Not my responsibility: The Impact of separate special education systems on educators' attitudes toward inclusion

Jess Gregory[i]

Southern Connecticut State University, USA

Abstract

Framed in terms of global policy pressures, this study explored differences in educator attitudes towards the inclusion of children with mild to moderate disabilities in the general education setting in Australia, Barbados, Romania, Turkey, and the United States. The purpose of this study was to investigate how educator attitudes towards the inclusion vary between nations that have disparate forms of special education systems. A sample of 1679 educators was analysed using the Attitudes Towards Teaching All Students (ATTAS-mm) and a triadic model of attitudes. Significant differences were found between nations. In addition to a statistically significant difference in the overall attitude scale, the three subscales: cognitive, affective and behavioural also demonstrated statistically significant differences with moderate effect sizes. These results support the differentiation of professional development for educators dependent on the setting and admonish against policy makers exporting educational policies as best practices regardless of context.

Keywords: *inclusive education; special education; education policy; national capital; international comparative education; educator attitudes; educational leadership*

----

[i] **Jess Gregory,** Ed.D., Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Southern Connecticut State University, TE-6, Room 123, 501 Crescent Street, New Haven, CT 06515, Email: gregoryj2@southernct.edu

Introduction

Education as a basic human right is increasingly being recognized globally and it is supported by international organizations and much of the developed world (Waddington & Toepeke, 2014). With this global support, educators are still unclear as to what inclusion of students with disabilities means, offering varying definitions and interpretations around the world (see Ainscow, Dyson, & Weiner, 2013/14). For this piece, inclusive education is defined as educators and schools ensuring that children can access the curriculum by not only being physically included into the educational setting, but also, ensuring that the curricular materials are being appropriately modified and used by educators to allow all children to access them.

Within the external push for increased inclusion, the educators' attitudes are often taken for granted by school leaders. Legal expectations that inclusive services be offered to students with disabilities is not a guarantee that such services will be provided nor is it a guarantee that the services provided are successful (Waddington & Toepeke, 2014). The attitudes of the general education teacher toward the inclusion of children with disabilities are a critical part of inclusive education; how educators perceive their ability to teach children with disabilities and educators' overarching attitudes toward inclusion will largely determine the success of the children with disabilities (Hunter-Johnson, & Newton, 2014; Unianu, 2012; Wilczenski, 1992). Educators need to have an accepting and willing attitude toward the instruction of all learners (Mintz, 2007) and removing any attitudinal barriers is crucial to the success of inclusion (Waddington & Toepeke, 2014). Even when children are accepted into the physical space of general education classrooms and the expected instruction of the curriculum, children with disabilities may still be excluded (Gregory & Noto, 2011).

There are several factors that contribute to educators' positive attitudes toward inclusion of children with disabilities (Silverman, 2007; Unianu, 2012). Educators must think that children with disabilities can achieve their very best and that they can learn. Second, educators need to have a strong sense of self-efficacy for teaching children with disabilities. Educators with high self-efficacy are more effective at differentiating instruction, making curriculum accessible to all children. Educators must feel that children with disabilities belong in their classroom and that they can contribute to the overall learning process. Finally, educators must possess a desire to use the skills and techniques that will ensure the curriculum is accessible to all children.

Global Desire for Social Reform

Nelson and Stephens (2009) cite investments in human capital as a way to address risk to individual and national well-being. Inclusion is a social justice principle (Crouch, Keys, & McMahon, 2014). Counter to market-driven rhetoric, social investment policies, such as inclusion, have also been described as a means

to foster civic and economic cohesion (Nikolai, 2009). The phenomenon of national decline may be an opportunity to refocus the way inclusion is approached. It is possible to frame improvements in educational systems and inclusive education specifically, not just about honing a competitive edge, but rather acknowledging the flattening of the globe through technological advances that have reduced isolation of nations, and embracing the social justice aims of inclusive education that have been previously subverted by the economic concerns tied to assessment practices.

Internal and external pressures

Societal pressures both internal and external to nations direct the level of attention that inclusion receives. The variations in the nature and origin of pressures, influenced by national capital, influence the implementation of inclusive education and therefore the pressures educators feel; partially shaping their attitudes. Education has been defined in the international community as a cultural right. In 1990, during the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 195 countries drafted an international binding human rights treaty, which was signed by 140 countries and ratified by countries including Australia, Turkey, Romania, and Barbados. The United States signed the treaty in 1995, however it has not been ratified (CRC, 1990). This binding treaty incorporated declarations, and reservations as well as closing remarks, which focused on sensitizing school personnel in order to reduce discrimination (CRC, 1990; Waddington & Toepeke, 2014).

The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) binding international human rights treaty extended the work done by the CRC explicitly mentioning that the attitudinal barriers must be removed to reduce the gap between policy goals and implementation (Waddington & Toepeke, 2014). In the concluding observations to the CRPD, some nations, specifically the United Kingdom and Mauritius, made specific reservations statements declaring that they sought to maintain a separate special education system in addition to the general education system (Waddington & Toepeke, 2014). This is similar to the system in the United States.

Even before the United States Civil Rights movement that outlawed a separate but equal system of education based on race, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) developed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). The United Nations, through UNESCO, sought to advance the rights of all children, establishing articles and policies designed to prevent or eliminate educational discrimination throughout the decades following the Declaration of Human Rights to today (Hunt, 2011). Three UNESCO conferences are widely acknowledged as markers in progress towards inclusive education: Jomtien, Salamanca, and Dakar. Jomtien is recognized as the starting point of focusing on basic learning needs, Salamanca marked the beginning of an emphasis on inclusion and Dakar a focus on

measuring progress towards achieving earlier goals and as an international affirmation of commitment to achieving these goals (Kiuppis, 2014).

Internationally, a landmark in inclusion is the Salamanca Statement of 1994. Within the Salamanca Statement, inclusive schools are a fundamental principle (Hunt, 2011; Kiuppis, 2014). The Salamanca Statement highlights inclusive education with specific reference to disability (Ainscow, 2006; Vislie 2003). The Salamanca Statement does not reference a bifurcated model of general education and special education (Hunt, 2011; Kiuppis, 2014). The Salamanca Statement presents a vision of inclusive education that requires nations to meet the educational needs of all children. As a treaty, it binds nations to move towards this human rights goal.

Kiuppis (2014) reports that immediately following the Salamanca conference there was disagreement as to how inclusive education would be realized. The responses and commentary highlighted that the nations involved realized that they may not be ready to act on the agreement. Competing priorities complicate actualizing the vision described in the Salamanca Statement. The nations involved recognized the importance of inclusive education, but the national commitment to implementation, or the value placed on inclusive education by the constituents is not sufficient to fully enact the treaty. Vislie (2003) studied classroom practices and found no change in the western European Union before and after the Salamanca Statement. A mere six years later, the UNESCO Education for All Declaration in Dakar used more inclusive language, referencing all groups that were not getting equal access to education. This essentially demoted the special emphasis that had been granted to students with disabilities earlier in the Salamanca Statement (Ainscow, 2006). Many children are excluded from education even with governmental commitments like those made at Salamanca and Dakar (LeBeer et al, 2011). At the 2015 World Education Forum in Incheon, Korea more than 100 nations welcomed the Declaration on the Future of Education.

> A quality education is a fundamental right that is essential to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. To realize that right, the World Bank Group - as the leading provider of official development assistance for education - is helping countries mobilize all available resources and link financing to measurable outcomes to advance learning for all. (Keith Hansen, World Bank Group as cited in UNESCO, 2015)

The 2015 declaration explicitly reaffirms the Jomtien and Dakar declarations and includes a direct reference to 'making the necessary changes in education policies and focusing our efforts on the most disadvantaged, especially those with disabilities' (Incheon Declaration, 2015, p.2). The reemphasis on children with disabilities better aligns with the language of the Salamanca Statement and includes a direct reference to the financial requirements to implement the espoused educational vision. Ultimately, Armstrong, Armstrong and Spandagou (2011) conclude that inclusive policies, even when connected to

resources, are unlikely to succeed if they do not consider the broader social context, and that the 'international rhetoric of inclusion is experiences, ironically, as reinforcing the exclusion of entire peoples from economic and social opportunities' (p.38).

Inclusive education challenges deeply established assumptions about education and the professional responsibilities of educators (Ainscow, Dyson, & Weiner, 2013/14; Hunter-Johnson, & Newton, 2014). Inclusive education forces educators to acknowledge that, as professionals, they are responsible for educating every child, and that this responsibility removes any deficit model excuses. Jacobsen (2009) reports that in some countries there is little domestic pressure for social and educational reform. Low internal pressure for inclusive education affects the daily support educators experience as they work in an inclusive setting, impacting their attitudes. Jacobsen (2009) found that regardless of domestic desire for inclusion, some countries will do whatever is required to earn the funding needed to grow; an example of a nation with very low national capital. As one civil servant stated, 'that they will meet whatever regulations they have to 'because we desperately need the money'' (Jacobsen, 2009, p126).

Settings

This study compares the educator attitudes towards inclusion in five countries, Australia, Barbados, Romania, Turkey and the United States. In Barbados, Romania, and Turkey data were collected from urban, suburban and rural sites. The data from these countries are compared to data from one site in Australia and nine sites in the United States that also represent urban, suburban and rural settings. Both Australia and the United States have deeply rooted traditions of a separate system of special education and relatively parallel histories of inclusion efforts, but the history of inclusion research in Barbados, Romania, and Turkey are less consistent.

Romania and Turkey are most clearly influenced by the presence of the European Union (EU). The EU was originally more removed from education policy, but over time has become a more intentional driver of policy (Walkenhorst, 2008). When the EU was conceived, nations wanted to preserve national oversight over education, but over time the member nations developed common legal, institutional, and procedural mechanisms that, in effect, created a common EU educational policy (Walkenhorst, 2008). Barbados' national capital is also reduced by the influence of the European Union (Richardson & Ngwenya, 2013). These nations have less bifurcated systems than do Australia and the United States.

Australia and the United States

While inclusion is being framed in market-driven rhetoric internationally and within the United States, an increase in inclusive opportunities over the past decade in the United States can be credited to No Child Left Behind (2001) and amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

(2004). Hunt (2011) dissects these laws and policies finding that they are imbued with the medical/deficit mindset and the idea of a bifurcated system that were notably absent in the Salamanca Statement. Armstrong, Armstrong and Spandagou (2011) argue that if a nation values social justice and equal participation, then a dual system, one that includes a separate special education system in addition to a general education system, cannot be justified. Policy initiatives are top down and can only be implemented with educators sharing the beliefs and goals of said initiatives (Waddington & Toepeke, 2014). Thus, inclusion is only marginally accomplished in the United States even while the United States enjoys a high degree of national capital (Hunt, 2011; Waddington & Toepeke, 2014). While children have entered the physical buildings of schools, not all children have access to the curriculum.

Australia followed quickly on the heels of US and UK movements (US's *Education for all Handicapped Children* Act 1975, UK's Warnock Report 1978) to establish policies that all children should attend their neighbourhood school (1982; Graham & Jahnukainen, 2011). This was followed by reductions in special school enrolments in Australia, intimating that inclusion was working, and children were physically included. However, Graham and Jahnukainen (2011) found that other forms of segregated placements were growing within the neighbourhood schools, creating a dual system where children were segregated in separate classrooms within the same school or not provided with instruction that allowed access to the curriculum, just as there is in the United States. The split approach to education that exists in the United States and Australia with special education existing as a separate but parallel form of education was also how UNESCO described education from 1965 until roughly the mid 1990's (Kiuppis, 2014).

In Australia, Cologon (2013) found that educator attitudes were critical to inclusive practices, and that the attitudes of the educators and the climate of the school were reciprocal; that is, the context of the setting influenced the educators attitudes and vice versa. Unfortunately, she also found attitudes in Australia were consistent with the lack of confidence, or willingness to teach all children. These attitudes stem from a traditional method of teacher preparation where pre-service teachers are taught about disabilities, perpetuating the 'myth of the normal child' (Cologon, 2013, p33). As in the United States, Australian funding for special education is connected to the labelling or categorization of children as disabled.

Barbados

Barbados is defined by the UN as a developing island nation. Barbados gained its independence in 1966 (Verret, 2013) and has a colonial past that has left a tradition of elitism based on meritocracy (Greenhalgh-Spencer et al., 2015; Lavia, 2007). Financially, Barbados is focused on self-transformation and progress (Greenhalgh-Spencer et al., 2015) and relies on international aid from the World Bank, InterAmerican Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank (Verret, 2013). There is a low-

income gap between the highest and lowest paid citizens, even with the presence of wealth and excess from the tourism trade (Greenhalgh-Spencer et al., 2015).

Educationally, the system in Barbados has been described as having three phases in its development beginning at the end of World War II and before Barbados' independence it was an expanding system, curricula were being established and, in general, the system was being created and defined (Verret, 2013). During the second phase, the 1960's through 1980, the educational system in Barbados turned its focus to fairness and equity. The third phase, starting in 1981, began compulsory schooling (Verret, 2013). Throughout the evolution of the educational system, the Ministry of Education developed a bifurcated system where special education was offered in special institutions or regular facilities as needed by the pupil (Verret, 2013). It is important to note that not all educators, whether they are special education or general education have been trained or completed any degrees in education (Verret, 2013).

While this may resemble the systems in the United States and Australia as far as how special education is implemented, it differs due to the Barbadian dependence on international financial organizations, low national capital, there are added external pressures to embrace a more inclusive system of education. The educational system in Barbados is vulnerable to these pressures as a UN designated developing island nation and the educators in the Barbadian system are especially vulnerable because of the variability in the level of formal training they have received.

Romania

Romania became a member of the European Union (EU) in 2007. The educational system in Romania is legally controlled by orders of the Minister of Education, acts of parliament, common specialized laws, the organic laws of education and the Constitution of Romania established in 1991 (Romania Ministry of Education and Research, 2001). Ghergut (2010) cites Romania's primary goal after the reform in the 1990's as a reduction in marginalization by improving educational access through support, special education and inclusion. In 2001, the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research describes a separate system of special education that is focused on integration rather than inclusion, but also sets a goal of becoming a part of the European Higher Education Area and making the Romanian education system compatible with European standards.

Overall, the EU goal for education appears to be a tool for employment and global economic competitiveness (Walkenhorst, 2008). LeBeer et al. (2011) report that special education needs across Europe are on the rise, with high variability in the number of children identified and the proportion of those children who are in special education, rather than inclusive settings. It is unclear how institutionalized inclusion is by design or by default within the Romanian system. Some rural areas in Romania use an inclusive model of education because they do not possess the resources to have a separate setting for children with different

learning needs. When permitted to attend school, these children are integrated into the physical classroom, but it is uncertain how well their learning needs are being met. There appears to be a growing desire for inclusion rather than integration in the Romanian Ministry of Education, but the transition from the earlier goal of integration to the current goal of inclusion has not yet been fully realized.

Turkey

Turkey, established as a country in 1923, is described as the bridge between Europe and Asia (Melekoglu, Cakiroglu, & Malmgren, 2009). Turkey's commitment to educating all children did not grow out of a civil rights movement as it did in the US, but rather it stems from a constitutional commitment to democracy and modernization and therefore to universal education (Meral & Turnbull, 2014). Even with this commitment to universal education, Meral (2014) found that there is an increase in the number of classrooms that serve children with special education needs. She concludes that the increase in special education classes, a 500% increase between 2011 and 2014, is contradictory to Turkey's espoused commitment to the European Disability Strategy that emphasizes inclusive education. Meral and Turnbull (2014) cite, the commitment to inclusive education is a means for Turkey to demonstrate that it is a 'liberal, democratic country' and to bolster its application for entry into the EU. To become a member of the EU, Turkey must demonstrate that is has a stable democracy that respects human rights, and educational inclusion has become a part of that definition.

Cakiroglu and Melekoglu (2014) report that while education, and specifically special education, have garnered more attention in Turkey in recent years, Turkey has not yet achieved the goal of inclusive education. Turkey has the same proportion of inclusion as does the US, which is higher than some nations with greater levels of capital (Germany or France; Cakiroglu and Melekoglu, 2014). The US system is presented as a high standard, even though the US has not achieved an inclusive system of education. While the number of children in an inclusive environment in Turkey has doubled in recent years, there are still many children with special needs not enrolled in any formal educational setting (Cakiroglu & Melekoglu, 2014).

Purpose of the Study

Together, the study sites in Australia, Barbados, Romania, Turkey and the United States provide a glimpse into how educator attitudes towards inclusion in vary. This deliberate attention to context responds to the call of Crossley (2000), D'Alessio and Cowan (2013), and others to consider the setting when conducting comparative analyses. Using a common instrument, Attitudes Towards Teaching All Students (ATTAS-mm) scale (Gregory & Noto, 2012), the three dimensions of attitude (cognitive, affective, and behavioural) were measured and conclusions drawn based on the contextual differences of the settings.

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether educator attitudes towards the inclusion of children with mild to moderate disabilities vary between nations with differing systems of special education. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

(RQ1) Is there a significant difference in the overall educator attitudes towards teaching children with mild to moderate disabilities between nations with more national capital and traditionally separate formal special education systems and those without?

(RQ2) Are there any significant differences in the subscales that measure the three dimensions of educator attitude towards teaching children with mild to moderate disabilities between nations with more national capital and traditionally separate formal special education systems and those without?

Methods

To answer these questions, data collected from 3 sites in nations without formal special education systems and 10 sites in nations with formal special education systems were compared. While the number of research sites appears unbalanced, the proportion of data from the two groups was 46%(without) to 54%(with), which is fairly balanced in terms of comparative sample sizes. To evaluate the research questions, independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVAs were conducted with Tukey post-hoc analyses. Additionally, effect sizes were calculated using Cohen's d and eta-squared as appropriate.

Instrumentation

Data were collected by independent researchers at the various sites, using the same instrument, the Attitudes Towards Teaching All Students (ATTAS-mm) scale (Gregory & Noto, 2012). The ATTAS-mm is a valid and reliable instrument that measures the attitudes of educators towards the inclusion of students with mild to moderate disabilities. As the instrument was translated in some instances (Romania and Turkey), before data were included in the data set, confirmatory factor analyses were preformed to ensure that the instrument was still reliable in translation. The reliability for the full ATTAS-mm scale is good according to generally accepted values and the three subscales also demonstrate good to excellent reliability (Table 1; Cronbach, 1951). Subscale scores range from 3 to 21 and the full scale scores span from 9 to a maximum of 63.

Table 1. *Domains and reliability analysis for ATTAS-mm full scale and subscales (Adapted from Gregory & Noto, 2012).*

Component	Title	Cronbach Alpha
Full scale	Attitudes towards teaching all students	0.833
Subscale 1: Cognitive	Knowing all students can succeed in general education classrooms	0.720
Subscale 2: Affective	Feeling professional responsibilities, developing personal and professional relationships	0.928
Subscale 3: Behavioral	Creating an accepting environment for all students to learn	0.837

It is interesting to note that the subscale that measures the affective portion of attitude has the highest reliability. This is inconsistent with the earlier TATIS instruments (Gregory & Noto, 2011) and with literature on measuring attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1972). It is unclear whether this is a result of instrumentation; the influence of social pressures impacting the self-reported data, or another factor.

Data Collection

Across the thirteen sites, 1679 responses were collected. Roughly half (54%) of the sample was collected from educators in ten sites in the Unites States and Australia, and the rest (46%) from educators working in nations without entrenched separate systems of special education and high levels of national capital: Turkey (13.2%), Romania (25.1%), and Barbados (7.7%).

Data analysis

The data were analysed in two stages. First the demographic data were analysed to determine whether the groups of educators, those in each setting, were different in characteristics beyond the measured dimensions of attitudes. Second, the data were analysed to evaluate the proposed research questions and effect sized for any statistically significant results.

Results

Description of the sample

Respondents, as grouped by level of national capital, varied on every demographic factor except their primary role, that of certified teacher. The nations with higher levels of national capital, and more distinct special education systems included more male respondents (27% vs. 18%), reported more experience with children with mild to moderate disabilities, and indicated higher levels of formal education and number of courses specifically on special education (Table 2). Researchers have conflicting views on how educator attitudes towards inclusion are impacted by these demographic characteristics (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Beacham & Rouse, 2012; Gal, Schreur, & Engel-Yeger, 2010; Parasuram, 2006; Subban & Sharma, 2006) and these differnces, while interesting, are not the focus of the current study. The description of the sample is presented here to provide additional context for the subsequent comparisons, and caution is warranted in over estimating the power of the comparisons made.

Table 2. *Demographic characteristics of the sample.*

Criterion	Higher Levels of Formal Special Education		Lower Levels of Formal Special Education	
	N	%	n	%
Highest Degree				
Associates	30	4.3	56	16.0
Bachelors	288	41.6	261	74.6
Masters	192	27.8	28	8.0
Masters +30	169	24.4	2	0.5
Doctorate	13	1.9	3	0.9
Experience with children with mild to moderate disabilities				
Minimal (1hour or fewer/month)	185	25.2	156	48.8
Some (2-10hrs/month)	123	16.8	122	38.0
Considerable (11-80hrs/month)	244	33.3	24	7.6
Extensive (more than 80hrs/month)	181	24.7	18	5.6

Comparison of the full ATTAS-mm scale

The full scale of attitudes demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the groups with the mean score of the nations with lower levels of formal special education ($M_{(lower)}$ = 34.46, SD = 8.35) exceeding that of the nations with higher levels of traditionally separate special education ($M_{(higher)}$ = 32.11, SD = 9.71; $t(1256)$ = -4.27, p < .001, $d_{(Cohen)}$ = .24). These scores are consistent with the fiftieth percentile for the nations with more separate systems and the thirtieth for the nations with lesser distinct systems (Gregory & Noto, 2012), meaning that seventy percent of educators responding to this scale overall have more positive attitudes than the educators in the portion of the current sample consisting of educators from nations with lower levels of traditionally separate special education. The full scale shows that educators in these nations indicated more positive overall attitudes towards inclusion, but the aggregate scale hides interesting differences within the data.

Comparison of the subscales

Within the ATTAS-mm the three dimensions of attitude, cognitive, affective and behavioural, are measured separately. The means for each of the subsections of the ATTAS-mm are significantly different within each respondent group (Table 3).

Table 3. *Comparison of ATTAS-mm mean subscale results for nations having differing levels of formal special education.*

Domain		Higher Levels of Formal Special Education		Lower Levels of Formal Special Education	
		Mean Score	Percentile	Mean Score	Percentile
Subscale Cognitive	1:	12.16***	93	10.37***	75
Subscale Affective	2:	10.14**	9	12.27*	34
Subscale Behavioral	3:	9.79**	8	11.82*	35

* differs from other means in the column at the .05 level of significance
** differs from other means in the column at the .01 level of significance
*** differs from other means in the column at the .001 level of significance

When the three dimensions are evaluated separately, the data show that educators in the nations with higher levels of national capital report higher scores on the cognitive domain with the mean score for these nations in the 93rd percentile ($M_{(higher)}$ = 12.16, SD = 3.88; $M_{(lower)}$ = 10.38, SD = 4.83; $t_{(1256)}$ = 6.22, $p <$ .001), but lower scores than educators from nations with less capital on both the affective ($M_{(higher)}$ = 10.14, SD = 4.14; $M_{(lower)}$ = 12.27, SD = 4.24; $t_{(1256)}$ = -8.03, $p <$ .001) and behavioural ($M(higher)$ = 9.79, SD = 4.59; $M_{(lower)}$ = 11.82, SD = 3.86; $t_{(1256)}$ = -7.92, $p <$ .001) domains. This is most clear when comparing the percentile ranks of the scores, where the educators from nations with more traditionally disparate systems of regular and special education scored in the top ten percent with the cognitive domain, but the lowest ten percent when measuring the affective and behavioural domains.

The differences in the scores from Barbados, Romania, and Turkey were more interesting. While significant differences exist between the nations having differing levels of formal special education, there were also significant differences within the group of nations described as having historically a less divided system (Table 4).

Table 4. *Comparison of ATTAS-mm subscale and full scale scores with nations having differing levels of formal special education, disaggregated.*

Domain		High Levels of Formal Special Education	Barbados	Romania	Turkey
Subscale Cognitive	1:	12.16	14.25***	11.38***	8.11***
Subscale Affective	2:	10.14	8.97***	7.06***	14.20***
Subscale Behavioral	3:	9.79	9.83***	7.78***	12.99***
Full Scale		32.11	33.05*	26.22***	35.29*

* differs from other means in the column at the .05 level of significance
** differs from other means in the column at the .01 level of significance
*** differs from other means in the column at the .001 level of significance

An analysis of variance demonstrated significant differences between Barbados, Romania, and Turkey (Cognitive, $F_{(2, 770)}$ = 120.064, p = .000; Affective, $F_{(2, 770)}$ = 358.963, p = .000; Behavioural, $F_{(2, 770)}$ = 176.793, p = .000; Full Scale, $F_{(2, 770)}$ = 100.105, p = .000). Tukey post-hoc analyses revealed that there were significant differences (p = .000) for all pairings save the full scale comparison between Barbados and Turkey; the difference in the full scale scores of educators in Barbados and Turkey demonstrated significance at the p = .05 level.

Practical significance of the results

Effect sizes were calculated for the comparisons between higher and lower national capital groupings to provide information of the practical significance in addition to the statistical significance previously reported. For the full scale the effect size (d = .31) suggests a low to moderate effect according to Cohen's (1988) conventions. In contrast to the modest effect suggested by Cohen's values of .2 indicating low effect and .5 denoting a moderate effect, the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC, 2014) asserted that, in educational research, an effect size of greater than .25 is 'substantively important.' Balancing these interpretations of effect size, practical significance, and the statistically significant difference in the full scale, the educators that were included in this study from nations with less distinct programs of special education had more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children with mild to moderate disabilities overall than the included educators from nations with greater distinction between regular education and special education.

"Again, more striking than the results of the overall scale were the results from the subscales. For the cognitive subscale, Cohen's effect size value (d = .54) suggested a moderate effect and exceeds the WWC threshold for importance, and both the affective and behavioural domains also demonstrate moderate effect sizes ($d_{(affective)}$ = .46; $d_{(behavioural)}$ = .58). The moderate or substantive practical significance of these subscales affirms the statistical significance of the differences and the differences noted in the percentile ranks of the scores. These effect sizes are impressive even when interpretation is tempered by possible differences in the characteristics of the sample.

Discussion

The data suggest that there are significant differences between nations having highly separate systems of special educations and those that do not. The results also indicate that within the subset of nations with less bifurcated systems there are also significant differences. Specifically, there were significant differences in both the overall educator attitudes as well as the three dimensions of educator attitude (cognitive, affective, and behavioural) towards teaching children with mild to moderate disabilities between these nations.

One unanticipated finding was that there were differences in the educator attitudes within the nations with less established separate systems of special education. The educators from Turkey indicated significantly different attitudes from the educators who are from Romania and Barbados. This challenges the hypothesis that the nations with higher and lower levels of national capital are consistent in their attitudes toward inclusion of students with mild to moderate disabilities. This fortuitous result prompts further questions into the national characteristics that may impact educator attitudes.

Romania's embracing of inclusion does not stem from a long history of positive attitudes towards minority groups, like the Romani minority or children with disabilities (Allan, 2012), but from a more recent pressure to include these groups exerted by the EU (Ghergut, 2010; Kushen, Buzetzky, Usein, & Bojadjieva, 2015). The focus presented by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research (2001) was integration. The approach of integration appears more appropriate for embracing the Romani minority than providing for children with special education needs. The low overall attitudinal scores may result from the very recent shift in policy from integration to inclusion. More recently, the Ministry of Education and Research has aligned itself with the EU vision of inclusion (Ghergut, 2010), and this corroborates the results of this study with higher cognitive scores than affective or behavioural scores. While the educators surveyed are aware of the benefits of inclusion (resulting in higher cognitive scores) the affective and behavioural aspects of attitude have not been impacted; policy vs. practice.

Barbados, unlike Turkey and Romania, includes in its history a period of British colonization (like Australia and the United States). Additionally, Barbados experienced a period of emphasis on equality and fairness roughly coinciding with the Civil Rights era in the United States (Verret, 2013). Similar to Australia and the United States, the Barbadian education system is bifurcated with special education existing as a separate entity from the regular education system (Verret, 2013). This split, while not as entrenched as it is in Australia and the United States along with the Barbadian emphasis on self-transformation, may well explain why the scores of educators surveyed in Barbados were more similar to those of Australia and the United States than to the scores of educators from Romania and Turkey. Thus, the level of national capital appears less important than does the existence of a bifurcated educational system.

Educators in Australia and the United States indicated higher levels of formal education and more classes specifically on special education, which would bias the group towards having information about the benefits of inclusive practices that are measured on the cognitive scale. While the magnitude of the polarization of the difference in percentile ranks is a surprising finding; that the cognitive domain is the highest of the three is not. Educator preparation programs in the United States and Australia require that candidates pass classes where the value of inclusion is espoused, and within the educational profession, legally and socially, inclusion is acknowledged as the mode that benefits children. In short, it is predictable that educators that have been a part of these systems would know the socially acceptable answers to the

cognitive items on the instrument, but this does not appear to impact the other domains. Additionally, many educator preparation programs require coursework in special education as a separate, distinct requirement. This further reinforces the separateness of special education, as something different from the regular, educator preparation curriculum. Gehrke and Cocchiarella (2013) lament that pre-service educators experience a disconnect between coursework and practice; they assert that student teachers can produce a definition of inclusion but are not able to recognize aspects of inclusion when observing others, nor practice it. Educators know what is best practice, but are underprepared to act on the cognition.

Policy makers and other educational leaders can use these results to drive greater practical application requirements in educator preparation. There is a caveat here, additional requirements of this ilk focus on the behavioural competency of the educator but not necessarily the affective domain. The affective domain may be addressed through experiential learning by building feelings of efficacy, but while a distinct system of special education exists, the educator in the nation with greater capital, and a more established, formal system of special education, can afford to be less emotionally invested and feel less accountable for modifying their own behaviours to meet the needs of all children in their care, not because they don't want what is best for the child but because there is someone more qualified to provide for that child.

Educators in Barbados, Romania, and Turkey face different issues in providing for children. Inclusion is not only a best practice for children; it is pragmatic. Where there are few teachers and even fewer certified teachers, insufficient resources exist to support a separate system of special education. Ghergut (2010) concluded that, 'inclusive education in rural areas is more readily accepted and supported by teachers' (p. 713). He and attributed the greater openness to inclusion to a lack of hierarchy among rural schools. Perhaps because Turkey is over three times the square area of Romania and over a thousand times the area of Barbados, there is a greater proportion of rural area in Turkey that may be contributing to the differences in attitude. The higher affective and behavioural dimensions of attitude may be ascribed to these demographic factors or to internal or external pressures on the nation's educational systems. The current study did not seek to disaggregate these causal links, nor was the focus on these characteristics, as the research on the impact of characteristics is far from conclusive (Avramidis et al., 2000; Gal et al., 2010; Parasuram, 2006; Subban & Sharma, 2006).

External pressures connected to funding or membership in the EU have driven top down requirements regarding inclusion in the nations with lower levels of national capital included in this study (Dunne, 2014; Mosley, 2003; Murphy, 1997; Richardson & Ngwenya, 2013). Mandates do not always engender a shared vision of the spirit behind the directive, and to be fair, not even the chief "architect" of inclusion in the United Kingdom remains a staunch advocate of it; she is quoted as calling inclusion "disastrous" (Allan, 2012). The data in this study suggest that the educators have embraced the essence of inclusion with responses that indicate positive affective and behavioural facets of attitude. Local pressures

and traits of the individual settings certainly contribute to these educator attitudes, but the quantitative nature of this research did not permit analysis of the varying impacts of local characteristics.

Inclusion is cost-effective and benefits children by giving them access to the curriculum (Ainscow, Dyson, & Weiner, 2013/14), but it is important that all players recognize that the teacher attitudes are crucial for inclusion to be a success. Hunter-Johnson and Newton (2014) found that administrative support partially operationalized as consistent professional development is a powerful predictor of favourable attitudes. Recognizing the varying needs of educators is pivotal to effective professional development, and using the results of the ATTAS-mm to narrow the focus of professional development can save financial and human resources.

Limitations

The greatest limitation of this study is the attempt to make generalized recommendations contingent on data collected at different sites. While there are general trends, each educational site would benefit from deeper, qualitative individual consideration. The educators in each country studied, and even each school within each country will have different attitudes, and to prescribe a one-size-fits-all plan to improve educator attitudes is a part of the problem rather than the solution. Additional, qualitative research would aid in understanding each setting, and in developing differentiated plans of professional development to best operationalize the findings from the quantitative results.

Another confounding issue is that the ATTAS-mm is a self-reported measure; making it unclear whether the responses were accurate reflections of the cognitive domain of attitude or the perception of the 'right' answer on a scale. An additional limitation of this study is, that for some of the educators, the ATTAS-mm was translated. To address this limitation, confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to ensure that the instrument was performing as well in translation as it did in English.

As the demographic section of the ATTAS-mm is also self-reported, some participants chose not to share this information. Every effort was made to collect these data, but participants had the right to not include it. This limited the ability to match demographic characteristics of the samples.

Conclusion

Every child in the world deserves to have a teacher that has a positive attitude towards his or her success regardless of any exceptionality. Educational leaders and policy makers can use the results of attitude measures of their specific population of educators to provide tailored professional development and relevant policy recommendations that respect varying contexts. It is inappropriate to export models of education from one setting to another without careful considerations of the historical, internal, and external pressures of that location, but lenders and policy makers persist in this practice. In a global economy where

financial and human assets are limited, strategic use of education and mandates can work together to improve the educational outcomes of children.

There are differences in teacher attitudes between nations, and between nations with differing levels of separate special education systems. Educators in nations with less established special education systems demonstrated lower scores on the cognitive domain of attitude, but there were significant differences within the three nations with lower levels of national capital that underscore the need for contextualization when discussing inclusionary reform. The percentile rank scores of the nations with long histories of separate special education systems indicate that the cognitive domain of attitude is not coupled with the affective and behavioural domains. The lower scores associated with the affective and behavioural domains for educators in the nations with greater national capital and formal special education are also consistent with the structures of education in those settings; both Australia and the United States have separate and well-entrenched special education systems that parallel the general education system.

If the goal of a system of education is to be inclusive, then this research suggests that deconstructing the parallel system of special education will improve the affective and behavioural domains of educator's attitudes, the behavioural intentions. This, in turn, will positively impact the educational experience of students with mild to moderate disabilities, as the promises of inclusive education can be realized.

References

Ainscow, M. & Cesar, M. (2006). Inclusive education ten years after Salamanca: Setting the agenda. *European Journal of Psychology of Education, 21*(3), 231-238.

Ainscow, M., Dyson, A., & Weiner, S. (2013/14). From exclusion to inclusion: A review of international literature on way s of responding to students with special educational needs in schools. *En-clave Pedagógica, 13*, 13-30.

Allan, J. (2012). The inclusion challenge. In T. Barow & D. Östlund (Eds.), *Bildning för alla! En pedagogisk utmaning. [Education for everyone! A pedagogical challenge.]* (pp. 109–120). Kristianstad, Sweden: Högskolan Kristianstad.

Amoako, E. (2012). Globalisation plus Comparative and International Education: Towards a Theory of the Confluence. *Journal of International and Comparative Education*, *1*(1), 62.

Ansell, B. W. (2008). Traders, teachers, and tyrants: Democracy, globalization, and public investment in education. *International Organization*, *62*(2) 289-322.

Armstrong, D., Armstrong, A. C., & Spandagou, I. (2011). Inclusion: by choice or by chance? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *15*(1), 29-39.

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*(3), 277–293. http://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(99)00062-1

Beacham, N., & Rouse, M. (2012). Student teachers' attitudes and beliefs about inclusion and inclusive practice. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, *12*(1), 3–11. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-3802.2010.01194.x

Busemeyer, M. R., & Trampusch, C. (2011). Review article: comparative political science and the study of education. *British Journal of Political Science*, *41*(02), 413-443.

Cherryholmes, C. H. (1994). More notes on pragmatism. *Educational researcher*, 16-18.

Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavioural sciences (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

Cologon, K. (2013). *Inclusion in education: Towards equality for students with disabilities Issues paper.* Children and Families Research Centre, Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University.

Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations, Sept. 2, 1990, *1577* (27531)*,* 3.

Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, *16*, 297-334.

Crossley, M. (2000). Bridging cultures and traditions in the reconceptualisation of comparative and international education. *Comparative Education*, *36*(3), 319-332.

Crossley, M. (2008). Bridging cultures and traditions for educational and international development: Comparative research, dialogue and difference. *International Review of Education*, *54*(3/4), 319-336.

Crossley, M. (2009). *Bridging cultures and traditions for educational and international development: Comparative research, dialogue and difference* (pp. 33-50). Springer Netherlands.

Crouch, R., Keys, C. B., & McMahon, S. D. (2014). Student-teacher relationships matter for school Inclusion: School belonging, disability and school transitions. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community, 42*, 20-30.

D'Alessio, S., & Cowan, S. (2013). Cross-cultural approaches to the study of 'inclusive' and 'special needs' education. In A. W. Wiseman & E. Anderson (Eds.), *Annual review of comparative and international education 2013* (Vol. 20, pp. 227-261). Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing.

Deletant, D. (2008). *New Evidence on Romania and the Warsaw Pact, 1955-1989. Cold War International History Project e-Dossier Series.* Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center.

Dunne, M. (2014). Mergers and Acquisitions within the EU: Have Member States Lost Belief in the Single Market. *Irish Law Journal*, *2*. Retrieved from http://heinonlinebackup.com/hol-cgi-bin/get_pdf.cgi?handle=hein.journals/irlajor2013&section=5

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, L. (1972). Attitudes and opinions. *Annual Review of Psychology 23*, 487-544.

Folostina, R., Duta, N., & Pravalici, A. (2014). The Attitudes of Teacher Towards Integrating Students with Intellectual Disability in Regular Schools in Romania. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 141,* 506-511.

Forlin, C. (2013). Changing paradigms and future directions for implementing inclusive education in developing countries. *Asian Journal of Inclusive Education, 1*(2), 19-31.

Gal, E., Schreur, N., & Engel-Yeger, B. (2010). Inclusion of Children with Disabilities: Teachers' Attitudes and Requirements for Environmental Accommodations. *International Journal of Special Education*, *25*(2), 89–99. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ890588

Gehrke, R. S., & Cocchiarella, M. (2013). Preservice special and general educators' knowledge of inclusion. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 36*(3), 204-216.

Ghergut, A. (2010). Analysis of inclusive education in Romania: Results from a survey conducted among teachers. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 5*, 711-715.

Graham, L. J., & Jahnukainen, M. (2011). Wherefore art thou, inclusion? Analysing the development of inclusive education in New South Wales, Alberta and Finland. *Journal of Education Policy*, *26*(2), 263-288.

Gregory, J. L. & Noto, L. A. (2011). Is it possible to impact the attitudes of pre-service general education teachers about the inclusion of students with disabilities. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Education.* http://www.hiceducation.org/proceedings_edu.htm.

Gregory, J. L. & Noto, L. A. (2012). Technical manual for attitudes towards teaching all students (ATTAS-mm) instrument. (ED537530).

Hunt, P. F. (2011). Salamanca Statement and IDEA 2004: possibilities of practice for inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *15*(4), 461-476.

Hunter-Johnson, Y. & Newton, N. G. L. (2014). What does teachers' perception have to do with inclusive education: A Bahamian context. *International Journal of Special Education, 29*(1), 1-15.

Incheon Declaration, Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all, United Nations, May 22, 2015, (ED/WEF2015/MD/3).

International Monetary Fund | April 2015

Jacobsen, K. (2009). Achievements and non-achievements of the European employment strategy. In N. Morel, B. Palier, J. Palme (dir.), *What future for social investment?,* Institute for Futures Studies Report Series, 2009, 119-130.

Kandel, I. L. (1933). *Studies in comparative education*. George G. Harrap and Company Limited: London.

Kiuppis, F. (2014). Why (not) associate the principle of inclusion with disability? Tracing connections from the start of the 'Salamanca Process'. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 18*(7), 746-761.

Kiuppis, F., & Peters, S. (2014). Inclusive Education for all as a Special Interest within the Comparative and International Education Research Community. *Annual Review of Comparative and International Education, 25*, 53-63.

Kushen, R., Buzetzky, T., Usein, O., & Bojadjieva, A. (2015). The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015. Retrieved February 8, 2016, from http://www.romadecade.org/

LeBeer, J., Birta-Székely, N., Demeter, K., Bohács, K., Candeias, A. A., Sønnesyn, G., Partanen, P. & Dawson, L. (2011). Re-assessing the current assessment practice of children with special education needs in Europe. *School Psychology International, 33*(1), 69-92.

Lifshitz, H., & Glaubman, R. (2002). Religious and secular students' sense of self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusion of pupils with intellectual disability and other types of needs. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, *46*(5), 405–418. http://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2788.2002.00424.x

Lingard, B., Rawolle, S., & Taylor, S. (2005). Globalizing policy sociology in education: working with Bourdieu. *Journal of education policy*, *20*(6), 759-777. http://core.kmi.open.ac.uk/download/pdf/10874366.pdf

McMillan, J. H., & Foley, J. (2011). Reporting and discussing effect size: Still the road less traveled. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, *16*(14), 1-12.

Melekoglu, M. A., Cakiroglu, O., & Malmgren, K. W. (2009). Special education in Turkey. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 13*(3), 287-298.

Meral, B. (2014). Obstacles to special education for students with intellectual disabilities in Turkey: A brief report. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 30*(1), 93-105.

Meral, B. & Turnbull, H. R. (2014). Analysis of special education policy in Turkey and United States: Improving Turkey's policy for students with intellectual disability. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, 11*(3), 165-175.

Mintz, J. (2007). Attitudes of primary initial teacher training students to special needs and inclusion. *Support for Learning, 22*(1), 3-8.

Moores, D. E. (2011). Waist deep in the big muddy: The individuals with disabilities education act (IDEA) and no child left behind (NCLB). *American Annals of the Deaf, 155*(5), 523- 525.

Morel, N., Palier, B., & Palme, J. (2009). Introduction. In N. Morel, B. Palier, J. Palme (dir.), *What future for social investment?,* Institute for Futures Studies Report Series, 2009, 15-22.

Mosley, L. (2003). *Global capital and national governments*. New York: Cambrdge Univeristy Press. Retrieved from
https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=pYykNVRMpKAC&oi=fnd&pg=PR11&dq=EU+reduced+%22national+capital%22&ots=hKi3qhnno-&sig=S0srDGSjt8udrMJ0qvw9KsoVzPI

Murphy, M. (1997). Capital, class and adult education: the international political economy of lifelong learning in the European Union. In P. Armstrong, N. Miller, & M. Zukas (Eds.), *Crossing Borders Breaking Boundaries, Proceedings of the 27th Annual SCUTREA Conference* (pp. 362–364). London: Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults. Retrieved from http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/000000273.doc

Nelson, M., & Stephens, J. D. (2009). Human capital policies and the social investment perspective: Explaining the past and anticipating the future. In N. Morel, B. Palier, J. Palme (dir.), *What future for social investment?,* Institute for Futures Studies Report Series, 2009, 67-78.

Nikolai, R. (2009). Towards social investment? Patterns of public policy in the OECD world. In N. Morel, B. Palier, J. Palme (dir.), *What future for social investment?,* Institute for Futures Studies Report Series, 2009, 99-118.

Palme, J. (2009). The quest for sustainable social policies in the EU: The crisis and beyond. In N. Morel, B. Palier, J. Palme (dir.), *What future for social investment?,* Institute for Futures Studies Report Series, 2009, 177-193.

Parasuram, K. (2006). Variables that affect teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusive education in Mumbai, India. *Disability & Society*, *21*(3), 231–242. http://doi.org/10.1080/09687590600617352

Peters, S. J. (2007). 'Education for all?' A historical analysis of international inclusive educa- tion policy and individuals with disabilities. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 18*(2), 98-108.

Richardson, B., & Ngwenya, P. R. (2013). Cut Loose in the Caribbean: Neoliberalism and the Demise of the Commonwealth Sugar Trade. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, *32*(3), 263–278. http://doi.org/10.1111/blar.12001

Romania Ministry of Education and Research. (2001). *The Romanian Education System, the national report.* Bucharest: Author.

Romi, S., & Leyser, Y. (2006). Exploring inclusion preservice training needs: a study of variables associated with attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *21*(1), 85–105. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856250500491880

Silverman, J. C. (2007). Epistemological beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion in pre-service teachers. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 30*(1), 42-51.

Subban, P., & Sharma, U. (2006). Primary school teachers' perceptions of inclusive education in Victoria, Australia. *International ...*, *21*(1), 42–52. Retrieved from http://www.internationaljournalofspecialed.com/docs/05 SubbanSharma.doc

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2012.* (NCES 2014-015), Table 48.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, *Education and Inclusion in the United States: A Brief Overview,* Washington, D.C., 2008. Retrieved Feb 20, 2015, from http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/ICE_2008/usa_NR08.pdf

Unianu, E. M. (2012) Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 33*, 900-904.

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. (2015). World Education Forum adopts Declaration on the Future of Education [Press release]. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/world_education_forum_adopts_declaration_on_the_future_of_education/#.VWxwT-uH11K

Vislie, L. (2003). From integration to inclusion: Focusing global trends and changes in western European societies. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 18*(1), 17-35.

Walkenhorst, H. (2008). Explaining change in EU education policy. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *15*(4), 567-587.

What Works Clearinghouse (2014). WWC procedures and standards handbook (Version 3.0). Washington, D.C.: Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved May 13, 2015, from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/documentsum.aspx?sid=19

Wilczenski, F. (1992). Use of the 'Attitudes toward mainstreaming scale with undergraduate student. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the New England Educational Research Organization. Portsmouth, NH. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 332 992.

Zigmond, N., Kloo, A., & Volonino, V. (2009). What, where, and how? Special education in the climate of full inclusion. *Exceptionality: A special Education Journal, 17*(4), 189- 204.