

Special Education Service Delivery Models Around the Globe

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter examines various service delivery models being used around the world. It discusses models of inclusion in which all students are placed into the public school educational arena and the regular education teachers provide the services to the student with special needs while the special education teacher is used as a consultant. It continues with a discussion about other types of service delivery models, such as separate schools or even institutions away from family, friends, and society. It concludes with a discussion about the future trends within the field of special education service delivery models and what can be done to improve them.

INTRODUCTION

In almost every country around the world, there is some form of education for students with special needs. However, the service delivery models vary depending on the country's culture, society, and how students with exceptionalities are accepted by the population. In some countries, students with exceptionalities are educated alongside their peers, similar to the inclusion service delivery models that can be found in the United States. In other countries, the service delivery model consists of segregating students

with exceptionalities in a separate school or not permitting the students to attend school or classes at all.

Within the United States and Canada, including students with special needs within the regular educational classroom has been accepted and practiced for a number of years. However, in other countries, this is not the case. Still, some countries that have not practiced inclusion are beginning to do so. For instance, the European Union, which consists of 27 countries—Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom—came together and decided that inclusion education was the best thing for students with learning disabilities. The first thing they decided to focus on was the terminology of *inclusion*. This group decided that the term they would use would include any student who would be susceptible to exclusion from the general or regular education classroom as opposed to only students identified with exceptionalities. This group also recognized that only through collaboration among themselves and their teachers can inclusion education be provided to all students with special needs, thereby providing a high-quality education for all. The European Union also recognized that in order to have high academic achievement among students with exceptionalities, they need to provide teachers who can differentiate instruction and provide research-based instructional strategies so that these children will have the benefit of excellent instruction. In order to acquire highly trained teachers, this group decided that the teacher training programs within their countries at their universities and colleges must include practical skills experience for pre-service teachers and that they should provide these teachers with coaches or mentors who will provide support and share their expertise with these rookie educators once they are in their own classrooms (Donnelly & Watkins, 2011). Hence, the practice of inclusion was started in Europe.

All the countries studied herein have laws regarding the education of students with disabilities. Some countries enforce these laws religiously by having all schools follow the same policies. In other countries, like the United States, the individual states or provinces are permitted to develop their own special education programs within specific guidelines. Still, there are other countries where although they have laws to educate students with special needs, these policies are not enforced due to political reasons and/or society's negative attitudes and prejudices toward students with special needs.

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