Case Study Interventions: Effects on Inclusion for Students with Special Needs
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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this research study was to determine whether or not case study interventions resulted in increased openness towards inclusion of special education students. Pre-service educators, from an experimental and control group, were both given the Opinions Relative to the Integration of Students with Special Needs pre-test and post-test. The experimental group received the intervention of completing case studies related to the pre-test factor area that displayed the most deficit (Perceived Ability to Teach Students with Disabilities). It was found that both the control and experimental groups’ inclusivity scores increased from pre-test to post-test.

Research Design
• This research was conducted under the supervision of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) program at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. A licensable minor in Special Education, at the undergraduate level, was just granted in Fall 2016, so the results of this research are beneficial for curriculum and course development.

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Introduction and Research Question

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Results
• Average class inclusivity scores were calculated, as well as, participants’ individual scores from pre-test to post-test (out of 150, with higher scores equaling more inclusivity). Individual response items were also analyzed, within each of the 4 factor areas, to determine factors displaying the highest levels of non-inclusive responses.

• The average inclusivity score for the experimental group, from pre-test to post-test, increased slightly from 74.3% to 74.6%. Increase was also viewed in the control group, from 82.3% to 82.8%.

• For the experimental group, 3 out of 4 of the factor areas actually decreased in their inclusivity scores. Factor 1: Benefits of Integration, had a major deduction in the number of non-inclusive responses from 7.4% to 3.1%. This factor, alone, could have been responsible for the slight increase in the average inclusivity scores for the experimental and control groups.

• Of the 12 experimental participants (completing both pre-test and post-test), 6 had increases in inclusivity and 6 had decreases. Of the 6 control group participants, 3 had increases in inclusivity and 3 had decreases.

Usefulness of Findings
• After analysis of the data, the researcher is reluctant to state that the implementation of case studies in the classroom is solely responsible for the increase in inclusivity scores. A major variable in this study involves experimental mortality, over the loss of participants from pre-test to post-test. In the experimental group, 12 of the original 17 completed the post-test; and in the control group, 6 of the original 10 completed the post-test. With less than 30 recommended participants, the loss of any one participant poses a major threat to the internal validity of the research.

• Being that inclusivity scores increased for both groups, replication of this study should be done to gather more evidence. Without more data, whether or not case study intervention makes a significant difference on inclusivity cannot be claimed.

References
