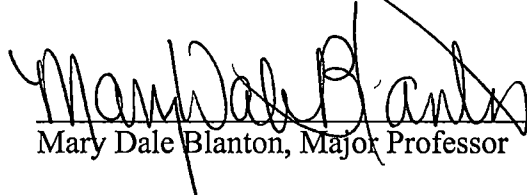
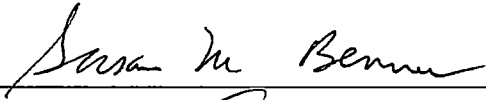
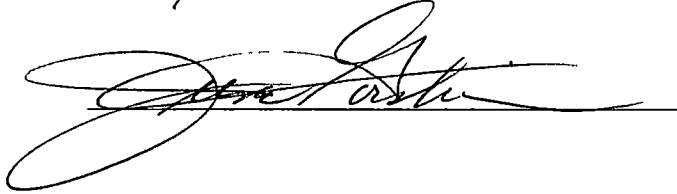


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Clarissa M. Combs entitled "Tennessee Students with Special Needs: The Status of Therapeutic Recreation in Elementary Individual Education Plans." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Recreation, Tourism and Hospitality Management.


Mary Dale Blanton, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and
recommend its acceptance.

Accepted for the Council:


Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

Tennessee Students with Special Needs: The Status of Therapeutic Recreation in Elementary Individual Education Plans

A thesis presented for the
Master of Science Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Clarissa M. Combs
May 2000

“Tell me and I forget,
Teach me and I remember,
Involve me and I learn.”
- Benjamin Franklin

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the amount of recreation involved in the planning of Individual Education Plans for special needs elementary school children. In order to achieve this, the following problems were discussed: (a) to determine if recreation, as a related service, is included in the IEPs, (b) to determine if recreation, as a related service, is included in the provision of services for special needs students, (c) if recreation is included, what aspect of recreation is incorporated into the IEP, (d) to identify who delivers these recreation services, and (e) to identify the desired benefits of the recreation participation for the elementary students.

In order to collect this necessary information, the researcher sent 200 self-developed surveys (Appendix A) to Elementary Special Education professionals across the state of Tennessee with a thirty-five percent return rate.

The information collected during the research showed the following conclusions. A total of 63 professionals participated in the study. The sizes of the schools ranged from 50 to 1016 students with between 10 and 260 special education students. The age range of the student population ranged

from 3 years of age to 15 years of age. The majority of responding professionals have received a masters degree and many hold multiple certifications. The majority of the respondents have not had any formal recreation education or experiences. Almost half of the students spend less than 20% of the school day in special Education classes while only 13% spend more than 60% of each day there. A large majority (84%) reported that recreation is not often used as a related service, listed on the IEPs. In addition, over half of the special education students never participate in any recreation curriculum.

Most often the primary service deliverers were the Physical Education teachers in the individual schools. The primary disabilities consisted of learning disabilities, mental retardation, speech language deficiency and emotional and behavioral disorders. The most popular programming categories of recreation included health and fitness, music, sports, and arts and crafts. When questioned as to the projected benefits of the current recreation programs, many responded that there were no benefits because there was no formal program. Of those teachers who are involved in some sort of recreation program, many responded that the benefits included health status, exploring other life options and peer interaction.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Each year, across the state of Tennessee, there are a growing number of special needs children who require help. These special needs can range from a mild learning disability to severe mental retardation and physical disabilities. Each child is evaluated in an attempt to discover his or her capabilities, accomplishments, and needs. Because these children are entitled to a free and appropriate public education, many times they are entered into special education programs in the school systems (Bullock & Mahon, 1997). An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is written for each student to ensure that educational needs are being met.

There are several different components to the IEP. Included in the IEP is "an indication of the client's problems and needs," a set of goals designed specifically for the student, and specific objectives for those goals. Also included in the IEP is a plan of activities and related services decided necessary for the student. Lastly, an evaluation plan is included (Austin, 1991, p.172). Each IEP is reviewed yearly and changes are made as necessary to ensure that the plan meets the individual's needs and expectations (Austin, 1991, p. 173). However, there is one aspect of daily living that is not mandated to be included on an IEP. This aspect is

recreation and it is important in the lives of these children. Physical Education is mandated on an IEP, recreation is not. Physical Education could be described as the purposeful instruction of different sport skills and physical movement whereas recreation consists of organized activities that allow for “growth, learning, satisfaction, pleasure, achievement, relaxation, personal and social acceptance” (Carter, 1985, p. 16). Recreation is important in the lives of all children. Recreation allows the students to participate in any number of activities, while still learning and growing from the experiences. Involving a child in recreation activities can help the child grow as an individual and still be included in a group. It is hoped that this research will illustrate the importance of recreation to schools across the state of Tennessee. Recreation helps the individual reach a high level of achievement and confidence. It can increase involvement and promote relaxation. Recreation can be modified and adapted for any type of disability.

Recreation services can consist of any number of activities with a variety of goals. It can bring people closer together and help them understand each other or intensify skills of the individual. Recreation can be adapted to every child in a classroom. Each student is different. Recreation offers the teachers and administrators an alternative to regular classroom

instruction and physical education activities. These activities allow the children to move about in a safe and structured way, while still allowing them to grow from the experience.

Many of the following excellent opportunities can be produced as a result of providing recreation services within the school system. More certified recreation professionals in a classroom can result in specialized interventions delivered to the children. Also, recreation can serve as a catalyst for all of the learning and growth opportunities available to students. Students can become more self-sufficient and self-assured as their self-esteem increases. Recreation services can help with this process. Finally, recreation also offers individuals the opportunity to learn socially appropriate behaviors that may be carried to other aspects of their lives.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the status of recreation experiences included in Individual Education Plans (IEP) designed for special needs children in elementary schools in Tennessee.

Research Questions

The study was divided into the following subproblems and research questions.

1. To determine if recreation, as a related service, is included in the IEPs.

2. To determine if recreation, as a related service, is included in the provision of services for special needs students.
3. To determine if recreation is included, what aspects of recreation are incorporated into the IEPs.
4. To identify who delivers the recreation services to the special needs students.
5. To identify the benefits of the recreation participation, for children with special needs.

Assumptions

The assumptions of this study included:

1. The questions were answered accurately and honestly by the subject.
2. The survey was reliable and valid.
3. The subject cooperated fully in the collection of data.

Limitations

The limitations of this study included:

1. The school teachers of elementary special education students in the state of Tennessee.
2. The teachers were willing to participate in the study.
3. The teachers shared the relevant information.
4. The school systems allowed teachers to participate in the study.

5. The survey return rate would be acceptable.

Delimitations

The delimitations of this study included:

1. The information was in the IEPs of elementary school students in the state of Tennessee from the 1998-1999 school year.
2. The teachers surveyed were selected equally from the three sections of Tennessee.

Definitions

Recreation- “An emotional condition within an individual human being that flows from a feeling of well-being and self-satisfaction. It is characterized by feelings of mastery, achievement, exhilaration, acceptance, success, personal worth, and pleasure. It reinforces a positive self-image. Recreation is a response to aesthetic experience, achievement of personal goals, or positive feedback from others. It is independent of activity, leisure, or social acceptance” (Kraus, 1978, p.33).

Therapeutic Recreation- A process which utilizes recreation services for purposive intervention in some physical, emotional, and/ or social behavior to bring about a desired change in that behavior and to promote the growth and development of the individual (Peterson & Gunn, 1984, p.2).

Physical Education – Purposeful instruction of different physical movements and sport skills.

Adapted Physical Education- Physical education activities in which a modification has been made to accommodate particular participants with any type of disability.

Individual Education Plan (IEP)- A document revisited each school year that “sets out a program designed to meet student’s educational needs, describes what placement is appropriate, and lists the related services to be provided” (Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, & Leal, 1995, p.74).

Public Law 94-142- Named the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EHA); this act ensures a free, appropriate, public education to children and youth with disabilities. This act regulates federal money to state and local educational agencies to educate students from age three to age twenty-one.

Related Services- “Transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services that are required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education, and includes speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, **recreation**, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children,

counseling services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluative purposes” (Bullock & Mahon, 1997, p.80).

Recreation Services – providing all people with the opportunities to participate in different types of recreation.

Significance of the Study

The researcher believes that students with special needs could be well served by participating in recreation services. This study will show the amount of recreation participation involved in elementary school special education curriculum in the state of Tennessee. Conducting this research will also help determine the nature of the offered experiences and who is delivering these experiences. This information can be used to determine if recreation does in fact exist in special education opportunities in the state of Tennessee. In addition, the prevalence of recreation in the IEPs and curriculum, the nature of these recreation services, the deliverer of these services, and the desired growth of these services was also determined. School administrators, teachers, parents, and students can all benefit from this study. It will offer them information on the status and nature of recreation in special education settings. This information is beneficial to school and administrative personnel in informing them of the amount of recreation provided and the

availability of other desired services. The gathered information can provide assistance to administrators, teachers, and parents when making informed decisions regarding the status of recreation in their schools. In turn, these parties can begin to understand the benefits of recreation for special needs children.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The purpose of this study was to determine the status of recreation as a related service included in Individualized Education Plans designed for special needs children in elementary schools. Recreation is an important way in which students can learn about themselves, their fears, behaviors, and strengths, through the process of physical or game like activity. By using recreation, students are able participate in exhilarating experiences while exploring different aspects of their lives and learning from activities provided to work toward the goals set for them.

The primary focus of this paper was to determine the status of recreation as a related service included in Individual Education Plans (IEP) designed for special needs children in an elementary school. There were several factors that went into the research on this topic. This review summarizes readings focusing on recreation and recreation services in the school systems and is organized under the following subject headings:

(1) Public Laws affecting recreation, (2) components of IDEA, (3) Codependence of Professionals, (4) Reasons for Recreation, and (5) Summary and Implications. The first section, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act details the history and impact of the law. Following are the

components to the law and what the law entails. The codependence of professionals deals with the growing need for the interdisciplinary classroom. Many positive affects and influences that come from participation in recreation activities are described.

Public Laws Affecting Recreation

There are several laws that have had a great impact on recreation in the schools. Beginning back in 1963 with the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, training and funds have been provided for the “ill and handicapped.” This was the beginning of the recognition of recreation as an important service (Austin & Crawford, 1991). In 1967, an act was passed that incorporated physical education and recreation for disabled children into the Bureau of Education. This was Public Law 90-170, the Education for Handicapped Children Act. This was, by far, the greatest program for training, research, and special projects to date (Austin & Crawford, 1991). Both of these laws helped to pave the way for one of the most groundbreaking laws ever written. “Although there existed some early special education legislations, nothing before compared” to this act (Bullock & Mahon, 1997, p. 76). This law was The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This law was passed and went into effect in 1977. It

required that a free and appropriate education be provided for all disabled children. Also, under this law, physical education was listed as a direct, required service and recreation was included as a related service (Austin & Crawford, 1991). This allowed for equal education for all students, including individuals with special needs.

IDEA places requirements on educators to prepare students to be well-rounded individuals. The law was “a commitment to assure all handicapped children a ‘free appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs’” (National Advisory Committee on the Handicapped, 1977, p.23). The term “special education” includes physical education, just as the term “related services” includes recreation and leisure. Therefore, they should be included in the IEP of these students (NAC, 1977). IDEA calls directly for physical education services (NAC, 1977). Students must be allowed to participate in the most normal PE class possible. (Broadhead & Brooks, 1982).

Broadhead and Brooks (1982), explored IDEA and its commitment to the well-rounded student, and explained the answers to different questions related to the law. They believed that if the student could not interact appropriately or was unable to complete the assigned tasks, the student should be placed in an environment that is conducive to his/her learning.

Public Law 94-142 was amended in 1983 and again in 1986 with PL 99-457. This amendment changed the age of children served. The age range was extended from three to twenty-two (Bullock & Mahon, 1997). Finally, in 1990, President Bush signed PL 101-476, the Education of the Handicapped Act amendments of 1990. At this time, the name of the act was changed to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and opened up new doors for the individuals that it served.

Components of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

As mentioned previously, IDEA, was one act that made a major impact on how that population was perceived and treated. It seems that one reason it had such an impact was due to its many components. According to Bullock and Mahon (1997) the major purposes of the law are as follows:

“To guarantee that a free appropriate education including special education and related service programming, is available to children and youth with disabilities who require it. To assure that the rights of children and youth with disabilities and their parents or guardians are protected (e.g., fairness, appropriateness, and due process in decision making about providing special education and related services to children and youth with disabilities). To access and assure the effectiveness of special education at

all levels of government. To financially assist the efforts of state and local governments in providing full education opportunities to all children and youth with disabilities through the use of federal funds” (p. 77). A point of special importance is the fact that the related services included recreation. This helped to promote recreation in the schools. The law defines related services as: “ developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as may be required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in children” (Bullock & Mahon, 1997, p.77). Several of the services named specifically in the law were recreation, school health services, social work services in schools, speech pathology, and rehabilitation counseling (Bullock & Mahon, 1997). This entire process is dedicated to the total education of special needs students. Students may receive any of these services, but the student must benefit from it and it must be listed in the student’s IEP (Bullock & Mahon, 1997). The passage of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) also helped push therapeutic recreation as an addition to the classroom offerings (Bullock & Mahon, 1997).

Mandated within the law were the requirements that if a student were deemed eligible for special education services, an assessment must be made

by a team of teachers and administrators. (Jansma & Decker, 1992). This team must then decide the best goals and objectives for the student. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must be written. The IEP identifies goals and objectives and requirements for the student's educational experiences (Jansma & Decker, 1992). A students' IEP contains the appropriate recommendations that will help the student grow as a person. Often times this includes recreation. Another, somewhat related experience is adapted physical education. Adapted physical education has been developed to offer children with special needs a chance to participate in games and activities, which they would have been excluded from previously (Stein, 1977).

It is important to keep in mind that each of these students is an individual. Therefore, each program and each plan that is developed must be individualized to the student. Even if two students have the same disabling condition, they may be helped in completely different ways (Stein, 1977). Also, according to Stein (1977), we must remember that when developing programs and delivering services it is important to include the participants themselves. It is the participants that know what they want and what they need better than we do. The participants, themselves, can help in the implementation and delivery of services. If students do not like what is

offered them, they will not participate in programs. Therefore, we must include them in this process.

It has been found that no matter what the curriculum may be, programs that are successful treat each person as an individual. It is important to remember that progress is relative. Each individual makes progress in his or her own way and time (Stein 1977). Successful recreation programs contain several of the same characteristics that include:

(a) participants are involved, (b) the activities prove to be appropriate and challenging, (c) the outcome of the activity helps growth and satisfaction occur, and (d) a bond is formed between the student and the leader (Stein, 1977).

Under the law, services must be offered to students no matter what sex or disability (Broadhead & Brooks, 1982). However, according to Davis and Rizzo (1991), it was found “that physical education is rarely included in an IEP inspite of the fact that it is included as part of the definition of special education according to IDEA” (1994). Due to the lack of Physical education opportunities, Davis and Rizzo (1991) report that Adapted PE has developed out of this need. It is hopeful that Adapted PE will be accepted and incorporated into a PE curriculum to assist those children with disabilities.

Codependence of Professionals

As the number of students with special needs continues to rise and more school systems are moving special needs students into the regular classroom, professionals are going to be required to depend on each other for information and ideas. The regular classrooms are becoming very diverse places with children in need of special attention. According to Maguire (1994) "professionals in schools today must...depend upon partnerships if students and professionals in school are to survive or even thrive in the changing school environment."

While the special education numbers are growing, the Federal legislation still stands. Issues such as Physical Education must still be discussed and provided, regardless of teacher availability (Maguire, 1994). Because of the overlap of services required for some children, direct service providers and related service providers must vow to work together. For example, "Physical Education is a direct service required for all students with disabilities. Physical and occupational therapy are related services that are provided as needed to support the Special Education program, including Physical Education" (Maguire, 1994).

There are several important aspects that go into this collaboration of professionals. Special needs professionals must be willing to work on the

following principles. They must be respectful of each other; encouraging questions and sharing values. Maguire (1994) also points out that humor is an important aspect to learning. Professionals must take advantage of the resources around them and use the experience of their coworkers to make the learning environment as productive as possible. Maguire (1994) also encourages opportunities to practice these new found ideas. Finally, meaningful reinforcement must be used between professionals. It seems as if many adults are uncomfortable in new situations and like children, require positive feedback about the new “performance.” Now, the teacher is often times becoming the student (Maguire, 1994).

Purpose for Recreation

Recreation can be a critical element in the growth and development of students with mental and physical disabilities. It may be especially critical to students who have multiple disabilities.

As motor skills develop, the foundation for the more complex skills are also being developed. These more complex skills are important for use in recreational and daily living skills. Those students who have not had the opportunity to develop motor skills are often times left out of activities, either by choice for fear of failure or because they are excluded by their

peers. This causes a high inactivity rate, which begins to affect physical health (Collier, Kasser, & Solava, 1997).

Recreation has constantly proven to be a positive aspect in the lives of children with disabilities. Self-respect is increased and recreation “increases the children’s value in the eyes of their peers” (Collier, 1997). In addition to these obvious effects that recreation may have on children, it also provides a sense of motivation. While providing self-esteem, these recreation activities also promote social, emotional, and motor development. Often times it seems that because of the difficulties that children with disabilities encounter on a daily basis, they are very difficult to motivate. However, through specifically planned activities, the student enjoys the activity, which in itself provides motivation, while also developing a certain skill or muscle (Collier, 1997). Motivation is also increased as the skill ability increases.

As mentioned previously, lack of recreation skills may cause a lack of activity. Students are unwilling to participate for fear of failure. By being taught recreation skills, students acquire the ability and increase their skill level. Including recreation offers students the opportunity to possibly develop a lifelong skill.

Summary and Implications

The review of literature showed several consistent findings. Each student should be treated as an individual and not as a disability. Different people react to different stimuli in different ways. Special education has many avenues in which students can find help. Although there is a lack of qualified professionals, as more and more professionals become involved, more students will be able to receive the special, one-on-one attention that is needed. More professionals are becoming aware of the necessity of recreation and leisure in the lives of individuals with special needs. Quite often, these needs have been overlooked, but more people are becoming aware of this situation. More resources should be made available to assist educational staff in providing recreation services. The number of special education recipients is increasing; therefore, services need to increase. Services should be geared to the individual's needs. In addition, many professionals are realizing that education is no longer an independent process. Professionals have begun to work together to develop appropriate experiences for their students which includes recreation participation. Most importantly, the laws that were passed, including IDEA and 101-476, made major changes in the ways that disabled students were perceived and taught.

Many types of therapy and activities can be used in conjunction with special education. However, the researcher believes that it would serve students well to participate in recreation services. If recreation specialists could go into the classrooms on a regular basis, the students could continue their growth and development from this experience, enhancing their self-esteem and self-awareness.

While the benefits of adapted physical education are expressed repeatedly in the literature, there needs to be more research done on recreation and its effects on special populations. School systems are required to provide physical education for their students; however, recreation often is not included in the curriculum. Recreation and leisure skills are very important to the development of a well-rounded student. This lack of service availability causes several issues to arise. Why has more research not been done in recent years to help develop recreation services for individuals in need? What is the nature of recreation services provided? Which professionals should be responsible for providing these services? And what types of activities/programs should be developed to serve the special education population? These are all very important issues that need to be discussed and have more information made available so that professionals

and teachers, alike, can work together to improve the quality of life for all students.

Chapter III

Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of recreation as a related service included in IEPs designed for special needs children in an elementary school. Also, this study was intended to determine the prevalence of recreation services in elementary schools and who leads such services, the nature of the services offered, and the outcomes of services. The sections of this chapter are ordered as follows: (a) identification of subjects, (b) the rationale for this study, (c) description of the instrument, and (d) the statistical analysis.

Identification of Subjects

The participants involved in this study consisted of 200 elementary special education teachers. The information used was gathered from the teachers of special needs students' across the state of Tennessee. The researcher obtained a list of all the elementary schools in the state of Tennessee. The state was then divided into East, Middle, and West regions by counties. (Appendix D) Twenty percent of the schools in each region were randomly selected for the survey. Each survey was coded with a number in the top corner to identify to which of the three regions the survey was sent. The elementary schools consulted were distributed evenly

throughout the state of Tennessee, divided into the East, Middle, and West regions. All individuals who chose to participate in this study gave informed consent by participating in and answering the survey (Appendix A). The teachers were asked to share this information in strict confidentiality and chose to do so voluntarily. However, even though the researcher sent a second request, there were not enough respondents from each region of the state received to warrant comparison between regions of the state.

Description of the Instrument

The survey, (Appendix A), which was used in this study was developed by the researcher. To ensure validity, the original survey was reviewed by the thesis committee and several changes were made. The thesis committee suggested the addition of "Special Arts Festival" to question 14, dealing with types of recreation. The committee also decided to use the Likert 5-point scale for questions 11 and 12. Following the committee review, the survey was reviewed by a panel of experts: (a) Marcia Kelly, Speech Language Pathologist and (b) Angie Rogers, Elementary special education teacher. Mrs. Rogers suggested that rather than have the size of the school incorporated into the code in the top corner of the survey, it be left in the survey as question 6. The researcher accepted the change.

Ms. Kelly recommended some grammatical changes, which were implemented by the researcher. Overall, the response to the survey was positive.

The researcher requested that the surveys be returned within two weeks. After the initial two-week period, another survey and cover letter were sent to those participants who had not returned their first copy.

According to Boling and Condry (1992), sending out the second round of surveys would increase the return rate of information. Two rounds of surveys were sent out. The first survey was sent at the end of the school year and the second in the Fall.

The final survey consisted of 17 questions about the nature of recreation within elementary schools in the state of Tennessee. The survey consisted of checklists, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions and the survey was easily completed and did not consume a large amount of time. The first section of the survey, questions 1 through 5, was created to gather information on each special education provider. The second section was developed to understand the demographics of the population, and consisted of questions 6 through 10. The next section consisted of questions 11 through 16 and addressed the program description. They were created to

answer the specific research questions. Lastly, the desired benefits of recreation participation were identified in question number 17.

Statistical Analysis

The information gained through the survey helped to answer the subproblems of the study, mentioned earlier. A descriptive statistical analysis of the information revealed the status of recreation within the state of Tennessee. The researcher utilized the descriptive (SPSS) Statistics Package for Social Sciences program. This used parametric percentages and means to analyze the data. Also, there were several open-ended questions, which were examined, and discussed.

Chapter IV

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the status of recreation experiences included in Individual Education Plans (IEP) designed for special needs students in elementary schools in the state of Tennessee. In order to achieve this, the following subproblems were addressed: (a) to determine if recreation, as a related service, was included in many IEPs, (b) to determine if recreation, as a related service, was included in the provision of services for special needs students, (c) to identify what aspects of recreation is incorporated into the IEP, (d) to identify who delivers the recreation services, and (e) to identify the desired benefits of recreation participation.

In order to collect the necessary information, the researcher distributed 200 self- developed surveys (Appendix A) to special education elementary school teachers randomly selected from the three sections of the state of Tennessee: East, Middle, and West. Each teacher was asked to complete a survey regarding recreation as a related service and return it to the researcher. The surveys were sent at the end of the 98-99 school year

and resulted in a 30% return rate. Another mailing was sent in October of 1999 and resulted in a 35% total return rate. As shown in Figure 1, there were 30 surveys returned from the East section, 20 returned from the Middle section, and 13 returned from the West section of the state.

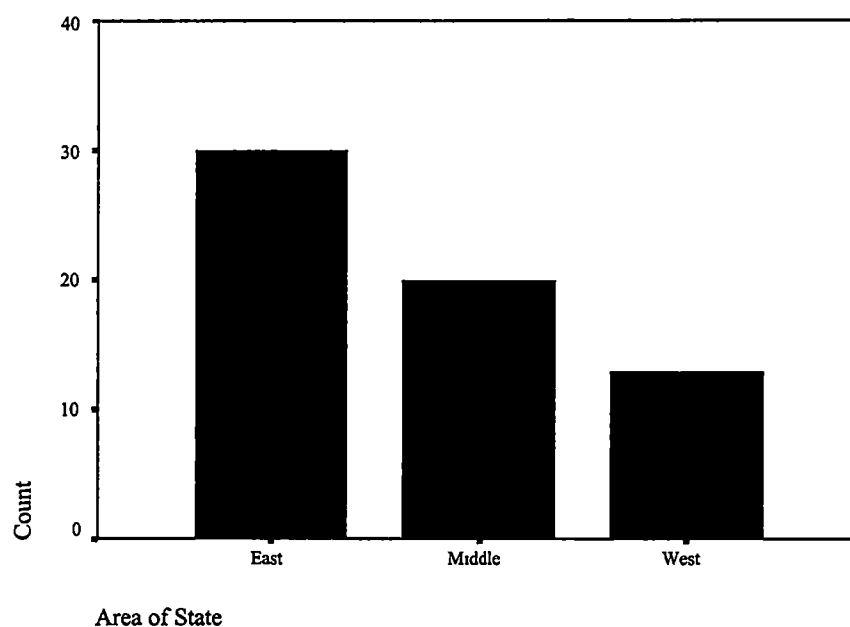


Figure 1 Region of State

Because there was a low return rate from across the entire state, the researcher did not get an equal representation of the services within each section to compare. The researcher can only hypothesize why the return rate was so low. (1) The researcher believes that recreation as a related service is

not offered in the school curriculum. (2) Recreation is not viewed as being important by service providers.

The contents of this chapter will be arranged in the following order:

(1) Demographics of Educators, (2) Population Demographics,

(3) Program Description, and (4) Benefits of Participation

Demographics of Educators

Professional Demographics of professional educators were collected from survey questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. These questions were used to identify the education, certification, and experience of the special education professionals. The specific variables described were: position title, level of education, type of certification, and recreation experience and education.

The 63 respondents in this study represented professional educators in the elementary school systems throughout the state.

Professional Title

Table 1 presents the professional title of educators. Resource teachers dominate the profession. Of the 63 subjects, 52% were resource teachers, 33.3% were special education teachers. This was followed by others (6.3%) and included elementary inclusion teacher, special education coordinator,

Table 1 Professional Title

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Comprehensive Developmental Class Teacher	2	3.2	3.2	3.2
Inclusion Teacher	3	4.8	4.8	7.9
Resource Teacher	33	52.4	52.4	60.3
Special Ed Teacher	21	33.3	33.3	93.7
Other	4	6.3	6.3	100.0
Total	63	100.0	100.0	

and speech language therapist. Inclusion teachers made up 4.8% and Comprehensive Developmental Class (CDC) teachers accounted for 3.2%.

Education

The education background is described in Table 2. The greatest percentage of teachers held a Masters degree (66.7%) followed by 28.6% with a bachelors degree and 4.8% with a doctorate. All of the respondents held some type of higher degree.

Table 2 Education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Bachelor's degree	18	28.6	28.6	31.8
Master's degree	42	66.7	66.7	98.4
Doctorate	3	4.8	4.8	100.0
Total	63	100.0	100.0	

Certification

The data collected shows that 100% of the respondents are certified in some area of education. The most prevalent certifications held by the respondents (40) were regular education 1-9 (15), elementary education (15) and administration/supervision (6). For a listing of all certifications held by respondents see Appendix E. The survey also revealed that 2% of the respondents were certified in speech language and/ or deaf education certification. None of the respondents held any certification in health services.

Recreation Experience

Finally, as shown in Figure 2, the data gathered also indicated that 18% of the 63 respondents have recreation education or experience. The

remaining 83% of the respondents claimed to have no extra recreation education or experience.

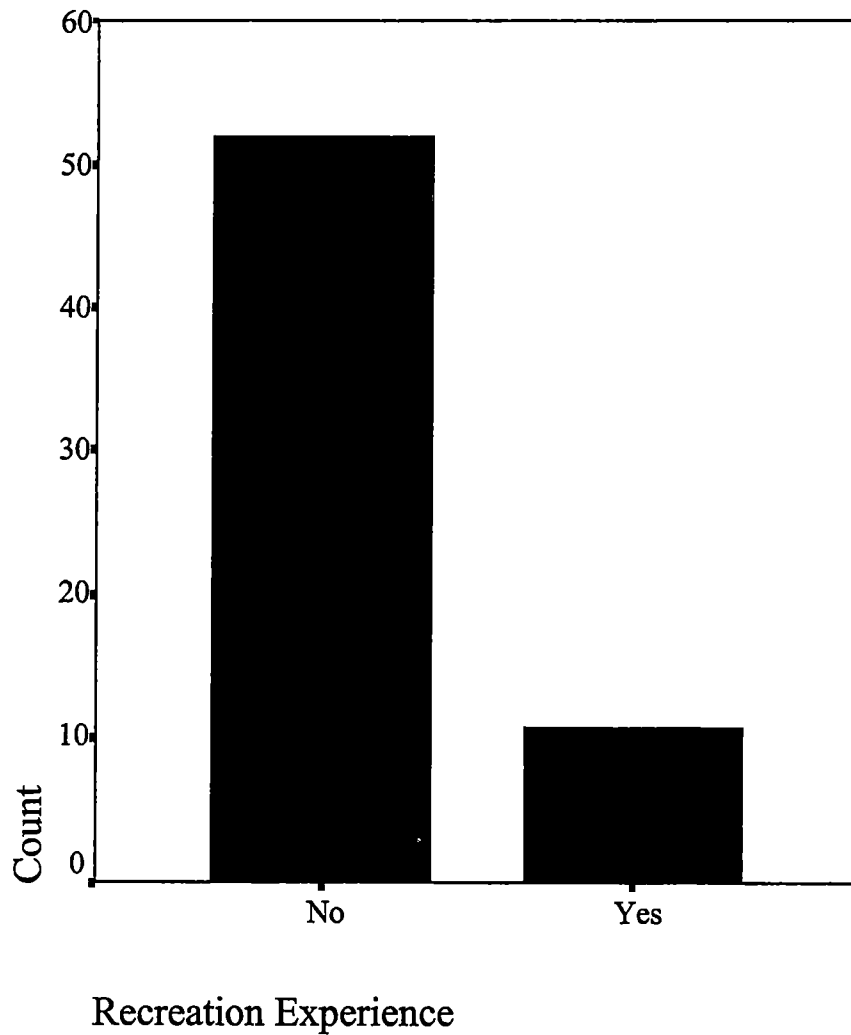


Figure 2 Recreation Experience

In summary, the majority of professional educators held the titles of resource teacher and special education teacher, almost half had a masters

degree, all respondents held some sort of education certification and a much greater percentage of respondents admitted to having no recreation experience.

Student Demographics

Student Demographics were collected from survey questions 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. These questions were used to identify the size of the school, special education population, age of the special education population, the amount of time spent in special education services, and the primary disabilities of the students.

School size

The size of the schools ranged from 50 students to 1016 students with the mean being 465 students and is illustrated in Table 3.

Special Education population

Shown by Table 3, the size of the special education programs ranged from 10 students to 260 students. The mean population of special education students was 60. Finally, table 3 shows the percentage of the population that is involved in Special Education Services. 14% of the total school population was involved in Special Education.

Table 3 Population Demographics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
School Population	60	50	1016	464.65	218.11
Special Education Students	63	10	260	60.25	47.37
Special Education Percentage	60	1.87	70.00	14.19	10.56
Valid N	60				

Table 4 Age of Special Needs Students

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Minimum Age	62	3	12	6.05	2
Maximum Age	62	8	15	12.19	1.69

Ages of Special Education Students

In Table 4, it can be found that the ages of special needs students in elementary schools ranges from 3 years to 15 years old. The mean age of special education students was 9 years old.

Amount of Special Education Services

The respondents were asked to describe the amount of time students were in special education classes. The choices consisted of 20% of the school day, 20%-60% of the school day and finally, 60% or more of the

school day. According to table 5, over two-fifths (44.8%) spend less than 20% of the school day receiving services. This is followed by 41% of these students spending between 21% and 60% of their school day in the special education classroom receiving services. Finally, only 13% of the students received special education services in the special education classroom for more than 60% of each day. A majority of students spent sometime in the regular classrooms.

Primary Disabilities

The primary disabilities affecting the students is illustrated in Figure 3 and is described in Table 6 and shows a variety of conditions. Almost all of the 63 respondents (98%) have students with some type of learning disability.

Over half of the students

Table 5 Description of Special Education Services

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 20%	26	41.3	44.8	46.5
21%- 60%	24	38.1	41.4	86.2
More than 60%	8	12.7	13.8	100.0
Total	58	92.1	100.0	
Missing	5	7.9		
Total	63	100.0		

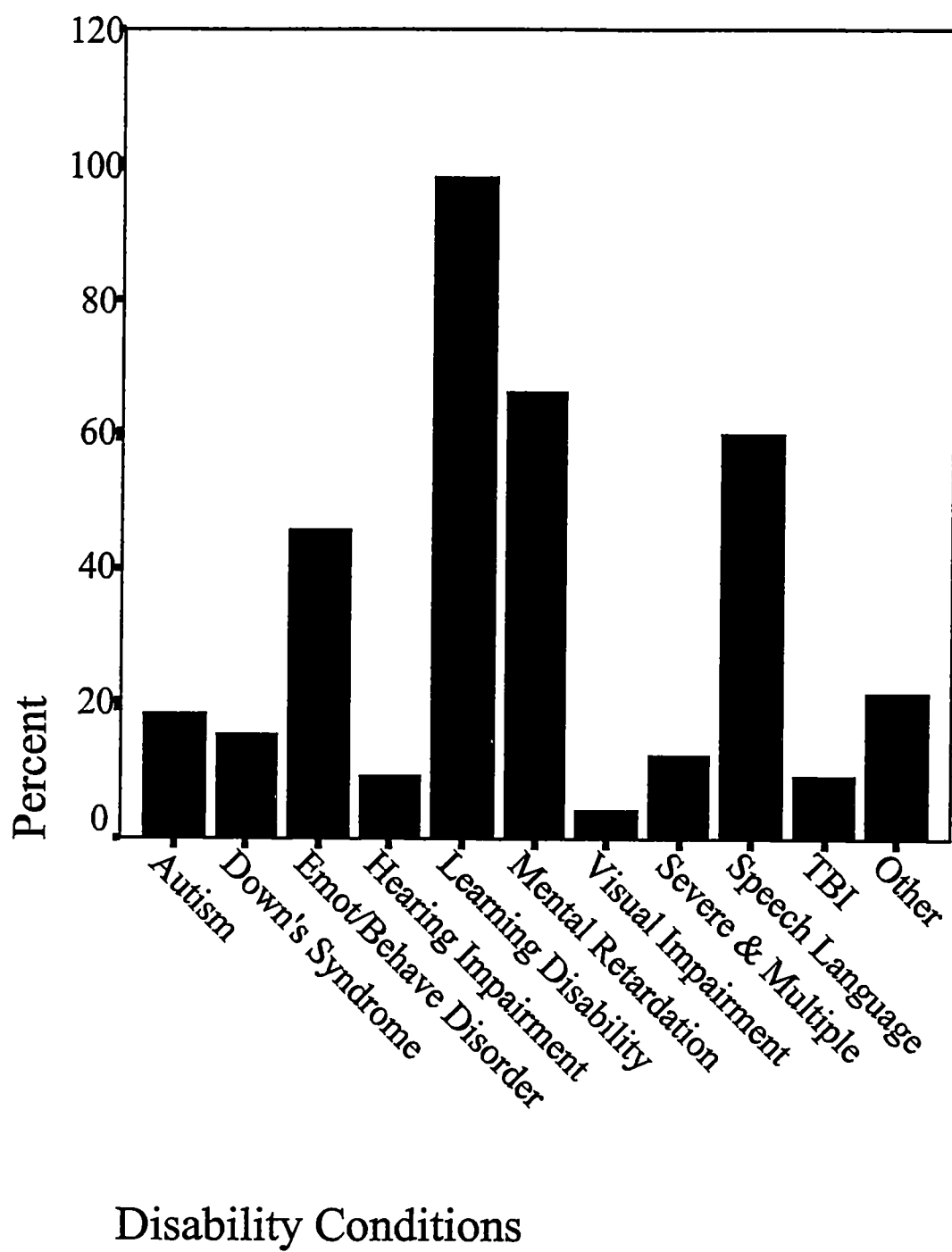


Figure 3 Disabling Conditions

*TBI is Traumatic Brain Injury

Table 6

Disabling Conditions

	Count	%
Severe and Multiple Disabilities	8	12.7%
Hearing Impaired	6	9.5%
Learning Disabilities	62	98.4%
Down's Syndrome	10	15.9%
Speech Language	38	60.3%
Traumatic Brain Injury	6	9.5%
Visual Impairment	3	4.8%
Mental Retardation	42	66.7%
Autism	12	19.0%
Emotional or Behavioral Disorder	29	46.0%
Other	14	22.2%

have been diagnosed with mental retardation (67%) or a speech language deficiency (60%). Almost half (46%) of the students suffer from emotional or behavioral disorders. Also found in the research, one-fifth (12) of the special needs students have been diagnosed with autism. The remaining disabilities included: Down's syndrome (16%), severe and multiple disabilities (13%), hearing impairments and traumatic brain injury (10%), respectively, and visual impairments (5%). 22% of the students are affected by other disabilities. These disabilities are described in Appendix F.

In summary, the size of the schools across the state varied from 50 students to 1016 students, the special education populations ranged from 10 students to 260 students, the age range of special needs elementary school students across the state is 3 years to 15 years old. Most students spent some time in the regular education classroom. The primary disabilities are learning disabilities, mental retardation, and speech language deficiency. It should also be noted that students could be diagnosed with several of these disabling conditions. Therefore, it is possible for one respondent to have students with all of the above disabilities.

Program Description

Program Description information was collected from questions 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16. Teachers were asked to respond to questions regarding the use of recreation as a related service on the IEP, the types of recreation curriculum, the prevalence of extra recreation components listed on IEPs, the percentage of time recreation is utilized, and the primary provider of recreation services.

Use of Recreation as a Related Service

Table 7 shows that a vast majority (83.9%) of the IEPs identified that recreation as a related service was used only every once in a while or never. According to the respondents, recreation as a related service was not included on 69% of the students' IEPs. 15% of the respondents said they incorporated recreation every once in a while. 5% of the respondents reported that recreation was sometimes used as a related service. 3% respondents reported usually using recreation as a related service. Finally, less than 10% of the special needs teachers (8%) reported that recreation as a related service was always included on their students IEPs as a related service. As noted above, recreation is very seldom used, yet as shown in the literature review, recreation has many benefits such as mental and physical

Table 7 Frequency of Recreation on the IEP

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	43	68.3	69.4	69.4
	Every once in awhile	9	14.3	14.5	83.9
	Sometimes	3	4.8	4.8	88.7
	Usually	2	3.2	3.2	91.9
	Always	5	7.9	8.1	100.0
	Total	62	98.4	100.0	
Missing		1	1.6		
Total		63	100.0		

growth and development. Recreation provides a foundation for other important and more developed skills. In addition, lack of recreation skills causes lack of activity. Finally, as students learn particular skills, self-esteem increases.

All of the information gathered indicates that there is very little involvement of recreation as a related service across the state of Tennessee. It seems to the researcher that again, with only 11% of schools using recreation in the IEP, schools do not understand the importance of using recreation and the benefits it offers to individuals with specific needs.

Amount of Recreation Curriculum

According to Table 8, over half (55%) of the students enrolled in special education never participated in a recreation curriculum while 23% of the teachers responded that their program always participated in some recreation curriculum.

Table 8 Frequency of participation in Recreation Curriculum

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	34	54.0	54.8	54.8
	Every once in awhile	7	11.1	11.3	66.1
	Sometimes	4	6.3	6.5	72.6
	Usually	3	4.8	4.8	77.4
	Always	14	22.2	22.6	100.0
	Total	62	98.4	100.0	
Missing		1	1.6		
Total		63	100.0		

Eleven percent of the teachers responded that their programs sometimes participated. This was followed by the remaining 5% (3) who said their programs usually participated in recreation curriculum.

In summary, the data collected indicates that 76.2% of the respondents incorporated recreation into less than 20% of the school day. Approximately 16 % of children use 20% to 40% of their school day for recreation services. The information also shows that 2% of the children use 41% to 60% of their school day for recreation participation. Only 1% of the children spend 61% to 80% of the school day in recreational activities. Eighty to 100% of the school day is used for recreation by less than one percent.

Respondents were asked if recreation was listed in their students IEPs. Most responded no, but of those who responded in the positive, the numbers are shown in Table 9. According to Table 9, 50% of the respondents have less than 8 IEPs with extra recreational components identified. One

respondent had 27 IEPs with recreation components. Finally, only 4 respondents had extra recreation components identified on all of their students' IEPs. Table 9 illustrates the lack of importance that is placed on students receiving a recreation curriculum.

Types of Recreation

Recreation activities were extremely varied. The researcher identified 13 activity categories included in recreation (Rossman, 1995). As Figure 4 demonstrates, there was a lack of recreation participation. Less than 50% of the respondents participated. Almost half of the respondents (29) indicated

Table 9 Number of IEPs with extra Recreation Components Listed

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
.38	1	7.1	7.1	7.1
1.60	1	7.1	7.1	14.3
2.86	1	7.1	7.1	21.4
3.13	1	7.1	7.1	28.6
4.55	1	7.1	7.1	35.7
6.25	1	7.1	7.1	42.9
7.50	1	7.1	7.1	50.0
8.00	2	14.3	14.3	64.3
26.67	1	7.1	7.1	71.4
100.00	4	28.6	28.6	100.0
Total	14	100.0	100.0	

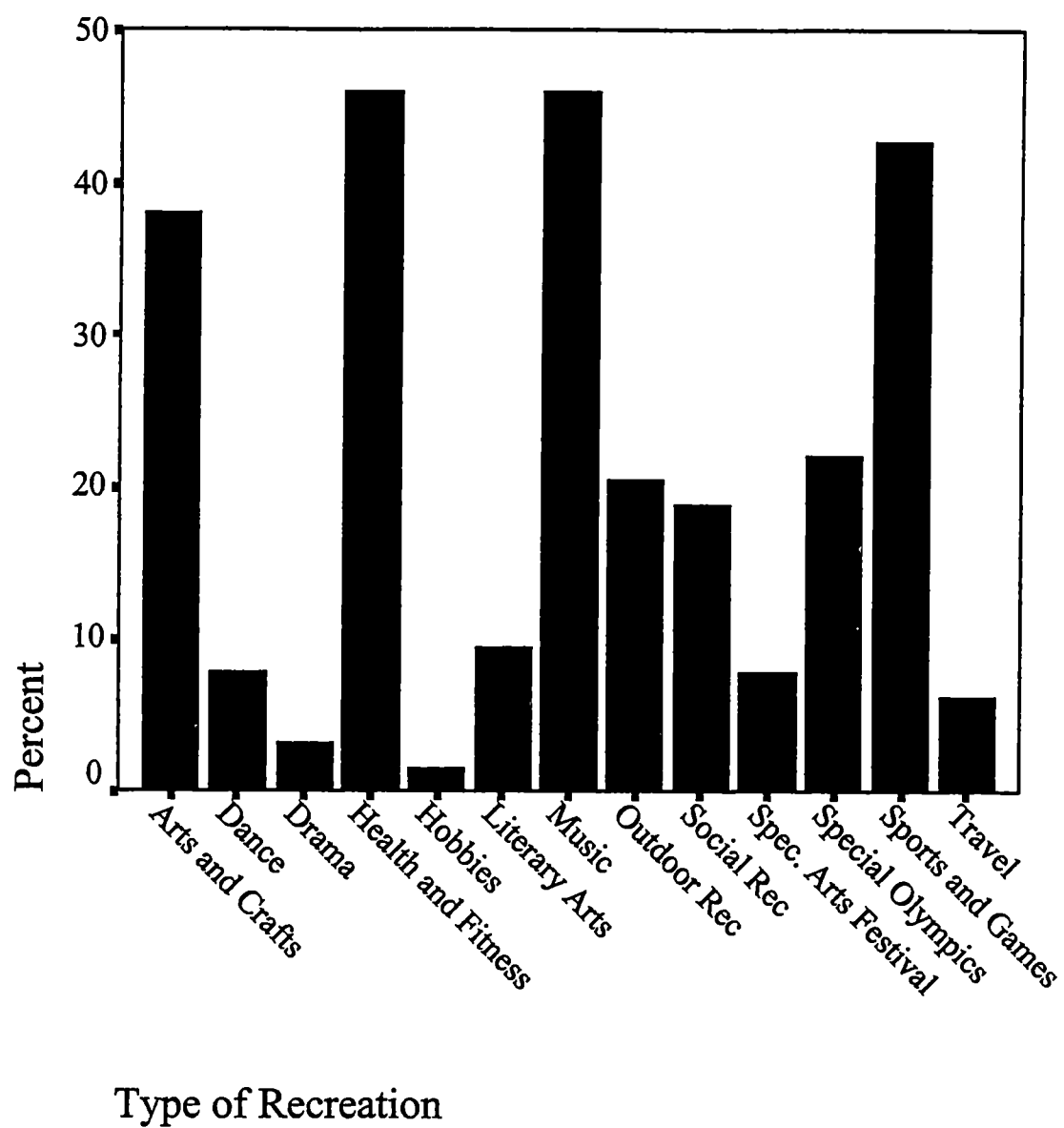


Figure 4 Types of Recreation

that their students participated in health and fitness and music, respectively. Table 10 shows that 43% (27) of the special education teachers stated that their students participated in sports and games. 38% (24) stated their students were involved in arts and crafts. About one-fifth (14) of the students were involved in Special Olympics. 21% (13) of the respondents revealed that their students participated in nature and outdoor recreation. Social recreation was an activity that 19% (12) of the respondents provided in their classes. Literary arts was used by 10% (6) of the respondents. Those activities least participated in by students included: Special Arts Festival (8%), dance (8%), travel (6%), drama (3%) and hobbies (2%). None of the respondents reported involving students in aquatics. It was not surprising that aquatics was not utilized due to the fact that many elementary schools do not have access to swimming pools.

These results were not surprising to the researcher. Teachers often have included in their academic programs, classes in arts and crafts, music, and health and fitness for elementary school children; therefore these activities would be easier to include. Travel or field trips are more difficult to arrange and are usually at an additional cost to the service provider.

Table 10 Types of Recreation

	N	%
Aquatics	0	0%
Health and Fitness	29	46.0%
Nature and Outdoor Recreation	13	20.6%
Arts and Crafts	24	38.1%
Hobbies	1	1.6%
Social Recreation	12	19.0%
Sports and Games	27	42.9%
Dance	5	7.9%
Literary Arts	6	9.5%
Special Olympics	14	22.2%
Travel	4	6.3%
Drama	2	3.2%
Music	29	46.0%
Special Arts Festival	5	7.9%

Primary Provider of Recreation Services

The primary deliverer of services is shown in Figure 5 and described in Table 11. Three-fourths (46) of the respondents indicated that the physical education teacher is the primary provider of recreation services. The other likely recreation providers consisted of the regular teacher (35%), the special education teacher (19%), physical therapist (11%), teaching assistant (8%), adapted physical education teacher (8%), and the student

Table 11 Provider of Services

	Count	%
Special Education Teacher	12	19.0%
Recreation Therapist	2	3.2%
Regular Teacher	22	34.9%
Physical Therapist	7	11.1%
Physical Education Teacher	46	73.0%
Student Teacher	2	3.2%
Adapted Physical Education Teacher	3	4.8%
Teacher's Assistant	5	7.9%
Other	8	12.7%

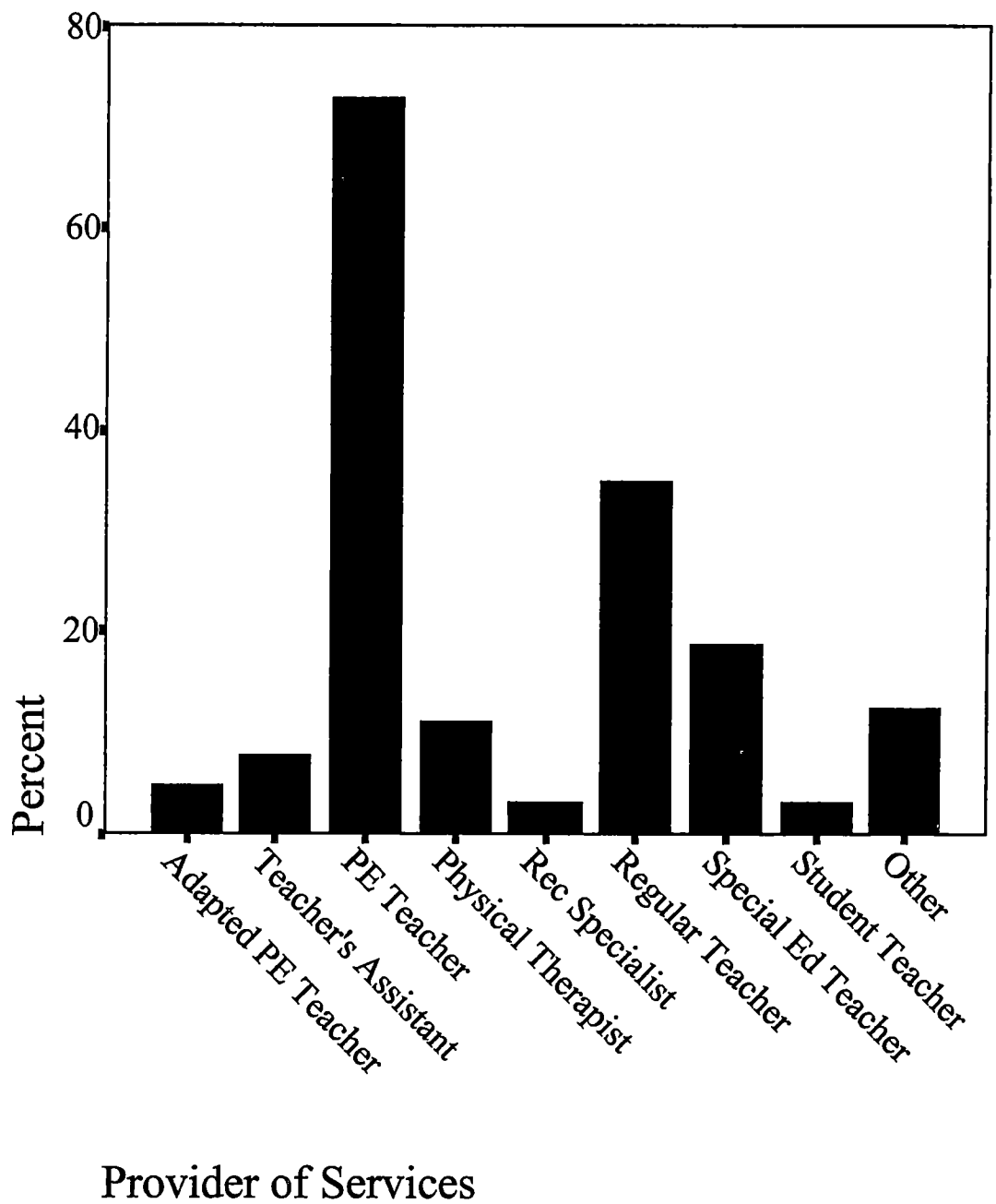


Figure 5 Provider of Services

teacher (3%). Finally, 13% respondents indicated that another member of the faculty was the primary provider of recreation services. These included music and art teachers (6), parents/community organizers/volunteers (2), and occupational therapists (1).

In summary, the vast majority of IEPs identified using recreation as a related service occasionally or never, the most popular forms of recreation curriculum included health and fitness, music, arts and crafts, and sports and games. Of the IEPs with recreation listed on them, only 6 had more than 8 recreation components listed. In terms of frequency of participation 73% of students only participated occasionally or never and the primary recreation providers were the physical education teacher and the regular teacher.

Benefits of Participation

Survey question 17 was used to identify the benefits of participation in recreation of special needs students.

Results

The researcher was interested in learning what benefits were identified by the respondents. Recognize that the majority did not respond as shown in previous charts. Of the half that did respond there was a wide range of desired benefits identified. The most commonly identified benefits

were: health reasons and exploring other life experiences (16%, respectively), and peer interaction (14%) - the peer interaction was with both disabled and non-disabled peers. Social skills, cooperation, and teamwork (10%) were also identified as benefits of recreation participation. Other benefits included were motivation (8%), self-esteem and community integration (6%, respectively), and burning energy (3%) For a complete listing of responses see Appendix H. The benefits indicated by the respondents are also supported in the literature review in Chapter 2. Respondents cited money, funding and time as problems contributing to the lack of recreation participation.

In summary, after reviewing the respondent's answers and comments on the surveys, it became apparent to the researcher that there is little to no recognition of recreation as a needed service or even as a necessary opportunity for the growth of students. The status of Therapeutic Recreation on elementary school Individual Education Plans across the state of Tennessee is almost nonexistent.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

This study was about the amount of recreation included in the Individual Education Plans for special needs children in the state of Tennessee. The following five subproblems were investigated:

1. To determine if recreation, as a related service, was included in the IEPs.
2. To determine if recreation, as a related service, was included in the provision of services for special needs students.
3. To determine if recreation was included, what aspects of recreation are incorporated into the IEPs.
4. To identify who delivered the recreation services to the special needs students.
5. To identify the desired benefits of the recreation participation.

In order to investigate these problems, the researcher developed a survey to access the amount of recreation included in IEPs.

(Appendix A). Two hundred surveys were sent across the state of Tennessee to Special Education teachers involved with special needs elementary school students. Thirty-five percent of the surveys were returned to the researcher for inclusion in the study. The data collected in these surveys was statistically calculated in the form of means and percentages. The results were presented in Chapter 4.

Findings

The researcher found the following conclusions as a result of the data collected. The majority of respondents hold the title of resource teacher. Over half of the participants hold Masters degrees and all the participants are certified in education. Over 40 respondents also claim to be certified in other areas. Recreation experience among the respondents was only 18% (11). The majority of respondents had no recreation experience or education.

The mean population of the schools involved was over 400, and ranges from 50 to 1016. Within those schools, the mean population of special education students was 60, and ranged from 10 to 260. The age range of students involved in the study was 3 years to 15 years

old. Finally, of the total population, 14% receive special education services.

Almost half of the special education students spend less than 20% of the school day receiving services. Only 14% of the students received services for 60% each day. Therefore the majority spend a large amount of the school day in regular education classes.

A large majority of the students have a learning disability. More than half of the students have some degree of mental retardation and/or speech language deficiencies. Most students do not have recreation listed on their IEPs. Only 5 respondents reported always listing recreation on their students' IEPs.

Over 50% of the participants claimed that their special education program never participated in a recreation curriculum. In addition, 50% of those who did participate had 8 or less IEPs with extra recreation components listed.

Many of the students participate in health and fitness activities and/or music. Almost half of the participants involved their students in sports and games. None of the participants used aquatics as a recreation opportunity.

Not surprising to the researcher, almost three-fourths of the programs used the schools physical education teacher for delivery of recreation services. Just over one-third of participants said that it was the regular teacher and 20% said it was the special education (20%) teacher who delivered these services.

Lastly, the most common identified benefits from recreation participation included improved health status and exploring other life opportunities. Other important benefits were peer interaction, social skills and motivation.

Based on this information, special education programs across the state of Tennessee seem to have little participation in recreation activities. Special education teachers and other service providers are not including recreation on their students IEPs. From the comments made, the researcher gathered that money, funding, and time tend to be contributing factors in the lack of importance placed on recreation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made as a result of conducting this study.

1. More studies need to focus on recreation as a related service. One problem the researcher encountered was an inability to find other research on this topic.
2. This study should be conducted again, focusing on a higher return rate.
3. Information on the benefits of recreation should be provided for more education professionals and school administrators in their academic preparation programs. More resources need to be made available to teachers in providing recreation services.
4. School systems across the state of Tennessee should make a point to become more educated about and to take more advantage of the recreation resources available to assist the students.
5. Recreation educators need to take more of an initiative to educate teacher education programs of the importance of providing potential teachers with recreation skills.
6. Physical Education teachers need to include recreation experiences in their curriculum.
7. Research projects should be undertaken to provide recreation services with the schools.

8. More recreation specialists should go into the classrooms to help promote recreation services.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Survey

For Researcher Use Only

1 2 3 4

Recreation as a Related Service across the State of Tennessee

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. If you feel the need to discontinue participation for any reason, during any part of this survey, you may do so. The purpose of this study is to determine the status of recreation in the curriculum of special needs elementary school students. Your responses to this survey will be held in strict confidentiality and will not be associated in any way with your name or school. Please answer all the questions honestly and as completely as possible. Completion of this survey implies informed consent of all participants.

Demographics:

1. What is your position title? _____
2. What is the highest level of education that you have received? (Circle one)
 - a. Bachelors degree
 - b. Masters degree
 - c. Doctorate
3. Are you certified? _____ In what is your certification? _____
4. Do you hold any additional certifications?

____ Speech Language	____ Health Services
____ Deaf Education	____ Counseling
____ Other _____	
5. Do you have any education or experience in recreation?

Population Demographics:

6. What is the approximate population of your school? _____
7. Approximately how many students do you have enrolled in Special Education services? _____
8. What are the approximate ages of your special needs population? _____

16 Who primarily delivers the recreation services? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Special Education Teacher | ☐ Recreation Specialist |
| ☐ Regular Teacher | ☐ Physical Therapist |
| ☐ Physical Education Teacher | ☐ Student Teacher |
| ☐ Adapted Physical Education Teacher | ☐ Teachers Assistant |

Other _____

17. What are the benefits that have been projected for your current recreation program?

Thank you for your time and willingness to help. If you would like to see the results of this study, please feel free to contact me directly by returning the attached information card or at the following address. I would be happy to send you any additional information that is available.

Claire Combs
1911 Andy Holt Ave.
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916
423-974-2005
combsc@rh.gw.utk.edu

Appendix B

Cover letter Sent with Survey

I am a graduate student at the University of Tennessee, majoring in Recreation and Tourism Management, with a concentration in Therapeutic Recreation. I am requesting your help in completing my thesis research. I am interested in discovering the amount of recreation involved in the IEPs of elementary school students with special needs. The results of this questionnaire will help determine the status of recreation within the school systems of the state of Tennessee. The areas of interest that will be addressed include identifying if recreation is included in IEPs, determining the amount of recreation included in the IEP, determining the nature of the services that are offered, to identify which professionals deliver recreational services, and to determine what benefits are desired from the services. Your taking the time to complete this questionnaire would be of great value to my research.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the questionnaire. This questionnaire has been sent to teachers within the state of Tennessee who are directly involved with the planning and implementing of students' IEPs and know the amount of exposure to recreation that is available. The survey should only take a few minutes of your time and can be completed easily. By completing the survey, you are agreeing to participate in this study. You may stop and remove your information at any point during the survey as this information is obtained on a voluntary basis.

There is minimal to no risk involved in completing this survey. All data that is collected will be held in very strict confidence. Your name or school's name will not be identified with your responses. Only an academic advisor and the researcher will have access to your information. All information received will be kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Also enclosed, you will find a postage paid envelope for you to return the survey at your earliest convenience. In order for the results to be compiled in time, please return this survey within two weeks. If at anytime, you have any questions, feel free to contact me directly. Thank you for your time and cooperation. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Claire Combs

Researcher

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423-974-2005

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Appendix C

Postcard for follow-up information

If you would like to obtain a summary of the information gathered in this survey, please return this card and I will get the requested information to you as soon as possible.
Thank you.

Name _____

Address _____

Appendix D

List of Tennessee Counties

Tennessee Counties

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Johnson | 34. Overton | 67. Hickman |
| 2. Carver | 35. Clay | 68. Lewis |
| 3. Washington | 36. Jackson | 69. Lawrence |
| 4. Sullivan | 37. Putnam | 70. Wayne |
| 5. Unicoi | 38. White | 71. Perry |
| 6. Greene | 39. Van Buren | 72. Humphreys |
| 7. Hawkins | 40. Sequatchie | 73. Houston |
| 8. Cocke | 41. Hamilton | 74. Stewart |
| 9. Hancock | 42. Marion | 75. Benton |
| 10. Hamblen | 43. Grundy | 76. Henry |
| 11. Grainger | 44. Warren | 77. Weakley |
| 12. Jefferson | 45. Dekalb | 78. Carroll |
| 13. Claiborne | 46. Smith | 79. Henderson |
| 14. Campbell | 47. Macon | 80. Decatur |
| 15. Union | 48. Trousdale | 81. Hardin |
| 16. Anderson | 49. Cannon | 82. McNairy |
| 17. Knox | 50. Coffee | 83. Chester |
| 18. Sevier | 51. Franklin | 84. Madison |
| 19. Blount | 52. Moore | 85. Hardeman |
| 20. Loudon | 53. Bedford | 86. Gibson |
| 21. Monroe | 54. Rutherford | 87. Obion |
| 22. Roane | 55. Wilson | 88. Lake |
| 23. Morgan | 56. Sumner | 89. Dyer |
| 24. Scott | 57. Lincoln | 90. Crockett |
| 25. Fentress | 58. Marshall | 91. Lauderdale |
| 26. Cumberland | 59. Giles | 92. Tipson |
| 27. McMinn | 60. Maury | 93. Haywood |
| 28. Meigs | 61. Williamson | 94. Fayette |
| 29. Polk | 62. Davidson | 95. Shelby |
| 30. Bradley | 63. Robertson | |
| 31. Rhea | 64. Cheatham | |
| 32. Bledsoe | 65. Montgomery | |
| 33. Pickett | 66. Dickson | |

Appendix E

List of Additional Disabilities

Additional Disabilities

Health Impaired/ ADHD/ADD	18
Developmentally Delayed	5
Functionally Delayed	2
Physically Impaired	2
Gifted *	2
Dyslexia	1

* Gifted students consist of those students who are identified as having or demonstrating certain abilities of high performance. Often times these areas include intellectual, creativity, academic, leadership ability or the performing and visual arts. These students may require advanced services that are not necessarily provided by the school. (Exceptional Lives)

Appendix F

Desired Benefits of Recreation

Desired Benefits of Recreation

1. Health Reasons	(10)
2. Explore other life options	(10)
3. Peer Interaction	(9)
4. Social Skills – cooperation & teamwork	(6)
5. Motivation	(5)
6. Community Integration	(4)
7. Gross Motor skills	(4)
8. Self Esteem	(4)
9. Burn extra energy	(2)
10. Least Restrictive Environment	(1)
11. Funding	(1)
12. To have a full-time teacher	(1)
13. Music & Art Appreciation	(1)
14. N/A or No response	(29)

VITA

Clarissa Marie Combs was born on October 15, 1975 in Charlotte, North Carolina. She graduated from Ooltewah High School in Ooltewah, Tennessee in June 1993. She then entered The University of Tennessee in September of the same year. Clarissa graduated in May 1997 with a Bachelor of Science in Special Education with a concentration focusing on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired.

Clarissa re-entered the University of Tennessee as a graduate student. While there, she was offered a job as a graduate assistant in the Department of University Housing, where she stayed until completing a Master of Science degree with a concentration in Therapeutic Recreation. Upon completion of her course work, Clarissa interned at Sunshine Industries. Clarissa received her masters degree in May of 2000.