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Teachers' Training, Knowledge, and Attitudes Towards Mainstreaming Behaviorally Disordered Students in Regular Classrooms

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TEACHERS' TRAINING , KNOWLEDGE, AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS MAINSTREAMING BEHAVIORALLY DISORDERED STUDENTS IN REGULAR CLASSROOMS

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Abstract

Public Law 94-142 requires that special education students be placed in "the least restrictive school environment" possible and that teachers who work with special needs students in regular classrooms receive training and help from special educators. According to Vandivier & Vandivier (1981), teachers have reservations about including children with "particular types" of disabilities in regular classes, and Mooney & Algozzine (1978) reported that teachers consider "socially defiant" behaviors to be more disturbing than those associated with learning disabilities.

This study was designed to determine the relationship between experienced classroom teachers' willingness to accept behaviorally disordered (BD) students in regular classrooms and their knowledge of effective and ineffective intervention strategies for mainstreaming them. Twenty experienced, regular classroom teachers from three central Illinois elementary schools volunteered to complete a survey. Knowledge scores were determined by assessing respondents' ability to accurately identify effective and ineffective strategies as described by Duquette & O'Reilly (1988), Fagen & Hill (1977), Knoff (1985), and Wells (1983). Training in special education and experience with BD students were also assessed.

The hypothesis that teachers' willingness to mainstream would correlate positively with knowledge of effective intervention strategies was not statistically supported *(Chi-Square = .9, df = 1, p >.05)*. However, of the 8 teachers willing to mainstream, 5 had high knowledge scores. Other findings included: 1) the more behaviorally disordered students teachers had taught in the past 5 years, the more willing they were to mainstream *(Chi-Square = 9.36, df = 3, p < .025)*; 2) of the 5 teachers who had mainstreamed 11 or more BD students in the past 5 years, 4 had high knowledge scores; 3) teachers' assessments of their own skill level did not correlate with their knowledge scores 4) nearly half (9 out of 20) of the teachers had no courses or in-service training which addressed the needs of BD students; and 5) only 3 out of 20 teachers in the study, 15%, were knowledgeable, willing to mainstream BD students if given a choice, and, in fact, had mainstreamed 11 or more BD students in the past 5 years.

This pilot study leads to the following concern: Will school districts be forced to group and segregate the increasing numbers of BD students because regular classroom teachers are not prepared to work effectively with them?

Background and Rationale

Since the passing of Public Law 94-142 in 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, school administrators and classroom teachers have been faced with the responsibility of determining and providing what constitutes the "least restrictive environment" for the class placement of special needs students.

> The law requires states to develop procedures for educating each child in the least restrictive placement. This means a setting that is as normal and as much in the mainstream of education as possible . . . Mainstreaming does not mean that students with severe physical, emotional, or cognitive problems must be placed in regular schools that cannot meet their needs. But students who can benefit from involvement with their nonhandicapped peers should be educated with them, even if doing so calls for special aids and services and training or consultation for the regular teaching staff. (Woolfolk, 1987, pp. 470-471)

Although the law specifies *least restrictive* placement, how this is interpreted often depends on budget and on the knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes of those making the decision. P. L. 94-142 requires that regular classroom teachers receive the training and assistance they need to effectively serve special needs children placed in their classrooms. However, from its very inception, educators have claimed that the law could not be adequately carried out because necessary resources were not

allocated to do so. Seventeen years after the passing of the "mainstreaming" law, uniformity in interpretation simply does not exist and mainstreaming special education students remains as controversial as ever.

With the introduction of the law in 1975, teachers were requested to bring into their classrooms those children that segregated special education classes had removed, thus causing a fundamental change in the education of exceptional children. Mainstreaming required many teachers to implement changes in curriculum, daily schedules, and management techniques. Some teachers acknowledged the value and were willing to make the changes needed to insure successful mainstreaming of special education students. However, many teachers been ambivalent about mainstreaming since P. L. 94-142 was enacted (Mancus interview, 1992).

Williams and Algozzine (1979) identified three factors governing the willingness of teachers to mainstream handicapped children into regular classes:

1) amount of teacher time required
2) successful experiences with handicapped children
3) presence of technical abilities

Mainstreaming may be viewed by some teachers as "instructional innovation." Rogers (1983) defined "innovation" as a new idea or practice being considered for use or continuation. Rogers' theory of innovation included five criteria which people use to evaluate any innovation: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, "trialability" and "observability," criteria which O'Reilly and Duquette (1988) discuss in relation to mainstreaming. The criteria most relevant to this study, compatibility, is described as such:

> An innovation such as mainstreaming is said to have a high degree of compatibility if the practice is in accord with the existing set of values of the teacher. The teacher will tend to continue the practice of mainstreaming if, through past experience, the teacher has acquired some of the knowledge and skill required to implement the innovation and if it is perceived that the new practices will contribute to the social, professional and psychological needs of the teacher (O'Reilly & Duquette 1988, pp. 10-11).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine regular classroom teachers' willingness to mainstream behavioral disordered and/or emotionally disordered children as it relates to their (a) prior experience doing so, (b) training in university or staff development courses, and (c) knowledge of effective intervention strategies as cited in the literature.

Definition of Behavioral Disorder

Problems exist in the defining of "behavioral disorder." Quay (1979) generated the following four classes of behavioral disorder, each with particular appropriate intervention strategies:

1) *conduct disorders*- behavior which is aggressive, destructive, disobedient, uncooperative, distractible, disruptive, and persistent

2) *anxiety-withdrawal disorders*- anxious, withdrawn, shy, depressed, hypersensitive, cry easily, have little confidence

3) *immaturity*- short attention span, frequent daydreaming, little initiative, messiness, and poor coordination

4) *socialized aggression*- often members of gangs, may steal or vandalize because the peer culture expects it

Without utilizing describable behaviors in their definition, Eggen and Kauchak (1992) defined behavior disorder in this manner:

> A type of exceptionality characterized by the display of serious and persistent age-inappropriate behavior that result in social conflict, personal unhappiness and school failure (p. G-2).

For the purposes of this study, both definitions are necessary for an understanding of emotional and behavioral disorders; however, the label "behaviorally disordered" (BD) will be used to encompass the labels of "serious emotionally disturbed," "emotionally disordered," or "emotionally disturbed."

The variety in definition and interpretation of P. L. 94-142 may contribute to the wide percentage range of children identified as having these emotional or behavioral disorders. Roach (1991) summarized data from the 1991 *Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act* that nearly 10% (4.5 million) of all students are enrolled in special education. And of those 4.5 million children, 9% (405,000) have been labeled as having "Serious Emotional Disturbance." The other categories (Specific Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation) that may have students displaying behaviors characteristic of BD children are not included in this 9% because they are classified by their *primary*

exceptionality, not secondary ones. Roach (1991) also notes that the percentages vary widely by state and by district. "For instance, in Massachusetts nearly 17% of students are enrolled in special education, while in Hawaii the figure is less than 7%." She continued with figures for specific disabilities, "In Connecticut, nearly 19% of students enrolled in special education are labeled as seriously emotionally disturbed, while in Idaho less than 3% are place in this category" (p. 1).

Hypotheses to be Tested

It was hypothesized that a positive correlation would exist between (1) experienced regular classroom teachers' ability to identify effective intervention strategies for mainstreaming BD students into regular classes and the training they had received in this area and (2) experienced teachers' knowledge of effective and ineffective intervention strategies for working with BD students and their willingness to accept them in their regular classes. It was also hypothesized that (3) experience with BD students in regular classrooms would correlate positively with willingness when effective strategies were known (4) prior experience would correlate negatively with willingness to mainstream when correct knowledge was lacking and that (5) training and knowledge (as defined by the instrument) would be positively correlated.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

The study was predicated upon the following assumptions:

1) Placing special education students in the least restrictive environment possible is a desirable practice. According to the spirit of P. L. 94-142, placing special needs children with their peers in regular classroom

situations whenever possible is most beneficial to special education students. Some argue that this also benefits regular children by helping them deal with and respect diversity (Mancus interview, 1992).

2) A teacher's knowledge of effective and ineffective intervention strategies is one indicator of his/her ability to effectively mainstream BD children.

Limits of the study included:

1) The term E/BD used in the study did not differentiate between emotional disorders (ED) and behavioral disorders (BD). "Mainstreaming" was not defined in the instrument as a specific amount time spent in the regular classroom (i.e. "special education children are in regular classrooms for a minimum of 50% of the day"). Mainstreaming is referred to in the survey's cover letter as instruction of students identified as behaviorally disordered or emotionally disordered in the "regular" classroom.

2) The population surveyed was limited to twenty teachers from three schools in a midwestern twin-city of 100,000 people, who volunteered to be involved.

Review of the Literature

Mooney and Algozzine (1978) found that behaviors characteristic of emotionally disturbed children were more disturbing to regular education teachers than were the behaviors characteristic of learning disabled students. Vandivier & Vandivier (1981) likewise found that BD/ED students pose special problems for regular classroom teachers. They reported that teachers were less disturbed by mainstreaming of educable

mentally retarded students than by mainstreaming behaviorally or emotionally disordered students.

Many interventions have been identified in the literature to overcome the disturbing behaviors of emotionally or behaviorally disordered students. In a study by Witt, Elliott, & Martens (1984) five interactive dimensions influencing teacher's appraisal of a particular intervention strategy for use with BD children were identified. They included "general acceptability, risk, teacher time required, effect on other children, and teacher skill required (p. 102)." Teachers preferred intervention strategies which require less teacher time and special training and "positive" (reinforcing) strategies over "negative" (punishing) ones. Witt et. al. (1984) also found that

> Interventions which require the most skill and training to implement are ones in which the behavior problem is severe and the amount of teacher time is high. Interestingly, the interventions which were seen [by teachers] as requiring the least skill and training to implement are ones in which the severity of the behavior problem is high and the extra teacher time is lowest (p. 102).

O'Reilly and Duquette (1988) in a Canadian study, inventoried experienced teachers' attitudes about mainstreaming in a questionnaire based on Rogers' (1983) theory of innovation, utilizing his five factors (relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, "trialability," and "observability"). Teachers reported that mainstreaming special education

students does not require undue effort by the teacher in terms of time or adaptation in teaching styles. Teachers also felt that mainstreaming was an innovation they could *technically* implement, but they did not feel competent in teaching exceptional children in their classrooms despite their previous experience in working with handicapped students and attending in-service sessions on mainstreaming (O'Reilly & Duquette, 1988). Knoff (1985) found similar results concerning teachers' lack of confidence in their abilities and their lack of willingness to mainstream. In this study, an average of 74% of regular educator respondents (N = 200) considered themselves unprepared to teach exceptional children. If given a choice, 79% of the respondents would not be willing to accept special education students into their classrooms.

Wood (1991) examined the costs of implementing a management intervention with emotional/behavioral disordered students in terms of the direct cost of implementation, costs related to assessment, planning, and evaluation. In this study, he presented four categories of intervention strategies and lists of respective behaviors. These behaviors were given cost weights by teachers from low cost to high cost. Low cost items were those interventions that regular classroom teachers should be expected to readily implement. A middle cost item might be represented with a two-way communication between teacher and student. High cost interventions are those commonly associated with classroom practices of special education teachers, psychologists, or social workers. More severe behavioral disorders are perceived as more stressful for the teacher and the student and require high cost intervention strategies. This high cost (taking more of the teacher's time, emotional or physical energy) of dealing with

emotional/behavioral disordered children may be the cause of some reluctance of teachers to mainstream.

The costs of intervention are always a factor when dealing with a crisis situation. Canter (1982) identified four stages of verbal aggression and suggested intervention strategies for each stage. According to Canter, intervention should expediate moving through the stages and reduce the size of the confrontation. This would also facilitate the usage of more low cost interventions, as described by Wood (1991). A high cost method (such as physically restraining a child) should not be necessary if the teacher follows Canter's model and the size of confrontation is consequently reduced. Stage One (anxiety) requires that the teacher be supportive and empathetic. Stage Two (refusal) involves five main strategies (1) The teacher may give the student a choice of either completing a task or suffering a consequence. (2) The teacher may introduce reality to the student, (i.e. presenting the facts of the situation). (3) In bargaining with the student, the teacher may say "if you complete these five problems, you may have three minutes of free choice." (4) The broken record approach entails repetition of the teacher response, as to not let the student lead away from the matter at hand. (5) A direct firm command of possibly "sit down" is also useful. Stage Three (release or act out) is when the student shows the most observable behaviors of aggression. At this time, the student needs to be placed in timeout to calm down. During Stage Four (tension reduction) the child is most accepting to suggestions for improving behavior. Strategies to be used at Stage Four assist the child to analyze the crisis and possible solutions are derived from Glasser's reality therapy. Canter recommended active listening as another acceptable strategy to assist children in this goal.

Research Methodology

Sample

Twenty experienced regular classroom teachers from three schools in a twin city area of 100,000 people volunteered to respond to a survey on mainstreaming Emotionally/Behaviorally Disordered (E/BD) students. Schools were chosen through a recommendation of the district student services director. This recommendation was based upon the increased probability that teachers in these schools would have been in contact with E/BD students. Of the twenty volunteer teachers in the study, most teachers were female, most were teachers of primary grades and most teachers had had 11 or more years of teaching experience (see Table I).

Instrumentation

A survey was designed based on the work of Duquette & O'Reilly (1988), Fagen & Hill (1977), Knoff (1985), and Wells and Karnes as cited by *Resource Guide for Emotional Disabilities, Vol. 1* (1983). Demographic questions and questions assessing teachers' attitudes about mainstreaming were adapted and borrowed from Duquette & O'Reilly (1988) and Knoff (1985). The "knowledge" portion of the instrument included three types of general statements which teachers were asked to label as effective or ineffective strategies when dealing with E/BD students. 1) Some statements were modified from effective intervention and management strategies for mainstreaming BD children, as identified in Fagen and Hill (1977) and Wells and Karnes (1983) (see attached instrument for examples). These effective intervention strategies were duplicated in other sources, however, the above authors were chosen

because their work contained larger breadth of information. 2) Some statements of good regular classroom management practices (i.e. the daily schedule should remain flexible, changing with the moods of the students) included on the instrument have been identified as inappropriate strategies to use with behaviorally disordered children. These items were included to discriminate between those teachers who knew good classroom management techniques and those who knew appropriate BD intervention strategies. 3) Other items on the instrument were chosen as the inverse of effective classroom management techniques, making this category (in addition to the one above) a balance for the "correct" answers of effective intervention strategies.

The purpose of the survey was to determine:

1) Teachers' abilities to discriminate between teacher intervention strategies identified from the literature as effective and ineffective and
2) Teachers' classroom experiences with BD students.
3) Teachers' willingness to accept BD students into their classrooms
4) Teachers' training in university classes or in-service programs in effective strategies for mainstreaming BD students
5) Teachers' perceptions of and attitudes towards mainstreaming (see Table II)

Table I

Demographic Information of Respondents

Item	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Sex		
Male	4	20.0
Female	16	80.0
Level of grades taught		
Primary	12	60.0
Intermediate	8	40.0
Years of teaching		
1 to 3	0	0
4 to 5	1	5.0
6 to 10	3	15.0
11 or more	16	80.0
Number of BD students in the past five years		
1 to 3	6	30.0
4 to 6	8	40.0
7 to 10	1	5.0
11 or more	5	25.0

Table II

Teachers' perceptions about mainstreaming emotionally and behaviorally disordered students

Item	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
1) I have the skills necessary to assist and manage E/BD students in my classroom		
level of disagreement	10	50.0
level of agreement	10	50.0
2) An E/BD child is better served with a special ed. teacher as a consultant in the regular classroom than isolated in a special ed. classroom.		
level of disagreement	14	70.0
neutral	3	15.0
level of agreement	3	15.0
3) The education of regular students is affected negatively when E/BD students are in the classroom.		
level of disagreement	3	15.0
neutral	6	30.0
level of agreement	11	55.0
4) It is beneficial for regular education students to have an E/BD student in their classroom.		
level of disagreement	10	50.0
neutral	8	40.0
level of agreement	2	10.0
5) The academic needs of E/BD children can be better met in a special ed. classroom.		
level of disagreement	1	5.0
neutral	6	30.0
level of agreement	13	65.0

Table II (cont)

6) The social needs of E/BD children can be better met in a special ed. classroom.		
level of disagreement	3	15.0
neutral	8	40.0
level of agreement	9	45.0

Data Collection

At two of the schools, teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire at a faculty meeting. Approximately 50% of the teachers volunteered to participate. The other 50% indicated that they had not had enough experience in teaching E/BD students to respond. At the third school, the principal asked individual teachers who had contact with E/BD students in their classrooms to respond. Thirty percent of the teachers in this school participated.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Chi Square analysis to check for statistical significance with the following formula where O = "observed frequency" and E = "expected frequency":

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

"Expected frequency" was determined by the formula:

$$E = \frac{\text{(column total) x (row total)}}{\text{grand total}}$$

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was determined to examine relationships between teachers' knowledge and their willingness to

mainstream. Each respondent was given a composite score for knowledge, indicating their ability to identify effective and ineffective intervention strategies cited in the literature. One point was given for each response that correctly corresponded to the literature for a maximum score of 20. Composite scores were also formed for "training" by combining courses taken at the undergraduate/post-graduate level or staff development workshops. One point was given for each course or workshop attended, for a minimum score of "0" and a maximum score of "2."

Findings

Fifty-five percent of teachers received a score of eleven or fewer responses (out of twenty possible points) correct on knowledge (arbitrarily labeled "low knowledge scores"), and forty-five percent scored twelve or higher (labeled "high knowledge scores"). The mean score was 11.05. Forty-five percent of the teachers had not had any training in mainstreaming BD students, thirty-five percent had either had a university course or attended a staff development workshop, and twenty percent had had both. The mean amount of training was .75, or less than one course/staff workshop per participant. One teacher, when asked if willing to mainstream, responded "yes" and "no." Another teacher, when asked the same question, gave no response. The responses of these teachers were discarded when the comparison of variables involved the teachers' willingness to mainstream, thus, N = 18 in some of the findings.

The hypothesis that teachers' willingness to mainstream would correlate positively with knowledge of effective intervention strategies was not statistically supported (see Table III), although of the 10 teachers not willing to mainstream, 6 received low knowledge scores and of the teachers willing to mainstream, 5 had high knowledge scores.

Table III

A Comparison of Teachers' Willingness to Mainstream with Knowledge of Effective Intervention Strategies

		Knowledge scores	
		low	*high*
Willing to mainstream	yes	3 16.7%	5 27.8%
	no	6 33.3%	4 22.2%

(Chi-Square = .9, df = 1, p > .05), N = 18

The comparison of teachers' willingness to mainstream and the number of BD students they had taught proved to be statistically significant ($p < .025$). Table IV shows that the more BD students teachers had taught in the past 5 years, the more willing they were to mainstream.

Table IV

A Comparison of Teachers' Willingness to Mainstream and Their Experience with Behaviorally Disordered Students

		Willingness to mainstream	
		yes	*no*
Number of BD Students	1 to 3	0	6 33.3%
	4 to 6	4 22.2%	2 11.1%
	7 to 10	0	1 5.6%
	11 or more	4 22.2%	1 5.6%

(Chi-Square = 9.360, df = 3, p < .025), N = 18

Five teachers had mainstreamed eleven or more E/BD students in the past five years, an average of at least two exceptional children per year. Although no statistical significance was found, Table V shows that as the teachers had fewer number of BD students, the teachers received low knowledge scores, and as the teachers' experience with BD students increased, so did their knowledge scores.

Table V

Knowledge Scores Compared to the Number of Behaviorally Disordered Students Taught in the Past Five Years

		Knowledge scores	
		low	*high*
Number of BD Students	1 to 3	4 20.0%	2 10.0%
	4 to 6	5 25.0%	3 15.0%
	7 to 10	1 5.0%	0 0%
	11 or more	1 5.0 %	4 20.0%

(Chi-Square = 3.8047, df = 3, p > .05), N = 20

When asked about their own knowledge level, teachers were not accurate. Some teachers who reported that they did not have the skills received high knowledge scores, conversely, some teachers who reported having the skills necessary to mainstream received low knowledge scores (see Table VI).

Table VI

A Comparison of Teachers' Knowledge Scores and Self-Assessment of Skills Necessary to Mainstream

		Knowledge scores	
		low	*high*
"I have the skills to mainstream"	disagree	6 20.0%	5 25.0%
	agree	5 25.0%	4 20.0%

(Chi-Square = .0021, df = 1, p > .05), N = 20

In addition to knowledge, we assessed the teachers' training. While nearly half (9 out of 20) of the teachers had no courses or in-service training which addressed the needs of BD students, four teachers had had both a course and a workshop. Teacher's perception of their own skill level of mainstreaming BD students did not correlate with the amount of training they had had in that area (see Table VII).

Table VII

Self-Assessment of Skills Needed for Mainstreaming as Compared to Training

		Self-Assessment of Skills	
		disagree	*agree*
Amount of training	no courses or workshops	5 25.0%	4 20.0%
	1 course or 1 workshop	4 20.0%	4 20.0%
	both course and workshop	1 5.0%	2 10.0%

(Chi-Square = .4444, df = 2, p > .05), N = 20

The comparison of teachers' assessment of their mainstreaming skills and their willingness to mainstream BD students had no statistical significance (see Table VIII). However, of the 10 teachers who felt they did not have the skills, 7 indicated they were unwilling to mainstream, if given a choice and 5 of the 8 teachers who thought they did possess the skills necessary willing to mainstream were also willing to do so.

Table VIII

A Comparison of Teachers' Willingness to Mainstream and Self-Assessment of Their Mainstreaming Skills

		Willing to mainstream	
		yes	*no*
"I have the skills to mainstream"	disagree	3 16.7%	7 38.9%
	agree	5 27.8%	3 16.7%

(Chi-Square = 1.9473, df = 1, p > .05), N = 18

Finally, teachers' training and their knowledge scores were compared. Six of the nine teachers who reported having no courses or workshops in mainstreaming practices for E/BD children received low knowledge scores (see Table IX).

Table IX

Knowledge Scores as Compared to Training

		Knowledge scores	
		low	*high*
Number of courses or workshops	no courses or workshops	6 30.0%	3 15.0%
	1 course or 1 workshop	2 10.0%	5 25.0%
	both course and workshop	3 15.0%	1 5.0%

(Chi-Square = 3.1169, df = 2, p > .05), N = 20

Conclusions

The following factors may have contributed to the lack of statistical significance in some of the findings: 1) low population of respondents or 2) teachers view other qualities (than knowledge) when assessing their own skill level in mainstreaming behaviorally disordered students. Since no statistical significance was found between teachers' knowledge of effective intervention strategies and their willingness to mainstream in this population, we can only speculate about the reasons: this might be because of inconsistencies in the instrument, or perhaps a teacher's willingness depends on the quality of his/her mainstreaming experience and/or the class size. While the results of this study may not be generalized to all teachers, the researchers have drawn the following conclusions.

1) There is a population of teachers who feel they do not have the skills to mainstream, some of these have had training in mainstreaming BD children, some of these have not.

2) Knowledge, as measured by this instrument, does not adequately indicate a teachers' ability to mainstream BD children effectively.

3) There is a trend in this study that the more experienced the teacher is (i.e. the more BD children taught in the classroom in the past five years), the more willing they are to mainstream. Is it possible that behaviorally disordered students are being placed disproportionately with a few teachers who are willing to make the necessary adaptations?

4) In this study, a population of teachers responsible for the education of children identified as "BD" in their classrooms, have not received training to prepare them for this work.

Recommendations

Based on these conclusions, the following recommendations are offered for better facilitating the education of teachers:

1) It is recommended that further validation of the knowledge instrument developed for this study be carried out by (a) administering it to a test population and (b) including a larger sample in the population of teachers being surveyed. If all teachers in a school could be surveyed, this would eliminate some of the questions about the motives, knowledge, and experience of those teachers who chose not to respond to the survey.

2) In order to address the issue of teachers' lack of confidence and knowledge, and teachers' discomfort with mainstreaming, all teachers should be offered (if not required to participate in) in-service workshops on effective mainstreaming practices *which deal with specific exceptionalities,* in this case, behavioral disorders.

3) In order to better prepare first-year teachers for the classroom and help "inexperienced" teachers become knowledgeable and comfortable with mainstreaming practices, it is recommended that teacher education programs be re-evaluated. Undergraduate students should have instruction on and exposure to all types of exceptional children, including behaviorally disordered students. Guided instruction in a role-playing situation could follow the instructions used by Olson (1988), based on Canter's (1982) work. This model, intended to teach undergraduate students effective ways to deal with verbal aggression in emotionally handicapped students, included controlled practice, independent practice, and evaluation. During controlled practice, the students did role-playing activities with one another and were instructed to simulate all of the stages of verbal aggression. After this practice, the students were given a checklist of supportive

strategies to check the behaviors that they demonstrated during the role-playing activity. During the independent practice, each student videotaped one of the simulations with a peer and did a self-evaluation of their own tape. Using a different checksheet, each student was asked more probing questions about their practice (i.e. areas for improvement, other effective strategies that could have been used). A goal of the independent practice was to utilize all of the strategies for the students to internalize the behaviors they practiced.

4) Before effective instruction of "how to mainstream BD children" can occur, we must acknowledge the reservations and questions teachers have about mainstreaming. Further analysis of why teachers prefer not to mainstream (and why other teachers do) would be helpful in this area.

Discussion

With an increasing number of children being labeled as "behaviorally disordered" (Eitzen, 1992), the education of teachers and the school placement of special needs children deserve scrutiny. In an essay on our changing society, Eitzen provided an explanation of how social, political, and economic changes have caused an increase in the incidence of behaviorally disordered children. The increasing number of families living below the poverty level, increasing numbers of minorities, reduced government support for social services, the changing family, and conflicts between the media's projection of "the American dream" and its reality all have contributed to our increasing social problems and, therefore, increasing numbers of children and families who are "at-risk." Eitzen issued the following challenge, "Schools must be committed to the education of all children. This requires a special commitment to invest

extra resources in the disadvantaged, by assigning the most creative and effective teachers to them. . ." (1992, p. 590).

The changing forces of our society are undeniable. The solutions, however, are much more complex. Can exceptional children afford to have the number of special education classes decreased without having qualified regular classroom teachers able to meet their needs? And can our "regular" education students afford to have disruptions in the classroom if the teacher is not fluent in mainstreaming practices? Finally, is it justifiable to place 3 or 4 behaviorally disordered students with a teacher who already has 27 children and no added support services (as P. L. 94-142 mandates)? Three out of twenty teachers in this study (fifteen percent) were knowledgeable, willing to mainstream BD students if given a choice, and had the experience of mainstreaming eleven or more BD students in the past five years. This small, select group of open-minded and knowledgeable teachers, if indicative of the general population, would not be adequate to serve the increasing numbers of BD children in our schools.

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Classroom Teacher Survey

Placement and Management of Emotionally/Behaviorally Disordered Students

Respondent Information

____ Male ____ Female

Level of Students Taught

____ Kindergarten-Grade 3 ___ Grades 4-Grade 5

Years of Teaching

____ 1-3 years _____ 4 - 5 _____ 6-10 ____ 11 or more

How many students identified as behaviorally disordered have been placed (mainstreamed for part or all of the day) in your classroom in the last five years?

____ 0 ____ 1-3 ____ 4-6 ____ 7-10 ____ 11 or more

In your undergraduate or post-graduate work, did you have a course which prepared you for working with E/BD students?

____ yes ____ no

Have you ever had a teacher workshop/staff development program which informed you about working with E/BD students?

____ yes ____ no

PART I

Please indicate your thoughts about mainstreaming emotionally/behaviorally disordered students using the scale below.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**

____ 1) I have the skills necessary to assist and manage E/BD students in my classroom.

____ 2) An E/BD child is better served with a special education teacher assisting the regular classroom than isolated in a special education classroom.

____ 3) The education of "regular" students is affected negatively when E/BD students are in the classroom.

____ 4) It is beneficial for regular education students to have an E/BD student in their classroom.

____ 5) The academic needs of E/BD children can be better met in a special education classroom.

____ 6) The social needs of E/BD children can be better met in a special education classroom.

PART II

Indicate which classroom management behaviors you believe to be effective *when dealing with emotionally/behaviorally disordered students.* **Write "E" for effective and "I" for ineffective.**

____ 1) Inappropriate behavior is ignored.

____ 2) Non-verbal techniques (i.e., eye contact, hand gestures) are used to discourage undesired behaviors.

____ 3) Students are required to admit to wrongdoings.

____ 4) A child who has completely lost control is physically restrained.

____ 5) The daily schedule is flexible and allows for changing moods of the students.

____ 6) Classroom rules are altered to accommodate the needs of an E/BD student.

____ 7) Classroom rules are well-known and understood by the students.

For the following classroom rules (Items 8-10), indicate which rules you believe to be effective or ineffective ones in classrooms with E/BD students.

____ 8) Raise your hand before you leave your seat.

____ 9) Be courteous.

____ 10) Respect one another.

For the following teacher statements (Items 12-15), indicate which you believe to be effective or ineffective when dealing with E/BD students.

____ 12) "I am disappointed when you don't listen to my directions."

____ 13) "You were fooling around, so you will stay in at recess."

____ 14) "Since your paper was in on time, you may have five minutes of free time after lunch."

____ 15) "You are a disappointment when you don't finish your work."

With a child temporarily out of control (i.e. hiccups, uncontrollable laughter, feelings of anger, disappointment) which strategies would you deem effective/ineffective?

____ 16) Send the child out of the room on an errand.

____ 17) Place the child in timeout in the classroom.

____ 18) Ignore the behavior.

If a child is playing with an object (i.e. toy cars, pencils, rubberbands) during instruction time, which of Items 19-21 would be effective or ineffective?

____ 19) Remove the object from the child.

____ 20) Move closer to the child while instructing.

____ 21) Ask the child to remove the object/put it away.

* * *

22) If you had a choice, would you agree to accept an E/BD student in your classroom?

_____ yes _____ no