Abstract

Since the inception of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, educators have struggled with including students with disabilities in the general education classroom with their nondisabled peers. The inclusion educational model was utilized in this study to explore secondary teachers’ attitudes toward inclusive educational practices. This research was conducted using the Inclusion Attitude Scale for High School Teachers (ISHST), a Web-based survey developed by Ernst and Rogers (2009), and researcher-developed descriptive questions. The ISHST measures teachers’ attitudes along three attitude domains—cognitive, affective, and behavior. Once the quantitative and descriptive data were collected, it was analyzed using the multivariate analysis of variance statistical procedure and thematic coding analysis methodology, respectively. The results indicated that teachers’ attitudes are generally positive toward the theory of providing inclusion practices, as measured by the ISHST; however, when asked to express their beliefs about the practice of inclusion in the open-ended descriptive questions, the results are overwhelmingly negative toward the practice of inclusion. In fact, the most significant factor associated with these negative teacher attitudes is the perceived lack of school leadership support for teachers providing inclusion education services in the general education classrooms. This study emphasizes the importance of teacher preparation practices at the collegiate level as a contributing factor impacting teachers’ attitudes, as well as the importance of how teachers’ beliefs about the practice of inclusion education impact their behaviors, thereby impacting the actual practice of providing inclusion services in the secondary general education setting.