
The Potentials and Limits of Analogy: Inclusive Education for students with learning disabilities in Boston Public Schools

Huiwen Zheng

Final Project

SOC-STUD 98TE



Roadmap of the Presentation



- Introduction
 - The Hook
 - Thesis statement
 - Definitions
- Body Paragraphs
 - Literature Overview
 - Racial Integration and Inclusive Education Analogy
 - Methodology
 - My Argument and Findings [preliminary]
- Conclusion
- Lingering Questions / Q & A



I. Introduction

HOOK & THESIS

A. The Hook

- Why am I interested in the topic?
 - The parallel between racial integration and inclusion of students with disability
 - Better ways to improve the status quo in principles
- Why should you be concerned with the topic?
 - Theoretical complexity
 - Practical value for policy-making
 - Related but marginalized in our syllabus

B. Thesis Statement

- Although the analogy between racial integration and inclusive education can be properly drawn, it has certain limits.
- The analogy fails in:
 - curriculum design
 - self-segregation theory
 - faculty requirements
 - Legal obligation
- The analogy applies in:
 - learning environment
 - dynamic between students without disabilities and students with disabilities
 - achievement gap

C. Definitions

- Learning disabilities¹
 - Learning disabilities are disorders that affect the ability to understand or use spoken or written language, do mathematical calculations, coordinate movements, or direct attention.
- Integrated education vs. Inclusive education²
 - Integrated education: students are only physically present in the classroom and adapt themselves to pedagogical activities not specifically designed for their needs
 - Inclusive education: students are present in the classroom and actually participate in the academic programs in mainstream classes with differentiated objectives. Students also receive extra assistance for their disabilities if needed.

1. The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) and other Institutes of the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

2. Serge Thomazet (2009) From integration to inclusive education: does changing the terms improve practice?, International Journal of Inclusive Education, 13:6, 553-563, DOI:10.1080/13603110801923476

II. Body Paragraphs

LITERATURE & ANALOGY & METHODOLOGY & MY ARGUMENT

A. Literature Overview

- Federal and Massachusetts State legal obligations for students with disability
 - Important legislation
 - Notable court cases
- Research work for inclusive education
 - Conceptual studies in education for students with disabilities
 - The interplay between racism and ableism
 - Academic performance

Federal and Massachusetts State Legal Obligations for Students with Disability

- Federal law
 - Fourteenth Amendment (against disability discrimination), state entities not private entities
 - Equal protection clause
 - Section 504, Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 - Education for All Handicapped Children Act 1975 (P.L.94-142)
 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 1990 (IDEA)
 - The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
 - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
 - The Handicapped Children's Protection Act of 1986
 - Assistive Technology Act of 1988

Federal and Massachusetts State Legal Obligations for Students with Disability

- Notable Court Cases
 - *Honig v. Doe*
 - *Parc v. Pennsylvania*
 - *Hudson v. Rowley*
 - *Mills v. B.O.E.*
 - *Champa v. Weston Public Schools*, 473 Mass.86 (2015)
 - *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*, 137 S. Ct. 988 (2017)
 - *Forest Grove School District v. T.A.* 557 US 230 (2009)
 - *Fry v. Napoleon Community Schools*, 137 S.Ct. 743 (2017)
 - *Allen v. McDonough*, 1976 (class action suit)
- Federal Regulations
 - Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations 300
 - Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations 84
- Massachusetts Legal Obligations
 - Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71B Children with special needs
 - Massachusetts 603 CMR 28.00: Special Education

Research Work for Inclusive Education

- Serge Thomazet, From integration to inclusive education: does changing the terms improve practice?, International Journal of Inclusive Education [conceptual studies]
- Leah Jones, Examining Special Education on Social and Academic Outcomes, Journal of Education [academic performance assessment]
- Grzegorz Szumski, Joanna Smogorzewska, Pawel Grygiel, Academic Achievement of students without special educational needs and disabilities in inclusive education – does the type of inclusion matter?, PloS One [experiment]
- Beth A. Ferri, David J. Connor, Tools of Exclusion: Race, Disability, and (Re)segregated Education [interplay between ableism and racism]
- Elizabeth Setren, Targeted vs. General Education investments, Evidence from Special Education and English Language Learners in Boston Charter Schools, The Journal of Human Resources

B. Racial Integration and Inclusive Education Analogy

- Similarity:
 - Social constructs, not biological marks
 - Segregation as a result of certain prejudices and systematic discrimination (racism vs. ableism)
 - Received similar resistance when try to be included in general education [desegregation vs. inclusion]
 - Can be greatly improved through participation in public education (integration vs. inclusion)
- Difference:
 - Desegregation as socially acceptable, whereas the inclusion of students with special needs constantly encounters resistance
 - Different requirements for faculty
 - Racial integration is deeply correlated with neighborhoods, but the case may be different for inclusive education

Methodology

- Empirical component
 - Data collection
 - Report analysis
- Historical component
 - Case studies
 - Legislations and laws



My Argument and Findings

The analogy fails ...

- Legal Obligations
 - More easily for students with disabilities to seek remedies
 - De jure & de facto?
 - Least restrictive environment (Mass 766, Education Act 20 U.S.C. § 1400) vs. de facto segregation
- Curriculum Design
 - Not just physical presence, but Inclusion in general classroom with individualized education plan
- Neighborhoods / Self-segregation Theory
 - Neighborhood problems will not be involved in the present discussion
- Faculty Requirements
 - Teachers need to be trained
 - Team of professionals or therapists may be required

The analogy can be applied ...

- Significant boost in the learning environment
 - Inclusive education is better than special education (racial integration similar)
 - Conducive to social inclusion (racial integration benefits social integration)
- Students without disabilities & white students will not be adversely affected
 - Empirical evidence studies suggest that students without disabilities will not be adversely affected while studying in an inclusive education environment
- Achievement gap
 - Similar to excuses principles, while given high standards and expectations and not excluded from participation in education with students without disabilities, students with disabilities may significantly close the achievement gaps both vertically and horizontally

Counterarguments

- Self-segregation theory can exist: Disability as an identity
 - Disability as a social construct
 - Unwilling to participate in learning environment where most students without disabilities participate
- Students without disabilities: a different case
 - Their academic performance may be affected due to the “disability” of these students included in the classroom

III. Conclusion

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

Summary of Argument

- The analogy between racial integration and inclusive education both has potentials to shed light on future endeavors to promote the inclusion of students with learning disabilities and the limits that may restrict the findings on the root cause of the problem.

Importance of the Research

- Practical importance, policy-making and legislations
- Theoretical significance, Disabilities Studies in Education (DSE)
- At individual level: change people's mindset on disability

Lingering Questions / Q & A

- Title?
 - Can the analogy actually fail? Or rather than limits, should I consider the negative consequences derived from the excessive application of the analogy?
- Methodology, Data?
 - How to introduce data on current Boston Public Schools' inclusion of students identified with disabilities?
- Relevance of Boston Public Schools?
- Disability type?
 - Learning disabilities or other physical disabilities?
 - The conclusion may change depending on the type of disability in discussion
 - The social construct argument may fail if considering severe disability

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