

General Education Teachers' Concerns and Self-Efficacy Beliefs in Working with Students with Disabilities

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Abstract

Recent policy initiatives of the Government of India ushered in a new era for the education of children with disabilities. A major emphasis of these initiatives has been the inclusion and full participation of students with disabilities in regular schools. They emphasize non-discrimination and removal of barriers, both physical and psychological, to facilitate the inclusion of students with special needs into regular schools. They have urged policy makers, educators, parents and other service providers to consider the premise that special education should be seen not only in the context of separate education but also as an integral part of regular education. This study, therefore, examined the concerns and self-efficacy beliefs of general secondary school teachers working in government-run schools in Uttar Pradesh, India in working with students with disabilities. A total of 51 teachers responded to a three-part questionnaire. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The data indicated that the teachers in Uttar Pradesh, overall, had a moderate level of concerns, 2.62 on a 4 point scale. With regard to self-efficacy, the mean self-efficacy score for the scale was 4.18. This score indicates that the teachers in this study considered themselves as somewhat prepared to work with students with disabilities. Significant differences were found in teachers' professional characteristics and the levels of concerns and self-efficacy beliefs.

Keywords: classroom; disabilities; inclusion; students; teachers