

INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF DISABILITIES IN MAINSTREAM EDUCATION: THE OPINION OF TEACHERS

Denisa Niculina Vidican¹

University of Oradea
Romania

Angela Marușca²

University of Oradea
Romania

Karla Melinda Barth³

University of Oradea
Romania

Marius Țepelea⁴

University of Oradea
Romania

Abstract

The inclusion process represents the access path under conditions of maximum protection and equality for all students, regardless of the type of disability they suffer from, to an education that meets the needs and interests of everyone, considering the particularities of the psychophysical and social development of these categories of education beneficiaries. Once physically integrated in an inclusive class, the disabled student must benefit from and have access to all the school's educational and social services, methods and means. The most important act in achieving inclusive education is the design of an adapted, differentiated and individualized curriculum by the classroom teacher for each subject that the student with a disability, especially the one with an intellectual disability, follows. The paper presents, through an opinion questionnaire, the opinions of teachers from Bihor County, Romania regarding the inclusion process for students with different types of disabilities, who attend daily classes in a regular class alongside other students with typical development. In order to find out some answers regarding the observance of the principles of inclusive education, we used MATIES (Multidimensional Attitudes towards Inclusive Education Scale), an instrument designed by Marian Mahat (2008) from the University of Melbourne, Australia, from whom we also received the consent to use it on the population of Romania.

¹ PhD.candidate, Educational Sciences, Babaș-Bolyai University Cluj Napoca, Romania; assistant professor, Faculty of Social and Humanistic Sciences, Educational Sciences Department, University of Oradea, Romania E-mail: denisaniculinaszilagyi@gmail.com

² Lecturer PhD., Faculty of Social and Humanistic Sciences, Educational Sciences Department, University of Oradea, Romania; E-mail: angelamarusca@yahoo.com

³ Professor, PhD., Faculty of Social and Humanistic Sciences, Educational Sciences Department, University of Oradea, Romania; E-mail: kbarth@uoradea.ro

⁴ Professor, PhD., Episcop Vasile Coman Faculty of Orthodox Theology, Theology Department, University of Oradea, Romania; E-mail: mariustepelea@yahoo.com

In order to clarify some aspects of the inclusion of students with various types of disabilities in a regular class in mainstream education, we will present in descriptive form the answers of the teaching staff participating in this study.

Keywords: inclusion; children with special needs; special educational requirements; curriculum adaptation

In an educational context, inclusion implies the development of positive open interpersonal relationships between students, the flexibility of school programs, the diversification of educational strategies and the provision of intervention and support services for students with special requirements, the promotion of equal rights and responsibilities for all students, ensuring equal access to learning opportunities, functional partnership between the school and the family/parents of the children, active involvement of the community in the programs and activities developed by the schools. (Vrăsmaș, 2001, as cited in Gherguț & Frumos, 2019).

In the opinion of Gherguț (2013), "inclusion represents the essence of a comprehensive educational system specific to a society whose main values are the valorization and promotion of diversity and equal rights". (p. 323). This system is characterized by:

- Open, positive, partnership-based interpersonal relationships;
- The flexibility of school programs, educational strategies and support services for students with learning difficulties;
- Promoting equality in rights and responsibilities and ensuring access to opportunities;
- Partnership with the family/parents;
- The active involvement of the community in school programs;
- Encouraging the exercise of the right to attitude and speech.

Therefore, inclusion represents the way of understanding and acceptance through the help offered to children, students, young people, people with different types of disabilities (intellectual, visual, auditory, language), with disorders/learning difficulties, in difficulty regarding their integration and relationship with the institutions of the community or with their peers in the community to which they belong.

The final goal of the inclusion process is to provide them with an increase in the quality of life by harnessing the intellectual, aptitude and adaptive potential of these people for the benefit of the community. Also, people with special educational needs (S.E.N.) need to find balance in life and engage in an area of the labor market where they can cope with the demands and pressures.

According to Booth and Ainscow (as cited in Gherguț, 2006, p. 21), inclusion in education involves:

- Equal valorization of all students and all teaching staff;
- Increasing the degree of participation of students in school, cultural and community activities, as well as reducing the degree of exclusion of students from them;
- Restructuring school cultures, policies and practices to respond to the diversity of students in that community;
- Reducing barriers to learning and the participation of all students, not just those with disabilities or those with "special educational requirements";
- The accumulation of experience from attempts to overcome the barriers to access and participation of certain students, with the aim of making changes for the benefit of all students;
- Perceiving differences between students as a resource to support learning rather than a problem to be overcome;
- Recognition of the right, which each student has, to education in his own living place;
- Improving schools, both for teaching staff and students;
- Strengthening the role that the school has both in the development of the community and values, as well as in increasing school performance;
- Promoting relationships of mutual help between schools and communities;
- Recognizing that inclusion in education is only one aspect of inclusion in society.

Method

Objectives

The objectives of this descriptive research based on the opinions of the teachers, participating in this study, regarding the process of inclusion of students with different types of disabilities in mainstream education are:

- Identifying the pro and against attitudes of mainstream and special education teachers on the school inclusion process for students with different types of disabilities.
- Identifying ways to achieve inclusive education for students with different types of disabilities.
- Identifying the concrete ways to achieve the inclusion of students with different types of disabilities in regular classes by designing an individualized curriculum, (which considers the particularities characteristic of the disabilities the student suffers from) carried out by the teaching staff from the regular class in mainstream education.

Participants

The MATIES scale was applied with small modifications to a small sample of subjects, namely 108 teachers from mainstream education, but also from special education in Romania, Bihor county. The following school institutions were involved: "Cristal" School Center for Inclusive Education, Oradea; School Center for Inclusive Education "Orizont", Oradea; School Center for Inclusive Education no. 1 from Oradea; Technological High School No. 1 Popești, Kindergarten with extended program no. 54, Oradea.

Regarding the distribution of teachers according to the type of education, as illustrated in the figure below, we note that 52 (48.14%) teachers work in special education, and 56 (51.85%) teachers didactic in mass education.

Considering the seniority in education as important, and implicitly the experience realized through the teaching degrees obtained, we found the following:

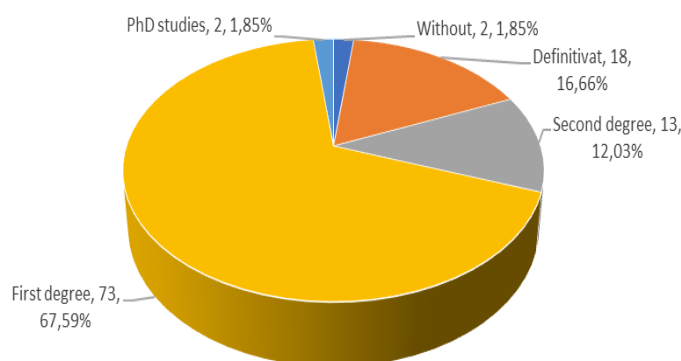


Figure 1. Educational degrees

Following the answers to this item, we note that a number of 2 (1.85%) teaching staff are beginners in education, 18 teaching staff (16.66%) have obtained the finalization in education, 13 teaching staff (12.03%) have Degree II, 73 teaching staff (67.59%) have the First Degree and only 2 teaching staff (1.85%) have completed doctoral studies.

Measures and procedure

The issue of educating students with special educational needs has become a special concern among specialists in recent years. The appearance of the concepts of inclusive education, respectively, inclusive school, determined fundamental changes in the perception of the educational act. Analyzing the specific peculiarities of the learning process of students with different types of disabilities, it is found that one of the essential qualities of the school curriculum aims at a greater degree of flexibility, so as to allow each student to advance at his own pace and be treated according to his

learning abilities. For this, it is necessary that the formulation of the objectives, the establishment of the contents of the training, the methods of transmitting information in the classroom and the evaluation of the students should be differentiated, respecting the principles of inclusion.

Together, we agreed to see to what extent teachers in Bihor county agreed with the implementation of inclusion practices among students with different types of disabilities, thus, we made it available for them to complete a questionnaire aimed at this fact. MATIES (Multidimensional Attitudes towards Inclusive Education Scale) is an instrument designed by Marian Mahat (2008) from the University of Melbourne, Australia. This questionnaire measures the degree of understanding and acceptance of all categories of students (suffering from different types of disabilities) in the regular classroom by adapting and carrying out an individualized curriculum designed by the classroom teacher.

The actual questions of the questionnaire, made entirely by Mahat, did not undergo changes on the population of Romania, but we limited their answer possibilities regarding the effective seniority in education, the seniority of teaching in the field of special education and those related to the level of studies of the subjects participating in this questionnaire. The questions that do not belong to the questionnaire are marked as .1.1., and the MATIES Scale questions are marked with .2.1.; .2.5.; .2.20. and so on. MATIES includes items related to the inclusive school and the progress of the students within it, the social benefits through the implementation of the inclusion process among students with different types of disabilities, items related to the best place to carry out the training process for students with disabilities, communication between teachers and students with disabilities, items related to the design and compliance of an individualized curriculum for students with different types of disabilities etc.

Results and discussions

Descriptive data

The highest means were obtained for the items:

- Item 2.13: I am willing to encourage students with disabilities to participate in all social activities in the regular classroom. ($M=4.972$, $SD=1.166$)
- Item 2.18: I am willing to adapt the individual assessment of students in order for inclusive education to take place. ($M=4.769$, $SD=1.069$)
- Item 2.17: I am willing to adapt my communication techniques to ensure that all students with an emotional and behavioral disorder can be successfully included in the regular classroom. ($M=4.722$, $SD=1.153$).

It seems that teachers involved in one way or another in the recovery and inclusion of students with disabilities agreed with this process of

inclusion and tried to achieve it as they knew best. It only begs the question whether the answers given are due to social desirability.

The lowest means were obtained for the items:

- Item 2.9: I get angry when I fail to understand students with disabilities*. (reverse rated item) ($M=1.907$, $SD=1.251$)
- Item 2.22: Write the number of years of special education experience you have. (Indicate whether this education was obtained at the university level or through professional development opportunities) *. (reverse rated item) ($M=1.630$, $SD=0.483$)
- Item 2.20: Your training level*. (reverse rated item) ($M=1.112$, $SD=0.395$)

The first conclusion that emerged from this analysis is that all teachers had an acute need for specialization in the field of inclusion of students with disabilities. They must know the specifics of these children, but also how to work or communicate with them.

For an easy illustration of the data, we present the following graph:

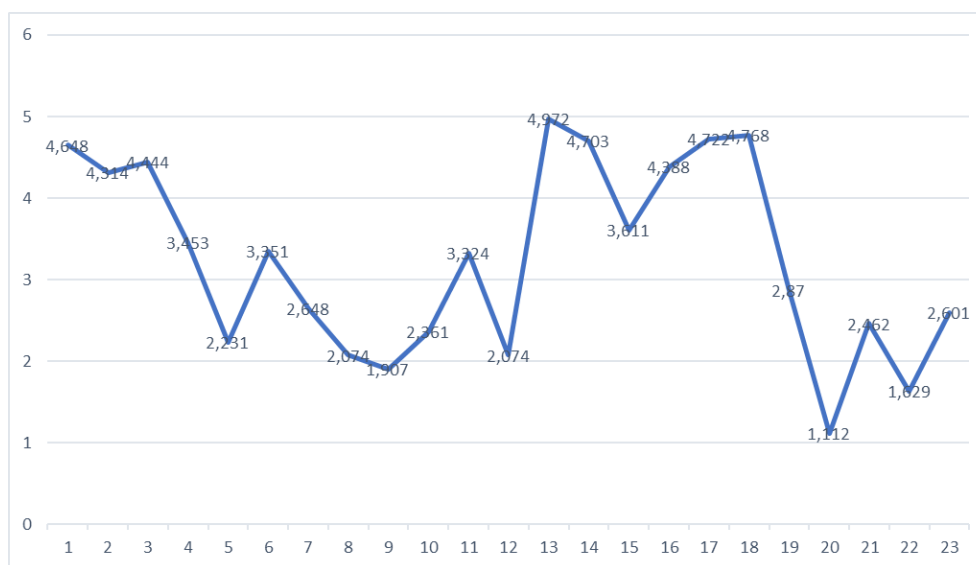


Figure 2. The results obtained at MATIES

In order to observe the differences between the teaching staff, we analyzed each item separately.

1. I believe that an inclusive school is one that allows the academic progress of all students, regardless of their abilities.

We observe that the participants involved in our descriptive study have a positive opinion on the inclusive school, thus 26 teachers (24.07%) completely agree and believe that the inclusive school is a favorable place that favors the school and educational progress of all students, regardless of

their abilities, 43 teaching staff (39.81%) agree and consider that the inclusive school ensures the academic progress of all students, 15 teaching staff (13.88%) express their partial agreement regarding this fact, 19 teaching staff (17.59 %) somewhat agree, 5 teaching staff (4.62%) opted for disagreement and consider that the inclusive school does not ensure the academic progress of all students, completely disagree 0 teaching staff (0%).

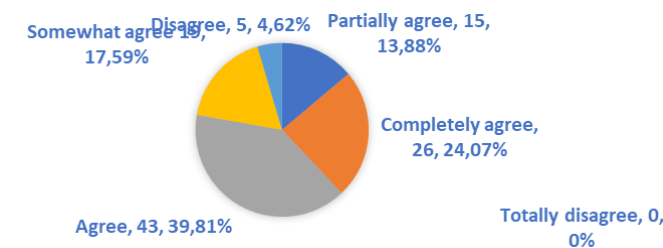


Figure 3. Teachers' opinion on the progress of all students in the inclusive school

2. I believe that students with disabilities should be taught in special education schools.

We observe that most teachers believe that students with disabilities must be trained in special education schools. 27 teachers agree with this item of the questionnaire, 25% of them, 40 teaching staff (37.03%) somewhat agree, 12 teaching staff (11.11%) chose the answer option disagree, and 29 teaching staff (26.85%) strongly disagree that students with disabilities should be trained in special education.

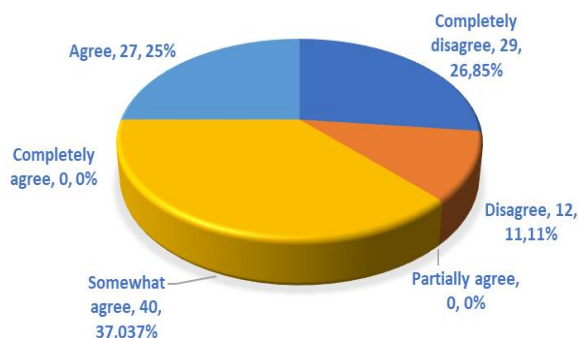


Figure 4. Teachers' opinion on the educational environment for students with disabilities

3. I believe that inclusion facilitates appropriate social behavior among all students.

Following the analysis Figure 5, we notice that 17 teaching staff (15.74%) completely agree with the fact that inclusion favors appropriate social behavior among all students, 40 teaching staff (37.03%) also agree in the same regard, 38 of teaching staff (35.18%) somewhat agree with the fact that the inclusion process facilitates appropriate social behavior for all

students, and 13 teaching staff opted for the disagree response option of this questionnaire item. No teaching staff opted for the answer options partial agreement and complete disagreement.

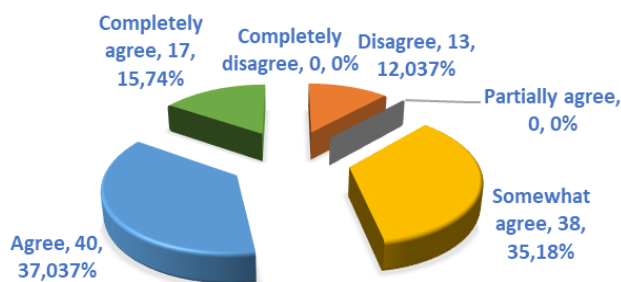


Figure 5. The role of the inclusion process on the appropriate social behavior of students in the opinion of teachers

4. I believe that any student can learn in a mainstream school if the curriculum is adapted to meet his individual needs.

We notice that 23 teachers (21.29%) of the participants in this study agree that any student can learn in a mainstream school if there is an adapted curriculum that meets his individual needs, 30 teachers (27.77%) somewhat agree with this item, 2 teaching staff (1.85%) express their partial agreement on this item, 28 teaching staff (25.92%) opted for the disagreement option on this fact, and 25 teaching staff (23.14%) strongly disagree that any student can learn in a mainstream school if the curriculum is tailored to meet their individual needs.

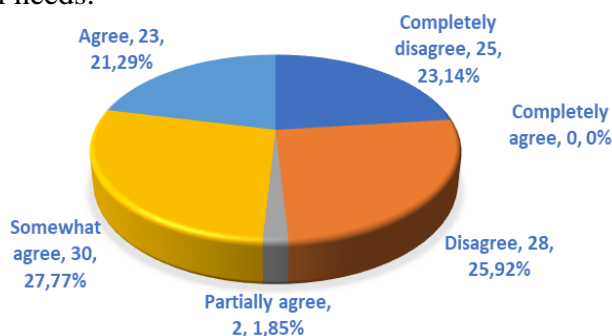


Figure 6. Curriculum adapted to the student who is learning in a mainstream school facilitates inclusion

5. I believe that students with disabilities should be segregated because it is too expensive to modify the physical environment of the school.

We notice that 13 teachers, 12.03% of them, completely agree regarding the segregation of students with disabilities on the grounds that it is too expensive to change the physical environment of these schools for this category of students, 16 teachers (14.81%) agree with the segregation of

students with disabilities, 28 of them (25.92%) somewhat agree with segregation among students with disabilities, but fortunately 41 teachers (37.96%) do not agree with the segregation of students with disabilities, thus they opted for the disagreement option and 10 teaching staff (9.25%) completely disagree with the segregation of students with disabilities.

However, there is a worrying number of people who still support the segregation of students.

In this situation, we consider useful a better popularization of the situation of people with disabilities and, last but not least, a better theoretical and practical training of teaching staff regarding the specifics of people with disabilities, but also concrete ways by which they can be helped in recovery. Also, if the teachers, who should be the most open to inclusion, consider such a high percentage that segregation is needed, we wonder what the results of a study addressed to civil society would be. A change of attitude should occur as soon as possible and this can only be achieved by sensitizing the population, by making them understand that these people are like us, they have the same rights as us.

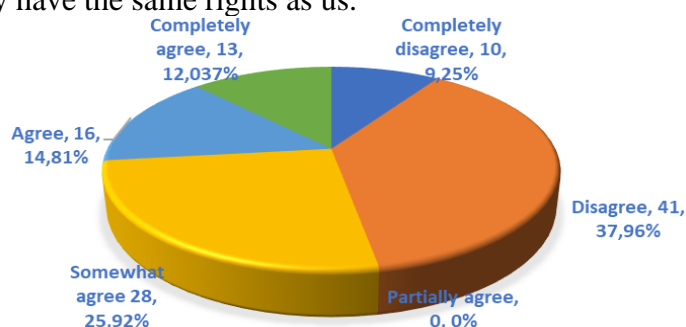


Figure 7. Economic segregation of students with disabilities in the opinion of teachers

6. *I believe that students with disabilities should be in special education schools so that they do not experience rejection in regular school.*

We observe that 3 teachers, 2.77% of the participants in this study, agree that students with disabilities should be in special education schools in order not to experience rejection in the regular school, 16 teachers (14.81%) are somewhat agree on this fact, 3 teachers (2.77%) completely agree that students with disabilities should be trained in special education in order not to experience rejection from mainstream education, 28 teachers (25.92%) are completely disagree with this item, and 58 teachers (53.70%) chose the answer option disagree for this item of the questionnaire.

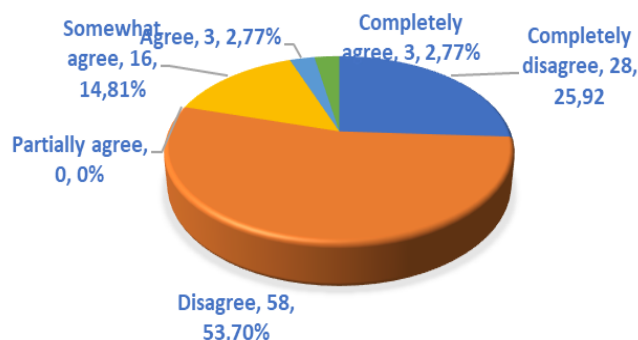


Figure 8. The experience and rejection of students with disabilities

7. *I am frustrated when I have difficulty communicating with students with disabilities.*

Following the analysis of the graph, we deduce that 14 teachers (12.96%) opted for the agree answer, 25 teachers (23.14%) opted for the somewhat agree answer, 2 teachers (1.85%) partially agree. 30 teachers (27.77%) opted for the completely disagree answer, 37 teachers (34.25%) opted for the disagree answer. Thus, the teachers who completed this questionnaire do not encounter the feeling of frustration when they have difficulties in communicating with students with disabilities.

Perhaps this analysis should be a wake-up call for all those involved in initial or continuing teacher education. It is necessary, from our point of view, to introduce some courses in which emphasis is placed on methods and techniques of communication, in general, but especially in the relationship with people with disabilities.

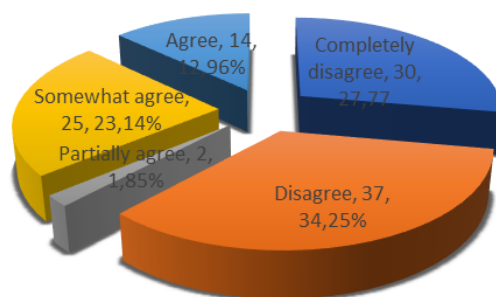


Figure 9. Frustration in communicating with students with disabilities

8. *I get upset when students with a disability cannot keep up with the day-to-day curriculum in my classroom.*

We observe that 4 teachers (3.7%) admit that they get upset when students with disabilities cannot keep up with the daily curriculum in the classroom, 14 teachers (12.96%) somewhat agree with this fact, 45 teachers (41.66%) opted for the disagreement option, and 44 teachers (40.74%)

admit that they do not get upset when students with disabilities cannot keep up with the daily curriculum in the classroom.

The question that is asked, or that we should ask ourselves, is why do teachers get angry? Do they feel helpless and do not know how to react in relation to these students? Not sure how exactly they should adapt the curriculum to help their students? Or, what should give us food for thought: are they not mentally prepared to face the challenges that the integration/inclusion of a disabled student in the classroom brings? Of course, these are all topics for reflection and analysis.

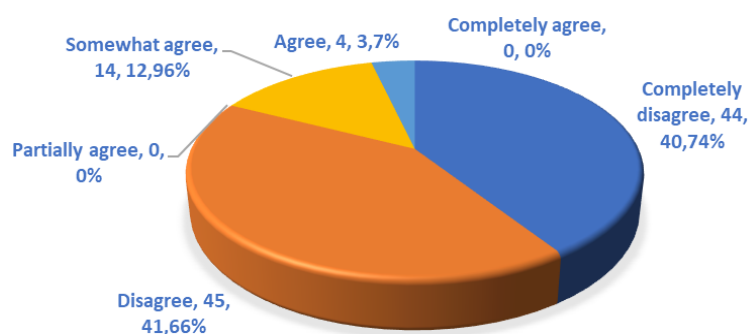


Figure 10. Teachers reaction when a student with disability cannot keep up with the day-to-day curriculum

9. I get irritated when I am unable to understand students with a disability.

We notice that a number of 6 teachers (5.55%) agree and admit that they get angry when they fail to understand students with disabilities, 8 teachers (7.4%) somewhat agree in what regarding the misunderstanding of these categories of students, 2 teaching staff (1.85%) express their partial agreement on this phenomenon, 40 teaching staff (37.03%) opted for the disagree response option for this item, and 52 teaching staff (48.14%) completely disagree with this item of the questionnaire.

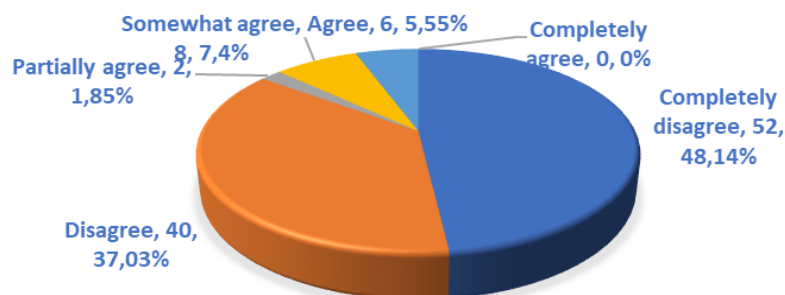


Figure 11. Teachers' reaction when they do not understand a student with disabilities

We believe that the results are good, but there is again the question of the answers given due to social desirability, that human characteristic to present themselves in a generally favorable fashion (Holden, 2001).

10. I am uncomfortable including students with a disability in a regular classroom with other students without a disability.

We observe that 3 teachers (2.77 %) completely agree with this item, 20 teachers (18.51%) somewhat agree that they feel uncomfortable with including students with different types of disabilities in the regular class, 7 teachers (6.48%) express their partial agreement on this fact, 44 teachers (40.74%) opted for the answer option of this item with disagreement, and 34 teachers (31.48%) confirm the fact that they do not feel uncomfortable to include students with disabilities in a regular classroom with other students without disabilities.

If we analyze the number of those who in one way or another agree that they do not feel comfortable in the situation where they have a student with disabilities in the class, we notice that it is quite high: 30 teachers, that is, a percentage of 27.77%. It is a high percentage given that both the Romanian education system and that of most European countries tend towards the integration/inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classes, provided that, as the Council of Europe also states: “Education and training systems should aim to ensure that all learners—including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with special needs and migrants—complete their education, including, where appropriate, through second-chance education and the provision of more personalized learning. Education should promote intercultural competences, democratic values and respect for fundamental rights and the environment, as well as combat all forms of discrimination, equipping all young people to interact positively with their peers from diverse backgrounds.” (Arnesen et al., 2009, p. 7). This means that more is expected from teachers in terms of accepting students with disabilities in their classes but also an effort to facilitate their inclusion.

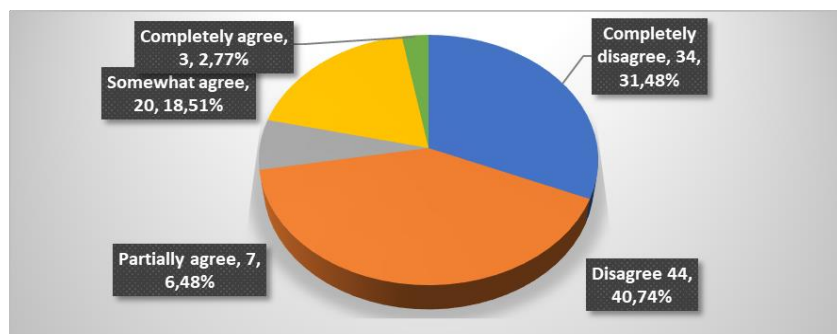


Figure 12. Teachers' reaction to the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular classroom

11. *I am disconcerted that students with a disability are included in the regular classroom, regardless of the severity of the disability.*

We notice that a number of 5 teaching staff (4,62%) admit that they completely agree with the inclusion in the classroom of children with disabilities regardless of their severity, 17 staff (15,74%) agree and admit that they feel uncomfortable in the presence of students with disabilities, 0 teachers somewhat agree regarding the integration of these students in normal classrooms, 34 teachers (31,48%) express their partial agreement on this phenomenon, 36 teachers (33,33%) opted for the disagree response option of this item, and 16 teachers (14,81%) completely disagree with this item of the questionnaire.

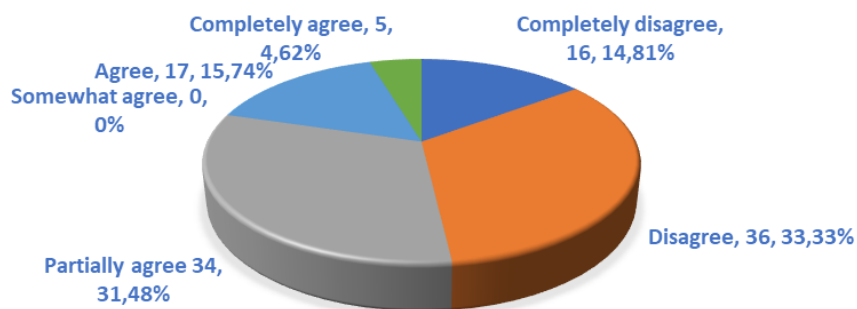


Figure 13. Disappointment of teaching staff in the integration of students with disabilities

12. *I get frustrated when I have to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students.*

A total of 3 teachers (2.77%) admit that they are frustrated when they have to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students, no teacher shows partial agreement, 14 (12.96%) teachers somewhat agree that regarding the curricular adaptation for these students, 57 teaching staff (52.77%) opted for the disagreement answer of this item, and 34 teaching staff (31.48%) completely disagree with this item of the questionnaire.

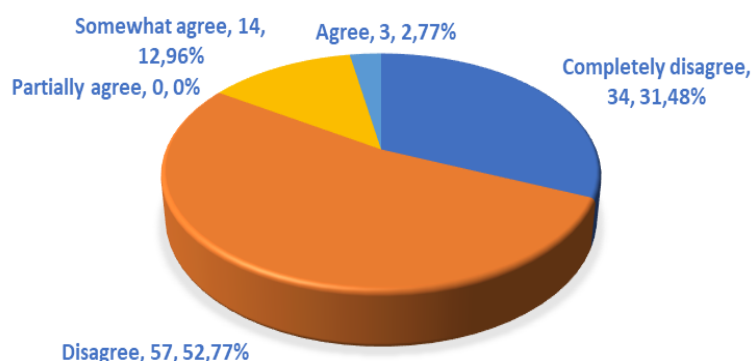


Figure 14. The frustration of teachers who have to adapt the curriculum

We found that there is still, even if fully recognized, the frustration when it is necessary to make some curricular adaptations for children with disabilities. We believe that it is real, many teaching staff do not have the necessary skills to make such adaptations, and this leads us to the thought of the need to carry out practical training courses in which emphasis is placed on these aspects.

13. I am willing to encourage students with a disability to participate in all social activities in the regular classroom.

No teacher shows their partial agreement to encourage students to participate in all activities in the regular classroom, a number of 47 teachers (43.51%) admit that they are willing to encourage students in this sense, 13 (12,38%) staff somewhat agree regarding encouraging student participation in all activities, 39 teaching staff (36.11%) opted for the completely agree option, 7 (6.48%) staff expressed disagreement in this regard, and 2 teaching staff (1.85%) completely disagree with this questionnaire item.

Why are there still teachers who do not encourage students with disabilities to get involved in social activities? Where did the training of these teachers go wrong? They are rhetorical questions to which we will find, probably the answer only when the whole society will be ready to accept the existence of education for all, equal rights for all.

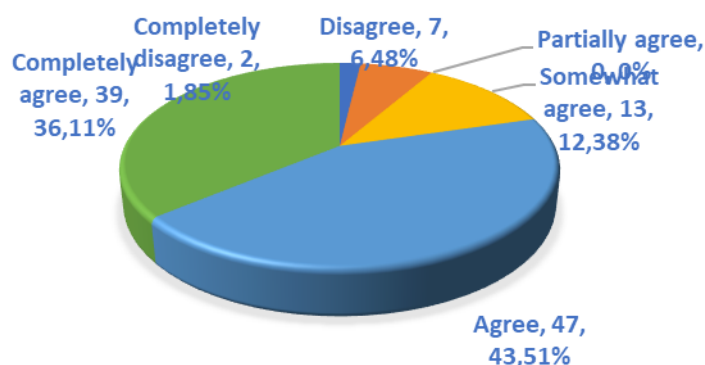


Figure 15. Encouraging students with disabilities to participate in social activities

14. I am willing to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students regardless of their disability.

We observe that 47 (43.51%) teachers are willing to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students, 26 (24.07%) agree with this item of the questionnaire, 25 teachers somewhat agree with curriculum adaptation for these students, 7 (6.48%) staff expressed disagreement in this sense, and 3 teaching staff (2.77%) completely disagree with this item of the questionnaire.

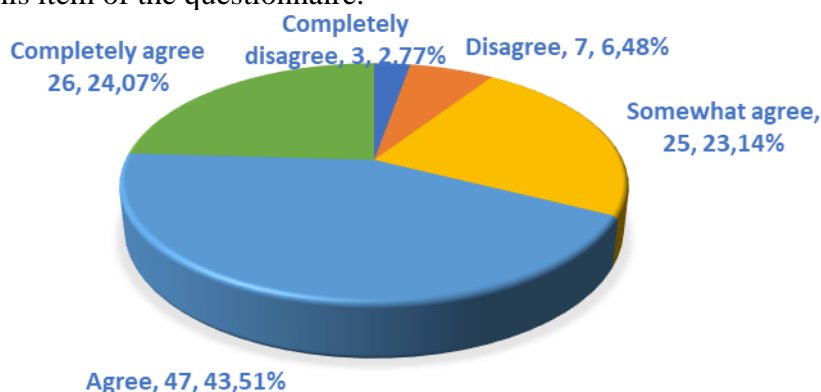


Figure 16. The availability of curricular adaptation for the student regardless of the disability he suffers from

15. I am willing to physically include students with a severe disability in the regular classroom with the necessary support.

On this question of the questionnaire we have 0 partial agreements for the inclusion of students with severe disabilities in the regular classroom, 28 (25.92%) teachers are willing to include such students in regular classrooms, 30 (27.77%) are somewhat agreement with this item of the questionnaire, 11 (10.18%) teaching staff completely agree with the inclusion of these children, 25 teaching staff (23.14%) expressed disagreement in this regard, and 14 (12.96%) teaching staff are completely disagree with this questionnaire item.

Considering the fact that it is about the lowest level of integration, namely the physical one, which is also the easiest to achieve, we believe that the number of teachers who do not have the availability to include these students in regular classes is quite high (39-36.11%). Under these conditions, the question arises as to what will happen to these students when it comes to functional or societal inclusion.

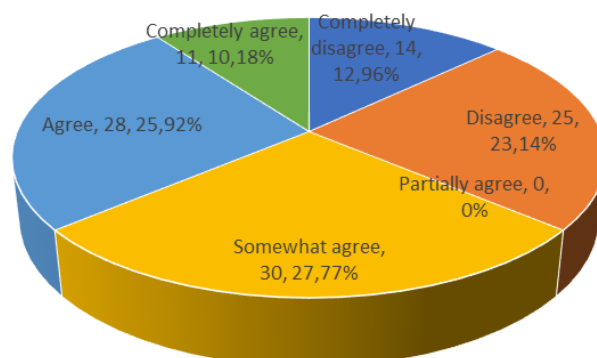


Figure 17. Teachers' willingness to physically include students with disabilities in the regular classroom

16. I am willing to modify the physical environment to include students with a disability in the regular classroom.

We note that in this questionnaire we have 1 partial agreement (0.92%) for modifying the physical environment to include students with disabilities in the classroom, 39 (36.11%) teachers are willing to modify the classroom space, 31(28.7%) somewhat agree with this item of the questionnaire, 20 (18.51%) teachers completely agree with the modification of the space, 4 teachers (4%) expressed complete disagreement in this regard, and 13 (12.03%) teachers are in disagree with this questionnaire item.

The problem is that if the space is not modified, even the lowest level of inclusion of students with disabilities is not ensured. And, even if the number of those who do not agree with the change is small, as long as it exists, talk about an opposition to inclusion exactly in the situation of those who should be more open to it.

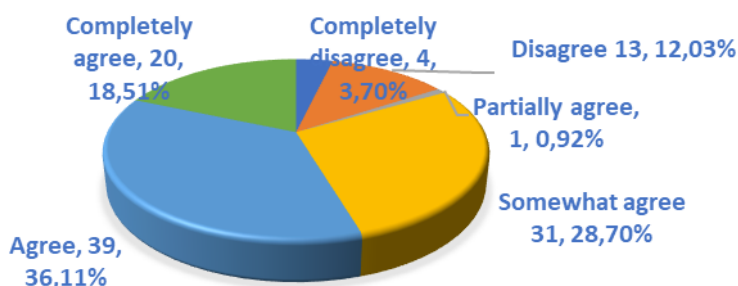


Figure 18. The availability of modifying the physical environment for the inclusion of students with disabilities

17. I am willing to adapt my communication techniques to ensure that all students with an emotional and behavioral disorder can be successfully included in the regular classroom

At this question we have zero partial agreements (0%) for adapting communication techniques for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, 50 (46.29%) teachers are willing to adapt their communication techniques, 25 (23.14%) are completely agree with this item of the questionnaire, 23 (21.29%) teaching staff somewhat agree with the adaptation of communication techniques, 8 teaching staff (7.40%) expressed disagreement in this sense, and 2 (1.85%) teaching staff are completely disagree with this questionnaire item. The question we ask ourselves following the answers obtained is why the teaching staff, in such a large number, still do not fully agree with this aspect. They do not have the necessary knowledge and in this case, they do not know how to do it or they do not have the disposition to adapt to the requirements of students with disabilities of any type. We know how important communication is in any classroom, but especially where a student with a disability is included. For this reason, we believe that for the success of inclusion, courses are needed to teach teachers how to talk to each individual student.

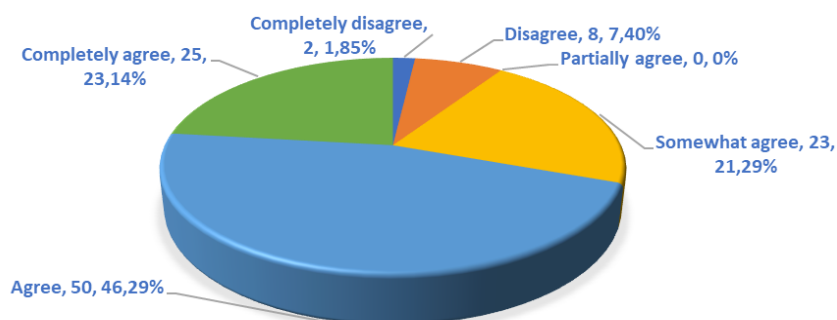


Figure 19. The disposition to adapt communication according to the type of disability

18. I am willing to adapt the assessment of individual students in order for the inclusive education to take place.

On this question we have 0 partial agreements (0%) for the adaptation of the individual assessment of students for inclusive education to take place, 50 (46.29%) teachers agree with the adaptation of the assessment, 25 (23.14%) completely agree with this item of the questionnaire, 25 (23.14%) teaching staff somewhat agree with the adaptation of assessments, 1 teaching staff (0.92%) expressed complete disagreement in this sense, and 7 (6.48%) teaching staff completely disagree with this item of the questionnaire.

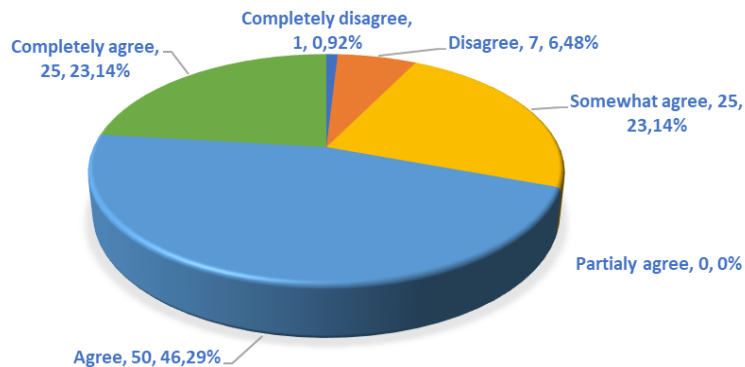


Figure 20. Availability to adapt the assessment for each student

19. What is your role in the school district?

Regarding the role and function in the school, most of the respondents were teachers. Unfortunately, only 6 principals responded, although we believe that their role in transforming the educational unit into an inclusive school is a very big one. We believe that if the principal is open to inclusion, the chances that the school he leads will become an inclusive school are much higher.

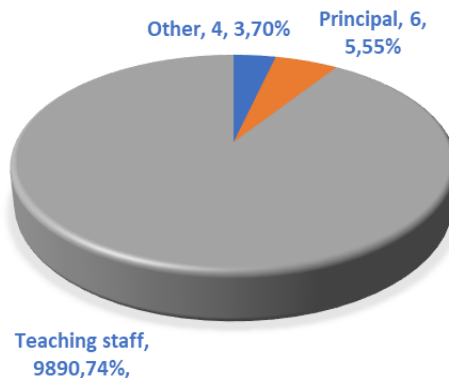


Figure 21. The role of the subjects in the school district

20. Grade span in which you currently work.

We note that the level of training of the respondents with long-term studies is 106 teachers (98.14%) and doctoral studies 2 teaching staff (1.85%). This means that all teachers should be prepared to meet the demands of any student with a disability who is included in their class. Perhaps universities should introduce more courses that emphasize inclusion, but we believe that more important than knowledge is the change of attitude towards everything that the process of inclusion means.

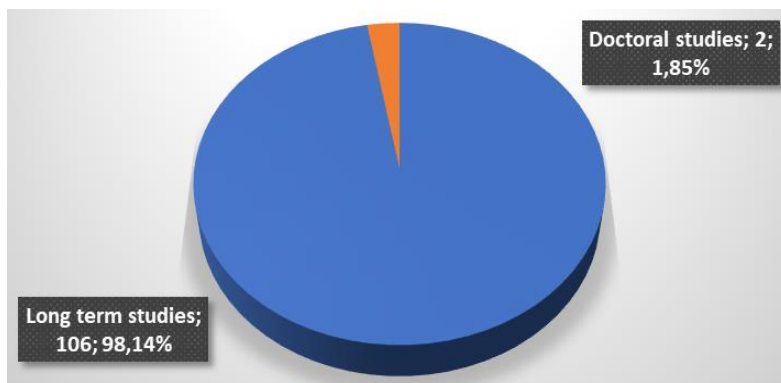


Figure 22. The training level of the study participants

21. Write the number of years of professional experience you have in education. Professional experience refers to the sum of time being employed as either a teacher and/or principal.

We note that for this question the professional experience of the respondents was between 0-3 years-15 teachers, (13.88%), professional experience over 15 years-63 teachers, (58.33%) and professional experience included between 3 and 5 years-30 teachers, i.e. (27.77 %).

Probably this division, which was not taken into account when distributing our questionnaire, could represent one of the limits of our research, because at this moment we do not have answers from teachers of all age categories.

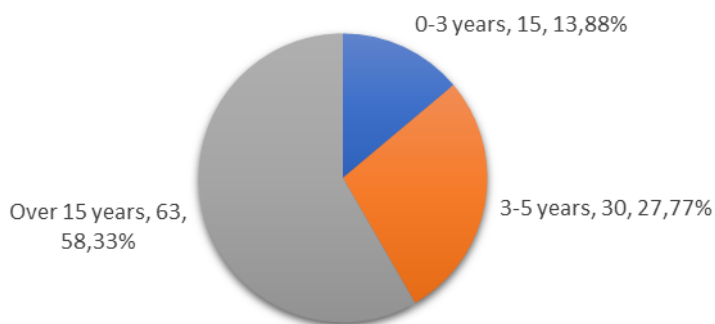


Figure 23. Professional experience in education for teachers participating in the descriptive study

22. Write the amount of experience of special education that you hold. Indicate whether this education was obtained at the collegiate level or through professional development opportunities.

We notice that in this questionnaire the special education experience of the teaching staff was represented as follows: 68 teachers had more than 15 years of experience, (62.96%) and 40 teachers had an experience between 0-10 years (37.03%). The question remains: if after so much experience we are still dealing with teachers who oppose or disagree with

inclusion, how did they last so long in special education and what were the elements that motivated them to stay in this type of education.

Regarding how they obtained their specialization, the most common answers were:

- Long-term university studies: bachelor's and master's;
- Accredited courses;
- Doctorate in the field of educational sciences.

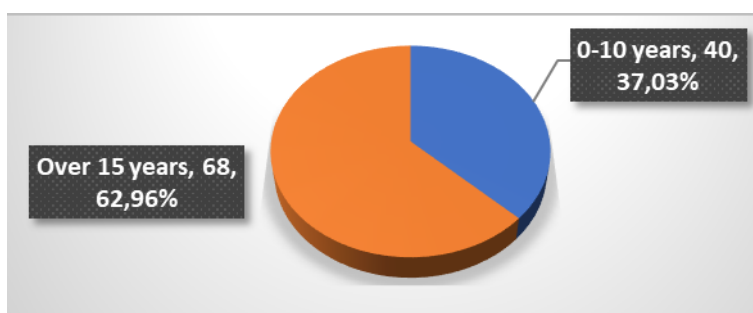


Figure 24. The experience of teachers in the field of special education

23. Choose the response associated to the level of overall support you feel your administrators provide in an effort for inclusive education to be effective. (without support; minimal support; medium support; suitable support; exceptional support)

We notice that for this item, the answer associated with the level of general support that we think managers/principals provide was represented as follows, 41 (37.96%) teachers answered that they receive suitable support from the principals, 28 teachers (25.92%) answered that they receive average support, 17 teachers (15.74%) indicated exceptional support, 19 teachers (17.59%) answered that they receive minimal support, and 3 teachers (2.77%) answered that they have no support from the principal/manager of the school where they teach.

It is a result that makes us confident in the success of inclusion, given that school managers seem to be ready to transform educational institutions into inclusive schools.

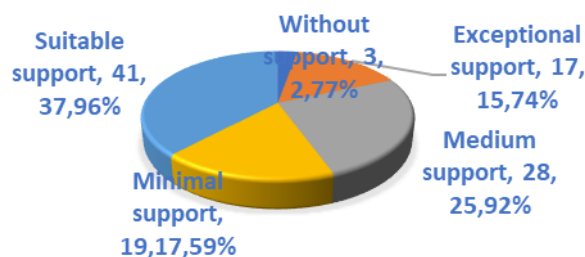


Figure 25. The support level of the manager of schools where teachers carry out their instructional-educational activity

Conclusion

Inclusion among students with different types of disabilities (intellectual, visual, auditory, language, etc.) represents the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes towards this category of students, while ensuring them an individualized education through a curricular adaptation that takes into account the particularities of their psychophysical and social development, but also the disability they were born with or later acquired.

Mainstream school teachers are responsible for carrying out this process of school inclusion, and for it to be achieved at the level of mainstream schools, they must be prepared for everything that is new and know the particularities of the development of different types of disabilities for for inclusive education to take place. At the same time, it must accept, respect and implement the principles of school inclusion in the regular class for students with disabilities, provide them with all the methods, means and resources necessary to carry out the teaching-learning-evaluation process for this category of education beneficiaries, through an individualized curriculum adaptation to meet his learning needs.

The process of school inclusion of students with disabilities occupies a very important place in terms of the development and improvement of Romanian education, which has the student with all his particularities at the center of the educational act. Following the application of this questionnaire, we obtained information related to the opinion (pros and cons) of teachers from mainstream education, but also from special education, on the school inclusion of students with different types of disabilities in the regular class, among which we recall the fact that the teachers consider that the inclusive school ensures the access of all students to a quality education, marked by scholastic and social progress of these categories of education beneficiaries, but the opinion still persists that the best place for the education of children with disabilities still remains the special school, because from the point of view of from an economic point of view, the costs of their schooling are too expensive; the teachers participating in the study are not frustrated when they encounter difficulties in communicating with children with disabilities and do not get upset when they fail to keep up with the daily curriculum, which indicates that these teachers know the characteristics of different types of disabilities of students with special educational requirements (S.E.N.), this being a first step in addressing positive attitudes towards the process of school inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular class in mainstream education.

Teachers agree to design a curricular adaptation for students with disabilities in the regular classroom, at the same time they encourage communication between students with disabilities and those with a typical development process.

By providing the answers to these questions, it is found that the teacher should accept, first of all, the diversity in a class, the fact that each student has his own intellectual capacities, different from those of other colleagues, that each has his own style of to learn and everyone has their own needs in terms of assimilating information. So one of the most important aspects of education today is its need to adapt to the needs of children, whatever those needs are and whatever the children are - whether they are children with SEN or simply children at a much faster pace slow learner. Inclusive schooling is a challenge for mainstream schools, but it should not be seen as a threat to the performance of mainstream schools. Many of these institutions find it difficult to achieve inclusion for students with special educational needs within mainstream classrooms. But this fear can be overcome through education, adequate didactic resources, support and last but not least the belief that inclusion is a moral and social right that cannot be taken away from anyone.

Appendix

The Multidimensional Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (MATIES)

Responses range from 1 (“Completely disagree”) to 6 (“Completely agree”).

1. I believe that an inclusive school is one that permits academic progression of all students regardless of their ability.
2. I believe that students with a disability should be taught in special education schools.
3. I believe that inclusion facilitates socially appropriate behavior among all students.
4. I believe that any student can learn in the regular curriculum of the school if the curriculum is adapted to meet their individual needs.
5. I believe that students with a disability should be segregated because it is too expensive to modify the physical environment of the school.
6. I believe that students with a disability should be in special education schools so that they do not experience rejection in the regular school.
7. I get frustrated when I have difficulty communicating with students with a disability.
8. I get upset when students with a disability cannot keep up with the day-to-day curriculum in my classroom.

9. I get irritated when I am unable to understand students with a disability.
10. I am uncomfortable including students with a disability in a regular classroom with other students without a disability.
11. I am disconcerted that students with a disability are included in the regular classroom, regardless of the severity of the disability.
12. I get frustrated when I have to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students.
13. I am willing to encourage students with a disability to participate in all social activities in the regular classroom.
14. I am willing to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students regardless of their disability.
15. I am willing to physically include students with a severe disability in the regular classroom with the necessary support.
16. I am willing to modify the physical environment to include students with a disability in the regular classroom.
17. I am willing to adapt my communication techniques to ensure that all students with an emotional and behavioral disorder can be successfully included in the regular classroom
18. I am willing to adapt the assessment of individual students in order for the inclusive education to take place.
19. What is your role in the school district?
20. Grade span in which you currently work:
21. Write the number of years of professional experience you have in education. Professional experience refers to the sum of time being employed as either a teacher and/or principal.
22. Write the amount of experience of special education that you hold. Indicate whether this education was obtained at the collegiate level or through professional development opportunities.
23. Choose the response associated to the level of overall support you feel your administrators provide in an effort for inclusive education to be effective. (without support; minimal support; medium support; suitable support; exceptional support)

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