
A Quantitative Study.

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Abstract

In this essay, in order to learn about the parents’ and teachers’ attitudes towards mainstreaming teaching methods in China, the authors used a sample from a middle school in Chengdu. Altogether 13 teachers and 155 parents of four classes in two grades in a middle boarding school in Chengdu, China, are recruited as participants. The study employs quantitative methods and interviews within the quantitative frame. Two questionnaires and two interview drafts are used. By analyzing the data collected in the questionnaire and examining the answers in the interview draft from the theoretical perspective of system theory, we make an attempt to have a basic understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of the mainstreaming teaching method in China as well as the public attitude towards this method. We found that most of the teachers and parents were in favor of mainstreaming teaching. However, they believed that the proportion of the disabled students in each class should not be too high.

Key words: disabled children; education equality, mainstreaming.
Preamble
We are really grateful to three persons who have guided and helped us a lot in the writing of this essay. Without these people, we could never finish this work. The first one is our dear supervisor, Stig Elofsson (Loffe), who has kindly offered us a great deal of suggestions, assistance, and inspirations. We really appreciate this. The second one is Miss Debbie Liu, who has provided us with a lot of assistance in the process of the interview and has collected the data of the questionnaires for us. Without the original data, we can never finish this essay. The third one is Mr. Edgar Feng, who has generously organized the interviews for us. He has also done the face-to-face interview part for us and has sent us back the data since we are not able to fly back to China. This face-to-face interview is really important because the observation can be various, which includes facial expression, body language, tone, voice, pause, and so on. Without this, the data from the interviews would be incomplete and we cannot deeply analyze our data from the interview as well.

Declaration
I claim that no portion of the work referred to in the dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institution of learning.
# Table of Contents

Abstract

Preamble

Declaration

Letter of Consent

1. Introduction
   1.1 History of Mainstreaming Teaching Methods
   1.2 Background of Mainstreaming Teaching in China
   1.3 Purpose and Research Questions
      1.3.1 Purpose
      1.3.2 Research Questions
      1.3.3 Essay disposition
      1.3.4 Explanation of concepts
   1.4 Essay disposition

2. Earlier Research

3. Theoretical Framework

4. Methodology
   4.1 Research Design
   4.2 Sampling
   4.3 Data Collection
1. Introduction

1.1 History of Mainstreaming Teaching Methods

For years, disabled children, mentally challenged or physically challenged, have been receiving their education in special education schools. There was a time when they were turned down by ordinary schools. However, now it is not the case. With the emergence of mainstreaming practice of education, disabled children now have the same opportunity as ordinary children to receive the same type and quality of education (Pam, 1995).

Mainstreaming is a form of education that can be dated back to as early as the Civil Rights movement in the United States in the 1950s (Deng and Zhu, 2007). It allows disabled children to have access to the equal opportunity of education as ordinary children in ordinary education institutions, which means that in this way, disabled children are studying together with ordinary children. Not only do mainstreaming students receive the basic requirements of general education, but they are also able to learn some special skills at school. These schools will provide target services, pertinent education, some necessary rehabilitation and compensation trainings for disabled children.

Mainstreaming education has now been practiced and celebrated in many developed countries as well as developing countries. It is seen as a symbol of education equality. Children are born to have equal rights, including education. Through mainstreaming teaching, disabled children can study with ordinary children, share the same teaching resources, and be treated like one of our own. Studying with ordinary children can also improve their self-esteem and promote their social to communicate and interact with other people. What is more, non-disabled students would have a better understanding of their disabled classmates. Through helping their classmates, they would be more compassionate, tolerant and kind as well. However, as a coin always has two sides, mainstreaming also has disadvantages. It might be a tradeoff with the education of the ordinary children because teachers tend to pay more attention to the disabled children. On the other hand, since the teachers in the ordinary
schools are not trained to provide assistance to disabled students like those in a special school, sometimes they could not satisfy disabled children’s needs. Indeed, these advantages and disadvantages are universal and common.

1.2 Background of Mainstreaming Teaching in China

In China, disabled children are defined as those who have special needs in the area of health, education, physical, intelligence, emotion and social development, owing to the genetic problems, or acquired brain or physical injuries. More specifically, disability is divided into two categories, one of which is pre-birth and the other one is after birth.

In China, education for the disabled children used to be a big headache. On one hand, there were not enough teaching resources. On the other, the public was not aware of the importance of education prevalence, especially for the disabled. According to Da’s study (2011), there are two stages of education for the disabled. The first stage is the early stage of the sampling survey in 1987, there are nearly 6 million disabled children, but only 1% of children with disabilities in special school receive education, the other disabled children didn't go to school to receive education (Da, L, 2011), because not enough schools could teach them. At 1987, the situation was improved by 6%, the relevant legal provisions for disabled children to have the right to receive compulsory education were issued in 1986 (Da, L, 2011), which makes the requirements for admission to the disabled children growing, the second phase as the pilot stage, in the combination of theory and practice. China started this special education mode. In the ordinary schools, they would specifically open a counseling room for children with disabilities. The school had been equipped with specialized teachers, helping the disabled children in common class who are not able to finish tasks. This project achieved affirmation and success. In 2002, the government also stepped up to support the mainstreaming and to provide more resources for the schools.
Mainstreaming for the disabled children in China is considered as an important symbol of social civilization progress in China. Mainstreaming is an educational policy adopted by the Chinese government in order to solve the problem of the education enrollment of disabled children.

According to Hua (2012), mainstreaming first started in the rural areas of China because there were not enough teaching resources (teachers, teaching equipment, teaching site, fund et. al) for them to set up special schools. Disabled children had to go to ordinary schools if they wanted to receive education. It was not until the late 1980s that the government began to realize the importance of mainstreaming practice and to advocate it on a national basis. Special education is an important part of social education career, and the right of education for disabled children is increasingly taken seriously. In addition, the mainstreaming has become one of the main forms of disabled children to access education in China nowadays. Nonetheless, not all teachers are in favor of mainstreaming teaching. In 2000, Wei and Yuan did a survey on 1888 teachers from ordinary schools and special schools. The research showed that the portion of teachers from ordinary schools that approved mainstreaming teaching were far less than that of the teachers from special schools. The reality was, pointed out by Wei and Yuan that since there were always a lot of students in the class in ordinary schools, teachers did not believe that they would have enough time and energy to provide special care for disabled students. Having disabled students was like a burden to the teachers in ordinary schools.

Back then in the rural areas, mainstreaming was the last resort for the government because of shortage of teaching resources. However, now we have abundant resources to build special schools, why are we still advocating mainstreaming? Why is it good for disabled children and ordinary children to study together? Disabled children and non-disabled children studying together in ordinary classes will affect many conditions. Moreover, since China starts relatively late in the field of mainstreaming for disabled children, problems will inevitably exist.

1.3 Purpose and Research Questions
In this essay, the authors are going to look at the mainstreaming teaching method in Chengdu, China. In the research, the authors mainly want to find out why China has advocated mainstreaming teaching methods through studying the sample from a middle school in Chengdu, China, Hence the advantages of mainstreaming practice. At the same time, the difficulties and obstacles encountered during the implement of mainstreaming study will also be explored.

1.3.1 Purpose

The purpose of this essay is to study attitudes to mainstream teaching among parents of ordinary and disable children and teachers in China. By analyzing this we hope we could learn more about the advantages and disadvantages of mainstream teaching.

1.3.2 Research Questions

What is the parents’ and teachers’ attitude towards mainstreaming teaching in China?

What matters in mainstreaming teaching methods in China?

Therefore, in this essay, four classes in a middle school in Chengdu, China are chosen as the sample to study the advantages and disadvantages (mainly difficulties and obstacles) of mainstreaming teaching methods in China. The authors have gathered their data thorough questionnaires and by conducting interviews to both the parents of disabled children and non-disabled children, as well as their teachers. By using quantitative methods as well as interviews within the quantitative frame, the authors make an attempt to have a better understanding of the teachers and parents’ attitudes and opinions on mainstreaming teaching. In this study, the participants will only be the parents and teachers. Students are not included because it is common phenomenon in China that in most cases, parents choose schools for their children aged under 16. Teachers and parents usually get feedbacks from the students and would spot the problems from a more mature and more sensible point of view.

1.3.3. Explanation of concepts
The most important concept in this essay is mainstreaming teaching methods. As explained in the previous part, the aim of mainstreaming teaching methods is for the disabled children and ordinary children to study together from a young age. In the schools that adopt this method, disabled children and ordinary children share the same classroom, same teaching materials and same teachers.

The second concept that needs explanation is disabled children. The concept for disabled children has two levels. The first level is physical disability. The second level is mental disability. Unfortunately, in this essay, the middle school in Chengdu which we chose as a sample did not have mentally challenged students. Therefore, the disabilities we are going to talk about in the following parts are physical disability.

1.4. Essay disposition
The essay starts with an introduction were we describe the history and background of mainstream teaching in China. This introduction ends with a description of purpose, research question, explanation of concepts and the disposition of the essay. In chapter 2, earlier research is presented, followed by theoretical framework which would describe the system theory applied in our research on how mainstreaming methods are used in Chengdu school. Thereafter, the important part of this chapter is methodology that used quantitative methods to study, more details presented in the others. In chapter 5, results and analysis, the results present the data collected from quantitative methods and information from interviews within the quantitative frame from the theoretical perspective of system theory. In the final chapter, we discussed the attitudes of the parents and teachers to mainstreaming teacher methods according to our analysis.
2 Earlier Research

During 1958 to 1995, Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) conducted a survey on teachers’ perceptions of mainstreaming teaching that included 28 respective investigations (studies). The results showed that two thirds of the teachers were in favor of having disabled students in their classes. However, although these teachers believed that mainstreaming teaching was very beneficial to the disabled students, they doubted that they had the sufficient resources (time, training, energy) to implement mainstreaming teaching. The research had also taken into consideration of the geographical factors, time spans and item type. Most of the teachers were concerned about the disability conditions of the disabled students as well as the responsibilities that would inflict on the teachers. They believed that mainstreaming would not yield better results than special education where teachers were well trained to take care of disabled children. This result indicated that teachers’ attitudes towards mainstreaming teaching were not that promising.

Madden and Slavin, (1983) conducted a survey to explore the education methods for mild handicap students. They compared the effects of mild handicap students studying in a full-time special education classes, part-time regular classes with resource support, and full-time regular classes. They inclined to integrating individualized instruction programs into the full time education system with mainstreaming teaching. They believed this would give the disabled students a chance to interact with ordinary students without pushing themselves to achieve academic performances as good as ordinary students. The results showed that the disabled students in the part-time regular classes with resource support and full-time regular classes were more open and confident than the disabled students in full-time special classes. They were more willing to take risks and try new things because they believed that they had support and help. The ordinary students in these two classes showed more compassion and patience towards problems than their peers in ordinary
schools. These results showed that mainstreaming teaching were both good for disabled students and ordinary students. It was better than special education.

However, Gresham (1982) held the opinion that mainstreaming teaching was not a good idea for disabled students to develop their social skills. He believed that mainstreaming teaching methods was based on three assumptions: 1. that handicapped children would have more chance to interact with ordinary students; 2. it would increase peer acceptance of handicapped children; 3. handicapped children would model ordinary children’s behavior. He refuted these three assumptions and proposed that a better solution would be teaching them how to interact with others socially by regular or special teachers. He argued that it was not the obligation for the ordinary students to help disabled classmates. If they were not willing to do so, this mainstreaming teaching would yield bad results. Disabled students would feel excluded and became more and more inward. He even made an example of an elementary school of mainstreaming teaching where two disabled children collapsed when their classmates always bullied them. That was why he was against mainstreaming teaching methods.
3. Theoretical Framework

System theory

The system theory is like a big circle. There are many elements in the system where each element has their own effect. In this system, these elements will interact with each other because the system theory consists of an inalienable whole (Healy, K, 2005). In our thesis, we explore the factors about the disabled children in their school, which is a boarding school. Children go home at the weekend, which means they eat, study, play, and interact at the school five days a week. According to the filed study observation, we believe that as a disabled child, there are many factors that will influence them, maybe education, family, life environment and so on (Parrish, M, 2010).

The reason why system theory is chosen as the theoretical perspective for analyzing our research results or simply the motivations behind it is that in order to answer the research questions, we need to figure out which factors will influence mainstreaming teaching methods and parents’ views on it. Here by employing the system theory in the analysis, we can discover factors just like those elements in the system theory. We will ultimately find how those elements, or factors, interact with each other to make an inalienable whole. The following three points will explain how this theory is used in our analysis.

First of all, this inalienable whole of students’ life at this boarding school can be divided into three parts, classroom or campus interaction, social or off-campus interaction and dormitory interaction. In this essay, we would focus on how the ordinary children and disabled children interact with each other and the factors that might affect each other from the teachers’ and parents’ point of view.

Second, in this big circle of students’ life, dormitory interaction and classroom interaction are the main overlap between the life of disabled students and ordinary students. System theory can help us look at it as a whole as well as bringing out the main and crucial parts of the whole. According to system theory, these different parts
would interact with each other with means the whole system is not merely the adding-up of these three parts.

Third, in the interview part of the experiment, system theory has been applied as well. All the data of the interview should be considered as a whole. There are different parts that constitute this whole system, body language, words in the answers and facial expressions, to name a few. In order to better analyze the data, we need to look at it as a whole and consider all parts of it as well as the interaction between all parts.
4. Methodology
4.1 Research Design

In this research, the authors have mainly used quantitative methods to study the advantages and disadvantages of mainstreaming problem for the disabled children at a school in Chengdu, China. Within this quantitative frame, interviews are used as a complement in order to give a broader picture of our research questions.

The reason why we employ interviews as a complement to the quantitative methods is that statistical data alone are not enough for figuring out the factors within mainstreaming teaching methods. According to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009), research by qualitative methods (e.g. interview) produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means quantification because qualitative methods are concerned more with meanings and processes rather than simply measurements. Thus, interview and observation are an important part of the qualitative research. They stated that in postmodernism, empirical work could be various (interview and observation, within which voices can be various as well). It is true for qualitative method. Different ways to gather empirical data could give researchers a comprehensive view of the target. It is also significant to differentiate the sociological background of the various respondents, for example, age, gender, education background. These factors would have an influence on people’s attitude and perspectives of things. Thus by taking into consideration these factors, we can have a more objective and impartial view in the analyzing process of the interview data.

Before the data collection, two kinds of research questionnaires were formed. One is directed to the parents of disabled children named as "Attitude Questionnaires for Mainstreaming (For Parents of Ordinary Children) ", the other to the parents of ordinary children named as "Attitude Questionnaires for Mainstreaming (For Parents of Disabled Children)". The reason why we designed these two kinds of questionnaires was because this classification of the parents is crucial in this research.
because these two kinds of children both study in the same school yet they share
different goals and values. These two kinds of parents will see mainstreaming
education from their own perspective whose priority is their own children’s benefits.
They are the same type of questionnaires but with the difference where “your child”
means different things. For parents to ordinary children it opposes to disabled
children, for parents to a disabled children it opposes to ordinary children. Each
questionnaire has ten multiple-choice questions which intend to explore the parents’
opinion on the co-schooling system and the interaction between disabled children and
ordinary children. There are two levels of questions in both questionnaires. The first
level is the first two questions. They are targeting at a general perspective by asking
the parents’ opinion about disabled children and ordinary children studying together.
It is no longer merely about their children any more. It is about the education pattern
of the society. As far as we are concerned, there might be chances that some parents
of the ordinary children might be in favor of mainstreaming teaching methods
because they think it is good for the nation and society. However, when it comes to
their own children, they might not want their children to go to the same school as the
disabled ones. This is why these two levels of questions are important in the design,
because some people might know what is good for the general public, nonetheless,
they will still choose what they believe is good for themselves. What is more, there
are three kinds of questions in the second level based on the three levels of interaction
between disabled children and ordinary children in a boarding school. The first one is
classroom interaction where disabled children are seated with ordinary children who
can help them with their study in class. The second level of interaction is campus
interaction which includes dormitory interaction and other activities beyond classes
and study. This kind of interaction is more intimate and social than the first one. The
third kind of interaction is the ones that take place outside of school on weekends.
This bond is based on willingness and friendship. The participants have to answer
these ten questions with three different choices, "approve", "against" and "whatever"
(T.R.J & A.S. S, 2008). According to set theory, “approve” and “against” are two
different sets without any intersection. The set “whatever” is the complement of the union of “approve” and “against”. All different attitudes from the parents should fall into these three sets. That is why they are chosen. These questionnaires will be used to interview parents; thereby after processing the data, we will get to know the attitudes of society toward the disabled.

In appendix A is the example questionnaire for the parents of ordinary children as well as disabled children. Question one and two asks about the parents’ general opinion on the mainstreaming teaching method. The rest of the questions are concerned about involving their own children into this system of mainstreaming teaching. Question four and five is about classroom or campus interaction. Question six is about social or off-campus interaction. Question seven is about dormitory interaction. The rest of the questions are about the school facilities and schedule for the mainstreaming teaching method. Question eight and nine are about the proportion of disabled students in a class. Question ten is about the extra training of the teachers. These multiple choice questions will first help us understand the parents’ views on the mainstreaming teaching method.

The next part of the experiment employs interviews within the quantitative frame as a complement to the quantitative material. Using interviews, one question has to be discussed are the teachers and parents’ opinions and attitudes towards the mainstreaming and coping strategies. From analyzing the questionnaires in the quantitative method mentioned above, we would get a basic understanding of the attitudes of two kinds of parents. However, this general understanding is not enough. Since disabled children all have different background, such as age, education background, family background. These different factors can have an influence on the mainstreaming problem and coping strategies they are using. As we all know, research by interviews, the qualitative element, produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means quantification because interview processes are concerned more with meanings and processes rather than simply measurements. In this study, as we mentioned above, quantitative methods can give
us a basic understanding of the parents’ attitudes. However, it is not specific enough. This is why in this method part of the research about mainstreaming problem and coping strategies for the disabled children, the authors will pay attention to the non-statistical part of the experiment, of course, within the quantitative frame, for example, taking into consideration our observation of the parents and teachers, discourse analysis of the different or similar features of them, and last but not least, in-depth interviews with the parents and teachers. In-depth interview with the parents and teachers will help us better understand the participants in details. Interviewing the teachers at the mainstreaming school would allows us to know more details about teachers’ teaching process and their attitudes to the mainstreaming. What is more, it will also help us to have an understanding of a specific problem or obstacle. The tools we are using are mainly the observation form, interview guide or draft which will allow interviewers to be as helpful as possible, and recordings. Within these, we will not get quantitative data. However, through the interview, we can explore the difficulties and obstacles each individual has. During the analyzing process, we will follow the steps of code-identifying, data displaying and data reduction. This will also help us develop our own opinion of the mainstreaming problem of disabled children. Nonetheless, due to the problem of distance, we cannot go to China and perform the research directly. Instead, we decide to use some communication tools, for example, email, phone calls, and Skype to implement the interviews and questionnaires through which we can also monitor and observe our participants. Thus, the participants can answer questions and tell us more details about their conditions through these communication tools. The interview draft we create for both parents of disabled children and ordinary children contains four questions. These questions ask specifically about the reasons why they are against or in favor of the mainstreaming teaching method, their special requirements and also the difficulties their children have encountered. The interview for teachers contains nine questions. These questions have two types. One is from the respect of teachers, whether they have been trained to teach disabled children or not, whether they have to provide special care for the
disabled students or not. The second type is from the angle of students, both disabled and ordinary, whether the mainstreaming teaching method has a good influence on the two types of students or not. Through these detailed interview questions, we expect to get specific answers to shed light on the advantages and disadvantages of the mainstreaming teaching method.

The interview draft for parents contains four questions. These four questions are based on the interviewees’ response to the questionnaires. It further raises questions in order to clearly understand why parents make their choices in the questionnaire. It first asks the reason why parents agree or disagree with this mainstreaming teaching method. The third and fourth question is about the problems or difficulties their children are coping with in their school life. The second question is about the proportion of the disabled children in one class. The target parents are experiencing with two different proportions. The two chosen classes in the first grade have lower proportion of disabled students in their classes. However, in the chosen two classes in the third year, they have relatively high proportion of disabled students in their classes. By asking this question, we can have an understanding of how much percentage is acceptable.

The interview draft for teachers contains nine questions. These nine questions could be divided into three parts. The first part is general questions, including question one and question two. They are about the general attitude of teachers towards mainstreaming teaching method and the specific reasons why they hold this view. Question five, six, and nine are designed to explore the reasons why teachers hold this view. As discussed in the introduction part of this essay, there are known advantages and disadvantages of mainstreaming teaching. The advantages are that this mainstreaming teaching method could bring the disabled and ordinary children together, helping disabled children adapt to society at an early age of life. They could also help ordinary children to be more compassionate and kind. The disadvantages are that disabled children might affect the teaching process and be a burden to both teachers and the ordinary children. These might not be true for this target school in
Chengdu, China. There might be more disadvantages or advantages in this aspect. By specifying these questions, teachers can give us detailed answers which would definitely help us have an insight into the disadvantages and advantages of this mainstreaming teaching method. Question three, seven and eight are about teachers’ requirements for mainstreaming teaching method. By looking into these questions, we could get a clear view of how the mainstreaming teaching method should be implemented in order to be good for both disabled children as well as ordinary children.

4.2 Sampling

The school is Chengdu is a middle school (boarding school). We will focus on two classes (A, B) in the first grade and two classes (C, D) in the third grade. There are 40 students in class A, with 38 ordinary students, and 2 disabled students. There are 35 ordinary students and 3 disabled students in class B. The reason why we choose these classes from two grades is because in this boarding school, in the first and second grades, disabled students are spread into different classes, with each class having less than three disabled children. However, in the third grade, disabled students are put together into two classes. This is an experiment of the school as well since they are trying to find out a better way to implement the mainstreaming teaching method, which can be a win-win for both disabled students and ordinary students.

There are altogether ten teachers teaching and supervising class A and B. Six of them will be interviewed. There are 30 ordinary students and 8 disabled students in class C. There are 28 ordinary students and 11 disabled students in class D. There are eleven teachers teaching class C and D in total. Seven of them will be interviewed. One parent of each student in these four classes is asked to fill in the questionnaire. This means altogether 155 parents have filled in the questionnaire. 24 of them have disabled children, 131 with ordinary children. Teachers and parents were not forced to participate in this. We first informed all the teachers about our project and they all
chose to take part willingly. Before they get the questionnaire, we have to double check whether their children are disabled or not to make sure they fill in the right questionnaire. About a quarter of the parents who have filled in the questionnaire (altogether 39 parents which are made up of a quarter of those that are against mainstreaming teaching, a quarter of those that approve mainstreaming teaching and another quarter of those who do not care about mainstreaming teaching) are interviewed with the four questions in the draft. Each teacher of these four classes (altogether 13) is interviewed with the nine questions in the draft.

Apparently, the second part of the experiment, interviews, is actually based on the first part, the questionnaires. Before the interview, each questionnaire is processed in advance and about a quarter of the parents who have filled in the questionnaire (altogether 35 parents which are made up of a quarter of those that are against mainstreaming teaching, a quarter of those that approve mainstreaming teaching and another quarter of those who do not care about mainstreaming teaching) are interviewed with the four questions in the draft. Since no one in the questionnaire shows the tendency to disapprove mainstreaming teaching method, we have to choose 35 parents at random. The draft questions are altered a little bit according to the different participants. The following two tables both show the number of parents interviewed.

Table 2: Number of parents with ordinary or disable children interviewed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parents with ordinary children</th>
<th>Parents with disabled children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying together</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitting together</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping or getting help</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roommates</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Data Collection

4.3.1 Questionnaires

Because of geographical distances, the authors had to ask a friend, Miss Debbie Liu, a former student at this boarding school in Chengdu, China to be in charge of the questionnaire distribution and collections. She was fully informed of this experiment.

4.3.2 Interviews

The interview takes place in three forms, telephone interview, Skype interview and face-to-face interview. Telephone interviews and Skype interviews in this experiment are general interviews each of which lasts around 10 minutes. Face-to-face interviews last around half an hour. We conduct telephone interviews and Skype interviews ourselves. Since we cannot go back to China, we arranged Mr. Edgar Feng to conduct this part of the research for us. He kindly recorded every interview for us. We gave Mr. Feng all the questions and materials he needed to conduct these interviews and our observations are based upon those videos he gave us. The form of the first level of information is the same in these three types of interviews. However, the second level of information in these three interviews is not the same. For face-to-face interview, it can be body language, voice, pause, tone and facial expression. For Skype interview, since we cannot see the whole body of the interviewee, the second level of information can be voice, pause, tone and facial expression. However, for the telephone interview, since we cannot see the interviewees and we can only hear their voices, the second level of information can only be voice, pause and tone. Telephone interviews and Skype interviews are adopted in the interviews for the parents. Fifteen parents are interviewed via telephone and twenty-four parents are interviewed via Skype. Furthermore, face-to-face interviews are adopted for the teachers. Six teachers (one teacher teaching English, one teacher teaching Chinese, one teacher teaching Math, one teacher teaching PE, one teacher teaching Arts and one dormitory supervisor) are interviewed from the first grade and seven teachers (one teacher teaching English, one foreign teacher teaching English, one teacher teaching Chinese, one teacher teaching Math, one teacher teaching PE, one teacher teaching Arts and
one dormitory supervisor) are interviewed from the third grade. The reason why these teachers are chosen to interview is because English, Chinese and Math are major subjects in middle schools in China, while PE, Arts teachers and dormitory supervisors need to provide extra help for physically challenged students. There are four interview questions for the parents and nine interview questions for the teachers. The following table presents you with a clear view of the number of parents the authors interviewed using Skype interview and telephone interview.

Table 3: Numbers of parents and teachers interviewed with different methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview methods</th>
<th>Number of parents interviewed</th>
<th>Number of teachers interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to face</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data has been analyses with SPSS, to construct tables or histograms.

As for the interviews, according to grounded theory, it is really important to construct “analytic codes and categories” from the collected data (Glaser and Strauss, 2009). This means sometimes the researcher needs to generate abstract concept in order to get to the substantive areas. The process of the data analysis using grounded theory can be seen as the following:

“Writing first draft; sorting memos; theoretical sampling and seek specific new data; advanced memos and refining conceptual categories; data collection and focused coding; initial memos and raising codes to tentative categories; initial coding and data collection; research problem and opening research questions” (Glaser and Strauss, 2009).

Following the above procedures, we first transcribed the data of the interviews and then read them three times before the analyzing process. Then the data were grouped together according to their categories which were based on the answers to the questionnaires. Similar texts were coded and the redundant part was deleted.
Observations of the tone, body languages and attitudes were decoded into attitudes as well.

4.5 Essay Credibility

4.5.1 Reliability

Reliability of this essay depends on the trustworthiness of the data (Minayo, 2012). First, the questionnaires were handed out to the parents and finished in front of the collector after the letter of consent was distributed. However, it might raise a validity problem that would be discussed later. Second, the interview questions are carefully worded and double checked to make sure that the interviewees fully understand the questions. Third, the data were carefully processed and also double checked. In this way, it guarantees the reliability of this essay. (Minayo, 2012).

4.5.2 Validity

Validity based on the plausibility of the findings and the logic of the analysis (Kirchgässler, 1991). Quantitative methods and interviews within quantitative frame were used in the study to increase validity. However, a clear validity problem is the possibility that the parents and teachers might have given answers that they thought we wanted or which been socially correct. (Kirchgässler, 1991)

4.5.3 Generalization

In this essay, the generalization will be analytical instead of statistical (Minayo, 2012). Although statistics were gathered during the first part of the experiment, they were used as a foundation to the second part of the experiment, which was analytical and qualitative. (Minayo, 2012). Based on the system theory and also the earlier researches, the authors explored the issue of mainstreaming teaching in China. The questionnaires and interviews provided the attitudes of teachers and parents towards
this teaching method. Their response also raised a crucial requirement for the mainstreaming teaching methods, which was that the proportion of the disabled students in one class should not be more than 10%, otherwise it would become a burden for both teachers and students.

4.6 Ethical Aspects

During the interviews, the authors strictly followed the ethical principles for scientific study (American Psychological Association, 1973). (Zigmond, 2003) The parents and teachers all participated in this study willingly. No data were altered. The questionnaire and interview questions were carefully worded in order not to hurt parents’ feelings. However, Zigmond (2003) mentioned that even thinking about where should disabled students study was a violation of ethical principles. We beg to differ. We were only considering this because we wanted to find out a better education way for the disabled students. (Zigmond, 2003)
5. Results and Analysis

In this part, the authors are going to present the data collected from both the quantitative methods from the two perspectives, one being that of the teachers’ and one being that of the parents’, employing the theoretical respect of the system theory.

First of all, the results of the first part of the experiment, the quantitative methods will be presented. In the 155 ten-question questionnaires we collected, two questionnaires from parents of the ordinary children and one questionnaire from parents of disabled children were excluded because they did not follow the instructions (the questionnaires were either incomplete or choosing more than one choices). This means that only 152 questionnaires (129 from parents of ordinary children and 23 from parents of disabled children) could be used for analysis. The following is the table for the results of the questionnaires. Only those who are against the issues of the questionnaires are cited here because this is crucial to the later discussion of the parents’ opinions and attitudes of the mainstreaming teaching in China. The following is the results of the number and percent of the parents who disagreed with the questions in the questionnaire.

Table 4: Disagree with different propositions (number and percent) divided between parents with ordinary and parents with disabled children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parents with ordinary children</th>
<th>Parents with disabled children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary children and disabled children studying together</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary children help disabled children with their study</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your children and disabled/ordinary children studying together</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your children helping disabled students/being helped by ordinary students in their school life</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your children sitting with disabled/ordinary children in class</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your children helping disabled children/being helped by ordinary children with their study after school (maybe at weekends)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your children having a disabled/ordinary</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the results of the above questionnaires, we can clearly see that all the parents agree to ordinary children studying with disabled children. However, approving of this mainstreaming teaching method does not in reality mean that parents of ordinary children or disabled children would send their children to mainstreaming teaching schools, as we can see that a few of the parents of ordinary children actually do not want their children to be in the same school as disabled children in spite of the fact that they are in favor of the mainstreaming teaching method.

About a quarter of the parents of ordinary children do not want their children to have class interaction or social interaction with disabled children. About 40% of the parents of ordinary children do not want their children to have dormitory interaction with disabled children. These two proportions seem much higher than the authors have expected. They also form a contrast to the proportion of parents that actually approve of involving their children into the education system of mainstreaming teaching method. This issue will be discussed later in the next section of the analysis of the interviews. All the parents of disabled children want their children to have class interaction with the other ordinary children. However, a few of the parents of disabled children do not want their children to have social interaction with ordinary children. Nearly a third of the parents of disabled children do not want their children to have dormitory interaction with ordinary children. Why would these parents feel reluctant for their children to have social or dormitory interaction with the ordinary children while they are in favor of the mainstreaming teaching method? This issue will also be discussed later in the next section of analysis of the interviews.

From the views of the parents, we can clearly see that the reason for those parents of ordinary children who do not want their children to have too much interaction with their disabled classmates is mainly because they do not want this to
affect their children’s grades. The reason for those parents of disabled children who are against interaction is mainly because they do not want to put their children’s classmates through too much trouble. They were also afraid that their classmates could not take good care of their children.

A few of the parents of ordinary children disagree with the proportion of disabled students being 5% in a class. About a third of the parents of ordinary children do not want their children to be in a class whose proportion of disabled children is 20%. All the parents of disabled children agree with the proportion of disabled students being 5% in a class. More than half of disabled children do not want their children to be in a class whose proportion of disabled students is 20%. As far as the extra training teachers should have received in order to teach or supervise disabled students, a third of the parents of ordinary children disagree and none of the parents of disabled children disagree with this.

According to the design of the questionnaire in the methodology part above, three themes will be used as indicators to analyze the parents’ attitude towards mainstreaming teaching methods, the classroom interaction, the social interaction and the dormitory interaction. According to system theory, this classification of the three categories of interactions altogether makes up the daily life of the students. In order to assess the affects of mainstreaming teaching method on students’ lives, we first break it down into three parts and then examine each respectively and figure out the main factors on their own.

In this part, grounded theory will be used as a guideline to how we got all these data and how we analyzed all the data. We followed the procedures given in grounded theory mentioned before.

First of all, the researchers will analyze the interviews with the parents of the ordinary children who do not want to involve their children in this mainstreaming teaching method. They both held the view that going to the same school as the disabled children would actually affect the teaching ability of the school and also the learning ability of the ordinary students. They both thought in today’s fierce world,
parents had to watch out for their children’s future which meant that a good grade was extremely important. In an education institution of mainstreaming teaching method, one parent pointed out that the teachers would pay more attention to the disabled than the ordinary. As the parents of the ordinary, they certainly did not want this to happen. This was why they did not want to involve their children in this system in the first place. They were too attached with their own benefits. However, one of the parents seemed to be nervous in the Skype camera when he was talking about this issue. When asked further, he admitted that his daughter, who was in class D, was not comfortable being with the eleven disabled students in class. She was, in a way, frightened by disabled people when she was young. That was why she was not able to deal with physically challenged students at ease.

Then comes the classroom interaction. Two parents of ordinary children who were against classroom interaction were interviewed. They both thought that sitting with the disabled child would distract their own children in class. They might not be able to learn as well as when they were sitting with other ordinary children. One parent said that his child used to sit with a physically challenged child. He helped her a lot at school at the expense of his own grades. This was not acceptable to the parent. That was why he asked the teacher to change their seats. Three parents of ordinary children who support this issue were also interviewed. Their children were all seated with disabled children. They took great pride in their children because they helped their disabled classmates a lot. When asked about whether this would affect their children’s grades, two of them said that there were virtues, such as compassion and kind-heatedness which were far more important than grades.

Dormitory interaction was the same as classroom interaction in the parents’ eye. Since in China, students usually take their homework back to the dormitory if they have not finished it. Those parents of ordinary children who were against dormitory interaction were mainly because they did not want this to affect their children’s grades. However, what surprised us were the two parents of disabled children who did not want their children to share a dormitory with ordinary children. In the interview,
they told us that their children applied for dormitory in the first semester. However, they both could not walk which meant they needed their roommates to escort them to class and back to dorm. It was simply too much for their roommates. That was why they chose to live at home. Nonetheless, three other parents of disabled children told us that they were really moved when they knew how much the roommates had done for their children. They thought that having a lot of interaction with their peers made them more optimistic, open and confident. One parent even said in tears that her son used to be sad, shy and quite. Now he laughed more and would even talk to strangers.

In the respect of social interaction, those parents of ordinary children who were against this said that they would prefer their children to spend more time with their ordinary peers instead of spending all their time with disabled classmates. The parent of ordinary child who was against this said that she did not want to put her daughter’s classmates through too much trouble. She said that her child was shy and introvert. She was really happy and grateful that her roommates were willing to help her overcome a lot of difficulties. However, sometimes they all had their own business and really did not have time or energy to help her. That was why she finally chose to live at home instead of school.

In the interview of the teachers, we adopt face-to-face interview. For the six teachers in the first grade, they are all in favor of this mainstreaming teaching method. Two of these teachers have received either long term or short term extra training for the disabled students. They all believed that receiving the training was really crucial in their job. However, those who did not receive this training thought that for all the teachers who taught the same class, at least one fourth of the teachers should be trained for disabled children (not necessarily all of the teachers should be trained). All six teachers were in favor of this mainstreaming teaching method. They all believed that interaction with ordinary children would help disabled children to be more open and confident. The changes are obvious and would happen within the first three months. This could also cultivate the virtues of ordinary students. However, four of the teachers pointed it out that this harmony in both classes is because of the
proportion of disabled students in both classes were quite low. Students or roommates can take turns help the disabled students when the proportion of the disabled students is low. Also, teachers would not spend too much time and energy on disabled students.

However, in the third grade, the situation is not as promising as that of the first grade. Five of these seven teachers are concerned about their class. One teacher mentioned that since the proportion of the disabled students is relatively high, in an eight-person dormitory room, there are often two disabled students. The good side is that these two students can talk about their problems together and share their life. However, it put extra burden on their roommates. They had to help two disabled children, instead of one. They would sometimes envy those in their grade who did not have a disabled roommate. Besides, one teacher mentioned that there was one student who was often put in a dilemma because he did not know which disabled roommate he should help because his time and energy was limited. The dormitory supervisor also said that facing confrontation, sometimes the two disabled students would form alliances against other ordinary students as well or the other way around when they can not get along. However, the foreign teacher believed that it would be better to have two disabled students in a dormitory room because in this way, they would not feel so special any more. It would help them to open up and make more friends. The other issue came up during the interview was whether teachers should receive extra training in order to teach disabled students. All the teachers believed that the dormitory supervisor should get some training and at least half of the teachers should be trained as well. In this way, when there is a problem, they can handle it well. All the teachers mentioned that they had noticed psychological problems in disabled students, whether minor or severe. Some disabled students have really low self-esteem and are quite closed to themselves. They do not want to have interaction with other students or teachers. Or, they simply are afraid to. In this way, these students need someone to guide them out. When teachers are trained, they could understand
what the students’ problems are or what they need. What is more, they would be more experienced with this issue and would know how to solve these problems.

When asked why this boarding school would choose this mainstreaming teaching method, all the teachers said this was an economical way to share teaching sources. They said that there was to be a special school far away from here. It would be really inconvenient for the parents to send disabled children there. So in order to solve this local education problem of the disabled, the school came up with this policy to provide education for disabled children as well.

In conclusion, half of the teachers in the third grade were in favor of this mainstreaming teaching method. Nonetheless, half of them disagreed. They pointed out that having disabled children in class would certainly slow down the teaching process. Teachers need to tend to their needs every now and then. Sometimes even their classmates need to do so. When ordinary students did not want to help the disabled or even made fun of them, the disabled students would suffer from depression and became more sensitive and shy. In theory, teachers should not force students to help the disabled students. However, in order for the disabled students to study together in the same school with the ordinary children, they needed help which should be more than that coming from the teachers. They also needed help from their classmates. This was also a dilemma some teachers were facing. Another thing pointed out by teachers was also the proportion of the disabled children in one class. They all agreed that the proportion should be no more than 10%. Otherwise it would be a big burden for the teachers as well as the students. This means that in an eight-person dormitory, there should be no more than one disabled student. If there is more, students are not able to handle it. About social interaction, teachers held the opinion that if ordinary children really want to and have the ability to help the disabled children at weekends, they can and should help them. However, if they do not want to or have no time to do it, they have no obligation to help the disabled children.
6. Discussion and Suggestion for Further Research

In this essay, we conducted a study in order to learn the attitudes of the parents and teachers to mainstreaming teaching methods. The experiment has two parts, questionnaires (quantitative methods) and interviews (qualitative element within quantitative frame).

We found that most of the teachers and parents were in favor of this mainstreaming teaching methods. According to the data we gathered, we believe that the mainstreaming teaching method has its own advantages. It is an economical way of sharing education sources which is good for both disabled children and ordinary children. On one hand, disabled children are able to study and have interactions with ordinary children. They are finally have a chance to receive the same education ordinary children receive. This is a symbol of education equality. This will help them build up their self confidence and also develop their social skills. This is a way for them to adapt themselves to the society from an early age. On the other hand, for the ordinary children, growing up with disabled classmates would help me be more considerate, compassionate and patient.

From the data we collected from the questionnaires and interviews, we can clearly see that not all parents and teachers are in favor of this mainstreaming teaching method. Some believe that it is a tradeoff with the education of the ordinary children because teachers will have to attend more to the disabled children and have less time and energy for the ordinary children. Some parents of ordinary children are really afraid that interaction with disabled children would affect their children’s grades. Most teachers are in favor of this mainstreaming teaching method. Some are concerned with the fact that without proper training, some teachers might not be able to handle the problems.

In today’s China, mainstreaming teaching method is a crucial way to implement education equality. Disabled children, if they could, should be given a chance to study together with the ordinary children. However, the proportion of the disabled students in a class should not be high because then it would affect the normal teaching process
and student performances. If we do want to advocate mainstreaming teaching method as a standard part of the education system, we need to make sure that the proportion of the disabled children in each class should better be no more than 10%. What is more, we also need to make sure that the dormitory supervisor is trained for disabled students if the disabled students choose to live on campus and also at least a quarter of the teachers should receive extra training in order to take care of those disabled students.

6.1 Critical discussion of use methodology

According to the quantitative methods and interviews employed in the research, the benefits of them are that we can learn more details about attitudes to mainstream teaching among parents of ordinary and disable children and teachers in China. Thereafter, by parents and teacher’s comments and our data analysis, we can clearly to know the disabled children situations in the boarding school in Chengdu.

The limitation of this research is related to methodology, the validity of the data we gathered. We could not be sure whether the parents or teachers told us what they really felt about mainstreaming teaching. There is a chance that hey might have told us what they believed that we wanted to hear or that were socially or morally correct.

6.2 Suggestion for Further Research

In this paper, the sample in this boarding school in Chengdu contains no mentally challenged students. The disabled students in this paper refer to mildly physically challenged students. The mainstreaming teaching methods for mentally challenged students and heavily physically challenged students are remained to be further explored in the future studies.
References:


Appendices

Appendix A

Attitude Questionnaires for Mainstreaming (For Parents of Ordinary Children)

I. Choose only one answer from the three choices below.

1. What is your attitude towards ordinary children and disabled children studying together?
   A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

2. What is your attitude towards ordinary children helping disabled children with their study?
   A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

3. What is your attitude towards your children and disabled children studying together?
   A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

4. What is your attitude towards your children helping disabled students in their school life?
   A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

5. What is your attitude towards your children sitting with disabled children in class?
   A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

6. What is your attitude towards your children helping disabled children with their study after school (maybe at weekends)?
   A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

7. If in a boarding school, what is your attitude towards your children having a disabled roommate?
   A. approve  B. against  C. whatever
8. In a 40-student class where your child studies, are you ok with two disabled students in this class?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

9. In a 40-student class where your child studies, are you ok with eight disabled students in this class?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

10. In mainstreaming, teachers should be trained to deal with disabled students.  
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

**Attitude Questionnaires for the Mainstreaming Teaching Method**  
(For Parents of Disable Children)

Choose only one answer from the three choices below.

1. What is your attitude towards ordinary children and disabled children studying together?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

2. What is your attitude towards ordinary children helping disabled children with their study?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

3. What is your attitude towards your child studying together with ordinary children?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

4. What is your attitude towards your child getting help from ordinary children in their school life?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

5. What is your attitude towards your children sitting with ordinary children in class?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

6. What is your attitude towards your child getting help from ordinary children with their study after school (maybe at weekends)?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

7. If in a boarding school, what is your attitude to that your child having ordinary roommates?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

8. In a 40-student class where your child studies, are you ok with two disabled students in this class?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

9. In a 40-student class where your child studies, are you ok with eight disabled students in this class?
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever

10. In mainstreaming, teachers should be trained to deal with disabled students.
A. approve  B. against  C. whatever
Appendix B

Interview Questions for Mainstreaming Teaching Method (For All Parents)

1. Why do you approve/disapprove mainstreaming teaching (disabled students studying with ordinary students)?

2. If you approve mainstreaming, what do you think is the perfect portion of disabled students in a class?

3. Do you have special requirements for mainstreaming teaching?

4. Is there any difficulty your children have encountered in the school with this mainstreaming teaching method?

Interview Questions for the Mainstreaming Teaching Method (For Teachers)

1. What is your attitude to mainstream teaching?

2. Why do you approve/disapprove mainstreaming teaching (disabled students studying with ordinary students)?

3. If you approve mainstreaming, what do you think is the perfect portion of disabled students in a class?

4. In what way would disabled students affect the teaching progress? Do you have to attend to them particularly?

5. How would studying with disabled affect ordinary students?
6. In what way would mainstreaming teaching affect disabled students?

7. Do you have special requirements for mainstreaming teaching? Any support from school or parents?

8. Do you need to be trained to teach disabled students?

9. Any difficulties you have encountered in your teaching? What is the biggest problem?
Appendix C
Letter of Consent

Dear participants,

Hi! Thank you for your interest in our study of the mainstreaming teaching methods in China which uses questionnaires and interviews to gather data and information. We mainly want to find out your true attitudes and opinions towards mainstreaming teaching. For the questionnaires, you need to choose one answer. The interviews, whether through phone or video, will be recorded. They would only be used for our research where the participants would be anonymous and under no circumstances will they be used for commercial reasons.

Thank you very much!