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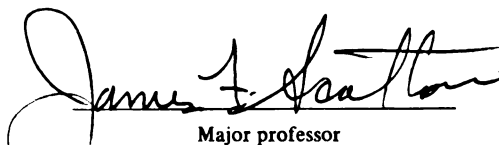
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GENERAL PUBLIC AND SCHOOLTEACHER ATTITUDES
TOWARD PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS:
IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION PLANNING
BY THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
BUREAU OF REHABILITATION
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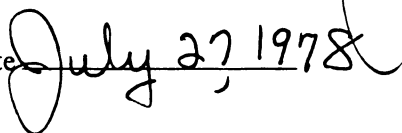
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ABSTRACT

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The objective of this study was to provide a scientific base for a public information program for the Michigan Department of Education, Bureau of Rehabilitation. Specific hypotheses were that the Bureau's key decision-makers have incorrect perceptions of the attitudes of the general public and of schoolteachers toward physically handicapped persons. Mail surveys were conducted in Lansing, Michigan, to document the two groups' actual attitudes as the first step in the public information process. The survey results supported the hypotheses. The decision-makers' perceptions of the attitudes of both groups were much less favorable than the attitudes were found to be. However, unfavorable attitudes concerning some aspects of the lives of physically handicapped persons were uncovered, providing a focus for a public information program. Survey responses regarding contact with handicapped persons, media use, and demographic information aided in pinpointing specific audiences, messages, and media for a public information program.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The practice of public relations over the years characteristically has been based on guesswork and intuition. "Too often," say Cutlip and Center, "there is too little research, too little planning, and too much publicity."¹ They advocate for the profession a "research attitude," in which public relations practitioners apply the methods of scientific research to their programs.²

Robinson, who devotes one-fourth of his public relations textbook to social and behavioral science research methods, says the "primary objective of all public relations practitioners should be to attempt to solve more and more problems on the basis of some research evidence or more reliable knowledge"³

Practitioners themselves cite the importance of using research-based knowledge in the profession: "However lean the body of knowledge is in understanding people's reactions, attitudes and opinions, public relations has an obligation to use the best of it and to apply it,"

¹Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 187.

²Ibid., pp. 191-192.

³Edward J. Robinson, Communication and Public Relations (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1966), p. 50.

argue Budd and Strayton.⁴

Like public relations in business and industry, the public information efforts of governmental agencies at national, state, and local levels have for too long relied on hunches and "fly by the seat of the pants" thinking. Cutlip and Center point out that most governmental public information programs consist of disseminating information, with little or no attention to opinion analysis and policy making. They specifically urge the use of opinion surveys, decrying agencies' reliance on "political channels to bring in the people's views."⁵

At the state level, Cutlip and Center commend one department of health for its public relations program, which has as an objective:

To effectively measure trends, attitudes, needs and reactions of the general and specialized public on their acceptance of departmental programs and objectives⁶

Clearly, the maturing of the public relations profession in both the public and private sectors will be accompanied by greater use of the methods of scientific research, particularly those tools which probe the attitudes and opinions of various publics.

Objective of the Study

It is the objective of this study to provide a scientific base from which to build a public information plan for the Michigan Department of Education, Bureau of Rehabilitation. The study specifically has sought to document through two surveys the attitudes of the general public and of public schoolteachers toward physically handicapped

⁴John F. Budd and Robert G. Strayton, "Can Public Relations Be Measured?" Public Relations Quarterly 13 (Winter 1969):19.

⁵Cutlip and Center, p. 552.

⁶Ibid., p. 556.

persons as these attitudes relate to the success of the state's vocational rehabilitation service.

The Bureau of Rehabilitation in Michigan is part of the federal-state vocational rehabilitation system created in 1921 by an act of Congress. Federal funds for the program are appropriated to the 50 states through the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The basic mission of the state agency is to help introduce and/or restore handicapped individuals to the employment market through such services as medical and psychological diagnosis, physical restoration, vocational counseling and training, and job placement. This is accomplished through a network of 41 field offices which operate throughout the state.⁷

Justification for the Study

The General Public

That state agencies have an obligation to inform the public of their policies and programs is widely supported in the literature. Schramm and Roberts maintain that in a democratic society, "there is at least the implicit assumption that the people have a right to know, that they should be provided with any and all information which might help them to formulate opinions and to influence the policies they wish their government to follow."⁸

They further state that the mass media have a major role in this process. "Because we are so large . . . only the media can provide us

⁷Annual Report, 1977, Michigan Department of Education, Bureau of Rehabilitation [unpaged].

⁸Wilbur Schramm and Donald F. Roberts, eds., The Process and Effects of Mass Communication (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), p. 640.

with much of the information necessary to enable public participation in government."⁹

Cutlip and Center specifically state that "[w]elfare agencies must tightly link their programs to educating the public to accept enlightened social concepts in fields such as poverty, mental health, crime and correction, child welfare, and the problems of aging."¹⁰ Vocational rehabilitation for physically handicapped persons is a logical extension of this list.

In addition to the acquisition of information, Cutlip and Center point out that

[t]oday's citizen needs a system of communications that will give him the same voice and understanding that his forefathers acquired in the town meeting. By the same token, today's administrator needs the face-to-face relationships that his predecessor of years ago had. He dare not lose the common touch. The bureaucrat must guard himself against isolation and insulation from the people of Punxsutawney and Prairie du Sac whose lives he so profoundly affects.¹¹

The public information process thus involves a two-way flow of communication--listening as well as message sending. Before an effective public information program can be planned around specific media, messages, target groups, and intended effects, a "harmonious adjustment between an institution and its publics" must exist.¹² This is achieved through exploring the attitudes and opinions of citizens whose compliance with the institution's policies is desired and whose support for the agency's programs is necessary in a democracy for their very existence.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Cutlip and Center, p. 510.

¹¹Ibid., p. 531.

¹²Ibid., p. 186.

It follows that the key decision-makers of the Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation should be cognizant of the kind of information the general public possesses regarding physically handicapped individuals in order that the agency may plan a public information program that will elicit community support for the Bureau's programs. Indeed, Dilley states that programs that help "handicapped and disadvantaged individuals become productive members of society must have the support of local community members" in order to be successful.¹³

Equally important is the agency's responsibility to elevate the level of knowledge the public possesses concerning handicapped persons and to abate negative attitudes. Critics argue that more could be done in this area. Reichel, for example, contends that rehabilitation workers are not disseminating enough "accurate information about the disabilities and abilities of the handicapped."¹⁴ Such activities are vital, Roeher maintains, because the attitudes of society toward handicapped persons determine to a great extent how handicapped individuals perceive themselves. Self-perception and the resultant personality of a handicapped person largely determine, in turn, how well that person succeeds in rehabilitation.¹⁵ "It seems paradoxical," he says, "that in comparison to the monumental achievements in physical restoration, agencies have, in general, failed to develop effective programs for

¹³Josiah S. Dilley, "Our Handicapped Efforts to Help the Handicapped," Vocational Guidance Quarterly 15 (June 1967):297.

¹⁴Elizabeth A. Reichel, "Changing Attitudes Toward the Disabled," Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling 6 (Fall 1975):188.

¹⁵G. Allan Roeher, "Significance of Public Attitudes in the Rehabilitation of the Disabled," Rehabilitation Literature 22 (March 1961):67-68.

changing public attitudes"¹⁶

Donald Barrett, special assistant on the handicapped with the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, echoes Roeher's position. For a handicapped individual, he says,

social adjustment is most assuredly affected by the positive or negative attitudes of those with whom he/she comes in contact; the importance of exposing wrong, negative and fallacious attitudes cannot be stressed enough.¹⁷

Attitude surveys, such as those undertaken in the present study, find support in the literature as a necessary, preliminary stage in the public education process. Yuker believes rehabilitation professionals "need to examine the attitudes prevalent in the nation, the state, and the community" as a first step in improving attitudes. "Then," he says, "we must attempt to establish values and norms that reflect positive rather than negative attitudes toward handicapped persons."¹⁸

Public Schoolteachers

The attitudes of public schoolteachers have become more important with the passage of the federal Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142). This law requires all public school systems in the country to "mainstream" handicapped children into regular classrooms whenever possible. The intent of the law is to provide handicapped students with an education that most closely approximates that received by their nonhandicapped peers. Mainstreaming is thus designed to

¹⁶Ibid., p. 68.

¹⁷Donald Barrett, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Letter to Lynne Schroeder, 12 May 1978.

¹⁸Harold E. Yuker, "Attitudes of the General Public Toward Handicapped Individuals," The White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals, vol. 1: Awareness Papers (Washington, D.C., 23-27 May 1977), p. 94.

eliminate any unnecessary isolation of handicapped students and to facilitate their post-school adjustment to society.

The advent of mainstreaming means teachers who have not had specific training in dealing with handicapped children will be teaching them along with nonhandicapped children. Martin maintains that most teachers "have had no formal training or experience with the handicapped child."¹⁹ Yet, the expressed attitudes of teachers toward handicapped children are clearly very important. Classroom teachers are often the first social contact a handicapped child has outside the home. The degree of acceptance such children feel in school undoubtedly affects their self-concept. In addition, says Hughes, a teacher's attitude toward a handicapped student influences how nonhandicapped students in the class respond to that student.²⁰

Teacher attitudes are also seen as an important factor in the success of mainstreaming itself. Mitchell contends that teachers' attitudes toward handicapped students "may be a far more potent and important variable in the successful integration of exceptional students into regular classrooms than any administrative or curricular scheme."²¹

Clearly, then, the attitudes of teachers toward physically handicapped individuals have become critical. Further, it is important that the Bureau of Rehabilitation have a sound perception of these attitudes. As a division of the Michigan Department of Education, the

¹⁹Edwin W. Martin, "Some Thoughts on Mainstreaming," High School Journal 59 (April 1976):272.

²⁰James H. Hughes, "Attitude Is Keystone to Success," School Shop 37 (April 1978):78.

²¹Marlys M. Mitchell, "Teacher Attitudes," High School Journal 59 (April 1976):302.

Bureau is closely aligned with the educational process in the state and has an unusual opportunity to communicate with a "neighboring" public, the state's public schoolteachers. That rehabilitation professionals can improve the attitudes of educators is argued by Reichel. She says the "attitudes of parents of the handicapped, school systems, and employers could be changed through rehabilitation efforts" (underlining mine).²²

The teacher attitude survey reported in this study serves as a first step in preparing an effective information campaign directed toward teachers. Indeed, Conine, who has been concerned with the emotional atmosphere teachers create in their classrooms regarding handicapped children, believes surveys of teacher attitudes are "essential in anticipating behavior and for promoting an empirical basis for social and educational efforts directed at mitigating negative attitudes towards handicapped individuals."²³

Theory and Hypotheses

This study is based on the theory that an institution's key decision-makers have incomplete and/or faulty knowledge regarding attitudes relevant to the institution's mission possessed by that institution's publics.²⁴

Specific hypotheses are:

- H₁ Vocational rehabilitation decision-makers' beliefs regarding the general public's attitudes toward physically handicapped individuals differ from the actual attitudes of the general public.

²²Reichel, p. 190.

²³Tali A. Conine, "Acceptance or Rejection of Disabled Persons by Teachers," Journal of School Health 39 (April 1969):279.

²⁴Cutlip and Center, p. 189.

- H₂ Vocational rehabilitation decision-makers' beliefs regarding the attitudes of public schoolteachers toward physically handicapped individuals differ from the actual attitudes of the teachers.

Stated as null hypotheses, these hypotheses are:

- H₁ Vocational rehabilitation decision-makers' beliefs regarding the general public's attitudes toward physically handicapped individuals do not differ from the actual attitudes of the general public.

- H₂ Vocational rehabilitation decision-makers' beliefs regarding the attitudes of public schoolteachers toward physically handicapped individuals do not differ from the actual attitudes of the teachers.

This study, then, has sought answers to the following questions:

- How do Bureau of Rehabilitation key decision-makers perceive attitudes of the general public toward the physically handicapped?
- What are the attitudes of the general public?
- How do Bureau of Rehabilitation key decision-makers perceive attitudes of public schoolteachers toward the physically handicapped?
- What are the attitudes of the teachers?
- What is the variance between the decision-makers' beliefs concerning the general public's attitudes and the actual attitudes of the general public?
- What is the variance between the decision-makers' beliefs concerning the teachers' attitudes and the actual attitudes of the teachers?
- How can knowledge of general public and teacher attitudes toward physically handicapped persons be used to plan an effective public information program?

Delimitations

The study has been delimited to:

- The public information process of the Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation
- The attitudes of adults in Lansing, Michigan
- The attitudes of public schoolteachers in Lansing, Michigan, schools
- Attitudes toward physically handicapped persons only

Significance of the Study

The study is the first of its kind in Michigan. The state's Bureau of Rehabilitation has never surveyed general or special public attitudes toward the physically handicapped. The study will be beneficial to the handicapped population in Michigan and to the state's vocational rehabilitation programs because the results will facilitate better public information planning by the Bureau. Dissemination of the results will extend the benefits to vocational rehabilitation programs in other states as well.

Definition of Terms

Attitude: "the sum total of a man's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and convictions about any specified topic."²⁵

²⁵L. L. Thurstone, "Attitudes Can Be Measured," American Journal of Sociology 33 (January 1928):531. The investigator is aware that this definition of "attitude" was put forward 50 years ago. However, Thurstone's definition continues to be quoted in the literature, most notably in Gene F. Summers, ed., Attitude Measurement (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1971); and Martin Fishbein, ed., Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967).

Mainstreaming: "provision of educational programs and services for handicapped pupils in environments and settings which are as near to the regular educational program as is possible consistent with the educational needs of the handicapped student."²⁶

Opinion: "a verbal expression of attitude."²⁷

Publics: "those groups with common interests affected by the acts and policies of an institution or whose acts and opinions affect the institution."²⁸

Physically handicapped person: "any person who (i) has a physical . . . impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of such an impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment."²⁹

Physical impairment: "(A) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitourinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine"³⁰

Major life activities: "functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working."³¹

Has a record of such an impairment: "has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a . . . physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities."³²

Is regarded as having an impairment: "(A) has a physical . . . impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but that is treated by a recipient as

²⁶"Mandatory Special Education in Michigan: Assessment and Recommendations," A Report of the Ad Hoc Task Force on Special Education, July 1977, p. 11.

²⁷Thurstone, p. 531.

²⁸Cutlip and Center, p. 145.

²⁹Rehabilitation Act, U.S. Code, title 29, sec. 701 (1970).

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

constituting such a limitation; (B) has a physical . . . impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment; or (C) has none of the impairments defined [above] . . . but is treated by a recipient as having such an impairment.³³

Recipient: "any state or its political subdivision, any instrumentality of a state or its political subdivision, any public or private agency, institution, organization, or other entity, or any person to which Federal financial assistance is extended directly or through another recipient, including any successor, assignee, or transferee of a recipient, but excluding the ultimate beneficiary of the assistance."³⁴

Schoolteacher: used synonymously with "educator" in this study to mean elementary and secondary teachers, adult education instructors, nursery school teachers, counselors, occupational therapists, media specialists, school nurses, psychologists, special education teachers, school social workers, librarians, and teachers of the homebound.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter I introduces the reader to the objective of this study-- that of providing a research base from which to develop a public information program. Justification for the study is given, as well as the theory and hypotheses. The significance of the study is noted, and terms used throughout the thesis are defined.

Chapter II is a review of the literature concerning attitudes of the general public and of educators toward handicapped persons. Related media studies are also reviewed.

Chapter III sets forth the method and procedures by which this study was carried out. The survey questionnaire used in the study is described, as are the groups to whom the questionnaire was administered.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

Chapter IV presents the data obtained from the surveys. The hypotheses are tested against the findings, comparisons are made between the responses of the general public and the educators, and statistical analyses of the survey results are performed.

Chapter V draws some conclusions for a public information program based on the survey findings and recommends that the Bureau of Rehabilitation take four specific actions.

Appendices and a bibliography follow the body of the thesis.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Attitudes of the General Public

Studies of general public attitudes toward physically handicapped persons have been undertaken in recent years with differing groups and varied objectives. These studies may be classified as (a) those which attempted to describe the general view of society toward handicapped individuals, (b) those which examined the characteristics of able-bodied persons as these traits influence attitudes, and (c) those which sought to establish the level of acceptance of handicapped persons by employers.

It has generally been found that persons with physical handicaps meet with less discrimination than do mentally handicapped persons, both in society at large and in the job market. However, physically handicapped persons still encounter a significant measure of discrimination when compared with able-bodied persons. Females hold more favorable attitudes toward handicapped persons than do males, and a difference exists also in their definition of handicap. Males view mental handicaps to be more debilitating, while females fear physical handicaps. In terms of age, it appears that a person expresses a more favorable attitude toward handicapped persons as he/she matures, but that the attitude becomes less favorable as he/she approaches old age.

Society's Perception of Handicapped Persons

Two studies have shown that physical handicaps may be more acceptable to the general population than are mental handicaps. Tringo¹ developed a Disability Social Distance Scale to test his hypothesis that a hierarchy of preference exists toward various disability groups. The scale, along with a list of 21 handicaps arranged in alphabetical order, was administered to 455 subjects from six sample groups. The investigator found that a hierarchy of preference does exist; this was established by the consistent relative placement of each disability group by the various sample groups. The first five positions in the hierarchy of acceptance were the somewhat hidden handicaps of ulcer, arthritis, asthma, diabetes, and heart disease. Those disabilities least accepted were ex-convict, mental retardation, alcoholism, and mental illness, suggesting little tolerance by the public for persons with mental rather than physical handicaps. Dwarf, cerebral palsy, and hunchback were also low on the list, suggesting the "influence of an aesthetic factor."² Tringo also found that the female subjects were more accepting of disability groups than were the male subjects.

Harasymiw et al.³ had similar results from their eight-year investigation into the attitudes of the general population toward 22 disability groups. They administered one of several attitude-measuring instruments to a total of 4,459 subjects, ranging from elementary school

¹John L. Tringo, "The Hierarchy of Preference Toward Disability Groups," Journal of Special Education 4 (Summer-Fall 1970):295-306.

²Ibid., p. 304.

³Stefan J. Harasymiw, Marcia D. Horne, and Sally C. Lewis, "A Longitudinal Study of Disability Group Acceptance," Rehabilitation Literature 37 (April 1976):98-102.

students to senior citizens. A major finding was the "remarkable stability"⁴ of attitudes toward handicapped persons. The investigators discovered that handicapped persons whose condition allows them to conform to the work ethic were most accepted. Persons whose condition was considered to be self-imposed (drug addiction or criminality) or who were mentally retarded and thus not maximally productive to society were least accepted.

A third study sought to discover how nonhandicapped people view the seriousness of disability types on six personal and social dimensions. MacDonald and Hall⁵ asked subjects to rate each of five classes of disability on a four-point scale--from extremely debilitating to not much debilitating--for each dimension. They found that nonhandicapped individuals perceive disabilities to be less debilitating in the extended social sphere than in the areas of employment, marriage, family relations, and feelings about oneself.

Comer and Piliavin⁶ examined attitudes in relation to perceived characteristics of physically handicapped persons. Their study explored (1) the attitudes of physically handicapped persons who were once physically normal toward other handicapped persons and toward physically normal individuals, and (2) the attitudes of physically normal persons toward those with physical handicaps. Subjects were asked to rate two

⁴Ibid., p. 101.

⁵A. P. MacDonald, Jr., and Janet Hall, "Perception of Disability by the Nondisabled," Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology 33 (December 1969):654-660.

⁶Ronald C. Comer and June Allyn Piliavin, "As Others See Us: Attitudes of Physically Handicapped and Normals Toward Own and Other Groups," Rehabilitation Literature 36 (July 1975):206-221, 225.

men--one handicapped, one able-bodied--based on a photograph of each, on a number of personal characteristics. They found that the attitudes of the physically normal subjects toward handicapped persons were more favorable than were their attitudes toward physically normal persons. The investigators also discovered that

[w]hen persons become handicapped themselves, they show a clear reduction in their favorable attitudes toward handicapped persons. Nevertheless, since they also show reductions in their attitudes toward normal persons, they continue to demonstrate the more favorable attitudes toward handicapped persons than normal persons demonstrate on intragroup differences.⁷

Comer and Piliavin postulated that nonhandicapped persons perceive handicapped persons to have favorable qualities, such as goodness, generosity, and kindness, because of a need by the handicapped person to "resolve to be a better and wiser person."⁸

Employer Attitudes

Attitudes of employers toward handicapped individuals do not appear to be markedly different from attitudes held by society in general. The findings of Hartlage et al.,⁹ for example, seem to support Tringo's and Harasymiw et al.'s conclusions that mental handicaps are perceived less favorably than are physical handicaps. Hartlage et al. were interested in seeing whether employers differentiate among types of handicaps. Survey letters were mailed to 152 employers, randomly selected for a sample stratified by number of employees and type of

⁷Ibid., p. 217.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Lawrence C. Hartlage, Paul Roland, and Dorothy Taraba, "Perceptions of Various Types of Disabilities by Employers," Psychological Aspects of Disability 18 (November 1971):122-124.

industry. The subjects were asked to rate frequency of problems on each of seven work-related behaviors for five disability types. The investigators found that employers believed persons with a history of social deviance would be the poorest employment risks. Amputees were viewed as being better than average employment risks. Epileptic persons were seen as above average in work tolerance, but slightly below average on all other variables. Likewise, the mentally retarded worker was viewed as needing less supervision than the nondisabled worker, but below average in other areas. The researchers concluded that employers may be more accepting of individuals who have no perceived control over their handicap than of those with psychiatric disorders.

Williams¹⁰ had similar results. He asked 180 employers to indicate the extent (always, usually, sometimes, never) to which they would consider hiring a person with a specified handicap for a particular job. Ten handicaps were included in the study. The results showed that more than 85 percent of the employers would never hire a mentally retarded person for a management or sales job. Eighty-five percent said they would either sometimes or never consider hiring a retarded person for a clerical job. Only 20 percent said they would usually consider hiring a retarded person for a production job. The results were not quite so unfavorable for persons with physical disabilities. More than 50 percent of the employers indicated they would usually consider hiring a person with a peptic ulcer, diabetes, or only one leg for any of the four jobs mentioned above. Those with just one arm would be banned only from a production position. However, more than 50 percent

¹⁰C. Arthur Williams, Jr., "Is Hiring the Handicapped Good Business?" Journal of Rehabilitation 38 (March/April 1972):30-34.

of the employers would never consider hiring a blind person for a production, clerical, sales, or management job. Further, more than 50 percent of the employers said they would not usually consider hiring for a production, management, or sales job an epileptic person or a person who had had a serious heart attack.

Johnson and Heal¹¹ described an investigation into the attitudes and practices concerning handicapped persons of counselors in private employment agencies. The responses of counselors toward a physically normal job applicant were compared with responses toward the same applicant in a wheelchair. The researchers found that the wheelchair applicant met with a significant measure of discrimination when compared with the treatment received by the able-bodied applicant. Counselors showed particular discrimination in their admissions to the handicapped applicant that her employment chances were smaller because of her handicap and in their lack of referrals for job interviews.

English and Oberle¹² also found that persons with physical handicaps may find a significant degree of discrimination among potential co-workers. They established that a person's occupation may influence his/her attitude toward physically handicapped persons. The researchers administered the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale to two occupational groups--one rated as high and one as low on the dimension of importance of physique. The data obtained supported their hypothesis

¹¹Rosemary Johnson and Laird W. Heal, "Private Employment Agency Responses to the Physically Handicapped Applicant in a Wheelchair," Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling 7 (Spring 1976):12-21.

¹²R. William English and Judson B. Oberle, "Toward the Development of New Methodology for Examining Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons," Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin 15 (December 1971):88-96.

that members of occupations placing a low emphasis on physique will demonstrate more positive attitudes toward the physically handicapped than will members of occupations placing a high emphasis on physique.

Effects of Various Characteristics on Public Attitudes

Studies which examined the characteristics of able-bodied persons in relation to their attitudes toward handicapped persons were generally concerned with psychological make-up and the factors of age and sex. Three studies supported the notion that persons who are socially adaptive tend to be more accepting of handicapped persons than are persons with a low level of social skill. Galbreath and Feinberg¹³ found that nonhandicapped individuals who cannot tolerate ambiguous stimuli or situations voice more negative attitudes toward the handicapped than do those who are tolerant of ambiguity. However, they also found that tolerant subjects expressed more favorable attitudes toward the least ambiguous disability type. Intolerant subjects, on the other hand, varied little in their expressed attitudes toward different disability types.

In an earlier study, Feinberg¹⁴ attempted to establish that a person's level of social desirability need influences his/her expressed attitudes toward handicapped individuals. Subjects were administered the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability scale and three attitude-measuring instruments, including the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale.

¹³Judith Galbreath and Lawrence Feinberg, "Ambiguity and Attitudes Toward Employment of the Disabled: A Multi-Dimensional Study," Rehabilitation Psychology 20 (Winter 1973):165-174.

¹⁴Lawrence B. Feinberg, "Social Desirability and Attitudes Toward the Disabled," Personnel and Guidance Journal 46 (December 1967):375-381.

Feinberg found that a subject's need to present himself/herself in a socially acceptable light did indeed influence attitudes toward handicapped persons. He suggested that social desirability is a significant factor in attitude measurement.

Siller et al.¹⁵ hypothesized that more favorable attitudes toward handicapped persons would correlate with greater ego strength and with a capacity for more stable object relations. They administered the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale (ATDP), Siller's Feeling Check List (FCL), and the Social Distance Scale (SDS) to 748 junior high school, high school, and college students. The ATDP and FCL showed significant, positive correlations with scales of ego-strength, social poise, and personal adjustment, among other positive traits. The investigators found that

[m]easures of response set indicated that the tendency to answer in terms of social desirability correlated with favorable disability attitude while acquiescence measures correlated with unfavorable attitudes [S]triving to make socially desirable responses would seem to coincide with adaptive tendencies whereas an acquiescent trend might reflect lowered self-esteem and poorer ego strength.¹⁶

Siller et al. also found that college students expressed more favorable attitudes toward handicapped persons than did the younger subjects. In addition, female students indicated more accepting attitudes toward handicapped persons than did the male students. These two findings are supported by several other studies.

¹⁵Jerome Siller, Abram Chipman, Linda Ferguson, Donald H. Vann, Attitudes of the Nondisabled Toward the Physically Disabled, XI: Studies in Reactions to Disability (New York: New York University, School of Education, May 1967).

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 75-76.

Higgs¹⁷ found that females tended to have more knowledge of, more contact with, and more positive attitudes toward handicapped persons than did males. He was interested in the effects of increased contact and more information on attitudes toward physically handicapped persons. He asked more than 300 subjects to complete the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale, a contact rating index, and a knowledge test about physical disabilities. His findings revealed that (1) persons with high degrees of contact had more favorable attitudes, and (2) persons with higher information levels had more favorable attitudes. The results also indicated that subjects with a high degree of contact also tended to have more information about physical handicaps and more favorable attitudes toward physically handicapped persons. Females scored higher than males on all measures. Higgs concluded that attitudes "change as a result of advancing age, related experiences, and changes in an individual's level of information."¹⁸

A study by Gozali¹⁹ shed some additional light on Siller et al.'s and Higgs' findings that attitudes toward handicapped persons become more favorable as one advances in age. Seeking to establish the relationship between age and expressed attitudes toward handicapped persons, Gozali mailed the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale to two church groups. Each consisted of 35 persons in each of four age groups (12 to 19, 20 to 35, 36 to 50, and 51 and over). He found that the ATDP

¹⁷Reginald W. Higgs, "Attitude Formation--Contact or Information?" Exceptional Children 41 (April 1975):496-497.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 497.

¹⁹Joav Gozali, "The Relationship Between Age and Attitude Toward Disbled Persons," Gerontologist 11 (Winter 1971):289-291.

scores were not linearly related to age. While attitudes toward the handicapped became more favorable as people moved from adolescence to young adulthood, persons over 51 years of age tended to be less favorable in their attitudes than did younger persons.

In two studies concerned with age and sex as determinants of the definition of "handicap," males were found to list mental disabilities as major handicaps while females tended to list physical disabilities. Coet and Tindall²⁰ asked a random sample of 32 males and 39 females, ages 17 to 81, to list in order of degree three classes of people they felt would be considered handicapped. While the analysis indicated that men and women and different age groups did not significantly differ in their rankings, marked differences were found in some areas. The males felt that mental retardation and mental problems were major handicaps; women stressed physical injury. In addition, the younger subjects emphasized mental problems more than did the older subjects.

In a similar study, Coet and Thornton²¹ surveyed a random sample of 67 males and 74 females in three age groups: 12 to 25, 26 to 45, and 46 to 82. The subjects were asked to list in order of degree of importance five groups of people they felt should be considered handicapped. The investigators found that males frequently listed mental retardation and mental problems, while females tended to list physical injury and old age. The youngest group listed race and socio-economic problems more frequently than did the two older groups. The 26 to 45

²⁰Larry Coet and Robert C. Tindall, "Definition of 'Handicap' as a Function of Age and Sex," Psychological Reports 34 (June 1974):1197-1198.

²¹Larry J. Coet and Larry W. Thornton, "Age and Sex: Factors in Defining the Term 'Handicap,'" Psychological Reports 37 (August 1975): 103-106.

year old group was more concerned with physical incapacitation, blindness, and heart disease. Contrary to the earlier study's findings, the oldest group placed more emphasis on mental problems. Coet and Thornton suggested that the definition of "handicap" is a function of a person's characteristics--at least age and sex.

Attitudes of Educators

Past studies of the attitudes of educators toward handicapped children and adults have largely attempted to demonstrate teachers' readiness for mainstreaming handicapped youngsters into their classrooms. These studies have generally found that teachers are not highly receptive to the mainstreaming concept. Conflicting results have been found, however, among studies seeking to establish a relationship between years of teaching experience and attitudes toward persons with handicaps.

Number of years of teaching experience do not seem to be a factor according to three studies. Combs and Harper,²² who studied handicap labels and their effect on teacher attitudes, found that years of teaching experience do not appear to affect attitudes toward handicapped students. Conine²³ tested experience along with other variables (education, age, race, religion, specialization area, and contact with handicapped persons) and found that teachers' attitudes toward handicapped persons were not significantly related to any of these variables.

²²Ronald H. Combs and Jerry L. Harper, "Effects of Labels on Attitudes of Educators Toward Handicapped Children," Exceptional Children 33 (February 1967):399-403.

²³Tali A. Conine, "Acceptance or Rejection of Disabled Persons by Teachers," Journal of School Health 39 (April 1969):278-281.

Conine's study compared the attitudes of public elementary teachers toward physically handicapped persons with the established norms of the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale. None of the elementary teachers expressed a very high degree of acceptance of handicapped persons (99th percentile). Twenty-one percent scored below the lower quartile of the norm for ATDP, and 23.5 percent scored above the upper quartile. The female teachers, however, expressed more favorable attitudes than did the males. Overall, the teachers' attitudes were found to be similar to the attitudes of the public. Conine suggested that unfavorable public attitudes may be a reflection of the attitudes of teachers, "who influence the value system of our future generations."²⁴

A third study compared the attitudes toward handicaps of 20 teachers who had specific experience teaching exceptional children with the attitudes of 20 who did not have such experience. Panda and Bartel²⁵ found that no significant difference existed between the way teachers with specialized experience and training viewed handicapped children as compared with teachers having no special experience or training. The investigators suggested that "training after a certain level of education does not bring radical differences in perception of the exceptional children."²⁶ The teachers rated all handicaps included in the study significantly lower than they did the normal and gifted labels.

Two studies, however, did find a relationship between experience

²⁴Ibid., p. 280.

²⁵Kailas C. Panda and Nettie R. Bartel, "Teacher Perception of Exceptional Children," Journal of Special Education 6 (Fall 1972): 261-266.

²⁶Ibid., p. 265.

with handicapped children and favorable attitudes toward handicaps. Harasymiw and Horne²⁷ demonstrated that teachers who had experience with the integration of handicapped children into the regular classroom had both a more favorable attitude toward handicaps and toward the concept of mainstreaming than did teachers without such experience. Their study of two groups of 352 teachers also showed that teachers with less education had more favorable attitudes than did those with advanced degrees. The investigators indicated that this finding may have been a result of a confounding with the effect of age, since younger teachers were found to have more positive attitudes. Harasymiw and Horne, unlike Conine, found no significant difference between the attitudes of males and females.

Wechsler et al.,²⁸ studying several variables, found only previous experience with handicapped children could be associated with attitude. Also, teachers with previous experience with handicapped students were more receptive to the mainstreaming concept than were other teachers. Wechsler et al. surveyed 547 public schoolteachers representing all grade levels to determine their readiness to comply with the new mainstreaming law. The questionnaire asked the teachers to answer specific questions concerning students with six different handicapping conditions. To the question of whether they would be "very

²⁷Stefan J. Harasymiw and Marcia D. Horne, "Integration of Handicapped Children: Its Effect on Teacher Attitudes," Education 96 (Winter 1975):153-158.

²⁸Henry Wechsler, Amorita C. Suarez, and Mary McFadden, "Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Education of Physically Handicapped Children: Implications for the Implementation of Massachusetts Law 766," Journal of Education 157 (February 1975):17-24.

willing to have child in class,"²⁹ those answering "yes" ranged from 27 percent for students with seizures to 32 percent for students with a hearing loss, 34 percent for students with impaired vision, 44 percent for students with asthma, 45 percent for those with heart conditions, and 52 percent for students with braces or crutches.

Seventy-nine percent felt a "full-time regular classroom would be best for child"³⁰ for students with a heart condition, 78 percent for students with asthma, 69 percent for those with crutches or braces, 60 percent for students with seizures, and 13 percent for both students with impaired vision and students with a hearing loss.

The findings of three additional studies approximated Wechsler et al.'s finding that teachers are neither highly accepting nor highly rejecting of mainstreaming. Gickling and Theobald³¹ examined the attitudes of teachers and supervisor/administrators toward mainstreaming. Of the 326 respondents to a 46-item questionnaire, 183 were regular classroom teachers, 84 were special education teachers, 47 were regular supervisor/administrators, and 12 were special supervisor/administrators. More than 60 percent of the educators expressed general satisfaction with self-contained classes for handicapped children. These respondents felt such classes "had proven to be more effective than regular classes for the mildly handicapped."³² Forty percent of elementary regular teachers and 30 percent of secondary regular teachers were in favor of

²⁹Ibid., p. 19.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Edward E. Gickling and John T. Theobald, "Mainstreaming: Affect or Effect," Journal of Special Education 9 (Fall 1975):317-328.

³²Ibid., p. 323.

mainstreaming. Interestingly, about one-half of the respondents indicated they had no knowledge of State Department of Education provisions for implementing mainstreaming.

Barngrover³³ found that slightly more than half of the educators she surveyed favored special classrooms. She interviewed 50 teachers, administrators, and school psychologists to determine their preferences in special education programs. Twenty-seven of those interviewed indicated that special classes for exceptional children should be retained. Their reasons included more success for the child, more realistic preparation for work, less disruption in the regular classroom, and specialized help. The 23 interviewees who favored placing handicapped students in regular classrooms believed such placement would provide good peer behavior models, higher expectations for progress, more group pressure for good behavior, and greater stimulation in general.

Hughes³⁴ examined the attitudes of a sample of vocational education teachers in skill training programs and found that the vocational teachers were neither highly accepting nor highly rejecting of mainstreaming. He also found that a relationship existed between favorable attitudes toward handicapped individuals and acceptance of the mainstreaming concept. He administered the Attitudes Toward Handicapped Individuals scale to 546 teachers in the areas of business, agriculture, occupational home economics, distributive education, trade and industry,

³³Elaine Barngrover, "A Study of Educators' Preference in Special Education Programs," Exceptional Children 37 (Summer 1971):754-755.

³⁴James H. Hughes, "Attitude Is Keystone to Success," School Shop 37 (April 1978):76-80.

industrial arts, and health. The scores indicated that all groups of teachers were favorable toward handicapped persons, with distributive education teachers showing the highest score and home economics, the lowest. Hughes also found the attitudes of the vocational teachers to be similar to those of other practicing educators and to parents of exceptional children.

Media Studies

Numerous studies have been undertaken to find the relationship between uses of various media and information gain and/or attitude change. Media investigations related to the present study fall into three general categories: (a) media use in relation to level of knowledge possessed, (b) campaigns designed to impart information and/or change attitudes, and (c) effects of different media channels on audience response. Studies in all three classes lend support to the notion that the various mass media can indeed be effective in raising the public's information level and in favorably influencing their attitudes.

Media Use and Knowledge Level

Two studies have demonstrated that the mass media play a definite role in elevating society's knowledge about current issues. Rosenstock et al.³⁵ reported on a study that questioned 1,493 adults on their knowledge, opinions, and behavior concerning three issues--fallout,

³⁵Irwin M. Rosenstock, Don P. Haefner, S. Stephen Kegeles, and John P. Kirscht, "Public Knowledge, Opinion and Action Concerning Three Public Health Issues: Radioactive Fallout, Insect and Plant Sprays and Fatty Foods," Journal of Health and Human Behavior 7 (Summer 1966): 91-98.

pesticides, and fatty foods. The survey revealed that the majority of respondents had some correct information about each issue, leading the investigators to conclude that the "mass media have apparently been quite effective in reaching a majority of the public and in stimulating the learning of at least partially correct information."³⁶ The findings showed a significant relationship between amount of education and proportion of individuals giving correct information. In addition, more people with higher incomes reported correct information about the issues than did those with lower incomes. No relationship was found between amount of correct information and sex.

Wade³⁷ found that the media not only impart information, but also influence public attitudes, especially in times of social change. A random survey of adults before and after the ratification of the Constitutional amendment giving 18 year olds the right to vote indicated that respondents who knew through the media of the change in voting regulations were more willing to allow 18 to 21 year olds to participate in politics. Wade suggested that the media "can affect public attitudes . . . and can effectively change the probability of influence in the direction of the young."³⁸

A third study, however, reported no relationship between media use

³⁶Ibid., p. 97.

³⁷Serena E. Wade, "Media Effects on Changes in Attitudes Toward the Rights of Young People," Journalism Quarterly 50 (Summer 1973): 292-296, 347.

³⁸Ibid., p. 296, 347.

and knowledge of current affairs. Kent and Rush³⁹ explored the communication behaviors of older persons for their impact on public affairs knowledge. A correct statement concerning the issue of amnesty for Vietnam War resisters was considered an index of such knowledge. Personal interviews with the subjects revealed that a high level of education is positively related to the use of print media, which in turn correlates with public affairs knowledge. It was also found that older persons who frequently attend meetings are highly educated, use the print media frequently, and are highly knowledgeable about public affairs. No relationship could be found between television, radio, movie, and phone use and level of education or knowledge of public affairs. The investigators concluded that many segments of the older population--i.e., those who do not use the print media--are not receiving important information.

Information Campaigns

Experiments in the effectiveness of public service information campaigns have generally met with some measure of success. Salcedo et al.,⁴⁰ for example, reported on the success of a one-month mass media campaign intended to increase knowledge of and influence attitudes toward pesticide use. The researchers attributed the subjects' information gain and strengthened attitudes toward the safe use of pesticides to a number of factors. "Unity, uniqueness, relevance and

³⁹K. E. Kent and Ramona R. Rush, "How Communication Behavior of Older Persons Affects Their Public Affairs Knowledge," Journalism Quarterly 53 (Spring 1976):40-46.

⁴⁰Rodolfo N. Salcedo, Hadley Read, James F. Evans, and Ana C. Kong, "A Successful Information Campaign on Pesticides," Journalism Quarterly 51 (Spring 1974):91-95, 110.

simplicity of message"⁴¹ were cited as important to campaign success. Repetition of key information was also mentioned.

Maisel et al.⁴² were also successful in their three-year information campaign to reduce accidental poisoning among children. Mass communication techniques employed included radio and television spot announcements, human interest stories in newspapers, public service and commercial advertisements, bus cards, posters, and displays in public buildings. Personal contact communications supplemented the media efforts. Six months after completion of the project, a survey showed that 88 percent of the respondents had seen or heard something about the dangers of accidental poisoning. Newspapers, television, and radio were cited most often as the source of the health information. The investigators suggested that the results "imply the necessity for maintaining an effective level of communication with which the population can relate and practically comply."⁴³

Like Maisel et al., Douglas et al.⁴⁴ included face-to-face communications in their study of the ability of public service advertisements to impart information and change attitudes. The researchers compared an experimental community with a control community following an information campaign on retardation in the experimental community. The

⁴¹Ibid., p. 95.

⁴²Georg Maisel, Bettye A. Langdoc, Margaret Q. Jenkins, and E. Kenneth Aycock, "Analysis of Two Surveys Evaluating a Project to Reduce Accidental Poisoning Among Children," Public Health Reports 82 (June 1967):555-560.

⁴³Ibid., p. 560.

⁴⁴Dorothy F. Douglas, Bruce H. Westley, and Steven H. Chaffee, "An Information Campaign That Changed Community Attitudes," Journalism Quarterly 47 (Autumn 1970):479-487, 492.

post-measure indicated that the media campaign reached the vast majority of citizens, particularly those with a low educational level. In addition, a positive correlation was found between information gain and attitude change. It was generalized that such campaign success may be limited to issues which are relatively uncontroversial and which do not involve deep-seated personal values. The study also lent support to the hypothesis that a "media campaign is 'relayed' via interpersonal sources."⁴⁵ However, the authors stated that they believed the interpersonal communication augmented rather than counteracted the media campaign.

Gordon⁴⁶ had conflicting results in the effectiveness of the media as compared with interpersonal contact in his publicizing of two health projects. The first, a long-term project concerning a maternity facility, utilized newspapers, radio, television, and leaflets as well as person-to-person contact in disseminating information. Gordon found individual contact to be the greatest source of referrals to the prenatal center.

A short-term project had more success with the mass media. The publicizing of a three-day diabetes detection center through posters, leaflets, newspaper articles, and radio and television messages resulted in heavy attendance at the center. Nearly 65 percent of the drop-ins interviewed said newspapers were their source of information about the center. Radio accounted for 15 percent of the referrals, and television, 8 percent. Personal contacts elicited the fewest number of referrals.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 492.

⁴⁶ Joseph Gordon, "Evaluation of Communications Media in Two Health Projects in Baltimore," Public Health Reports 82 (July 1967):651-655.

In addition, the mass distribution of leaflets and posters did not appear to be an effective means of evoking a response in either campaign.

Dilley⁴⁷ indicated that the failure of his public information campaign may have been due to an ineffective means by which the information was conveyed or to the dissemination of inappropriate information. He sought to discover public knowledge about the state-federal vocational rehabilitation program by means of two surveys. The members of service clubs in two counties were administered a questionnaire inquiring about their knowledge of vocational rehabilitation. Six months later--after a public information campaign had been conducted--club members in one of the counties were surveyed again. Dilley found that the respondents did not have much knowledge of vocational rehabilitation and that the public information program did not raise their level of knowledge appreciably. He also found that the subjects confused similar state-federal programs with one another.

Greenberg,⁴⁸ however, has shown that when subjects are directly presented with information, their knowledge level does increase and that any attitude change cannot occur without the accompanying information gain. He conducted an experiment in which subjects were pretested for their attitudes toward fallout shelters and knowledge of both the shelters and nuclear war. They were then exposed to factual information about the topics. Posttesting showed significantly increased positive

⁴⁷Josiah S. Dilley, "Our Handicapped Efforts to Help the Handicapped," Vocational Guidance Quarterly 15 (June 1967):297-301.

⁴⁸Bradley S. Greenberg, "On Relating Attitude Change and Information Gain," Journal of Communication 14 (September 1964):157-171.

attitudes toward fallout shelters across all subjects. Additionally, the subjects doubled their level of knowledge concerning fallout shelters and nuclear war. Greenberg found that the knowledge scores after the information had been introduced were directly related to existing attitudes. He concluded that "where a message succeeds in influencing predispositions, what is learned will be more a function of the new, rather than the old, attitude."⁴⁹

Channel Effect on Audience Response

Studies of the effects of specific media channels have generally shown that newspapers as well as television and videotape presentations can be instrumental in achieving public information objectives. Baran⁵⁰ found that people who view television programs about mentally retarded people in everyday situations will report significantly more positive attitudes toward retarded people than will people who did not see the programs. Compared with the control group, the viewers' responses to 19 attitudinal questions showed significant differences in attitude on eight of the 19 items. The investigator could find no correlation between attitude change and knowledge about retardation, amount of contact with retarded people, or knowing a retarded person. Baran concluded that television can indeed favorably influence attitudes toward retarded persons, and might even be more effective than actual contact because television confers status on the material it broadcasts.

The investigators in two other studies had success with videotape

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 168.

⁵⁰Stanley J. Baran, "TV Programming and Attitudes Toward Mental Retardation," Journalism Quarterly 54 (Spring 1977):140-142.

presentations, but found live discussions to be the most effective in changing attitudes. Donaldson⁵¹ examined the effects of three channel variations on attitudes toward physically handicapped persons. Three groups of subjects were exposed to a panel presentation by six young adults with visible handicaps. Their discussion centered on issues and problems of disability. One group viewed the discussion live, while the second and third groups viewed or heard the discussion by video and audio media, respectively. Following the presentations, the subjects as well as the control group were asked to complete the Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale.

Donaldson found that the live and videotaped presentations were effective in favorably influencing the attitudes of the subjects, with the live presentation effecting more favorable attitudes than the video program. The audio presentation did not significantly affect attitudes. The investigator suggested that a "live discussion/presentation by a minority group with obvious physical stigmata can be highly effective in the modification of attitudes toward that group."⁵² She said the significant effects of videotape presentations should also be considered.

Likewise, Croft et al.⁵³ found that a live presentation will elicit greater attitude change than will a videotape presentation, but that a videotape presentation will create more attitude change than will

⁵¹Joy Donaldson, "Channel Variations and Effects on Attitudes Toward Physically Disabled Individuals," AV Communication Review 24 (Summer 1976):135-144.

⁵²Ibid., p. 142.

⁵³Roger G. Croft, David V. Stimpson, Walter L. Ross, Robert M. Bray, and Vincent J. Breglio, "Comparison of Attitude Changes Elicited by Live and Videotape Classroom Presentations," AV Communication Review 17 (Fall 1969):315-321.

occur in a control group not exposed to the information. The investigators suggested that the tape medium was less effective than the live presentation because of "fewer information cues."⁵⁴ The live cues deficient in the television medium included color, image, size, voice quality, clear perception of facial expressions, and physical proximity.

O'Keefe⁵⁵ met with less success in his study of the relationship between attitude and behavior based on the effects of television anti-smoking commercials. He hypothesized that the commercials would have the most effect on smokers who already had a desire to give up smoking. The findings showed the commercials had an effect on a "bare majority"⁵⁶ of the smokers who wanted to quit: 50 percent of a student sample and 51 percent of the general population group. O'Keefe indicated that the commercials were not more successful because a majority of those surveyed reported that they did not want to quit smoking. He concluded that mass communications are limited in their ability to influence behavior and that a supplement, such as personal contact, is needed for mass media messages to have an effect.

Haefner⁵⁷ attempted to increase the effectiveness of public service advertisements (PSAs) through the use of prime time television. Instead of relying on station managers to air PSAs at their discretion,

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 318.

⁵⁵M. Timothy O'Keefe, "The Anti-Smoking Commercials: A Study of Television's Impact on Behavior," Public Opinion Quarterly 35 (Summer 1971):242-248.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 247.

⁵⁷James E. Haefner, "Can TV Advertising Influence Employers to Hire or Train Disadvantaged Persons?" Journalism Quarterly 53 (Summer 1976):211-214.

the investigator purchased time at the local affiliates of ABC, CBS, and NBC. The ads, which were aired 24 times a week over a six-week period, stressed the importance of employers training and hiring disadvantaged persons. A sample of employers was asked a series of questions both before and after the ad campaign. The results indicated an average 70.6 percent recall rate for all employers in the study. The average comprehension rate was 51 percent. Haefner concluded that the results of the campaign were significantly better than most past campaigns and attributed the results to the purchase of prime time television.

Morrison and Libow⁵⁸ demonstrated that newspaper publicity can raise the level of visibility of a community mental health center. The researchers administered the Visibility Survey Questionnaire concerning a local mental health center to a street sample just prior to the publication of an article about the center in the local newspaper. Another sample was questioned, using the same instrument, the day after the article appeared. The results of the two surveys showed a significant increase in the level of agency visibility. A similar survey taken six weeks after the appearance of the article indicated the visibility increase had remained relatively stable.

Relationship to the Present Study

Studies exploring media use and knowledge level have generally established that the more highly educated members of society have a higher level of knowledge about current issues than do those with less education. Further, it has been shown that the media can influence

⁵⁸James K. Morrison and Judith A. Libow, "The Effect of Newspaper Publicity on a Mental Health Center's Community Visibility," Community Mental Health Journal 13 (Spring 1977):58-62.

attitudes. A discussion of information campaigns has indicated that such campaigns to be successful must involve issues which are not highly controversial and which hold some relevance for the public. Personal contact has been cited as a useful supplement to media campaigns. Greenberg's conclusion that information gain is a prerequisite to attitude change is a critical finding for the present study.

In terms of specific media channels, it appears that newspapers can be effective conveyors of information. It has also been shown that television and videotape presentations are more successful in changing attitudes than is the audio medium. Live discussions/presentations may be the most effective means for changing attitudes.

The present study will consider how these findings can help the Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation develop a public information plan to make the general public and educators more willing to accept handicapped persons. This is particularly important in view of the maturing notion that handicapped persons have a rightful place in the mainstream of society. Educators have a special role to play in helping handicapped students be successfully integrated into regular classrooms.

Essential to this objective is assembling an accurate picture of existing public and teacher attitudes toward physically handicapped persons. Chapter III outlines the method and procedures by which knowledge of these attitudes was obtained.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURES

Knowledge of the attitudes of the general public and of educators toward physically handicapped persons was obtained in this study through two mail surveys. A common questionnaire was used with both groups.

As a data collection tool, mail questionnaires have a number of advantages, all of which were important in this study. Selltiz et al.¹ state that, compared with the personal interview, mail questionnaires are more easily administered to large groups of people and have an extra advantage of providing anonymity to respondents. They add that the standardized nature of questionnaires "ensures some uniformity from one measurement situation to the next."²

Linsky points out that the mail questionnaire is low in cost, can elicit replies from individuals who do not have time for a personal interview, and "avoids interviewer or respondent bias for topics that are potentially embarrassing in a personal interview situation."³

A mail questionnaire, then, seemed to be an appropriate data gathering technique for this study based on the large groups of people

¹Claire Selltiz, Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook, Research Methods in Social Relations (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1959), pp. 238-240.

²Ibid., p. 239.

³Arnold S. Linsky, "Stimulating Responses to Mailed Questionnaires: A Review," Public Opinion Quarterly 39 (Spring 1975):82.

whose attitudes were being sought, the need for some measure of standardization, and the need for a relatively inexpensive data collection tool. In addition, it was felt that the questionnaire topic for this study might cause discomfort to some subjects, particularly the educators, some of whom may have negative feelings about the new mainstreaming law.

The Questionnaire

The Attitude Toward Disabled Persons scale, Form 0 (ATDP-0), as devised by Yuker et al.,⁴ was adapted for this study. The ATDP-0 contains 20 items which are statements of difference between handicapped persons and those not handicapped. The intent of the scale is to measure attitudes toward handicapped individuals in general rather than attitudes toward people with specific handicaps. A high score on the scale indicates that the respondent does not perceive handicapped individuals as different from able-bodied persons. A low score indicates that the respondent does perceive physically handicapped individuals as different from able-bodied persons. Yuker points out that a negative connotation may be attached to those items where a respondent perceives a difference between handicapped and nonhandicapped individuals. He therefore suggests that "a low score not only reflects the fact that the respondent perceives disabled persons as different but also to some degree 'inferior' or 'disadvantaged.'"⁵

Split-half equivalence reliability was reported as .75 to .85.

⁴Harold E. Yuker, J. R. Block, and Janet H. Youngg, The Measurement of Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons (Albertson, N.Y.: Human Resources Center, 1970).

⁵Ibid., p. 31.

The validity of the ATDP-0 was assessed by the method of construct validity. Yuker further indicates that the scale "has been found to be relatively not fakeable."⁶ The ATDP-0 seemed to be appropriate for this study because of its briefness and its intent to measure attitudes toward physically handicapped persons in general.

Scoring

In the scale's original form (see Appendix A), respondents were to choose from among six categories in a Likert-type format--I agree very much, I agree pretty much, I agree a little, I disagree very much, I disagree pretty much, and I disagree a little. For this study, the response categories for each item in the questionnaire (see Appendix B) were reduced to four--strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, and disagree. This modification, also introduced by Felty, by Friesen, and by Dickie,⁷ was made to simplify the form for the respondents.

Items 2, 5, 6, 11, and 12 on the scale are "positive" statements; i.e., they imply that handicapped persons are no different from non-handicapped persons. Thus in scoring the ATDP-0, the responses to these five items were recoded in order to obtain comparable responses across all statements. As a result, there were 20 attitude items, each having four possible answers, with strongly disagree, or response "1," being

⁶Ibid., pp. 34, 97.

⁷John Ernest Felty, "Attitudes Toward Physical Disability in Costa Rica and Their Determinants: A Pilot Study" (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1965), p. 66; Eugene Wesley Friesen, "Nature and Determinants of Attitudes Toward Education and Toward Physically Disabled Persons in Colombia, Peru, and the United States" (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1966), p. 76; and Robert F. Dickie, "An Investigation of Differential Attitudes Toward the Physically Handicapped, Blind Persons, and Attitudes Toward Education and Their Determinants Among Various Occupational Groups in Kansas" (Ed.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1967), p. 61.

the most positive response. The range of scores was 20 through 80. The lower the respondent's score, the more favorable was his or her attitude; the higher the score, the less favorable the attitude.

Yuker notes that "no absolute interpretation of the raw score is possible since the degree of the attitude expressed by each item is not known as it would be with a Thurstone scale."⁸ He therefore suggests that each investigator using the scale develop norms for the groups he or she is working with. In this study, the scores of the general public group were compared with the scores of the educator group.

Statement Modifications

In a pretest of the questionnaire, items 5, 6, 10, and 15 were interpreted as ambiguous by the subjects. These items were thus altered slightly to clarify their intent. The changes, however, were made with a view to retaining the concepts of the original statements. For example, the original statement "There shouldn't be special schools for disabled children" was changed to "Physically handicapped children should be placed in regular classrooms whenever possible."

The investigator felt the respondents may have erroneously thought the original statement was referring to a possible closing of the Michigan School for the Blind in Lansing and the Michigan School for the Deaf in Flint. Therefore, the statement concerning mainstreaming was substituted. This was believed to be a reasonable substitution (1) because mainstreaming has become the law since the original ATDP-0 was devised, and (2) because the new statement retains the notion of a difference between handicapped and nonhandicapped individuals. The

⁸Yuker, p. 28.

three other statement changes were similarly made.

An additional change was the substitution of the word "handicapped" for "disabled" on all 20 items of the questionnaire. Since the ATDP-0 was constructed, the word "disabled" has come to be viewed as a negative term.⁹ Thus the use of the word "handicapped" simply updated the language used in the questionnaire.

Six items were added to the questionnaire seeking knowledge of the frequency with which respondents see and talk to physically handicapped people and the frequency with which they use newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. The media items were included because, as Mendelsohn notes, knowledge of a public's "mass media habits" adds to the potential success of a public information campaign.¹⁰

Three demographic questions inquired about education, age, and sex.

Procedure

General Public

The City of Lansing, Michigan, with a population of approximately 134,000, was selected as the community in which to survey attitudes of the general public toward physically handicapped persons. This selection was based on practicality and on the fact that the area contains a diverse population in terms of occupations. With state government offices, automobile manufacturing, and a nearby large university, it is believed that the city residents represent those occupational groups physically handicapped persons are most likely to

⁹Eric A. Gentile and Judy K. Taylor, "Images, Words & Identity," article from Michigan State University Handicapper Program, Fall 1976.

¹⁰Harold Mendelsohn, "Some Reasons Why Information Campaigns Can Succeed," Public Opinion Quarterly 37 (Spring 1973):52.

encounter, both as citizens and as employees.

The questionnaire was mailed on May 9, 1978, to 400 Lansing residents whose names were randomly drawn from the alphabetical section of the 1977 Lansing City Directory.¹¹ The information in this section of the directory was secured by door-to-door canvassing. Included are names and addresses of the business firms and individuals 18 years and older residing or employed within the canvass area. Care was taken to include in the random sample only those persons residing in Lansing.

The cover letter accompanying each questionnaire (see Appendix C) was directed specifically to the Lansing residents. The letters were typed and duplicated on plain white paper. Each was personally signed by the investigator and indicated that the survey was part of the investigator's work as a student at Michigan State University. A stamped, pre-addressed envelope was included with each mailing.

The Lansing residents were asked to return a completed questionnaire "as soon as possible." This was indicated instead of a return deadline because the literature suggests that while a deadline may increase early responses, it discourages responses after that date.¹² Early responses were not necessary in this study.

To encourage recipients to open the letters, the address on the outside envelopes was written in longhand. The return address was made

¹¹Two other investigations used city directories from which to draw probability samples: Rodolfo N. Salcedo, Hadley Read, James F. Evans, and Ana C. Kong, "A Successful Information Campaign on Pesticides," Journalism Quarterly 51 (Spring 1974):93; and Charles F. Cannell and James C. MacDonald, "The Impact of Health News on Attitudes and Behavior," Journalism Quarterly 33 (Summer 1956):315.

¹²James R. Henley, Jr., "Response Rate to Mail Questionnaires with a Return Deadline," Public Opinion Quarterly 40 (Fall 1976):375.

with a rubber stamp specially made for that purpose. Regular 13-cent stamps were affixed to each envelope.

Schoolteachers

Schoolteachers of the Lansing, Michigan, Public Schools were selected as the educator population. It was felt that their geographical proximity to the Lansing general public population would provide the most suitable conditions for a comparison of the attitudes of the two groups.

The questionnaire was mailed on May 3, 1978 to 200 of the 1,442 professional employees (excluding administrators) of the Lansing Public Schools. The 200 names were randomly drawn from a current list of these employees on file with the Michigan Department of Education. The names were drawn from among elementary and secondary teachers, adult education instructors, nursery school teachers, counselors, occupational therapists, media specialists, school nurses, psychologists, special education teachers, school social workers, librarians, and teachers of the homebound. Administrators were excluded from the survey because their direct contact with students is limited.

The cover letter accompanying each questionnaire (see Appendix D) was personally signed by the investigator. The letter, typed and duplicated on plain white paper, indicated that the survey was part of the investigator's master's thesis. As with the general public, a stamped, pre-addressed envelope was included with each mailing. The outside envelope also was prepared in the same manner.

Since the questionnaires were not coded, yellow forms were sent to the educators and white to the general public so the investigator

would know to which group each respondent belonged.

A minimum of 100 returned questionnaires was desired from each group. Half as many questionnaires were sent to the educators (200) as were sent to the general public (400) because the investigator believed the educators' interest in the survey would be higher, effecting a greater response.

The Executive Committee

To test the hypotheses of the study,

- H₁ Vocational rehabilitation decision-makers' beliefs regarding the general public's attitudes toward physically handicapped individuals differ from the actual attitudes of the general public, and
- H₂ Vocational rehabilitation decision-makers' beliefs regarding the attitudes of public schoolteachers toward physically handicapped individuals differ from the actual attitudes of the teachers,

the four members of the Bureau of Rehabilitation's Executive Committee on May 22, 1978, were asked to complete questionnaires.

The Executive Committee includes the Bureau's Director (who also is the Michigan Department of Education's Associate Superintendent for Rehabilitation), the Director of Field Services, the Director of Interagency Services, and the Supervisor of Management Services. These four men are considered to be the key decision-makers in the agency.

They were requested to complete the ATDP-0 questionnaire two times: first, as they believed the general public of Lansing would respond to the statements, and secondly, as they believed Lansing public schoolteachers would respond to the statements.

Inquiry of Other State Agencies

A sample of 12 state vocational rehabilitation agencies was contacted by mail to discover if any had sought knowledge of the attitudes of the general public and/or special publics toward physically handicapped individuals for their public information planning. It was the intention of the investigator to draw upon the experience of other state agencies in developing a public information program for the Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation.

The state agencies receiving letters were in Arkansas, California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin. These state agencies were selected by the Director of the Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation on the basis of their leadership in various areas of vocational rehabilitation.

The letter to each (see Appendix E) was sent on Bureau of Rehabilitation letterhead stationery and signed by the Director. It was felt this approach would elicit a greater response than would a letter signed by the investigator.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF STUDY

By June 19, 1978, 42 percent of the general public sample of 400 Lansing residents had returned usable questionnaires, for a total of 166 forms. The U. S. Post Office returned to the investigator 49 of the general public forms. Ten respondents returned questionnaires that were not usable because of incomplete answers.

The actual response rate of the general public sample, however, is considered to be 47 percent. According to Babbie,¹ a response rate should be computed after omitting the total number of questionnaires that were undeliverable. The omission of the 49 forms returned by the Post Office thus raised the response rate by five percentage points.

Of the 200 Lansing schoolteachers to whom questionnaires were sent, 116, or 58 percent, returned usable questionnaires. The U. S. Post Office returned one questionnaire to the investigator. Thirteen respondents returned forms that were unusable because of incomplete answers.

The response rates of both groups were considered by the investigator to be quite adequate for analysis and reporting since Selltiz et al. indicate that questionnaires mailed to a random sample of the

¹Earl R. Babbie, The Practice of Social Research (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1975), p. 265.

population usually elicit a 10 to 50 percent response.²

General Public and Educator Scores

The Likert-scale mean scores across the 20 items on the ATDP-0 questionnaire on attitudes toward the handicapped were added to find overall attitude scores for both the general public and educator sample respondents. As noted in Chapter III, on 15 of the 20 questionnaire items a "disagree" response indicates a favorable attitude toward the handicapped, while on items 2, 5, 6, 11, and 12, an "agree" response does. Therefore, the scores for those five items were reversed for coding purposes. After the reversal, all responses indicating favorable attitudes toward the handicapped were scored "1" (strongly favorable) or "2" (favorable); all responses indicating unfavorable attitudes toward the handicapped were scored "3" (unfavorable) or "4" (strongly unfavorable). This means, of course, that the lower the score, the more favorable the attitude toward handicapped persons and the higher the score, the more unfavorable the attitude.

In our sample, the general public's overall test mean score across the 20 items was 40.66, while the educators' overall test mean score was 37.34. The t test was used to test for a significant difference between these scores.³ The t test indicated the difference in these two overall scores was significant at the .001 level, supporting the conclusion that

²Claire Selltiz, Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook, Research Methods in Social Relations (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1959), p. 241.

³The t test was also used by Raymond A. Ehrle and Joseph A. Pauza in "A Pilot Study Using the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale," Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin 7 (March 1964):87-91, a report of a study of self-discharges in a rehabilitation center.

in the population of Lansing teachers hold more favorable attitudes toward physically handicapped persons than do members of the general public.

There is no statistical test that will tell us whether or not this conclusion is valid for other areas of Michigan, of course. This depends to a great extent on whether or not Lansing is representative of other areas of the state. The degree to which any of the findings in this study can be extended to other areas of Michigan will be discussed further in Chapter V.

Hypothesis Testing

To test the first hypothesis, "Vocational rehabilitation decision-makers' beliefs regarding the general public's attitudes toward physically handicapped individuals differ from the actual attitudes of the general public," an overall score for the four administrators' perceptions of general public attitudes had to be obtained. As with the general public and educator scores, the mean scores of the administrators across the 20 attitude items were added. For this hypothesis, of course, the administrators' perception of general public attitudes was the basis of the comparison.

As shown in Table 1, the overall score for the administrators with regard to the general public was 57.5, compared with the actual general public group score of 40.66. Table 1 illustrates that it was only on item 3 ("Physically handicapped people are usually easier to get along with than other people") that the general public's mean score (2.48) indicated a less favorable attitude than the administrators' perceived general public attitude (2.25). It appears, then, that the Executive

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF MEAN SCORES OF PUBLIC
AND PERCEIVED MEAN SCORES OF PUBLIC
ON YUKER ATDP-O TEST

Item*	Executive Committee (N=4)	Public (N=166)
1	3.25	1.86
2	2.50	1.67
3	2.25	2.48
4	2.75	2.07
5	2.75	1.90
6	2.50	1.81
7	2.50	1.63
8	2.75	2.06
9	2.75	2.33
10	3.50	2.35
11	3.00	2.26
12	3.00	2.38
13	3.50	2.04
14	3.25	2.03
15	2.75	1.93
16	3.00	2.23
17	2.75	2.11
18	3.00	2.09
19	3.00	2.25
20	<u>2.75</u>	<u>2.00</u>
Overall Test Score:	57.50	40.66

*See Appendix B for list of item statements.

Committee perceived the general public's attitudes toward physically handicapped people to be much less favorable than they were actually found to be. The first hypothesis was supported.

The second hypothesis was, "Vocational rehabilitation decision-makers' beliefs regarding the attitudes of public schoolteachers toward physically handicapped individuals differ from the actual attitudes of the teachers." To test this hypothesis, an overall score for the administrators' perception of educator attitudes had to be obtained. This was done by adding the mean scores of the administrators across the 20 attitude items. For this hypothesis, of course, the administrators' perception of educator attitudes was the basis of the comparison.

Table 2 shows that the overall score for the administrators with regard to the educators was 49.75, compared with the actual educator score of 37.34. The administrators indicated across all but one item that they believed the attitudes of the teachers would be less favorable than they were actually found to be. Item 10 ("Generally, physically handicapped people should not be expected to meet the same standards as nonhandicapped people") was the only item on which the educators' mean score (2.04) indicated a less favorable attitude than the administrators' perceived teacher attitude (2.0). Thus the second hypothesis was supported.

Since the four-member Executive Committee is the entire "population" of the Bureau's decision-makers, a statistical test as such was unnecessary to determine significant differences between the administrators' scores on the attitude items and the general public's and

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF MEAN SCORES OF EDUCATORS
AND PERCEIVED MEAN SCORES OF EDUCATORS
ON YUKER ATDP-O TEST

Item [*]	Executive Committee (N=4)	Educators (N=116)
1	2.50	1.59
2	2.25	1.48
3	2.50	2.15
4	2.50	1.96
5	2.25	1.84
6	2.50	1.91
7	2.25	1.52
8	2.25	1.90
9	2.75	2.17
10	2.00	2.04
11	2.75	2.19
12	2.75	2.35
13	2.50	1.96
14	2.50	1.63
15	2.25	1.85
16	3.00	1.94
17	2.25	1.89
18	2.50	1.94
19	2.75	2.06
20	<u>2.75</u>	<u>1.85</u>
Overall Test Score:	49.75	37.34

^{*}See Appendix B for list of item statements.

educators' scores. Therefore, what Meyer has referred to as an "eyeball comparison"⁴ of the scores was used as a basis for accepting the hypotheses.

General Public vs. Educator Attitudes
Toward the Handicapped

Attitude Items

Educators consistently indicated more favorable attitudes toward the handicapped than did the public in our Lansing sample. Only on item 5 ("Physically handicapped people have the same goals in life as anyone else") and, significantly, on item 6 ("Physically handicapped children should be placed in regular classrooms whenever possible") did the general public show a slightly more favorable attitude toward the handicapped.

On item 5, 91 percent of the general public and 88.8 percent of the educators agreed or strongly agreed. However, more educators strongly agreed--26.7 percent to 19.3 percent of the general public.

On item 6, the "mainstreaming" statement, the difference between general public and educators was small, 91.6 percent of the general public believing physically handicapped children should be placed in regular classrooms whenever possible and 88.8 percent of the educators supporting this concept. It is noteworthy, however, that fewer teachers were in strong agreement with mainstreaming. Only 20.7 percent of the teachers strongly agreed with the statement while 27.7 percent of the general public did.

Although teachers were consistently more favorable in their

⁴Philip Meyer, Precision Journalism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p. 93.

attitudes toward the physically handicapped on all the other 18 items, the scores on six items indicated the existence of misconceptions concerning handicapped individuals among substantial numbers of both the general public and teacher samples. These six items were 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 19. Except for item 10 ("Generally, physically handicapped people should not be expected to meet the same standards as nonhandicapped people"), the misconceptions seem to concern the emotional and social disposition of handicapped people.

On item 3 ("Physically handicapped people are usually easier to get along with than other people"), 45.8 percent of the general public and nearly 20 percent of the educators either agreed or strongly agreed. Yet a substantial number in both groups believe there is a difference in disposition among handicapped people, with more severely handicapped more difficult to get along with. On item 12 ("Severely physically handicapped people are no harder to get along with than those with minor handicaps"), nearly 40 percent of the public and 35 percent of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed.

On item 9 ("Most physically handicapped people worry a great deal"), 30.7 percent of the general public and 24 percent of the educators agreed or strongly agreed.

On item 10 ("Generally, physically handicapped people should not be expected to meet the same standards as nonhandicapped people"), more than a third (37.9 percent) of the general public agreed or strongly agreed while 18 percent of the educators did.

On item 11 ("Physically handicapped people are as happy as nonhandicapped ones"), 29 percent of the general public and 26 percent of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed.

On item 19 ("You have to be careful of what you say when you are with physically handicapped people"), the findings also show that substantial numbers of people believe you must watch your words when you are talking with the handicapped. Nearly 30 percent of the general public and 17.3 percent of the educators agreed or strongly agreed with item 19.

On these six items, therefore, the range of unfavorable attitudes toward the physically handicapped among the general public is from 29 percent (item 11) to 46 percent (item 3) and among educators is from 17 percent (item 19) to 35 percent (item 12). These unfavorable attitudes appear to be rooted in misconceptions concerning the social and emotional health of handicapped individuals, misconceptions that suggest that physically handicapped people differ from physically normal individuals in other ways as well.

Although educators and the general public shared to some degree some misconceptions concerning the physically handicapped, they differed on other items in the attitude test. There were four items (14, 16, 17, and 18) on which sizeable percentages, from about a fifth to a fourth, of the general public but not the educators indicated unfavorable attitudes.

On item 14 ("You should not expect too much from physically handicapped people"), 18.7 percent of the public agreed or strongly agreed, considered an unfavorable attitude, while less than 3 percent of the educators agreed.

On item 16 ("Physically handicapped people are more easily upset than nonhandicapped people"), 27.7 percent of the public agreed or strongly agreed, compared to only 8.6 percent of the educators.

On item 17 ("Physically handicapped persons cannot have a normal

social life"), one-fifth (20.5 percent) of the public indicated an unfavorable attitude by agreeing or strongly agreeing. Six percent of the educators agreed in our survey sample.

On item 18 ("Most physically handicapped people feel that they are not as good as other people"), 17.5 percent of the public agreed, while just under 8 percent of the educators did.

Again, one might note that three of these four items concerned the social and emotional condition of the handicapped and not their physical condition.

On two other items, about one-fifth of the general public showed unfavorable responses while smaller, but still substantial, numbers of educators did. On item 8 ("It is up to the government to take care of physically handicapped persons"), 19.3 percent of the public and 12.9 percent of the educators agreed or strongly agreed. On item 13 ("It is almost impossible for a physically handicapped person to lead a normal life"), 16.9 percent of the public and 13 percent of the educators agreed or strongly agreed.

More than nine out of ten members of both samples held favorable attitudes toward the handicapped on five items (1, 2, 7, 15, and 20). The nature of the items suggest that both the general public and educators strongly support the view that physically handicapped individuals can live and work as intelligent and sociable members of the community.

On item 1 ("Parents of physically handicapped children should be less strict than other parents"), 94 percent of the public and 97.4 percent of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed.

On item 2 ("Physically handicapped persons are just as intelligent

as nonhandicapped ones"), 94.6 percent of the public and 96.6 percent of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed.

On item 7 ("It would be best for physically handicapped persons to live and work in special communities"), 94.6 percent of the public and 98.3 percent of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed.

On item 15 ("Physically handicapped people like to keep to themselves much of the time"), 91 percent of the public and 92.3 percent of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed.

On item 20 ("Physically handicapped people are often grouchy"), 87.9 percent of the public and 94.9 percent of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed. No respondent in either group strongly agreed with this statement.

An important point for public information planners and to be discussed more fully in Chapter V is the fact that neither the public nor the educators showed strongly unfavorable attitudes toward the handicapped. This was true even in those areas where responses suggest that in both groups there are substantial numbers of people with misconceptions about the social and emotional dispositions of physically handicapped individuals (items 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 19). This is also true for item 8, where substantial proportions of the public and educator samples believed that it is "up to the government to take care of physically handicapped persons," considered an unfavorable attitude. Table 3 illustrates that there were few strongly unfavorable responses on any of these items. This is also true for items 14, 16, 17, and 18, where from a fifth to a fourth of the public held unfavorable attitudes.

Also important to the development of a public information program is the fact that significant differences exist between the two groups'

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF STRONGLY UNFAVORABLE
AND UNFAVORABLE RESPONSES,
PUBLIC AND EDUCATORS

Item [*]	Response	Public (N=166)	Educators (N=116)
3	Agree Strongly Agree	41.6% 4.2	19.0% .9
8	Agree Strongly Agree	13.9% 5.4	12.9% 0.0
9	Agree Strongly Agree	28.9% 1.8	24.1% 0.0
10	Agree Strongly Agree	36.7% 1.2	16.4% 1.7
11	Disagree Strongly Disagree	28.3% .6	25.0% .9
12	Disagree Strongly Disagree	37.3% 2.4	32.8% 2.6
13	Agree Strongly Agree	15.7% 1.2	12.1% .9
19	Agree Strongly Agree	27.1% 2.4	16.4% .9
14	Agree Strongly Agree	18.1% .6	N.A. ^{**}
16	Agree Strongly Agree	26.5% 1.2	N.A.
17	Agree Strongly Agree	18.7% 1.8	N.A.
18	Agree Strongly Agree	17.5% 0.0	N.A.

^{*}See Appendix B for list of item statements.

^{**}Items 14, 16, 17, and 18 are not applicable (N.A.) to the educators in this table since most educators in the sample indicated favorable attitudes on these items.

mean scores on 12 of the 20 attitude items. Table 4 shows the results of the t test for statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. Four of these questionnaire statements--3, 9, 10, and 19--were identified earlier as problem areas for both the general public and the educators. It thus appears that even though both groups have misconceptions concerning these four statements, there definitely is a greater incidence of these misconceptions among the general public.

Contact Items

About three in four of our sample, both the general public and the educators, talk to physically handicapped persons at least occasionally, and even more in each group report they see physically handicapped individuals at least occasionally. That still leaves, however, a substantial number who say they see or talk to a handicapped person "seldom." On item 21 ("How frequently do you see physically handicapped people?"), one in nine of the public (10.8 percent) and one in six of the teachers (16.4 percent) said "seldom." The same response to item 22 ("How frequently do you talk to physically handicapped people?") came from 21.6 percent of the teachers and 24.7 percent of the public.

A t test applied to the means of the public and educator samples on items 21 and 22 showed there was no significant difference, suggesting that in the Lansing population, at least, public and teachers see and talk to physically handicapped people equally often. About 40 percent of the public and teachers say they see physically handicapped individuals "often," while 30 percent in each group report talking to handicapped people "often."

TABLE 4

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN
ATTITUDE ITEM MEAN SCORES,
PUBLIC AND EDUCATORS

Item *	Group	Mean	T Value	Significance Level
1	Public Educators	1.86 1.59	4.06	.001
2	Public Educators	1.67 1.48	2.43	.05
3	Public Educators	2.48 2.15	4.35	.001
4	Public Educators	2.07 1.96	1.97	.05
9	Public Educators	2.33 2.17	2.17	.05
10	Public Educators	2.35 2.04	4.13	.001
14	Public Educators	2.03 1.63	5.65	.001
16	Public Educators	2.23 1.94	4.32	.001
17	Public Educators	2.11 1.89	3.30	.001
18	Public Educators	2.09 1.94	2.56	.05
19	Public Educators	2.25 2.06	2.69	.01
20	Public Educators	2.0 1.85	2.76	.01

* See Appendix B for list of item statements.

Media Items

There is a good deal of media exposure in our public and educator samples. Indications are, however, that while newspaper readership is about the same, the public watches more television. Teachers, on the other hand, spend much more time reading magazines and are somewhat heavier radio listeners. The differences in magazine, radio, and television exposure were statistically significant.

As shown in Table 5, about 80 percent of the public and of the teachers read a newspaper daily or almost every day. Both groups are clearly reachable through newspapers. About the same percentage of the teachers read magazines on a fairly regular basis ("lots of magazines" or "some"), but a significantly smaller percentage of the general public (57.3 percent) said they read "lots" of magazines or "some" magazines. One-third of the teachers indicated they read "lots of magazines," twice the percentage (15.1 percent) of heavy magazine readers among the general public sample.

Although about half of each sample group reported listening to radio about every day, more teachers (25.9 percent) than general public respondents (19.9 percent) said they listened "several hours a day." Again, the difference in radio listening between the two groups was statistically significant.

Television appears to be the more popular broadcast medium for the public. Nearly one-third in the public sample reported watching television "several hours a day" compared with 10.3 percent of the educators (see Table 6). In the other television viewing categories, approximately the same percentage of the two groups were represented, but overall there was a statistically significant difference in

TABLE 5

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE USE,
PUBLIC AND EDUCATORS

Question 23: "Do you read a newspaper"

Response	Public	Educators
1-Every Day	62.0%	59.5%
2-Almost Every Day	19.3	19.8
3-Several Times A Week	9.6	10.3
4-About Once A Week	6.6	7.8
5-Rarely Or Never	2.4	2.6
Mean:	1.68	1.74
T Value:	-.47	
Level of Significance:	(Not Significant)	

Question 24: "Would you say that you read"

Response	Public	Educators
1-Lots Of Magazines	15.1%	33.6%
2-Some Magazines	42.2	44.8
3-A Few Magazines	26.5	16.4
4-Only An Occasional Magazine	15.1	5.2
Mean:	2.5	1.93
T Value:	4.49	
Level of Significance:	P < .001	

TABLE 6

RADIO AND TELEVISION USE,
PUBLIC AND EDUCATORS

Question 25: "Do you listen to the radio"

Response	Public	Educators
1-Several Hours A Day	19.9%	25.9%
2-About Every Day	50.0	50.0
3-Several Times A Week	6.0	12.1
4-Occasionally	19.3	10.3
5-Rarely Or Never	4.8	1.7
Mean:	2.39	2.12
T Value:	2.07	
Level of Significance:	P < .05	

Question 26: "Would you say that you watch television"

Response	Public	Educators
1-Several Hours A Day	31.3%	10.3%
2-About Every Day	41.0	45.7
3-Several Times A Week	12.0	14.7
4-Occasionally	13.9	19.0
5-Rarely Or Never	1.8	10.3
Mean:	2.14	2.73
T Value:	-4.39	
Level of Significance:	P < .001	

television exposure between the two groups.

Education and Age

The teachers in our sample, as might be expected, have considerably more formal education than the members of our general public sample. Still, the education level in both groups is relatively high. The typical respondent in the general public sample has some post high school schooling, while the typical educator in our sample has some postgraduate university training.

There also was a statistically significant ($P < .01$) age difference between our two samples. The mean age of the educators was in the 21 to 39 years response category, while the mean age of our general public sample fell in the 40 to 59 years category.

Relationship Between Contact/Media/ Demographic Variables and Attitude Items

General Public

Analysis of the sample data showed that attitudes are, in some cases at least, significantly related to other variables. Exposure to handicapped persons (variable 21), newspaper readership (variable 23), and age (variable 28) showed definite correlation with some of the attitude items in the sample of the Lansing public. As shown in Table 7, the strength of these relationships varies between .20 and .28. Guilford says that while a correlation that falls between .20 and .40 is low, a definite relationship exists nonetheless.⁵ The significance of these relationships between the demographic-media variables and the attitude items was tested using Kendall's tau (B). This nonparametric

⁵J. P. Guilford, Fundamental Statistics in Psychology and Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1956), p. 145.

TABLE 7

RELATIONSHIPS OF ATTITUDE RESPONSES
AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES, PUBLIC

Contact/Media/ Demographic Variables/ Attitude Items*	Kendall's Tau (B)	Significance Level
21/2	.25	.001
21/7	.22	.01
21/14	.22	.001
21/17	.22	.01
22/7	.28	.001
22/13	.21	.01
22/14	.25	.001
23/18	.20	.01
26/4	.21	.01
26/18	.25	.001
28/1	.22	.01
28/14	.23	.001

*See Appendix B for list of item statements.

statistic, suitable for ranked data,⁶ was also used by Kent and Rush in their study of media use and public affairs knowledge of older persons.⁷

Frequent exposure to physically handicapped persons (variable 21) has a low correlation with the belief that handicapped persons are just as intelligent as nonhandicapped ones (item 2). Similarly, the more often the general public sees physically handicapped persons, the less they believe that handicapped persons should live and work in special communities (item 7).

A small but definite relationship also was found between the general public's frequent exposure to physically handicapped persons and their disagreement with the notion that one should not expect too much from them (item 14). Likewise, the more often nonhandicapped members of the general public see those with physical handicaps, the more they tend to believe that handicapped people can have a normal social life (item 17).

How often the general public talks to physically handicapped people (variable 22) is related to three of the attitude items. The more often members of the general public talk to physically handicapped people, the more they disagree with the notions that such persons should live and work in special communities (item 7), that physically handicapped people cannot have a normal life (item 13), and that one should not expect too much from them (item 14).

A low correlation was found between the frequent use of newspapers

⁶Schuyler W. Huck, William H. Cormier, and William G. Bounds, Jr., Reading Statistics and Research (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), p. 197.

⁷K. E. Kent and Ramona R. Rush, "How Communication Behavior of Older Persons Affects Their Public Affairs Knowledge," Journalism Quarterly 53 (Spring 1976):42.

(variable 23) and disagreement with the notion that physically handicapped people feel that they are not as good as other people (item 18). A relationship also exists between frequent viewing of television (variable 26) and disagreement with item 18 as well as with the similar statement that physically handicapped people feel sorry for themselves (item 4).

Age (variable 28) has a low correlation with two attitude items. Members of the general public in the 21 to 39 age bracket were more likely to disagree with the idea that parents of physically handicapped children should be less strict (item 1) than were persons in the 40 to 59 age group. Respondents over 60 years of age were even less likely to disagree than were persons in the second age group. The same age pattern exists regarding the notion that one should not expect too much from physically handicapped people (item 14). Younger individuals were more likely to disagree.

Dichotomizing the Contact/Media/ Demographic Variables

General Public

Responses to variables 21 through 29 did not divide evenly among all possible response categories. For example, variable 21 ("How frequently do you see physically handicapped people?") responses were as follows:

Public (N=166)		Teachers (N=116)
41.0%	Often	37.9%
48.2	Occasionally	45.7
10.8	Seldom	16.4
0.0	Never	0.0

It was clear from the results that the two major groups among both the public and the teachers were those who see physically handicapped

people "often" and those who see them less often. Therefore, we recoded our response categories to put all responses in one of two categories, "often" and "less than often." This failed to yield significant differences between the two groups ("often" vs. "less than often"), so we recoded the responses into two new response categories, "often or occasionally" and "seldom." This dichotomy did show some significant relationships between how members of the public in our Lansing sample responded on variable 21 and how they responded on several attitude items.

The same process of dichotomization was followed for the other variables (21 through 29). Table 8 provides a summary of the t test for each significant relationship found between one of the dichotomized variables (21 through 29) and the attitude items for the sample of the Lansing public.

On variable 21, those with higher exposure to physically handicapped persons scored significantly more favorably than those with lower exposure on attitude items 1, 7, 14, and 17--the same items for which small relationships were found in the correlational analyses (Table 7). Those with a higher exposure also scored significantly more favorably on items 13 and 16, meaning they disagree with the notions that physically handicapped people cannot lead a normal life and that they are more easily upset than nonhandicapped people.

A similar grouping of respondents on variable 22--how frequently one talks to physically handicapped people--strongly supports the correlational analyses findings. The t test shows a significant difference between the overall attitude score of the respondents who talk often or occasionally to handicapped people and the overall score

TABLE 8

RELATIONSHIPS OF DICHOTOMIZED DEMOGRAPHIC
VARIABLES AND ATTITUDE RESPONSES, PUBLIC

Demographic Variable/ Attitude Item*	T Value	Significance Level
21/1	-2.14	.05
21/7	-2.31	.05
21/13	-3.18	.01
21/14	-3.15	.01
21/16	-2.01	.05
21/17	-2.97	.01
22/Total 1-20	-2.11	.05
23/18	-2.84	.01
26/13	-2.17	.05
26/18	-3.56	.001
26/19	-2.09	.05
27/10	3.06	.01
27/14	2.15	.05
27/16	2.54	.05
29/10	-2.17	.05
29/17	2.37	.05

*See Appendix B for list of item statements.

of those who talk to them less frequently. Thus it may be concluded that members of the general public who talk often or occasionally to physically handicapped people hold significantly more favorable attitudes toward persons with physical handicaps than do people who seldom or never speak to them.

In terms of media use, it appears that persons who read a newspaper (variable 23) every day or almost every day are more likely than those who read a newspaper less often to dismiss the notion that physically handicapped people feel that they are not as good as other people (item 18). This finding coincides with the relationship found earlier (Table 7) between frequent use of newspapers and disagreement with the same statement.

Persons who watch television (variable 26) either several hours a day or about every day hold more favorable attitudes than those who view TV less often concerning three different attitude items. A significant difference exists between the mean scores for these two groups on item 13 ("It is almost impossible for a physically handicapped person to live a normal life"); on item 18 ("Most physically handicapped people feel that they are not as good as other people"); and on item 19 ("You have to be careful of what you say when you are with physically handicapped people"). Individuals with higher television exposure were more likely to disagree with these items.

When members of the general public are grouped into two education levels (variable 27)--those who have a high school education or less and those who have studied beyond the high school level--significant attitude differences also appear. Members of the general public with some post high school education scored significantly more favorably on

items 10, 14, and 16. In other words, they were more likely to disagree that physically handicapped people should not be expected to meet the same standards as nonhandicapped people; that one should not expect too much from them; and that they are more easily upset than nonhandicapped people.

While no significant difference was found to exist between the overall attitude scores of males and females in the general public sample (variable 29), the females did score significantly more favorably on items 10 and 17. The females were more likely to believe that handicapped persons should be expected to meet the same standards as nonhandicapped people and that they can have a normal life.

Relationship Between Contact/Media/ Demographic Variables and Attitude Items

Educators

A small but definite relationship appears to exist between three of the demographic variables and the educators' responses to a number of the attitude items on the questionnaire. As with the cross tabulations for the general public, Kendall's tau (B) was used to test for significance of relationships. Table 9 indicates that these relationships vary between .20 and .27.

Only one media variable--television viewing (variable 26)--was related to the notion that physically handicapped people feel sorry for themselves (item 4). Educators with more exposure to television were more likely to disagree with this view.

The age variable (28) shows a small relationship with the educators' responses to three of the attitude items. Teachers in the 21 to 39 age group were more likely than those in the 40 to 59 age group to disagree

TABLE 9

RELATIONSHIPS OF ATTITUDE RESPONSES
AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES, EDUCATORS

Contact/Media/ Demographic Variables/ Attitude Items*	Kendall's Tau (B)	Significance Level
26/4	.27	.01
28/10	.26	.01
28/13	.21	.01
28/18	.25	.01
29/5	.25	.01
29/8	.21	.05
29/13	.26	.01
29/16	.20	.05
29/18	.21	.05

*See Appendix B for list of item statements.

with the statements that physically handicapped people should not be expected to meet the same standards as nonhandicapped people (item 10); that it is almost impossible for them to lead a normal life (item 13); and that they feel that they are not as good as other people (item 18).

Sex (variable 29) has a low correlation with five of the attitude items. More female teachers than male teachers agreed that physically handicapped people have the same goals in life as anyone else (item 5). In addition, more females than males disagreed with the following items: "It is up to the government to take care of physically handicapped persons (item 8), "It is almost impossible for a physically handicapped person to lead a normal life" (item 13), "Physically handicapped people are more easily upset than nonhandicapped people" (item 16), and "Most physically handicapped people feel that they are not as good as other people" (item 18).

Dichotomizing the Contact/Media/ Demographic Variables

Educators

T tests revealed some definite relationships between educator responses on attitude items and their responses on the contact, media, and demographic variables. As with the general public, for these analyses the responses on each variable were recoded into just two categories with the categories being tested in various combinations to see if a significant relationship could be found. Table 10 provides a summary of the t test results for each of these significant relationships.

Teachers who report seeing physically handicapped people often or occasionally (variable 21) scored significantly more favorably on

TABLE 10

RELATIONSHIPS OF DICHOTOMIZED DEMOGRAPHIC
VARIABLES AND ATTITUDE RESPONSES, EDUCATORS

Demographic Variable/ Attitude Item	T Value	Significance Level
21/4	-2.01	.05
21/5	-3.40	.001
21/16	-2.23	.05
22/5	-2.63	.01
24/7	-2.20	.05
24/18	-2.24	.05
29/Total 1-20	2.34	.05

* See Appendix B for list of item statements.

attitude items 4, 5, and 16 than those who see handicapped people seldom or never. Therefore, educators with more frequent exposure to physically handicapped individuals are more likely to believe that physically handicapped people do not feel sorry for themselves, that they have the same goals in life as anyone else, and that they are not more easily upset than nonhandicapped people. Similarly, teachers who talk to physically handicapped people (variable 22) often or occasionally are more likely than those who talk seldom or never to physically handicapped persons to believe that such persons have the same goals in life as others (item 5).

Frequent use of magazines shows a significant relationship with two attitude items. Teachers who reported that they read lots of or some magazines (variable 24) scored more favorably on items 7 and 18 than did low users of magazines. The frequent magazine readers are more likely to disagree with the idea that physically handicapped persons should live and work in special communities and with the notion that the physically handicapped feel that they are not as good as other people.

The correlations reported earlier between sex (variable 29) and attitude item responses of the teachers parallel a significant difference on the t test between the overall attitude scores of the male and female teachers. Thus the female teachers clearly hold more favorable attitudes toward physically handicapped persons than do the male teachers.

Summary

The survey results in this study have shown that the 116 teachers in our Lansing schoolteacher sample hold more favorable attitudes toward physically handicapped persons than do the 166 members of our general

public sample. We have also found support for both hypotheses. The Executive Committee of the Bureau of Rehabilitation perceived public and teacher attitudes to be much worse than they were found to be.

Substantial numbers of both survey groups, however, indicated they have misconceptions concerning the emotional and social health of physically handicapped persons. Generally, the public sample consistently reported unfavorable responses more often than did the teachers, although neither group exhibited strongly unfavorable attitudes toward the handicapped.

The public and teachers appear to see and talk to handicapped persons equally as often. And in terms of media use, both groups are heavy readers of newspapers. Significant differences were found, however, in the groups' use of magazines, radio, and television.

Both the general public and teachers were found to have relatively high education levels, with the teachers having about four more years of formal education. The teachers also were a younger group than the general public sample.

Analyses of the sample data indicated that these variables were in some cases significantly related to attitude items. Most notable were the findings that people who talk to physically handicapped persons frequently have more favorable attitudes and that female teachers hold significantly more favorable attitudes than male teachers.

Chapter V discusses the implications of these findings for public information planning.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was undertaken to determine if the key decision-makers in the Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation have an accurate picture of general public and educator attitudes toward physically handicapped persons. The survey data indicated they do not. The Bureau's Executive Committee indicated they believe the attitudes of both groups to be less favorable than they were actually found to be, at least in Lansing and probably throughout Michigan.

The attitude surveys thus demonstrated their importance in the public information process--that of providing feedback to an institution's decision-makers from which to plan an effective public information program. The survey results actually performed two roles in this study. They established the attitude level of the two groups, and they aided in pinpointing specific problem areas, specific audiences, and specific media.

Other state vocational rehabilitation agencies apparently are not examining the attitudes of their publics as a first step in the public information process. Of the 12 agencies contacted in other states, ten responded, indicating they had not conducted surveys of any group other than client groups. Only two of the ten agencies had developed a public information plan, and these were not research-based. Thus the public

information plan that develops from this study can serve as a model for other vocational rehabilitation agencies. This chapter provides direction for devising such a program model.

Discussion

A portrait of both the general public and educator respondents can be drawn from the attitude and demographic information provided by the surveys. These portraits are important as bases from which to design a public information program to raise the level of knowledge concerning physically handicapped persons and to foster positive attitudes toward them.

The importance in public relations of knowing not only a group's attitudes but also its mass media habits and personal characteristics is pointed out by Cutlip and Center:

It is not easy to attract the public's attention or to hold its interest The more carefully one defines various publics, the more ways of reaching and influencing them one will discover.¹

Grunig adds that all members of a public are not alike. "If one assumes that a public is a group of people who behave similarly, then it should be clear," he says, "that the social categories used by public relations people are gross categories which may disguise many different publics" ²

The information provided by the surveys in this study, then, enables the Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation to pinpoint those segments of the general public and educator groups that have misconceptions

¹Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), p. 201.

²James E. Grunig, "Defining Publics in Public Relations: The Case of a Suburban Hospital," Journalism Quarterly 55 (Spring 1978):109.

concerning the physically handicapped. This knowledge, in turn, will allow the Bureau to "target specific messages to specific audiences to achieve specific results."³

Portrait of the General Public

Attitudes

The general public survey results have shown that the attitudes of the public are more favorable than the Bureau's Executive Committee presumed they would be. Nevertheless, sizeable percentages of the general public have misconceptions and/or negative attitudes concerning 12 of the 20 attitude areas in the questionnaire.

Half of the respondents, for example, believe physically handicapped people are usually easier to get along with than other people. While this response does not imply a negative attitude, it does suggest that the respondents feel physically handicapped people are "different" from nonhandicapped people. A negative attitude was expressed, however, by 40 percent of the respondents concerning the disposition of severely handicapped persons. They disagreed or strongly disagreed that the severely handicapped are no harder to get along with than those with minor handicaps.

More than one-fourth of the respondents believe that physically handicapped people are more easily upset than others. Likewise, nearly 30 percent feel that they have to be careful of what they say when they are with handicapped people.

Negative attitudes also exist concerning the personal feelings of physically handicapped people. Nearly one-third of the respondents

³Cutlip and Center, p. 251.

believe physically handicapped people worry a great deal. Almost as many respondents believe physically handicapped people are not as happy as other people. There is also a belief by one in five of the respondents that the physically handicapped feel that they are not as good as other people.

A number of general public respondents perceive physically handicapped persons to be different in terms of their total life situation. About as many believe that it is impossible for physically handicapped people to have a normal social life as believe they cannot have a normal life in general. Nearly 40 percent feel that physically handicapped people should not be expected to meet the same standards as non-handicapped persons. Similarly, nearly 20 percent believe you should not expect too much from them, and an equal number feel it is the government's responsibility to take care of physically handicapped people.

While these misconceptions and/or unfavorable attitudes do exist in varying degrees among the general public, few people expressed strong negative attitudes. In addition, the general public, for the most part, seems to be well informed or feel favorably in the following areas: Most believe parents of physically handicapped children should be just as strict as other parents. They also favor placing physically handicapped children in the same classroom as able-bodied children whenever possible. And just as they believe children should be integrated, they also feel physically handicapped adults should be part of the mainstream of society. Ninety-five percent of the respondents disapproved of their living and working in special communities; 44 percent strongly disapproved.

Most of the general public respondents also feel that physically handicapped people have the same goals in life as anyone else and that

they are just as intelligent. They do not believe that physically handicapped people feel sorry for themselves, that they like to keep to themselves, or that they are often grouchy.

Contact/Media/Demographic Variables

In terms of general public contact with physically handicapped persons, the survey results show that about nine out of ten people see them often or occasionally. Three-quarters of the general public talk to physically handicapped people often or occasionally.

The public appears to be heavy readers of newspapers. About four of five in the sample reported that they read a newspaper every day or almost every day. Another 10 percent read a newspaper several times a week. They do not read magazines so often. Only 15 percent said they read lots of magazines, although 42 percent said they do read some magazines.

Half of the general public respondents reported that they listen to the radio about every day. Another 20 percent indicated they listen several hours each day. Television viewing is heavier. Four out of ten said they watch television about every day; an additional three in ten said they watch television several hours a day.

About 40 percent of the respondents are high school graduates, with an additional 27 percent having studied beyond the high school level. Another 28 percent have one or more college degrees. In terms of age, 43 percent are between 21 and 39, while 39 percent are between 40 and 59. Another 16 percent are 60 years of age or older.

Relationships Between Attitudes and Other Variables

The results of the correlational analyses and the analyses using dichotomized variables have indicated a significant relationship between

talking to physically handicapped people and a more favorable attitude toward them. In addition, both the Kendall's tau test and the t test revealed that members of the general public who frequently see physically handicapped people showed significantly more favorable attitudes on six of the 20 attitude items in the questionnaire than did those who see handicapped people seldom or never.

Both tests also showed a significant relationship between heavy newspaper reading and the favorable belief that physically handicapped people feel that they are as good as other people. In addition, both tests showed a relationship between heavy television viewing and a favorable attitude on four of the attitude items.

That age has a relationship with general public attitudes was shown by Kendall's tau. On two attitude items, young adults expressed significantly more favorable attitudes than did the middle-age respondents, while the middle-age respondents expressed significantly more favorable attitudes than did those 60 or older.

Education also appears to be a correlate of positive attitudes. The t test indicated that members of the general public who had studied beyond the high school level expressed significantly more favorable attitudes than did those with a high school education or less. Females were shown by a t test to have significantly more favorable attitudes than males on two of the questionnaire items.

Portrait of the Educators

Attitudes

The attitudes of schoolteachers in Lansing, Michigan, are more favorable than the Executive Committee presumed they would be. The teachers' attitudes are also significantly more favorable than the

attitudes of the general public.

However, enough educators did indicate a lack of information and/or negative attitudes concerning a number of items to consider these to be problem areas. For example, one-fifth of the educators said they believe physically handicapped people are usually easier to get along with than other people, implying the handicapped are "different" from others in non-physical ways. And like a segment of the general public, this feeling was reversed for teachers concerning severely physically handicapped people. More than a third of the teachers disagreed with the statement that the severely handicapped are no harder to get along with than those with minor handicaps.

In terms of personal feelings of physically handicapped persons, nearly one-quarter of the teachers believe they worry a great deal, and slightly more believe they are not as happy as nonhandicapped people. In addition, one in six teachers believe they have to be careful of what they say when they are with physically handicapped people.

Some teachers believe handicapped people are different from able-bodied people in their day-to-day living patterns. Thirteen percent of the teachers believe it is impossible for a physically handicapped person to lead a normal life. Likewise, 13 percent think it is up to the government to take care of them. And 18 percent think physically handicapped people should not be expected to meet the same standards as nonhandicapped people.

Few of the teachers who expressed negative attitudes, however, feel strongly about the issues. Moreover, most of the teachers indicated that they are well informed and/or feel favorable about physically

handicapped persons in the following areas: They believe parents of physically handicapped children should be as strict as other parents, and, very critically, they believe physically handicapped children should be placed in regular classrooms whenever possible. An important link with their positive attitude toward mainstreaming is their belief that physically handicapped persons are just as intelligent as non-handicapped ones. They also recognize that physically handicapped people have the same goals in life as anyone else.

Most of the teachers do not believe that physically handicapped people feel sorry for themselves, that they like to keep to themselves much of the time, that they are often grouchy, that they feel that they are not as good as other people, or that they are more easily upset than other people. They also do not believe that physically handicapped people cannot have a normal social life or that you should not expect too much from them. The educators are very much opposed to the notion that physically handicapped people should live and work in special communities.

Contact/Media/Demographic Variables

Fully 97 percent of the teachers reported that they see physically handicapped people often or occasionally. About two-thirds said they talk to them often or occasionally.

In terms of mass media use, eight in ten teachers read a newspaper every day or almost every day, while another 10 percent read a paper several times a week. One-third of the teachers said they read lots of magazines, with an additional 45 percent saying they read some magazines.

Three-quarters of the teachers listen to the radio every day--with one-quarter of these listening for several hours a day. Just over half

of the teachers watch television every day. Nearly 30 percent said they watch television every day. Nearly 30 percent said they watch television occasionally, rarely, or never.

All of the teachers, of course, are college educated. Seventy-two percent have advanced degrees. More than half of the teachers are between 21 and 39 years of age. About 40 percent are between 40 and 59, and only 4 percent are 60 or older.

Relationships Between Attitudes and Other Variables

The results of the correlational analyses and the analyses using dichotomized demographic variables have indicated that female teachers have significantly more favorable attitudes toward physically handicapped persons than do male teachers.

In addition, t tests have shown that correlations do exist between teachers' seeing and talking to physically handicapped persons and their attitudes toward them. Teachers who see handicapped people frequently expressed significantly more favorable attitudes on three attitude items than did teachers who see handicapped people seldom or never. Similarly, teachers who talk frequently to physically handicapped people expressed a significantly more favorable attitude on one attitude item.

T tests also showed that teachers who are heavy consumers of magazines expressed significantly more favorable attitudes on two attitude items. A test using Kendall's tau indicated that the heavier television viewers expressed a significantly more favorable attitude on one attitude item than did light viewers.

An age correlation was also shown by Kendall's tau. On three different attitude items, the younger teachers (21 to 39) expressed significantly more favorable attitudes than did the older teachers

(40 and older).

Comparison of Portraits with Literature Findings

A number of studies in the literature lend support to the significant findings of the present study. Higgs, too, found that persons with high degrees of contact with physically handicapped persons have more favorable attitudes toward them.⁴ Tringo, Siller, Conine, and Higgs all found that females express more favorable attitudes toward physically handicapped persons than do males.⁵ Gozali's study also showed that a person's attitude toward physically handicapped persons becomes more negative with advancing age.⁶ And, interestingly, Comer and Piliavin's finding that people perceive handicapped people to have more favorable qualities than are possessed by nonhandicapped people⁷ coincides with our findings that 46 percent of the general public and 20 percent of the teachers in this study believe physically handicapped people are usually easier to get along with than other people.

One literature finding that is contrary to a finding in the present

⁴Reginald W. Higgs, "Attitude Formation--Contact or Information?" Exceptional Children 41 (April 1975):496-497.

⁵John L. Tringo, "The Hierarchy of Preference Toward Disability Groups," Journal of Special Education 4 (Summer-Fall 1970): 295-306; Jerome Siller, Abram Chipman, Linda Ferguson, and Donald H. Vann, Attitudes of the Nondisabled Toward the Physically Disabled, XI: Studies in Reactions to Disability (New York: New York University, School of Education, May 1967); Tali A. Conine, "Acceptance or Rejection of Disabled Persons by Teachers," Journal of School Health 39 (April 1969): 278-281; and Higgs.

⁶Joav Gozali, "The Relationship Between Age and Attitude Toward Disabled Persons," Gerontologist 11 (Winter 1971):289-291.

⁷Ronald C. Comer and June Allyn Piliavin, "As Others See Us: Attitudes of Physically Handicapped and Normals Toward Own and Other Groups," Rehabilitation Literature 36 (July 1975):206-221, 225.

study is teachers' acceptance of the mainstreaming concept. As indicated in Chapter IV, 89 percent of the teachers in the survey expressed their approval of placing physically handicapped children in regular classrooms. The literature suggests that teachers are not highly accepting of the mainstreaming concept. An explanation may be that over time teachers have come to be more comfortable with the idea of mainstreaming through increased knowledge of the concept and perhaps special in-service training. It should be noted that only one of the studies concerning mainstreaming mentioned in the literature review is current (1978). The four others were reported in 1971 and in 1975.

Applicability of Survey Findings to the Michigan Population

Any mail survey will receive a lower response from the less educated and more mobile segments of any population. However, this survey represents the best available picture of the Lansing population concerning their attitudes toward the physically handicapped.

To what extent does this survey represent the attitudes of the Michigan population outside Lansing? There is, again, no sure way of determining this. The income and education levels in the Lansing area are undoubtedly higher than the income and education levels in some other areas of the state, particularly rural areas. We can only state that to the degree that Lansing is representative enough of the state's population is this survey representative of the attitudes in the Michigan population toward the physically handicapped. Again, this represents the only available data on this issue, and until a broader-based survey is carried out, this represents the best picture of the attitudes of the general public and educators in Michigan toward the

physically handicapped.

Conclusions

The preceding discussion has illustrated that some significant information has been obtained from which a public information program may be planned. The audiences, of course, would be the general public and public schoolteachers in Michigan. The objective would be to raise the level of knowledge these two groups possess concerning physically handicapped persons and to influence favorably their attitudes toward them.

More precisely, however, the information that has been gathered enables the Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation to devise a program that will (1) communicate with those segments of the audience most in need of information, (2) transmit messages specifically written for those segments, and (3) use the media that will most likely reach those segments. "Effective communication," say Cutlip and Center, "means tailor-made programming specially designed for the situation, time, place, and audience."⁸

Directions for a Public Information Program

The Audiences

That the general public expressed less favorable attitudes than did the educators suggests a more intense public information strategy for the general public. It also appears that a general public strategy should be to reach older segments of the population, as these persons tend to have less favorable attitudes than do younger persons. In addition,

⁸Cutlip and Center, p. 250.

males and persons with only a high school education or less should be target groups.

A public information program for educators should be directed more to males and older teachers as these two groups appear to have less favorable attitudes than other educators.

It was shown in Chapter IV that neither the general public nor the educator respondents expressed strong unfavorable attitudes. This is critical to the success of a public information program because, as Yuker points out, intense attitudes are harder to change than mild ones: "People with very negative attitudes toward handicapped citizens will be hard to reach, those who are mildly accepting will be more susceptible to persuasive communications."⁹

The Messages

It is apparent from the attitude response analyses that the general public and the educators have some common areas of negative attitude.

The following messages, then, should be relayed to both groups:

1. Physically handicapped people are no more and no less easy to get along with than anyone else.
2. Physically handicapped persons can be self-supporting.
3. Physically handicapped people worry no more and no less than anyone else.
4. Physically handicapped people should be expected to meet the same standards as anyone else.
5. Physically handicapped people are as happy as anyone else.
6. Severely physically handicapped people are no harder to get along with than those with minor handicaps.

⁹Harold E. Yuker, "Attitudes of the General Public Toward Handicapped Individuals," The White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals, vol. 1: Awareness Papers (Washington, D. C., 23-27 May 1977), p. 99.

7. Physically handicapped people can lead a normal life.
8. People do not have to be any more careful of what they say when with physically handicapped people than they are when with anyone else.

Four additional messages should be transmitted to the general public because of existing misconceptions and/or negative attitudes:

1. People should expect just as much from physically handicapped people as they do from anyone else.
2. Physically handicapped people are no more easily upset than anyone else.
3. Physically handicapped persons can have a normal social life.
4. Physically handicapped people feel that they are as good as other people.

Hyman and Sheatsley point out that "people tend to become exposed to information which is congenial with their prior attitudes" ¹⁰ Therefore, the preceding messages should be "packaged" in terms of the two groups' existing favorable attitudes. The surveys showed these to be:

1. Parents of physically handicapped children should be just as strict as other parents.
2. Physically handicapped persons are just as intelligent as nonhandicapped ones.
3. Most physically handicapped people do not feel sorry for themselves.
4. Physically handicapped people have the same goals in life as anyone else.
5. Physically handicapped children should be placed in regular classrooms whenever possible.
6. Physically handicapped people should not live and work in special communities.
7. Physically handicapped people are not usually grouchy.

¹⁰ Herbert H. Hyman and Paul B. Sheatsley, "Some Reasons Why Information Campaigns Fail," Public Opinion Quarterly 11 (Fall 1947):417.

8. Physically handicapped people do not like to keep to themselves.

In addition, the messages should be conveyed by persons who are like the target groups in age, education, and other characteristics. Yuker maintains that people are more likely to listen to others whom they perceive to be like themselves.¹¹

Media

The mass media, of course, will play the major role in the public information program. Simon says that because they are "considered to be impartial and nonpartisan, mass media messages are deemed to be more credible than those stemming directly from a public relations source."¹²

Specific media should be selected on the basis of frequency of use by the target groups. Since older people, males, and those with less education are to be the focal points in the general public population, their media habits must be considered. Among the general public respondents, the survey indicated, use of the radio is not high. Neither are the public respondents heavy readers of magazines. However, they do read a newspaper quite frequently and are heavy television viewers. Newspapers and television, then, would probably be the most effective media in reaching members of the general public, particularly the target groups. The literature supports this conclusion.

Kent and Rush, for example, found that older persons are heavy viewers of television.¹³ Wade and Schramm found that less-educated

¹¹Yuker, p. 98.

¹²Raymond Simon, Public Relations: Concepts and Practices (Columbus, Ohio: Grid, Inc., 1976), p. 261.

¹³K. E. Kent and Ramona R. Rush, "How Communication Behavior of Older Persons Affects Their Public Affairs Knowledge," Journalism Quarterly 53 (Spring 1976):40-46.

groups get their health information from television.¹⁴ And Gordon as well as Morrison and Libow demonstrated that newspaper publicity can be effective in conveying information about health matters.¹⁵

Public information efforts directed toward the teachers should employ both newspapers and magazines as the educators in the survey indicated they are heavy users of both print media. Literature findings support their media reports. Samuelson et al., for example, found that the more education a person has, the more likely he or she is to use the print media instead of the broadcast media.¹⁶ Similarly, Kent and Rush point out that "education is positively related to the use of print media which in turn is positively related to public affairs knowledge."¹⁷ Wade and Schramm found that newspapers and magazines are the principal sources of health information for the public, particularly for the better educated members.¹⁸

While a high percentage of the teachers reported that they listen often to the radio, this medium was found by Donaldson to be ineffective

¹⁴Serena Wade and Wilbur Schramm, "Mass Media as Sources of Public Affairs, Science, and Health Knowledge," Public Opinion Quarterly 33 (Summer 1969):197-209.

¹⁵Joseph Gordon, "Evaluation of Communications Media in Two Health Projects in Baltimore," Public Health Reports 82 (July 1967):651-655; and James K. Morrison and Judith A. Libow, "The Effect of Newspaper Publicity on a Mental Health Center's Community Visibility," Community Mental Health Journal 13 (Spring 1977):58-62.

¹⁶Merrill Samuelson, Richard F. Carter, and Lee Ruggels, "Education, Available Time, and the Use of the Mass Media," Journalism Quarterly 40 (Autumn 1963):491.

¹⁷Kent and Rush, p. 45.

¹⁸Wade and Schramm, p. 202.

in changing attitudes.¹⁹ In addition, no significant relationships were found between frequent use of the radio and positive attitudes. Thus radio does not appear to be an appropriate medium to use for the particular objective of this public information campaign.

In addition to the mass media, communications with the general public and educators should include personal contact involving physically handicapped persons themselves. A significant relationship was found in this study between talking to handicapped people and a favorable attitude toward them. Significant relationships also were found between seeing physically handicapped people and responding favorably to a number of attitude items on the questionnaire. Thus it appears that the more often able-bodied people are exposed to physically handicapped people, the less prejudice they have regarding them. It is also noted that both Donaldson and Croft et al. found that contact with physically handicapped persons can favorably influence attitudes toward them.²⁰

Intended Effects

The intended effects from the public information program proposed here are to increase knowledge concerning physically handicapped persons and to favorably influence attitudes toward them. Yuker, however, states more specifically that a major goal of such an information program "should be to have disabled persons perceived as similar to everyone else." He bases this assertion on the belief that

¹⁹Joy Donaldson, "Channel Variations and Effects on Attitudes Toward Physically Disabled Individuals," AV Communication Review 24 (Summer 1976):135-144.

²⁰Donaldson; and Roger G. Croft, David V. Stimpson, Walter L. Ross, Robert M. Bray, and Vincent J. Breglio, "Comparison of Attitude Changes Elicited by Live and Videotape Classroom Presentations," AV Communication Review 17 (Fall 1969):315-321.

disabled persons are frequently perceived as different from non-disabled people. This perception often results in rejection; people who are perceived as different are usually not liked and not trusted, and frequently are feared.²¹

In conclusion, audience, message, and media considerations should be linked with the intended effect of this particular public information program--that physically handicapped persons be perceived as similar to able-bodied persons.

Recommendations

Four recommendations logically flow from the knowledge gained in this study. First, of course, is the recommendation that the Michigan Department of Education, Bureau of Rehabilitation develop and execute a public information program based on the results of this study.

A second recommendation is that the Bureau of Rehabilitation examine the attitudes of the general public and educators toward those with mental and emotional handicaps so that a public information program may be developed to improve these attitudes, if necessary. The Bureau of Rehabilitation is concerned with mentally and emotionally handicapped persons as well as with those with physical handicaps.

Third, it is recommended that the Bureau employ research methods similar to those used in this study prior to developing public information programs directed toward other publics of the Bureau, such as potential clients, employers, and legislators.

Finally, it is recommended that the Bureau of Rehabilitation examine public awareness of the agency and the services it provides. If warranted, a public information campaign should be launched to heighten

²¹Yuker, p. 100.

the visibility of the Bureau. Cutlip and Center point out that the more a message sender is "known and liked by his audience, the more inclined the audience is to change its beliefs in the direction the communicator advocates."²² Thus high visibility of the agency should serve to increase the effectiveness of all its public information programs.

²²Cutlip and Center, p. 240.

APPENDIX A

STATEMENTS FROM THE ORIGINAL ATTITUDE TOWARD DISABLED PERSONS SCALE

APPENDIX A

STATEMENTS FROM THE ORIGINAL ATTITUDE TOWARD DISABLED PERSONS SCALE

1. Parents of disabled children should be less strict than other parents.
2. Physically disabled persons are just as intelligent as non-disabled ones.
3. Disabled people are usually easier to get along with than other people.
4. Most disabled people feel sorry for themselves.
5. Disabled people are the same as anyone else.
6. There shouldn't be special schools for disabled children.
7. It would be best for disabled persons to live and work in special communities.
8. It is up to the government to take care of disabled persons.
9. Most disabled people worry a great deal.
10. Disabled people should not be expected to meet the same standards as non-disabled people.
11. Disabled people are as happy as non-disabled ones.
12. Severely disabled people are no harder to get along with than those with minor disabilities.
13. It is almost impossible for a disabled person to lead a normal life.
14. You should not expect too much from disabled people.
15. Disabled people tend to keep to themselves much of the time.
16. Disabled people are more easily upset than non-disabled people.
17. Disabled persons cannot have a normal social life.
18. Most disabled people feel that they are not as good as other people.
19. You have to be careful of what you say when you are with disabled people.
20. Disabled people are often grouchy.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY ON PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS

APPENDIX B

SURVEY ON PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS

INSTRUCTIONS: Below are 20 statements about physically handicapped persons. We all think differently about persons with physical handicaps. Please express your opinions by circling one of the four possible answers following each statement. Please mark your answer by placing a circle around the number in front of the one answer you select.

1. Parents of physically handicapped children should be less strict than other parents.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
2. Physically handicapped persons are just as intelligent as nonhandicapped ones.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
3. Physically handicapped people are usually easier to get along with than other people.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
4. Most physically handicapped people feel sorry for themselves.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
5. Physically handicapped people have the same goals in life as anyone else.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
6. Physically handicapped children should be placed in regular classrooms whenever possible.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
7. It would be best for physically handicapped persons to live and work in special communities.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
8. It is up to the government to take care of physically handicapped persons.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree

9. Most physically handicapped people worry a great deal.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
10. Generally, physically handicapped people should not be expected to meet the same standards as nonhandicapped people.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
11. Physically handicapped people are as happy as nonhandicapped ones.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
12. Severely physically handicapped people are no harder to get along with than those with minor handicaps.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
13. It is almost impossible for a physically handicapped person to lead a normal life.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
14. You should not expect too much from physically handicapped people.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
15. Physically handicapped people like to keep to themselves much of the time.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
16. Physically handicapped people are more easily upset than nonhandicapped people.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
17. Physically handicapped persons cannot have a normal social life.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
18. Most physically handicapped people feel that they are not as good as other people.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree
19. You have to be careful of what you say when you are with physically handicapped people.
 1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree

20. Physically handicapped people are often grouchy.
- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Strongly disagree | 3. Agree |
| 2. Disagree | 4. Strongly agree |

AGAIN, PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE ANSWER THAT BEST APPLIES TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

21. How frequently do you see physically handicapped people?
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| 1. Often | 3. Seldom |
| 2. Occasionally | 4. Never |
22. How frequently do you talk to physically handicapped people?
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| 1. Often | 3. Seldom |
| 2. Occasionally | 4. Never |
23. Do you read a daily newspaper
- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Every day | 4. About once a week |
| 2. Almost every day | 5. Rarely or never |
| 3. Several times a week | |
24. Would you say that you read
- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Lots of magazines | 3. A few magazines |
| 2. Some magazines | 4. Only an occasional magazine |
25. Do you listen to the radio
- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Several hours a day | 4. Occasionally |
| 2. About every day | 5. Rarely or never |
| 3. Several times a week | |
26. Would you say that you watch television
- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Several hours a day | 4. Occasionally |
| 2. About every day | 5. Rarely or never |
| 3. Several times a week | |
27. What is the last year of school you completed?
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Less than high school | 4. Some post high school |
| 2. Some high school | 5. College degree |
| 3. High school graduate | 6. Advanced degree |
28. What is your approximate age?
- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Under 21 | 3. 40 to 59 |
| 2. 21 to 39 | 4. 60 or above |
29. What is your sex?
- | |
|-----------|
| 1. Male |
| 2. Female |

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO LANSING, MICHIGAN, RESIDENTS

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO LANSING, MICHIGAN, RESIDENTS

515 E. Edgewood Blvd., Apt. 115
Lansing, Michigan 48910
May 9, 1978

Dear Lansing Resident:

You are among 400 persons living in the City of Lansing being asked to participate in a survey of attitudes toward persons with handicaps.

You have undoubtedly noticed parking places now reserved for handicapped persons only and ramps built next to stairs for people who use wheelchairs. Because of new federal and state laws, changes are being made in our society in a number of ways to assist persons with handicaps.

It is important to know your opinions concerning persons with physical handicaps. The information you provide on the enclosed questionnaire will help me determine how television, radio, newspapers, and magazines inform the public about persons with handicaps.

This survey is part of my work as a student at Michigan State University.

I would appreciate it very much if you would take just 10 minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it as soon as possible in the stamped, pre-addressed envelope.

Your answers on the questionnaire will be strictly anonymous. There is no way of my knowing how any particular person responds to the statements.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Lynne Schroeder

Enclosures

APPENDIX D

**LETTER TO SCHOOLTEACHERS OF
LANSING, MICHIGAN, PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO SCHOOLTEACHERS OF
LANSING, MICHIGAN, PUBLIC SCHOOLS

515 E. Edgewood Blvd., Apt. 115
Lansing, Michigan 48910
May 3, 1978

Dear Educator:

You are among 200 professional employees of the Lansing Public School system being asked to participate in a survey of attitudes toward persons with handicaps.

As you know, two recent laws--the federal Education for All Handicapped Children Act and Michigan's Mandatory Special Education Act--endorse the concept of "mainstreaming" handicapped students into regular classrooms whenever possible. As a result, you will be coming into contact with a greater number of students with handicaps.

Your views on persons with handicaps are important. The information you provide on the enclosed questionnaire will help me determine the role television, radio, newspapers, and magazines play in informing the public about handicapped individuals.

I am conducting this survey as part of my master's thesis at Michigan State University.

I would appreciate it very much if you would take just 10 minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it as soon as possible in the stamped, pre-addressed envelope.

Your answers on the questionnaire will be strictly anonymous. There is no way of my knowing how any particular person responds to the statements.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Lynne Schroeder

Enclosures

APPENDIX E

LETTER TO OTHER STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES

STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUREAU OF REHABILITATION
Box 30010, Lansing, Michigan 48909

APPENDIX E

LETTER TO OTHER STATE
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

DR. EDMUND F. VANDETTE
President

ANNETTA MILLER
Vice President

BARBARA ROBERTS MASON
Secretary

DR. GUMECINDO SALAS
Treasurer

JOHN WATANEN, JR.
NASBE Delegate

BARBARA DUMOUCHELLE

DR. PAUL B. HENRY
NORMAN OTTO STOCKMEYER, SR.

Governor
WILLIAM G. MILLIKEN
Ex-Officio



Dear

The Michigan Bureau of Rehabilitation is preparing a public information plan that will assist the agency in fulfilling its mission and meeting its objectives. Unsystematic efforts in public information in the past have delivered disappointing results. We are therefore attempting to devise a plan that will help us maintain and improve services as well as respond to problems.

Much of the groundwork for this plan will be provided by the results of a survey being conducted of the attitudes of the general public and of teachers in Michigan toward handicapped persons. We are interested in knowing whether you have sought information on the attitudes of the general public or of any special public as a basis for your public information planning. Your experience in this area will help us determine the components as well as the direction of our plan.

We would appreciate it very much if you would send us a copy of your public information plan and a copy of the design and results of any surveys you may have conducted. If you have used the services of a public relations consultant, we would also be pleased to receive a copy of the consultant's report.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Donald E. Galvin
Associate Superintendent
for Rehabilitation



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