

SPA08638

Primary education preservice teachers' attitudes on inclusion and perceptions on preparedness to respond to classroom diversity

Ilektra Spandagou, David Evans and Cathy Little
Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney

Abstract

This paper presents data from a project evaluating the implementation of a new teaching framework in preparing general education teachers for working in diverse classrooms. One of the aims of the research project is to establish what the preservice teachers' attitudes towards inclusion both prior and after the completion of a special and inclusive education unit of study are.

The overall aim of this research project is to develop and evaluate a Problem Based Learning (PBL) teaching framework for the two mandatory special and inclusive education units of study offered to all education students in a large University. One of these units is offered to all students enrolled in four-year undergraduate teacher training programs and the other to students enrolled in the postgraduate teacher training program.

The three members of the teaching team conducted a needs' analysis to identify approaches of improving students' learning experience. A PBL teaching framework (Johnson, 2004; Ockjean, Utke, and Hupp, 2005; Van Laarhoven et al., 2006; Lambe, 2007) was considered appropriate for integrating further the philosophical, theoretical, pedagogical, practical, and assessment elements of the course, as well as the practical experience undertaken by the students.

This paper presents data from the primary education cohort of the postgraduate teacher training program. The survey was administered at the beginning and the end of a six-week unit of study. The survey examines preservice teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and perceptions of their preparedness to teach in diverse classrooms. The analysis of the results indicates that there was a positive shift in all categories explored in the survey questions, and in particular in the participants' perception of their preparedness. It appears also that the preservice teachers' attitudes towards inclusion at the end of the course not only were more positive but also more informed in terms of a cohesive understanding of the issues involved.

Background

The principles of inclusive education as expressed in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) have influenced legislation and policy internationally. The United Nations' (2006) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reiterates the call for the development of inclusive education systems at all levels of education. According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, for inclusion to be successful, 'effective individualized support measures' including 'reasonable adjustments' are required (UN, 2006, p. 17). In Australia the Disability Discrimination Act (Commonwealth, 1992) and the Disability Standards for Education (Commonwealth, 2005) reinforce the right to education of students with a disability 'on the same basis as' students without a disability. Even though the Disability Discrimination Act does not specify the setting where students with a disability should be educated, there is an expectation that regular classroom teachers would be able to meet the diverse needs of their students.

One of the factors influencing the effective implementation of inclusion is teachers' attitudes. There is substantial research examining teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and disability. Although it appears that teachers tend to be in favour of inclusion as a social and educational principle, their support of the practical implementation of inclusion is dependent on the type and severity of disability, with more reluctant views expressed towards the inclusion of students with more 'severe disabilities' and students with behaviour disabilities (Scruggs and Mastropieri, 1996; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002). Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) in their synthesis of studies conducted during a 38 year period concluded that there is no relation between the year of publication of a study and teachers' attitudes. As Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) argue this implies that that the effect of societal attitudes and more positive perceptions of disabilities in recent years have none or limited influence on teachers actual perceptions. They continue that

the lack of improvement in perceptions of teacher preparedness for mainstreaming/inclusion over time suggests that teacher education program may be no more effective at preparing teachers for mainstreaming/inclusion now than they were more than 2 decades ago.

(Scruggs and Mastropieri, 1996, p. 71)

The last fifteen years have seen an increased interest in exploring the effectiveness of teacher education programs for preparing teachers to work in diverse classrooms. This is

particularly the case since research in teachers' attitudes reports a general dissatisfaction of teachers with their preservice training in meeting the needs of students with a disability or special education needs. This is of significance since there is also evidence that the degree of teachers' perception of their preparedness for inclusion and their attitudes towards inclusion relate (Van Reusen, Shoho, and Barker, 2001).

This 'pedagogical shift' (Sharma, Forlin, Loreman, and Earle, 2006, p. 80) has created new demands for teacher education programs. There is an expectation that general education preservice training programs will instil teachers with positive attitudes towards inclusion and students with a disability as well as equip them with the knowledge and skills required for working in diverse classrooms. Research in the field focuses on a number of areas with the majority of studies exploring the attitudes that preservice teachers hold towards inclusion and students with a disability (Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden, 2000; Tait and Purdie, 2000; Alghraza, Dodeen, Algaryoouti, 2003; Hodkinson, 2005; Sharma et al., 2006; Lambe and Bones, 2006a; Lambe and Bones, 2006b).

Most of these studies employ quantitative methodologies with the use of surveys and questionnaires. The variation in the language and terminology used as well as the research questions, instruments, sampling procedures and analysis of findings affect the extent that comparisons between studies and generalisations can be made. Although personal characteristics (e.g. gender, cultural background) are noted as influencing preservice teachers' attitudes in some studies, it appears that contextual factors (e.g. prevailing social attitudes towards disability, inclusive policy and practice), contact with people with a disability, and training are the main factors influencing attitudes. However, the actual ways that these factors interplay in shaping preservice teachers' attitudes in different contexts have not been fully explored (Sharma et al., 2006).

In terms of preparedness, Lambe and Bones (2006a) report that preservice teachers' concerns relate to 'personal adequacy and prejudices regarding inclusion' (p. 521). From the 108 participants that completed their survey before the commencement of an elective unit in inclusive education, 52.2% agreed with the statement 'it is impossible to try and accommodate too many differences in one classroom' while 57.4% considered that they did not have sufficient skills to teach in an inclusive setting.

A number of research studies discuss the effectiveness of different approaches of preparing preservice teachers for inclusion. There is an increased recognition that the 'permeation' or 'embedded' model in which instruction in the area of inclusion is

incorporated in all units of studies and a separate, 'specialised unit' is not available can be problematic in its application. As Avramidis et al. (2000) state, the participants in their study found this type of experience 'as unplanned and incoherent which does not argue well for the development of student competence' (p. 290). The implementation and effectiveness of this model is difficult also to be researched and evaluated. An alternative, middle-ground approach is when specific, well-defined activities for inclusive education training are incorporated in a general education subject (Golder, Norwich, and Bayliss, 2005; Pearson, 2007).

However, the prevailing model found in the literature is that of a mandatory or elective subject on inclusive and/or special education (Van Laarhove, et al 2006; Lancaster and Bain, 2007; Lambe, 2007; Van Laarhoven, Munk, Lynch, Bosma, and Rouse, 2007). Different innovative approaches are discussed in the literature in terms of providing preservice teachers with increased opportunities to explore their attitudes. Forlin and Hopewell (2006) for example used the account of a mother of a child with high support needs as a stimulus for reflection. Carroll, Forlin and Jobling (2003) provided increased opportunities for interaction with people with disabilities in tutorials, including the viewing of relevant videos and participation in a 'buddy system' at schools. After the completion of the course positive changes in preservice teachers' attitudes were reported, especially in the areas of 'uncertainty' and 'coping' (p. 76). Positive change in attitudes was also reported by Campbell, Gilmore and Cuskelly (2003) in a study where preservice teachers interviewed members of the community in terms of their knowledge of Down syndrome and inclusive education. Although in this case the participants did not have necessarily direct contact with people with a disability, their attitudes were positively affected.

Van Laarhoven, et al. (2006; 2007) implemented a model called ACCEPT in which special and general education preservice teachers participated. The model included a simulated lesson plan as a class assignment, a field experience in an inclusive classroom and the development of specific competences using vignettes with students' profiles. Participation in the model was voluntary and a 'control group' followed the traditional unit of study. Participants in the Project ACCEPT were overwhelmingly positive (91%) about their experience (Van Laarhoven et al, 2006). It appears that the general education preservice teachers benefited more than the special education preservice teachers from the program in terms of knowledge and skills acquired and both these groups benefited more than the control group which followed the traditional unit of study. However, the responses

of all three groups to an attitudinal survey did not result in any overall significant differences between the three groups (Van Laarhoven et al, 2007).

The effect of different models of instruction to preservice teachers' 'self-efficacy' was explored by Lancaster and Bain (2007). Three different groups of students participated in seven weeks of a common program of a subject and then in six weeks of differentiated ones. One group received one-on-one student mentoring experience with students being at risk of underachievement, while a second group undertook an inclusive classroom support experience and the last group continued with the university-based program. Although both the first two groups reported higher gains in self-efficacy, it was the mentoring group that gained the most. The differences between the three groups however were not statistically significant.

From the above discussion it becomes evident that in general, there is a positive change in attitudes before and after undertaking an inclusive/special education unit of study and this is the case across a number of contexts and countries (Ching, Forlin, and Mei Lan, 2007; Kyriakou, Avramidis, Høie, Stephens, and Hultgren, 2007). It might be that by simply having some type of formalised input, the awareness of general education preservice teachers increases. Thus, opportunities for contact with students with a disability, field placement, problem-based learning, simulations, and on-line support seem to enrich the experiences of preservice teachers but there is no clear indication of the actual effect that each of them have on attitudes.

Research project

The PBL teaching framework

This paper focuses on one aspect of a wider research study. The overall study aims to evaluate the Problem Based Learning (PBL) teaching framework that was introduced in the two mandatory special and inclusive education units of study in a large University. A number of sources were utilised for data collection including an attitudinal survey, formal evaluations, focus groups with students, as well as feedback from the teaching team and students' assessment. In this paper findings from the attitudinal survey are presented. The survey was administered to students at the beginning and at the end of the unit. The survey explores the preservice teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and their preparedness to respond to classroom diversity and it was used both as a measure of capturing preservice

teachers' attitudes before undertaking the unit of study as well as of any change at completion. Before continuing with the discussion of the survey data, a short presentation of the PBL teaching framework follows as an overview of what took place between the pre- and post- survey.

The PBL teaching framework is implemented in two different units with different credit weighting offered as part of undergraduate as well as postgraduate teacher training programs to students trained to be primary or secondary teachers. For that reason the framework needed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of specific groups. The framework's development was based on previous years' student formal evaluations. This feedback resonated with the findings of current research in the field. That is, students find that their special and inclusive education training is extremely relevant, but not sufficient in preparing them to meet diverse needs in the regular classroom (Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden, 2000; Van Reusen, Shoho, and Barker, 2000; Lambe and Bones, 2006).

A number of activities constitute the unit of study; a series of lectures and tutorials, volunteer field placement organised by the students themselves (all BEd and BTeach secondary education students) or supervised in-school experience (BTeach primary education students –which is the group discussed in this paper), and assessment tasks. All the activities of the unit of study are integrated in the PBL framework through the use of case studies.

The case studies allow for contextual information to be given about the school, the teacher, the class and its environment thus avoiding an individualised or 'deficit' approach to inclusion. The case studies represent schools from different sectors (government, catholic, and independent) in metropolitan or rural areas with different socio-economic and cultural characteristics. In each case study the school and its community is described and then a teacher teaching a specific class is presented. Diversity in terms of gender, age, cultural background, experience, knowledge, and attitudes characterise also the teachers represented in the case studies. Finally in each class three students are identified as 'key students'. The key students in each case study have additional educational needs. The additional educational needs represented in the case studies cover different types of disability, special education needs, learning difficulties, behaviour issues and mental health issues. Further, the case studies embed characteristics of cultural, ethnical and social diversity. The concept of classroom diversity used in the case studies is broad and not limited to students receiving special education support.

Primary education preservice teachers' attitudes on inclusion and perceptions on preparedness to respond to classroom diversity

In the first tutorial the students are allocated to small groups in which they work for the duration of the unit of study. The tutorial activities allow the groups to engage with their case study and using the stimuli of lectures and readings to develop their case studies and respond to the issues raised in their scenarios. The areas covered during the lectures and tutorials are represented in the unit of study rationale (see Table 1). The three areas of inclusive principles, effective teaching practices and behaviour management are underpinned by the common themes of attitudes and collaboration.

The topics covered in the tutorials are current legislation and the Disability Standards for Education (2005), Learning Support Teams, Individualised Education Plans, Accommodations and Learning Adjustments, and Behaviour Support Plans. In the final tutorial each group presents their case study and discusses how they collaborated to meet the needs of students, teachers and the school community in general.

Table 1: Rationale of the PBL teaching framework

Attitudes towards disability and inclusive education	A. Principles of inclusive/special education	Importance of collaboration
	B. Effective teaching practices in order to respond to the diversity of the classroom	
	C. Behaviour Management strategies (whole-school and classroom)	
Graduate attributes		

The PBL teaching framework emphasises students' engagement in group work and collaboration. Opportunities however are given for personal reflection and to that end students develop two professional statements; one on inclusion and one on behaviour management. In addition, Reflective Commentaries give the opportunity to respond on weekly readings and diverse stimuli (a comment, quote, cartoon, etc). These short commentaries allow for weekly written feedback to be given to students.

A significant aspect of the unit of study is the field placement or in-school experience. This paper presents data from the Bachelor of Teaching primary education group. This group undertakes the in-school experience that consists of 15 hours in school working with a child with additional needs in literacy. The experience has been the subject of previous research (e.g., Evans, Moore, & Strnadová, 2007), with students reporting it to be beneficial in bringing together theory and practice.

Preservice teachers undertake an introductory seminar on working with students with literacy difficulties during O-week. In this seminar students are provided with background information on working with a child with literacy difficulties, and introduced to the process for assessing current levels of skills and knowledge and developing an individual program. The first in-school experience tutorial in the proceeding week is used to elaborate on this introductory session, with the second session of the week conducted in schools working with a child. The ensuing five weeks preservice teachers attend two, three-hour tutorial sessions per week in schools.

During the time in schools preservice teachers are under the supervision of an experienced learning support teacher. Preservice teachers work with these teachers to develop and refine the literacy program for their target child. The program is based primarily around reading, and works to enhance the child's skills, knowledge and confidence in reading. Prior to tutorial sessions preservice teachers engage in a tutorial with their mentor, which typically addresses issues that arise from a reading set for the week discussing instructional practices for accommodating students with reading difficulties. After each tutorial session, preservice teachers work with their mentor to plan for the next tutorial session. These planning sessions allow preservice teachers to ask their mentor questions, and clarify issues that have arisen during tutorial times.

Survey

The survey instrument comprises 26 closed-question items answered on a Likert scale response format. The four-point response scale range from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The survey was presented in two sections. The first section asks for demographic information which includes: gender, age, course of study, major subject area, previous degree, year of study and whether the participants have previous experience working with or contact with students or people with a disability.

The second section of the survey consists of 26 items which measure the participants' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with special educational needs into regular education classrooms and their perceptions of their preparedness to respond to classroom diversity. This section of the survey instrument is composited from three existing questionnaires (Antonak and Livneh, 1988; Van Reusen et al, 2000; Lambe & Bones, 2006). Independently, these pre-existing surveys were used with diverse populations: preservice teachers, high school teachers and general population; and each focused upon

Primary education preservice teachers' attitudes on inclusion and perceptions on preparedness to respond to classroom diversity

attitudes towards inclusion or preparedness for inclusive teaching. None was felt to address both elements sufficiently for this study, hence a representative sample of questions was chosen from each questionnaire for inclusion in this survey. A small number of items was slightly reworded to account for contextual differences in education systems and terminology and the fact that preservice teachers' attitudes and perceptions were explored in relation to their future practice.

The 26 items address five areas of interest. All three original surveys contribute to items across the five categories. Of the 26 items, thirteen measure participants' attitudes towards inclusion across two categories: general statements on inclusion, and effects of inclusion on teachers and classrooms. These teacher attitude items assess preservice teachers' theoretical and practical perceptions of the inclusion of students with special educational needs into regular education classrooms. Examples of items in these categories are: 'The best way to ensure equality of provision is for all pupils to be educated in an inclusive classroom' (General statements) and 'Teacher effectiveness is compromised by the amount of preparation required for placement of special needs students into the regular classroom' (Effects of inclusion).

Nine items measure preservice teacher preparedness for teaching in inclusive classrooms across two categories: general teacher preparedness and personal teacher preparedness. The teacher preparedness items measure the level of confidence preservice teachers have about working with students with special educational needs in their classes and their level of preparedness to cater for said students. Examples of items in these categories are: 'I feel that special education teachers can best meet the needs of students who require significant modifications to the curriculum' (General Teacher preparedness) and 'I can be effective with special education students in my future teaching' (Personal Teacher preparedness).

The remaining four items measure participant attitudes regarding the behaviour of students with special educational needs. These items seek to explore how preservice teachers perceive the behaviour of SEN students in their classes. An example is 'Special education students are socially well adjusted in the classroom'.

Participants

The survey was administered to three groups of students in the first semester of 2008. The results discussed in this paper relate to the 2nd year Bachelor of Teaching – Primary preservice teachers enrolled in the mandatory special and inclusive education unit of study.

Of the 74 enrolments in the initial cohort, 57 complete responses were received for both the pre and post survey. Age and gender distribution is shown in Table 2. Of the 57 respondents, 30 indicated they had previous experience working with or had contact with students or people with a disability and 27 participants that had not.

Table 2: Age and Gender distribution

Gender	Total	Age		
		20 – 30	31 – 40	41 - 50
Male	8	4	4	0
Female	49	37	10	2
Total	57	41	14	2

All participants possessed at least a 3 year previous degree, the majority being in the areas of Arts and Science. All respondents met requirements for entry into the Master of Teaching program.

Procedure

Following successful submission of ethics application in January 2008, the survey was developed and reviewed by colleagues, both local and international. The participants were informed about the research in O-Week before the beginning of classes. The initial survey was administered to all participants at the beginning of the first lecture. Following 6 hours of lectures and 6 hours of tutorials, participants were again surveyed using the same instrument in the final, sixth, lecture.

Presentation of results and discussion

The data collected from the survey was initially sorted to identify those that did provide ethics approval for participation in the study. The second level of data sorting was conducted to identify respondents who completed surveys both prior to and at the conclusion of the subject. A total of 57 complete pairs of surveys were identified from a total enrolment of 76 students (75% return rate of survey pairs).

The data from surveys were coded and entered onto a spreadsheet that was transferred for analysis to a SPSS data file. The coded responses for each of the survey items within each of the five categories were summed. A summary of summed responses is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Pre and Post Survey Responses by Category (n=57)

Survey Category	Pre		Post	
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
General Statements of Inclusion (A1)	11.16	2.77	10.12	3.01
Effects of Inclusion on Teachers/Classroom (A2)	5.53	1.33	5.04	1.54
General Teacher Preparedness (B1)	5.35	1.65	4.70	1.46
Personal Teacher Preparedness (B2)	7.95	1.39	5.67	1.81
Teacher Attitudes (Behaviour) (C)	5.12	1.62	4.58	1.56

An examination of descriptive data in Table 3 shows that there was a shift in mean responses for each of the five survey categories towards a more positive attitude of inclusion (indicated by a decrease in the mean value). As the data violated normality on KS statistic, a series of non-parametric t-tests were conducted to establish differences in pre and post survey data for each of the five categories. A statistically significant difference was found between the means for each of the five categories ($p < .05$). The difference in means showed that preservice teachers' responses were more positive towards inclusive education and their preparedness to cater for students with special education needs after completing the subject.

Further examination of individual participants' responses found considerable variation in pre and post responses. A small number of preservice teachers commenced the subject with attitudes that were reserved, and these attitudes remained the same at the end of the six-week subject. In future research, the reasons of this caution would need to be established by interviewing for instance, specific participants in relation to their survey responses. On the whole, however, these reservations were not a common pattern. The majority of preservice teachers started with relatively positive attitudes towards inclusion which were strengthened at the completion of the course.

An examination of individual survey items was also conducted to establish if participants made strong shifts in any direction in their responses. Three items were identified where more than 50% of students were more positive in their responses, resulting in a mean change of nearly one response's rating on the Likert scale. Each of these three

items related to the skills and knowledge that students had to cater for students with special needs. That is, students believed the subject had prepared them adequately for teaching students' or had the instructional background that would assist them to cater for students with a special need.

An examination of the correlation between the five categories pre and post survey was undertaken. These results showed that there were no strong correlations between categories on the pre survey data. Data on the post survey showed a number of statistically significant and moderately strong correlations (i.e., 0.4 – 0.7 (Burns, 2000)) between categories. These data is shown in Table 4. The strength between categories provided some evidence that preservice teachers at the end of the subject were aware of the inter-relationship between areas. The one exception was for the category relating to personal preparedness. The relationship of this category was limited with each of the other four categories. One explanation of the lack of correlation between personal preparedness and the other categories may be that this was the only category that participants were called to respond in relation to themselves and their personal knowledge and skills. All other categories explored their attitudes and beliefs towards inclusion of students with special education need and general teacher preparedness.

Table 4: Correlations between Categories on Post Survey

	A1	A2	B1	B2	C
A1					
A2	0.237				
B1	0.448 *	0.403*			
B2	0.371	0.191	0.357		
C	0.140	0.438*	0.405*	0.151	

* Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)

A final analysis was undertaken to establish if previous contact with people with a disability influenced responses either in the pre or post survey. The results were not statistically different, with means showing that both groups of participants, those with and without previous contact, showed more positive attitudes and preparedness in the post survey. Preservice teachers who had no previous contact with people with a disability showed greater gains in this positive shift, but this was not statistically different.

The analysis of the pre/post surveys provide evidence that participation in the inclusive/special education unit of study has a positive impact on the preservice teachers'

Primary education preservice teachers' attitudes on inclusion and perceptions on preparedness to respond to classroom diversity

attitudes towards inclusion as well as their sense of preparedness to meet the needs of students in diverse classrooms. The positive impact on attitudes towards inclusive education is consistent with the majority of the existing research. The finding that in the post survey there were statistically significant and moderately strong correlations between four of the survey categories may provide an indication of how the PBL teaching framework assisted preservice teachers in developing their personal philosophy on inclusion. Although this is a hypothesis that needs to be tested further with the rest of the groups participating in the study, there is initial evidence to argue that participants in this study related their attitudes to the rationale of the PBL teaching framework (i.e. philosophy/policy, effective teaching practices, behaviour management and attitudes towards inclusion and disability) which are represented in the categories of the survey.

Further, the significant change in the perception of personal preparedness may be related to the characteristics of the in-school experience component. As it was discussed, Lancaster and Bain (2007) found that the one-on-one student mentoring experience resulted in greater gains in self-efficacy when compared with the inclusive classroom support experience or the university-based program. The in-school experience component of the postgraduate teacher training program shares some of the characteristics described by Lancaster and Bain; being structured and highly supervised.

This is again an area that the comparative analysis of the different groups' data will assist to explore further since this particular group is the only one that engages in this type of experience. Comparing this group with, for example, the BEd primary education group that undergoes a field placement which is not supervised –but at the same time receives double the university-based contact hours– could allow us to possibly unpack some of the relations between different types of experience and perception of preparedness.

Further analysis is also needed to explore some of the limitations of the current study. The validity and reliability of the initial surveys cannot be assumed after they were adapted for this study. This is an area that more analysis needs to be conducted. In addition, up to this point we haven't been able to unpack the reasons for some participants 'resistance to change' and it may be possible that our instrument is unable to provide any answer in this question and further exploration is required with qualitative methodologies. Adding to that, the high intensity and short duration of the unit of study with this group of students means that a short period of time separates the pre and post administration of the survey. It is not

Primary education preservice teachers' attitudes on inclusion and perceptions on preparedness to respond to classroom diversity

possible to tell whether the 'effect' of the unit of study as it is presented in the post-survey is going to last.

In conclusion, from the presentation of the initial results of this study it appears that the PBL teaching framework is effective in positively influencing preservice teachers' attitudes and their perception of preparedness. The strong positive change in the perception of preparedness is an indication that the more positive attitudes are not simply the result of inclusive/special education training, but of the specific elements of the PBL teaching framework. It can be argued that engagement with the case studies and collaborative work provides students the opportunity to contextualise and integrate their learning from the different elements of the subject (lectures, tutorials, readings, in-school experience and assessment). Additional analysis of the presented data as well as comparisons with the other groups participating in this study will allow exploring these findings further and informing the future development of the units of study.

References

- Alghazo, E., Dodeen, H., & Algaryouti, I. (2003). Attitudes of pre-service teachers towards persons with disabilities: predictions for the success of inclusion. *College Student Journal*, 37(3), 515-522.
- Antonak, R., & Livneh, H. (1988). *The Measurement of Attitudes toward People with Disabilities: Methods, psychometrics, and scales*, Springfield, IL: C.C.Thomas.
- Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: a review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17(2), 129-147.
- Avramidis, E., Bayliss, P., & Burden, R. (2000). Student teachers attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the ordinary school. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16, 277-293.
- Boling, E. (2007). "Yeah, but I still don't want to deal with it". Changes in a teacher candidate's conceptions of inclusion. *Teaching Education*, 18(3), 217-231.
- Burns, R. (2000). *Introduction to Research Methods* (4th ed.). Sydney: Longman.
- Campbell, J. Gilmore, L., & Cuskelly, M. (2003). Changing student teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusion. *Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability*, 28(4), 369-379.
- Carroll, A., Forlin, C., & Jobling, A. (2003). The impact of teacher training in special education on the attitudes of Australian preservice general educators towards people with disabilities. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 65-79.
- Ching, S., Forlin, C., & Mei Lan, A. (2007). The influence of an inclusive education course on attitude change of pre-service secondary teachers in Hong Kong. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(2), 161-179.
- Commonwealth -Attorney-General's Department. (2005). *Disability Standards for Education (2005)*. Canberra: Author.
- Commonwealth -Attorney-General's Department. (1992). *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992)*. Canberra: Author.
- Evans, D., Moore, C., & Strnadová, I. (2007). University-school partnerships: Literacy and students with additional learning needs. In A. Simpson, *Future directions in literacy: International conversations*. University of Sydney, Australia: University of Sydney Press.
- Forlin, C., & Hopewell, T. (2006). Inclusion –the heart of the matter: trainee teachers' perceptions of a parent's journey. *British Journal of Special Education*, 33(2), 55-61.
- Golder, G., Norwich, B., & Bayliss, P. (2005). Preparing teachers to teach pupils with special educational needs in more inclusive schools: evaluating a PGCE development. *British Journal of Special Education*, 32(2), 92-99.
- Johnson, L.R. (2004). Research-based online course development for special education teacher preparation. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 27(3), 207-223.
- Kyriakou, C., Avramidis, E., Høie, H., Stephens, P., & Hultgren, Å. (2007). The development of student teachers' views on pupil misbehaviour during an initial teacher training programme in England and Norway. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 33(3), 293-307.
- Lambe, J. (2007). Student teachers, special educational needs and inclusion education: reviewing the potential for problem-based, e-learning pedagogy to support practice. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, (33)3, 359-377.
- Lambe, J., & Bones, R. (2006a). Student teachers attitudes to inclusion; implications for Initial Teacher Education in Northern Ireland. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 10(6), 511-527.

Primary education preservice teachers' attitudes on inclusion and perceptions on preparedness to respond to classroom diversity

- Lambe, J., & Bones, R. (2006b). Student teachers' perceptions about inclusive classroom teaching in Northern Ireland prior to teaching practice experience. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 21*(2), 167-186.
- Lancaster, J., & Bain, A. (2007). The design of inclusive education courses and the self-efficacy of preservice teacher education students. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 54*(2), 245-256.
- Moran, A. (2007). Can a competence or standards model facilitate an inclusive approach to teacher education? *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 1*-17.
- Ockjean, K., Utke, B.J., & Hupp, S.C. (2005). Comparing the use of case studies and application questions in preparing special education professionals. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 28*(2), 104-113.
- Pearson, S. (2007). Exploring inclusive education: early steps for prospective secondary school teachers. *British Journal of Special Education, 34*(1), 25-32.
- Rice, N. (2006). Promoting "epistemic fissures": Disability studies in teacher education. *Teaching Education, 17*(3), 251-264.
- Scruggs, T., & Mastropieri, M. (1996). Teacher perceptions of mainstreaming/inclusion, 1958-1995: A research synthesis. *Exceptional Children, 63*(1), 59-74.
- Sharma, U., Forlin, C., Loreman, T., & Earle, C. (2006). Pre-service teachers' attitudes, concerns and sentiments about inclusive education: An international comparison of novice pre-service teachers. *International Journal of Special Education, 21*(2), 80-93.
- Tait, K., & Purdie, N. (2000). Attitudes towards disability: teacher education for inclusive environments in an Australian university. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 47*(1), 25-38.
- UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol*. New York: United Nations.
- Van Laarhoven, T., Munk, D., Lynch, K., Bosma, J., & Rouse, J. (2007). A model for preparing special and general education preservice teachers for inclusive education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 58*(5), 440-455.
- Van Laarhoven, T., Munk, D., Lynch, K., Wyland, S., Dorsh, N., Zurita, L., Bosma, J., & Rouse, J. (2006). Project ACCEPT: Preparing pre-service special and general educators for inclusive education. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 29*(4), 209-212.
- Van Reusen, A., Shoho, A., & Barker, K. (2001). High school teacher attitudes towards inclusion. *High School Journal, 84*, 7-20.