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ABSTRACT

Court mandates and legislation have established the groundwork for the provision of equal educational opportunity and an appropriate education for culturally and linguistically different exceptional students. This process has in turn demanded that training programs be established to prepare teachers and other personnel who can meet the special needs of these individuals. Without adequate numbers of bilingual special education and related area training programs, implementation of the provisions of litigation and legislation will be impeded. This study surveyed Institutes of Higher Education to determine the number of bilingual special education, bilingual school psychology, bilingual diagnostician, and bilingual speech language pathology programs in the United States. The ethnic makeup of trainees, area of concentration, targeted language, and level of programming were also investigated. The number of minority faculty providing the specialized training and the type of funding the programs received were also examined. The results indicate that, while there has been an increase in programs and trainees, the numbers of those currently enrolled and graduates still do not meet current needs, according to prevalence figures. There are shortages of trainees in certain areas of exceptionality as well as at certain levels of training. Federal funding appears to be crucial for the continuation and enhancement of training.

An Examination of Bilingual Special Education and Related Training

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BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The issue of overrepresentation of minority children in classes for exceptional children and the use of culturally biased tests and placement procedures was a first step in addressing the needs of culturally and linguistically different children in the United States. A number of court decisions (*Arreola* v. *Santa Anna Board of Education*, 1968; *Covarrubias* v. *San Diego Unified School District*, 1971; *Diana* v. *California State Board of Education*, 1970; *Lora* v. *Board of Education of the City of New York*, 1984) established groundwork for the national mandate for an appropriate education for culturally and linguistically different students that was provided by PL 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act.

Despite legal and legislative mandates, however, appropriate educational programming for culturally and linguistically different exceptional children requires specially trained personnel. These personnel must be trained to act as resources in the assessment and referral process as well as in developing programming and implementing appropriate educa-

tional strategies that address both cultural and linguistic issues, as well as those related to the handicapping condition.

TRAINING NEEDS BASED ON PREVALENCE FIGURES

During the decade of the 1970s, the U.S. population grew by 11.6% overall, while the number of Hispanics increased by 61% and Asian Americans by 233%. Together these two groups will represent 12.3% of American residents by the year 2000 and 18.1% by 2030, according to the Population Reference Bureau (Crawford, 1989). Recent demographic data (Roger & Olsen, 1989) indicate that in some states reporting recent figures, 22.5% (more than one student in every five) *may* be limited in English proficiency. This ratio is six times larger than that for limited English proficient (LEP) students reported nationwide.

To date, prevalence figures of culturally and lingusitically diverse exceptional (CLDE) students have been generated by applying proportions of exceptional children in the general population to LEP figures. For example, figures from New Mexico indicate that 12% of the school population is children with special needs. Because the number of LEP students is estimated to be 272,644, it would follow that approximately 32,717 CLDE students require bilingual special education services. This method of calculation is based on estimation rather than acutal prevalence figures. Another problem in obtaining accurate prevalence data is that states fail to consistently or completely report CLDE student data.

In summary, actual prevalence figures, vital to support the need for bilingual special educators and support services, are difficult to determine accurately. However, the demographic figures do suggest that our educational systems must take immediate steps to prepare teachers and supportive staff to adequately serve the educational needs of culturally and linguistically diverse populations. If they do not, court mandates may well be addressing this issue for professionals.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF BILINGUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINING

Formal bilingual special education training programs are relatively new. The Council for Exceptional Children sponsored the first major conference directed toward minority exceptional children in Las Vegas in 1973. Prior to that time, university efforts consisted of recruitment of minorities with bilingual language skills into regular special education training programs. In the mid-1970s, bilingual education tenets were introduced into special education programs. They dealt primarily with cultural variables and second language acquisition.

Two studies of that period (Baca, 1974; Sanua, 1976) showed that bilingual education approaches were beneficial for the bilingual student with special needs. Bilingual education methodology was reported to be successful with exceptional children (Evans, 1980; McConnell, 1981) during the early 1980s. Formal bilingual special education training programs were begun at a few institutions with specific courses supplementing the regular special education training program.

In the spring of 1980, the Association for Cross Cultural Education and Social Studies, Inc. (ACCESS, Inc.) conducted the first seminar in bilingual/bicultural special education personnel preparation. Bilingual/bicultural educators and their special education colleagues were provided with a common goal of developing the first set of personnel competencies for this population. These first competencies and further recommendations were published the following year, and numerous professionals in the field soon followed with recommended competencies (McLean, 1981; Prieto, Rueda, & Rodriguez, 1981; Salend, Michael, & Taylor, 1984). The introduction of *The Bilingual Special Education Interface* text by Baca and Cervantes (1984) provided a theoretical framework to the field of bilingual special education. This framework helped isolate training programs with a common vision towards meeting the needs of CLDE students. Since then, numerous professionals in the field (Baca & Amato, 1989; Baca & Cervantes, 1989; Cegelka, Lewis, & Rodriguez, 1987; Fradd, Weismantal, Correa, & Algozzine, 1988; Ortiz & Yates, 1981; Salend & Fradd, 1986) have identified the lack of trained personnel as the leading problem in the field today.

Two studies have attempted to investigate the status of existing bilingual special education training programs in this country (Baca, 1984; Medina, 1986). In the earlier study, Baca, reporting on 30 universities in the western United States, attempted to classify their individual training programs into three categories: (1) those that used traditional training programs primarily recruiting bilingual minority students who had bilingual language skills, but no specific training in bilingual education; (2) those in which bilingual special education components were infused into existing programs; and (3) those that include specific bilingual special education coursework and a bilingual special education practicum experience. He

found that 29% fell into category 1, 29% into category 2 and 42% into the final category. He also found that the separate bilingual special education program (third category) produced the smallest number of graduates.

In the later study, Medina (1986) attempted to identify all bilingual special education teacher training programs, the curriculum, certification, funding sources, and if program directors felt they were meeting the needs of their regions. A questionnaire was mailed to 115 institutions identified as possibly having such a program. Thirty-eight (33%) responded. Of those responding, 16 (42%) indicated they currently had a bilingual special education training program and 22 (58%) stated that they did not have a program. Data of those reporting indicated that their programs had graduated 218 teachers between 1980 and 1986. When asked what percentage of needed graduates was being provided by their program, respondents gave a range of 5% to 80%, with a mean of 19%. When asked about the approximate number of graduates needed in their region, they responded with a range of 10 to 750, with a mean of 20. Twelve programs offer a master's degree with credential and 7 without credential. Only 4 institutions offered a doctoral degree. In addition, only 12 indicated that they provided student financial assistance.

Based on these two studies, we can conclude that there is a shortage of preservice training programs. The lack of qualified bilingual special education trainers graduating from doctoral programs was also evident during this period.

To the institutions of higher education (IHE) that are involved in the training, federal funding provided through the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (currently Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services) and Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, Title VII training programs has allowed for the existence of bilingual special education training programs. There is little doubt that without this source of funding the majority of the existing programs would not and could not exist.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This national study was designed to examine numbers of existing bilingual special education teacher training and other related programs. Targeted ethnic groups and the types of training programs were also of interest. The investigation included the number of trainees as well as the number of minority faculty designated to do the specialized training. The study concentrated on six specific areas:

1. The number of IHEs with teacher training programs in bilingual special education and related areas
2. Number and ethnicity of students enrolled in programs
3. Number of students who had completed specialized training since 1980
4. Ethnic makeup of faculty responsible for training
5. Student language competency requirements
6. Funding source(s)

METHODS

The first process in the study was the identification of IHEs with training in areas related to bilingual special education. This included bilingual speech-language pathology, bilingual diagnosis, and bilingual school psychology, as well as bilingual special education teacher preparation. Participants were identified through lists of Title VII funded projects including those for special populations, the investigators' own knowledge of existing programs, and contact with program directors who might be aware of institutions training in bilingual special education areas. The data were collected through the use of a national survey distributed to the identified colleges and universities. A questionnaire was developed and field tested to determine time required to fill out the questionnaire as well as clarity of questions addressed. The final form consisted of 10 questions concerning the six issues listed above plus recruitment efforts.

A cover letter was sent to each of the IHEs outlining (a) the purpose of the study; (b) a designated timeline for questionnaire return; (c) requests for names of other IHEs and contact persons overlooked in the identification process; and (d) an offer to disseminate results to interested institutions. A total of 42 participants were identified and 29 surveys were returned, constituting a 69% return.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Availability of Programs

There were a total of 21 programs training in bilingual special education and related areas. Of the 42 IHEs identified as having bilingual special education training, 19% no longer had a program at the time of contact. One university claimed it did not have a program but continued to encourage bilingual education majors to take interdisciplinary courses in special education. One program had lost funding just prior to receiving the questionnaire. All programs were federally funded; the majority were located in the southwest, particularly California.

The oldest program indicated that it was established in 1970. Approximately half of the programs had only been in existence since the mid-1980s. The other half had been established in the past 3 years. As would be expected, those programs that had been in existence the longest had larger numbers of students. This analysis indicates that bilingual special education training is relatively new and it could potentially take some time to gear up to meeting the need. With cuts in federal funding and the elimination of minority teacher training in this area as a priority, one can only speculate about whether the need will be filled.

Types of Programs

A total of 21 programs across the nation identified themselves as providing training programs designed to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically different students (see Table 1). Only 5 of those 21 programs provided training in bilingual speech–language pathology, bilingual school psychology, and bilingual educational diagnosis. One such program was unique in that it trained Native American educational diagnosticians exclusively. While it has been established that teachers trained to work with CLDE students are needed, it is also important to note that support and ancillary personnel are also in critical demand.

The majority of programs were teacher training programs; however, training was lacking in some exceptionalities. Of particular concern was training in education of gifted students and students with communication disorders. The small number of programs training teachers to work with the learning disabled was also a concern. Ortiz and Yates (1981) and Tucker (1980) have pointed to the large numbers of culturally and linguistically different students in classes for the learning disabled. With the small number of training programs in this area, it is obvious that needs cannot be met. Half the programs did not identify specific areas of training, and it is possible that some of those institutions do training in all areas or do cross-categorical training. When prevalence figures are considered, it is obvious that the numbers of training programs do not match the need.

The largest percentage of programs recruited Hispanic students primarily (43%), and their training also concentrated on the Hispanic handicapped. Thirty-three percent of the programs trained and recruited students from at least two ethnic groups (see Table 2).

Interestingly enough, language proficiency did not have to be demonstrated in 43% of the training programs despite the emphasis on bilingualism. In another 48% of the programs, some type of language proficiency was required (see Table 3). Respondents did not indicate whether language proficiency was tested prior to the initiation of training or after training or whether proficiency in the target language was assumed based on conversational use.

Trainee Profile

According to data on students currently enrolled in training programs (see Table 4), it is apparent that Hispanics comprise the group of which the largest numbers are being trained in all areas of bilingual special education, including at the master's level. In fact, across all ethnic groups, training at the master's level appears to be most frequent. This is encouraging in that it is anticipated that bilingual special educators will therefore have a relatively higher level of training.

When data on students enrolled in programs are compared to the numbers of students who have com-

TABLE 1

Types and numbers of programs

Area of Concentration	Number*
Bilingual Special Education Training	
Special education/ESL	2
Learning handicapped	2
Severely handicapped	1
Resource specialist	1
Mildly handicapped	1
Emotionally handicapped	1
Deaf	1
Multiply impaired	1
Area not specified	11
Bilingual speech-language pathology	1
Bilingual school psychology	2
Bilingual educational diagnostic	2

*Total is greater than 21 because some programs reported more than one area of concentration.

TABLE 2

Ethnic groups training directed toward

Ethnic Group	Percentage
Hispanic only	43%
Native American only	14%
More than one group (Chinese, Pacific Islander, Portuguese, etc.)	33%
No group specified	10%

TABLE 3

Language competency requirements

Language proficiency required	48%
Language proficiency not required	43%
Language proficiency requirements not specified	9%

TABLE 4

Numbers, ethnicity, and training of students currently enrolled

	A	H	NA	PI	O
Certification only	0	64	0	0	0
Paraprofessional	0	25	0	0	0
BA	11	52	3	4	0
MA or MS	27	278	15	2	8
PhD	2	13	10	0	0
Diagnostician	0	0	10	0	0
Speech-language pathology	0	10	3	0	0

Note: A—Asian
H—Hispanic
NA—Native American
PI—Pacific Islander
O—Other

TABLE 5

Numbers, ethnicity, and degrees of students completing training since 1980

	A	H	NA	PI	O
Certification only	0	13	0	0	0
Paraprofessional	0	0	0	0	0
BA	0	21	0	0	0
MA or MS	11	377	36	6	5
PhD	0	7	0	0	0
Diagnostician	0	12	0	0	0
Speech-language pathology	0	16	0	0	0

Note: A—Asian
H—Hispanic
NA—Native American
PI—Pacific Islander
O—Other

TABLE 6

Minority faculty hired to train in bilingual special education

Degrees	Asians	Hispanics	Native Americans	Other
MA/MS	6	7	2	2
PhD	2	9	2	0
EdS	0	0	1	1

pleted training since 1980, it appears that the number of trainees is increasing (see Tables 4 and 5). Again, the largest group of trainees are Hispanic and most training is occurring at the master's level. It is also apparent that the numbers of bilingual special educators trained at the doctoral level have increased somewhat but not enough to meet the upcoming needs for more training programs. Table 6 indicates that the numbers of minority faculty at the doctoral leval to do the training are already low. The existing training programs do not seem to be reversing that trend.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While the numbers of minority students in our schools and special education programs continue to rise, our training programs preparing teachers to deal with CLDE students are not rising at the appropriate rate to meet the need. More bilingual special education teachers, bilingual school psychologists, bilingual educational diagnosticians, and bilingual speech-language pathologists are needed. The numbers of bilingual special education doctoral students should also be increased to meet the need for an expansion of future training programs.

Existing bilingual special education training programs need to continue to have a common vision. They need to network to plan for future needs and to subsequently direct their focus. Networking can also solidify recruitment efforts for all levels of programming. Competencies that were developed a decade ago should be reexamined for relevancy in practice. It is also time to follow-up and evaluate how past bilingual special education trainees are doing, where their job responsibilities lie, and whether they continue to be employed in bilingual special education.

In an era of decreased federal funding for programs addressing the needs of minority children, it is critical to make legislators aware of the ramifications of not funding bilingual special education training. The lack of funding will undoubtedly lead to a decrease of training efforts, a decrease of teachers trained to work with CLDE students, and a repeat of history in our schools with regard to minority students in special education. Historically, schools have overrepresented some minority groups in classes for the handicapped and underrepresented them in classes for the gifted. Legislation and litigation have primarily dealt with issues of equal educational opportunity and appropriate education. In providing bilingual special education training, we are ensuring that CLDE students will receive an equal educational opportunity and an appropriate education.

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