, B.E., & Wimer, G. 2013; Litvack, M.S., Ritchie, K.C., & Shore,

B.M. 2011; Michele Wilson Kamens, Susan J. Loprete & Frances A. Slostad 2003; Monsen, J.J.,

Ewing, D.L., & Kwoka, M. 2014; Rodkin, P.C., Farmer, T.W., Acker, R.V., Pearl, R., Thompson,

J.H., & Fedora, P., 2006; Rose-Hill, R., 2009; Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R. 2001; Sharma, U., &

Sokal, L., 2015; Specht, J., McGhie- et al., 2016; Swain, K.D., Nordness, P.D., &

Leader-Janssen, E.M., 2012; Wilkins, T., & Niefeld, J.L. 2004). One of the studies (5%)

employed a mixed method research design, collecting and analyzing a combination of both

quantitative (i.e., numerical) and qualitative (i.e., non-numerical) data (Cameron, D. L., 2014).

3.2.2 Participants and data source

The nineteen studies included in this meta-synthesis analyzed data collected from special

education majors, pre-service teachers, undergraduate and graduate students, elementary and

secondary general education teachers, and inclusive classroom teachers. Two of the studies

(10%) analyzed data collected from special education majors or teachers (Gebhardt, M., Schwab,

S., Krammer, M., & Gegenfurtner, A. 2015; Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R. 2001). Six of the studies

(30%) analyzed data from pre-service teachers (Beacham, N. & Rouse, M. 2012; Gökdere, M,. 2012; Specht, J., McGhie-Richmond, D., Loreman, T., Mirenda, P., Bennett, S., Gallagher, T., Young, G., Metsala, J., Alyward, L., Katz, J., Lyons, W., Thompson, S., & Cloutier, S., 2016; Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005; Killoran, I., Woronko, D., & Zaretsky, H. 2014; Sharma, U., & Sokal, L., 2015). Nine of the studies (45%) analyzed data collected from undergraduate and graduate students (Beacham, N. & Rouse, M. 2012; Berry, R. 2010; Gökdere, M,. 2012; Hastings, R. P., & Oakford, S. , 2003; Specht, J., McGhie- et al; Killoran, I., Woronko, D., & Zaretsky, H. 2014; ; Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005; Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R. 2001; Sharma, U., & Sokal, L., 2015). Nine of the studies (45%) analyzed data collected from elementary and secondary general education teachers (Black-Hawkins, K., & Florian, L. 2012; Gebhardt, M., Schwab, S., Krammer, M., & Gegenfurtner, A. 2015; Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005; Logan, B.E., & Wimer, G. 2013; Michele Wilson Kamens, Susan J. Loprete & Frances A. Slostad 2003; Monsen, J.J., Ewing, D.L., & Kwoka, M. 2014; Rose-Hill, R., 2009; ; Shade, R.A., & Stewart, R. 2001; Wilkins, T., & Niefeld, J.L. 2004). Two of the studies (10%) analyzed data collected from inclusive classroom teachers (Cameron, D. L., 2014; Gebhardt, M., Schwab, S., Krammer, M., & Gegenfurtner, A. 2015).

Most of these studies reviewed for this meta-synthesis used questionnaires and/or surveys to collect data from participants. Six of the studies (30%) used questionnaires to collect data ((Beacham, N. & Rouse, M. 2012; Gebhardt, M., Schwab, S., Krammer, M., & Gegenfurtner, A. 2015; Gökdere, M,. 2012; Hastings, R. P., & Oakford, S. , 2003; Specht, J., McGhie- et al, 2016; Monsen, J.J., Ewing, D.L., & Kwoka, M. 2014). Four of the studies (20%) used observation and interviews to collect data (Black-Hawkins, K., & Florian, L. 2012; Cameron, D. L., 2014;

Gökdere, M,. 2012; Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A., 2005). Eight of the studies (40%) used

surveys to collect data (Berry, R. 2010; Killoran, I., Woronko, D., & Zaretsky, H. 2014; Logan,

B.E., & Wimer, G. 2013; Michele Wilson Kamens, Susan J. Loprete & Frances A. Slostad 2003;

Rodkin, P.C., Farmer, T.W., Acker, R.V., Pearl, R., Thompson, J.H., & Fedora, P., 2006; Sharma, U., &

Sokal, L., 2015; Swain, K.D., Nordness, P.D., & Leader-Janssen, E.M., 2012; Wilkins, T., &

Niefeld, J.L. 2004). One of the studies (5%) analyzed data collected from Attitudes Toward

Disabled Persons (ADTP) Scale (Litvack, M.S., Ritchie, K.C., & Shore, B.M. 2011). One of the

studies (5%) analyzed data collected from the Scale of Teacher's Attitudes Towards Inclusive

Classrooms (STATIC) (Rose-Hill, R., 2009).

3.2.3 Finding of the studies;

        The findings of these nineteen studies included in this meta-synthesis can be summarized

as follows:

1. Preservice, undergraduates, and graduates in the teaching profession felt more

    confident about teaching in an inclusive classroom with the appropriate training, via

    class and some fieldwork. This training was presented both preservice and in-service

    in the studies.

2. Elementary and Secondary general education teacher were more comfortable teaching

    in an inclusive classroom after training and professional development.

3.2 Emergent themes

Three themes emerged from my analysis of the 22 articles included in this meta-synthesis. These

emergent themes (or theme clusters) include: (a) teachers confidence in teaching in an inclusive

classroom, (b) education of teachers for an inclusive classroom, and (c) information teachers

needed to feel successful in a special needs classrooms. These three theme clusters and their

associated formulated meanings are delineated in Table 3.

Table 3

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings

Teachers Confidence in Teaching in an Inclusive Classroom	- Teachers need more planning time to adjust their lessons to best suit all students - Teachers need time to meet with special education teachers to exchange information - Teachers need a full understanding of a student's IEP - Teachers want more guidance and advice - Teachers want the confidence that all students are being taught - After teaching and the development of effective inclusive practices, teachers developed more positive attitudes towards inclusion - Attitude, whether negative or positive, correlates with how teachers feel about their abilities to teach in an inclusive classroom - University programs on inclusion better prepares and influences the attitudes and levels of confidence of pre service teachers in inclusive classrooms.
Education of Teachers for an Inclusive Classroom	- Teachers want in-service workshops/grade level sharing of ideas with special education teachers - Teachers want field knowledge of how to best serve students with special needs - A greater understanding of how teachers organize and adapt their instructional practices in inclusive classrooms is needed
Information Teachers Needed to Feel Successful in a Special Needs Classrooms	- Teachers want knowledge about children in specific areas: a) classification, b) information specific to the individual child, and c) adaptations and accomodations - Teachers want knowledge of the causes of student's condition and how they could successfully teach the student - Teachers want specific information about each child's diagnosis to better understand children's needs and behavior - Teachers want to know how to adapt the curriculum to "their" needs - Teachers want to know alternative procedures

3. Discussion

In this section, I summarized the major themes that emerged from my analysis of the 22 articles included in the meta-synthesis. I then connected the emergent themes to my own teaching practice.

4.1. Teacher's confidence in teaching an inclusive classroom

All teachers should have the experience of feeling confident about their teaching practices, as it seems it would be essential to both teacher and student success. What I found interesting was the findings of the study done by Leatherman, J.M., & Niemeyer, J.A.(2005) that stated that teacher's had more positive experiences with inclusive classrooms if they had previous positive interactions within an inclusive classroom at some point.

In another study by Kames, Loprete, and Slostad (2012) teachers stated that they felt that they needed the support of their administrators. They wanted their administrators to understand the implications of the placement of the students. In addition, administrators needed to be willing to adapt organizational structure to support inclusive classrooms. Overall teachers wanted to learn more in the best interest of all their students.

From my own view I'm able to see that I don't have the confidence and comfortability yet to have a successful inclusive classroom. I've had the classes, some experience, but I don't always feel that I'm doing the best for all my students. As I write this I'm thinking back to the beginning of the year and what I knew about my students on day one. I knew nothing. No one had IEP's for me to review. I hadn't conferenced with other teachers about the specific needs of all my students with needs, both with and without disabilities. For me to be more confident in my own abilities to teach in an inclusive classroom I would need to have more information, conference with the previous teachers, special education teachers, and the administrators.

Another point of contention with teachers was the additional work they would need to do. Teachers developed an attitude toward inclusive classrooms from the fact that inclusive classrooms cause extra work and intra-class problems for the teacher on duty (Gökdere, M., 2012).

This is where support from both paraprofessionals and special education teachers need to be taken into consideration. How are paraprofessionals and special education teachers going to contribute to the classroom duties? Teachers are tasked with making lesson plans, managing their classrooms, making phone calls to parents, and much more. All things that a teacher should do, but with an inclusive classroom, those duties may multiply and they need to know that paraprofessionals and special education teachers are there to help in any way. This is where teamwork and everyone feeling equal is so important.

4.3. Education of teachers for an inclusive classroom

Being a recently endorsed special education teacher I have taken a multiple of classes on working with students with special needs. Yes, I feel somewhat confident in my abilities and with what I have learned, but there is still so much more that you learn on the job. According to Swain, et al. in 2012 "...teacher education programs should consider incorporating a field experience within an inclusionary setting. Critical to the success of these field experiences is the mentorship by current practitioners." I hear my instructors talking about conferences that they attend to increase their knowledge and help them stay up to date on issues even after they have had numerous years of experience with special education and individuals with disabilities. Even as a student, prior to my special education classes we were required to take a minimal amount of special education courses. I don't feel like the general education program goes in depth enough

in special education and the inclusive classroom. I honestly think that general education teachers should be required to spend so many hours in a special education setting before being able to graduate. I realize that not every general education student wants to teach special education, but if we are talking about inclusive classrooms, it shouldn't even be a conversation it should be a given.

Of the studies that I have read for this paper I have come to the conclusion that education and experience with students in an inclusive classroom has everything to do with teacher success. Teachers want more information, education, on how to have the best inclusive classroom. They don't want a one day workshop, they want hands on experiences, and in depth classe. But, more than anything, the results of the Wilkins and Niefeld (2004) study showed that teachers felt most ready for an inclusive classroom when they had taken classes about inclusive classrooms and done additional fieldwork. Fieldwork makes a world of difference. Like anything, practice makes perfect, or something close to that.

4.4 Information teachers needed to feel successful in a special needs classrooms

Teachers wanted information on the students that they would be working with prior to working with the students. "Teachers expressed perceived deficiencies in the information they received about the developmental histories of children included in their classrooms. Their responses indicated a need to know more information about the child's academic development, social/emotional growth, medical background, and family history (Kamens, et al. 2003)".

Things that a teacher wants to know are the "small" things like what makes the student happy, what could set them off, what do they excel at, what do they struggle with, what's the best

way to help them, do they like to stand or sit, what has been successful with them in the past, and much more. These are all things that any teachers want to know about their students. In fact, at my school we would go through a list of our students at the end of the school year and fill out a form that would answer questions about those types of things. Then, before school would begin, the new teacher would get the information to review and then be able to reflect on what they needed to do to prepare for those students. This was great in my opinion. However, we no longer fill them out. It was sad to see such a tool be taken away. Teacher's that should have known how important those were by the years that they had taught were the teachers that were most happy about not having to fill them out anymore. I thought for sure that they would have more use for them than they did. Many of the veteran teachers told me they never read them anyway. I was so let down, because I had poured over them my first year teaching and thought it had really paid off. This also reminded me of how my first year, before I started I asked the special education teacher to see my student's IEPs. She was offended and irritated to go out of her way to show me them. I thought this was common practice and was stunned that it wasn't. Why would I want to try and teach a bunch of students that I knew nothing about? How could I be the best teacher I could be if I didn't have this information?

5.1 Conclusion

Education, education, education, field work, and more education is what best sums up what I have learned and read about teachers and inclusive classrooms. Teachers want more knowledge to feel confident in teaching and reaching all of their students. Teachers want support from their administrators. They want to work as a team with paraprofessionals, special education teachers, and their administrators. They want information on their students prior to teaching

them. All of this information and teamwork can them translate into a confident teacher that can walk into their inclusive classroom and feel ready to face the challenges and successes of having such a classroom. Who doesn't want to feel like they are doing their best, like they are prepared, and like they have support?

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