

The Bridge from Segregation to Inclusion....A Long Journey



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of Special Education*



The University of British Columbia

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PREFACE

The biennial conferences of the International Association of Special Education (IASE) are designed with the intent of bringing special educators, families, and other interested professionals and individuals together to share ideas and experiences, celebrate accomplishments, and of course create and renew friendships. This year the IASE is proudly sponsoring the 13th biennial conference on the theme “*The Bridge from Segregation to Inclusion....A Long Journey.*” Most would agree that it has been a long journey towards the realization of inclusive education for learners with special needs. Most would also agree that that ultimate goal has not been achieved across the globe. Hence, the need to continue exploring and sharing ways through which we can realize this goal. This conference was designed to do that.

It is our hope that these proceedings will be helpful to you in your endeavour to advance the education of learners with disabilities around the world. We have included the contact information for the presenters in case you would be interested in learning more about the presentations.

We thank all the presenters who submitted their abstracts for inclusion in the conference proceedings and all those who contributed to making the conference a success. Finally, we appreciate and honor all of you who are committed to making a difference in the lives of the many children who are challenged by disability around the world.

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TOO AUTISTIC TO PLAY: THE PLAYGROUND AS A BRIDGE TO INCLUSION

**Llyween Couper
Dr. Dean Sutherland
Dr. Anne van Bysterveldt**

Conceptual Framework and Background

Time in the school playground has an important place in the lives of all children including the most complex and vulnerable children, those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. However, despite the increased numbers of children with autism attending mainstream schools very little research has investigated the experiences of these children in their playgrounds (Ingram, Dickerson-Mayes, Troxell, & Calhoun, 2007). Neither has the physical design or playground equipment been seen as having the potential to increase the frequency of group play and overall social interactions (Yuill, Streith, Roake, Aspden, & Todd, 2007).

An inclusion perspective is expected to increase opportunities for social interaction and play between children with ASD and their typically developing peers (Anderson, Moore, Godfrey, & Fletcher-Flinn, 2004). Yet time in the playground is often spent in isolation, being shadowed by an adult or removed to “play” on a computer. Inclusion is not just about placement in regular classrooms. It is about feelings of belonging in the whole school community and that includes being able to participate in the school playground without feelings of anxiety, isolation, or vulnerability.

Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder often lack sufficient speech to communicate their social or academic needs or have impairment in play skills such as symbolic or socio-dramatic play including imaginative or pretend play (Brewster & Coleyshaw, 2010) (Lydon, Healy, & Leader, 2011). The skills to play the simplest game requiring interaction with a peer often fills the child with autism with fear and anxiety (Palmer, 2007). Despite the challenges in forming friendships children with ASD still want to be part of a group of friends and the school playground is the place where this can happen (Bauminger & Kasari, 2000; Brewster & Coleyshaw, 2010). The measure of an effective school playground will be its success in moving these isolated students into the everyday play of their classmates (Doll & Brehm, 2010). Researchers remind us that children with autism are often victims of bullying and this unacceptable aggressive behaviour often occurs in playgrounds (Doll & Brehm, 2010; MacArthur & Gaffney, 2001; Morewood, Humphrey, & Symes, 2011; Rowley et al., 2002). When incidents of negativity are reduced competent social interactions are prompted, peer acceptance is increased, friendships form and are maintained. Having friends and siblings around may be the biggest deterrent to becoming a target for bullies according to MacArthur and Gaffney, 2001 who believe that schools where children have friends are safe places for children with disabilities.

Method

Participants in the Study

The participants are three boys with autism who are nonverbal and aged 7 to 11 years. They attend their local rural schools (50 to 300 pupils) and are in mainstream classrooms throughout the day participating with their peers and siblings in their school playgrounds at morning play 10.30-10.45am and lunchtime 12.30-1.30pm. The three playgrounds are fenced and include large grassed spaces and sealed areas. There are trees, gardens and playground equipment such as Adventure Playgrounds, drinking fountains, bike sheds, rugby goal posts and netball hoops. All children play anywhere regardless of age or gender with a teacher on duty during each play period.

Procedure

Playground observations used The Ingram-Troxell Playground Observation Checklist used as a guide for the observations and data analyses (Ingram et al., 2007). Information described the physical environment, choices of activities, evidence of engagement in play or play skills with peers (Osterling, Dawson, & McPartland, 2001). Semi-structured interviews gained the perspectives of those closest to each child considering what they considered was a good or not so good play day and what could be changed.

Results from the Study

From the observations the researcher investigated the playground experiences of the three boys. The checklist of ten behaviours included social interactions as well as language and motor skills in a free play environment. In addition the semi-structured interviews with those closest to the students were analyzed and emerging themes identified.

Discussion

A positive playground experience has an enormous impact on the development of skills in social competence, feelings of belonging, self esteem and well being for all children including those with ASD (Doll & Brehm, 2010; Sullivan, 2000; Yuill et al., 2007). When time in the school playground is valued by teachers as a curriculum resource it has the same status as time in the classroom (Couper, 2011). Inclusion for everyone in these three school communities included an investigation of the physical environment as well as how professional practice and policies promoted inclusion in the playgrounds.

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BUILDING INCLUSION FROM THE GROUND UP: A REVIEW OF WHOLE SCHOOL RE-CULTURING PROGRAMS FOR SUSTAINING INCLUSIVE CHANGE

Christopher McMaster

Introduction

Sustainability is a central success factor in creating inclusive school cultures. The model of professional learning employed must be designed so that the learning that takes place over a period of time is reinforced through experience based reflection. Learning that involves developing theoretical knowledge as well as the skills to enquire into practice has been demonstrated as essential to sustaining that learning (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007), and the framework of professional learning is most effective when it incorporates the exploration and acquisition of theoretical understanding. This paper will look at examples developed by the US state of Michigan, as well as the Canadian province of Ontario, which have been trialled in local school districts and have been embraced with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Finally, the *Index for Inclusion* will be examined, which was first developed in the United Kingdom and has enjoyed varied use throughout the world. In each of the whole school development programs reviewed below, there is an in-built process not only of review, but of collective reflection, collective planning, and joint action. These processes have been identified as essential for achieving sustainability in professional learning and development (Timperley, 2007).

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Whole Schooling

The work of the Whole School Consortium and Wayne State University College of Education in Michigan has been directed at inclusive developments to the whole school (Peterson, 2007). Principles of Whole Schooling include: empowering citizens in a democracy; including all; authentic, multi-level teaching; building community; supporting learning; and partnering. Whole Schooling is outlined as a whole school project beginning with indicator/questionnaire guided self-assessment and discussion, followed by creating a shared school vision, planning, implementing and reflecting on the process. The person centred planning work of Pearpoint and Forest (1992) have been incorporated into the school re-culturing process to help ensure a shared vision and a voice for diverse members of the school community. Writing in 2004, Whole School Consortium founder Michael Peterson (2004) acknowledged worrying trends in society, such as the growth of narrow and rigid teaching methods; the standardisation of curriculum and assessment; the prevalence of segregation, by class and ethnicity as well as ability; and the presence of autocratic or top down administrative practices. Whole schooling represented a framework to challenge these trends and create alliances beyond national borders.

The Index for Inclusion

The *Index for Inclusion* has been widely used and validated in numerous locations around the world. The *Index for Inclusion* was designed as a process consisting of three dimensions: producing inclusive policies, evolving inclusive practices and creating inclusive cultures (Booth & Ainscow, 2011, p. 13). The *Index for Inclusion* was designed to be used by individual schools. Initial activities in the *Index* process involve reviewing the existing school culture through questionnaires and indicators. The latest (2011) edition contains questionnaires for staff, parents/caregivers and children, and schools are encouraged to adapt these review aids to suit their particular location and community. Through analyzing the results of this process, action plans are developed, followed through, and reviewed for further development. The *Index for Inclusion* has been used in over 30 countries around the world and translated into thirty-seven languages as school communities try to clarify the meaning of inclusion and build inclusive school cultures and practices (Booth & Ainscow, 2011).

Indicators of Success

A Canadian example of a whole school approach, *An Inclusive School Culture - Indicators of Success* was developed organically by Community Living Ontario (2005) and brings together the concepts of inclusion and social justice. The *Indicators of Success* have been brought into 132 schools in Ontario. The result of that exercise was to develop an Action Plan that was then required to be inserted into the individual School Improvement Plans (these are an annual requirement for all schools in Ontario). The *Indicators of Success* has been adapted to other Canadian provinces, such as New Brunswick. There the program, *Creating an Inclusive School: Indicators of Success* (New Brunswick Association for Community Living, 2011) shows cross fertilisation between provinces (it was introduced by Community Living Ontario through information sessions held in 2008) and integration with the work of Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow. Also like the *Index for Inclusion* and Whole Schooling, *Creating an Inclusive School* sees the development of inclusive schools as a foundation for ensuring an inclusive society. There are further resonance with current thought with the advocacy for Universal Design for Learning, which involves attempting to create a curriculum and learning environment that “allows the student to control the method of accessing information” (Kraayenoord, 2007, p. 392). The synonymous term employed by Whole Schooling Consortium is “multi-level authentic instruction.”

Conclusion

The structure of whole school programs in inculcating inclusive values and practices reflect evidenced based research for sustainability in professional learning and development. Whole school re-culturing programs such as the *Index for Inclusion*, Whole Schooling, and *Indicators of Success* offer a mechanism through which school communities can move towards the aspirations of inclusion. The strength of the school wide programs reviewed is their collaborative nature, involving all members of the school community, and the praxis of reflection, planning, acting, and reviewing outcomes to begin another cycle of exploring the nature, definition and practice of inclusion.

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SYSTEMATIC CHANGE: CREATING MODEL SCHOOL SITES FOR STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT NEEDS

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Kara Halley, Ed.D.

Introduction

Despite the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) mandate for least restrictive environment, some programs for students with significant support needs (SSN) fail to be inclusive, utilize segregated classrooms, continue to focus on functional life skills and ignore potential academic needs, including participation in standards-based education (Browder & Spooner, 2006; Director's Survey, 2005; Quintana, personal email July 7, 2006; Ryndak & Billingsley in Kennedy & Horn, 2004). The goal of this project is to increase student achievement (outcomes) as well as teacher satisfaction and retention by providing training, coaching and consultation on evidence based practices.

In response to the need for program improvement, stakeholders in Colorado developed a rubric of Quality Indicators (QIs) to assess the use of evidence based practices in educational programs for students with significant support needs. The COMASP Project, sponsored by the Colorado Department of Education in conjunction with the Colorado State Professional Development Grant (SPDG), is a systems change project that uses the QIs to assist school districts in providing quality programs for their students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) or Significant Support Needs (SSN).

Methodology

The Colorado Model Autism and Significant Support Needs Program (COMASP), a professional development and program improvement project, was Colorado's attempt at creating model programs for students with significant support needs in several regions of the state using a case study and coaching approach to systems change. Using the Quality Indicators for Assessing Individualized Services for Students (K-12) with Significant Support Needs (CDE 2010), programs were assessed, an action plan developed collaboratively, and technical assistance was provided for program improvement based on assessment data and collaborative planning with the school team. An instructional coach, funded by the project, provides technical assistance regularly at each site. Coaching has been shown to be the most effective professional development method for implementing change in schools (Knight, 2001).

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected to establish program improvement. Specifically, QI data is collected a minimum of three times during the first year of the project (initial, mid-year, and end of year) and a minimum of one time per year following for four years to ensure sustainability of systems change. The goal is to reach 80% full implementation of QIs.

Participants

Districts applied to the Colorado Department of Education to take part in this project. Five districts participated in this study. This includes a preschool, elementary school, middle school and high school/transition program in each district. The number of participants ranges from 8-12 at each school. This paper addresses the progress at the elementary schools in the four districts.

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All participants are self-nominating, have a vested interest in the significant support needs program at the school and can include members such as the following: principals, assistant principals, special education directors, special education coordinators, special education teachers, general education teachers, speech language pathologists, physical and/or occupational therapists, nurses, paraprofessionals, and parents. Individual participation is voluntary.

Data were collected based on the SSN Rubric of Quality Indicators a minimum of three times (pre, post, and follow-up). The rubric measures evidence based practices in ten areas including inclusive practices, collaboration, instruction, transition, and communication. This form is completed by members of the educational team, the coach and the advisor, three times per year during the first year, and one time per year following for three more years. Additionally, non-identified student outcome data is collected by the special education teacher and submitted to the project coach. This process allows the project coordinators to determine student progress, but ensures that individual student identification is not known to the SE teacher.

Results

Results indicate that all schools made progress on all areas of the QIs. The areas consistently scoring low at the elementary level were collaboration, self-determination, and instruction. Schools determined target areas and addressed these areas over the course of at least one year. The goal was to ensure each school averaged at least 80% compliance with the quality indicators and this goal has been met. The long-term goal is to ensure these schools maintain their level of compliance while building a comprehensive model site at each level Pre-K through Transition.

Recommendations

With appropriate guidance, schools can and do develop quality programming for students with significant support needs. Results of this project demonstrate the potential to impact not only educational service delivery for students with significant support needs, but policy and decision making in educational settings that provide those services.

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CROSS-CULTURAL MODELS OF COLLABORATION: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

**Ellen R. Browning, PhD
Patricia Caro, Ph.D.**

Background Information and Research

As a global community it is imperative that we provide cross-cultural opportunities for future educators. The importance of global understanding is not new and in fact, peace education was prominent in the educational philosophies of Dewey and Montessori as well as other educators before them (Dewey, 1900, Montessori, 1949). While higher educational systems support programs that contribute to economic growth other aspects of cross-cultural understanding have been neglected. As recent as 2011 Colin Power in an address to the World Universities Forum highlighted that there is still emphasis on economic growth and advocated the importance of global study with specific strategies for strengthening education for international understanding. This paper shares models of collaboration to serve as mechanisms for brainstorming and as starting points for professionals concerned with global partnerships.

Models of Collaboration

One traditional model of collaboration involves a faculty member and preservice education students traveling to a different country and working with staff and children at a local school for a period of time. This model was used by a faculty member at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point with undergraduate special education students enrolled at the university and staff from Windhoek, Namibia in the summer of 2012. In order to develop the program, repeated phone contact with the principal of the special education site was required. Use of email and other forms of communication were not successful. Through these monthly contacts, gradual expectations and roles were established for the students. A unique aspect of this program was the use of student mentors.

Another form of collaboration was influenced by the strong belief and commitment that any collaboration must be a true exchange, with opportunities for hosts from one country being able to be the visitors to the other country. Thus the faculty from a private college in Wisconsin had visited India with students and it was time to have teachers from India visit the United States. Due to travel costs visa difficulties etc., this was not feasible at this time and thus it was decided that teachers of children with special needs in a small nonprofit school in India would send case studies of children in their program to the professor teaching an undergraduate course regarding children with special needs at the small private college in Wisconsin. Undergraduates in special education would study these cases, suggest recommendations, and engage in learning terms etc. that they were unfamiliar with, and then have the opportunity to discuss the cases and have questions answered by the director of the school in India.

The final method of collaboration involved education graduates teaching for a year in a different country, in this case Thailand, and returning to share experiences and promote this type of international engagement with undergraduate education students.

Lessons Learned

With the Namibia experience, one of the most valuable lessons was certainly the importance of journaling, and providing questions for daily journaling as well as leaving journal entries open for students to determine the topic. There were many insights into a different culture; one student noted that "I found it interesting that the children were called 'learners, instead of 'students.'" It was important the Namibian learners did not feel that they were left and on-going interest was not present. Many of the Namibian students were abandoned by their families, so it was important that they did not feel abandoned by the university students. The undergraduate students sent packages to specific children and to the school. Letters were mailed to maintain that relationship. It was also impressive how students used "Skype" to talk to the students in the "wee" hours while the students were in school. The university students increased their comfort zone to welcome the new culture, celebrate it, and incorporate some of the values into their daily lives once back in the United States.

With collaboration through the use of case studies, we purposely did not use photos or Skyping for we wanted to determine whether we could reach some understanding through the written word. It became apparent that misunderstandings are created in translations, particularly when there is more than one person translating. For example the translation for moderate Down Syndrome was "50% Down Syndrome". We realized that the undergraduate students did not readily seek out in depth information regarding the culture of origin of the children rather expected that they would be given this information. When the term "bhajans" appeared in the case study students asked what it meant rather than seeking the information via the internet etc. Students did appreciate that children develop similarly across cultures and were impressed by similarities in educational strategies used with children.

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What was obvious with the teacher exchange with Thailand was the lack of involvement with institutions of higher learning. It would be feasible for institutions of higher learning to coordinate these experiences in undergraduate's senior year and assist them with these opportunities, providing financial as well as collaborative assistance. After the exchange there could be mentoring opportunities and assistance in securing teaching positions.

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IMPROVING THE NOTE-TAKING SKILLS OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES THROUGH STRATEGIC NOTE-TAKING

Joseph R. Boyle, Ph.D.

For secondary students with Learning Disabilities (LD), the stakes are ever increasing to learn concepts and content in science and other content-area classes. More and more states are now requiring that students pass end-of-the-course tests to advance in courses and graduate from high school. Moreover, a large number of students with disabilities, up to 45%, now attend college and post-secondary institutions (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey, & Shaver, 2010). For these students learning content from lectures has become a critical, but often overlooked skill, which is needed in secondary classes and post-secondary institutions.

Even though teachers use a variety of instructional methods (e.g., inquiry learning, direct instruction, labs and activities) in classes, such as science, to help students learn content, teacher-led lecture learning is still the dominant form of instruction used by teachers in middle schools and high schools (Moin, Magiera & Zigmund, 2009; Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007). For example, Putnam, Deshler, and Schumaker (1993) discovered that teachers used lectures 44% of class time in seventh grade science classes and 49% of the time in tenth grade science classes. Students with LD who can not integrate effective note-taking skills during lectures will end up missing out on important concepts and content (Boyle, 2010a; Scruggs, Mastropieri, Berkeley, & Graetz, 2011), perform poorly on course tests and quizzes (Boyle 2010a), and in the end, are at risk for earning lower grades in content area courses (Deshler, Schumaker, Bui, & Vernon, 2006).

Recording notes allow students to actively follow the lecture, to consciously select important from unimportant information, and to rephrase it in their own words (Steimle, Brdiczka & Muhlhauser, 2009). When students use note-taking skills during lectures, they increase their encoding of lecture content. Recording notes not only helps students recall information from lectures but, note-taking among K-12 students facilitates their *understanding* of lecture content, that in turn, enhances retention of information. Finally, because teachers frequently construct tests from information found in their lectures (Putnam et al., 1993), taking notes helps students to preserve the content of the lecture so that they can have it for later review as they prepare for class tests and quizzes.

Despite the importance of note-taking skills for learning content during lectures, students with and without disabilities are rarely taught formal note-taking skills (Beirne-Smith, 1989; Fulk, 2003). In fact, it is believed that many students learn note-taking skills on their own before reaching middle and high school (Beirne-Smith, 1989). As a result, most students are poor note-takers. To illustrate this point, Boyle found that while typical middle school students with no learning disabilities (NLD) record about 25 to 27% of total lecture information (Boyle, 2010a), students with LD recorded 50% fewer total notes overall, recorded 43% fewer important lecture points, and had test scores that were 20% lower than peers with NLD. In a qualitative analysis that followed up

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on this data, it was discovered that many of the lecture points that students with LD recorded in notes were partial lecture points, incorrect lecture points, or were simply absent from their notes (Boyle, 2012).

In order for students with LD to perform better a note-taking a strategic note-taking intervention was developed to assist students with note-taking. Originally developed and used with college students (Boyle, 1996), strategic note-taking was refined for use with high school students with mild disabilities (Boyle & Weishaar, 2001), and later the CUES strategy was integrated into the training for middle school students with LD (Boyle 2010b). Results from Boyle and Weishhar (2001) found that high school students with mild disabilities who were trained to use strategic note-taking increased the number of words recorded in notes (i.e., 175 words) compared to students who used conventional note-taking (i.e., 21.5 words). Likewise, students in this group outperformed control group students on measures of comprehension (i.e., 37.4% to 27.1% favoring the experimental group), immediate recall (i.e., 37.5 words to 14.3 words favoring the experimental group), and long-term free recall (22.2 words to 3.9 words). Results from the Boyle (2010b) study found that middle school students who were taught strategic note-taking outperformed control students on the comprehension test (9.9 to 8.5 favoring the experimental group), immediate free recall measure (40 words to 17.6 words favoring the experimental group), long-term free recall (28.4 to 8.8 favoring the experimental group) and number words in notes (109 to 41 favoring the experimental group). Variations of the strategy and strategic note-taking paper found similar effects with students with LD improving in the number of notes recorded and increasing gains in pre to posttest on science modules.

In conclusion, students with LD often experience cognitive deficits and these are reflected in difficulties while recording notes during lectures. As previously shown, deficits in note-taking lead to poor performance on comprehension and recall measures of lecture information. Despite these deficits, students can be taught note-taking skills, via strategy instruction, and can increase their note-taking skills and in the process, improve comprehension of lecture content.

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PREPARING TEACHERS FOR INCLUSION: MODELS AND STRATEGIES

Ahon Adaka T.

Introduction

Inclusion has been recognized as a philosophy for attaining quality education for all children, especially those who were traditionally excluded from mainstream education due to exceptionality. Inclusive education is seen a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education (UNESCO, 2005). This means that all children have the right to a quality education in the least restrictive environment that caters to the extent possible to the individual needs of all learners.

However, one of the factors that poses a serious challenge to successful implementation of inclusion is the lack of trained personnel in meeting this paradigm shift to inclusive education. The shift to inclusion targets essentially children with disabilities, a group that has been traditionally excluded from full educational opportunities. This approach involves full accommodation and participation of children with disabilities into regular classroom settings, allowing them to learn together with their non-exceptional peers. In essence, this practice lays the foundation for quality education for *all* children, disability notwithstanding.

Components of Capacity Building for Inclusive Education

In preparing teachers for successful implementation of an inclusionary system of education, three areas need focus. These include: the attitudes of teachers and other support staff; reforming pre-service teacher education programs to ensure that graduates of the reformed programs enter the profession with the prerequisite pedagogical skills and knowledge to work in an inclusive class; and in-service training to improve the capacity of regular and special teachers already teaching.

Attitude of Teachers and Other Support Staff. Obtaining attitudinal change involves a number of methods such as organizing training workshops for educators and key stakeholders on general inclusive education techniques, especially those which highlight how such techniques can benefit *all* children by improving overall quality of teaching. Also, integrating awareness about inclusive education into schools' regular professional development activities is needed as well as integrating the benefits of inclusive education into initial training programs for student teachers. Mass media activities and materials that emphasize the value of inclusive education can also be developed.

Reforming Pre-Service Teacher Education Programs. Pre-service teacher training programs need to be reformed to inculcate fundamental knowledge and skills of inclusive education, such as understanding the needs and abilities of children with special needs and the pedagogic skills such as instructional accommodation and differentiation, the use of assistive technology and alternative assessment practices. These are indeed good models for the training of pre-service teachers for inclusion.

In-service Training of Teachers. It is essential that teachers already teaching be provided skills and techniques for inclusive education. In-service training programs are effective strategies for improving the quality of an entire educational system for all children regardless of their needs. Inclusive education methods are child-centered, employing active and participatory learning techniques that improve teachers' capacity to teach all categories of children both with and without disabilities (Vietnam,2010).

Models for Inclusive Education

The models to be discussed here include two discussed by the Inclusive Education Network Victoria (2006):

1. *A cluster based model of coordination and professional development.* This model emphasizes professional development of teachers in terms of capacity building by ensuring that appropriate expertise is available at all levels of the system and also provides for on-going opportunities for learning and the improvement of practice for teachers, currently in service and those returning to service. A cluster based model can be effective because it has the potential to support the professional learning of teachers in schools, pre-service teachers and those returning to teaching and to embed this professional learning in practice.
2. *Whole School Model:* Inclusive education is not just about providing additional support or aid; it is about an integrated curriculum driven by student learning and accountable funding. This explains equity funding to improve the learning outcomes of students with disabilities, thus building on and strengthening the Government agenda for a more equitable resource model that is inclusive of all students.

The above models are underpinned by the following essential components for Teacher Preparation Programs and are introduced based on the principles of inclusion.

- i. The Teacher Preparation Programs should include subjects with *high social and community content* because they need to be sensitive to the needs of students and the immediate community.
- ii. The Inclusive Teacher *recognizes individual differences*. The educational intervention is oriented to diversity and promotes learning strategies for all (equality).

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- iii. The *collaborative work* among stakeholders facilitates inclusion and needs to be promoted in the Teacher Preparation Program. Inclusion is founded on a collective of teachers, team sharing knowledge, decision making, problem solving and generating actions in order to improve the school and to increase the learning of all. As a consequence, the collaborative work is a source of dialogue, co-teaching and updating.
- iv. Pre-service and in-service teacher programs must be based on the *interpretative and critical paradigms*. This allows encounter with others collectively and interpret insight into environments and circumstances. This allows for dialogue and collaboration. Such dialogue and collaboration are key elements in inclusive education.
- v. *Contextual Preparation*. This entails allowing identification of diversity as an enriching element for teacher preparation. It has three great steps: re-significance of their own school experience of future teachers; approaches to various contexts of school children; and professional practices in real environments. For teachers to promote inclusive education, their training should link directly with the educational services in so called contextual professional practice. This approach, in our experience, must be presented to all throughout the training process with multi-directional flow between theoretical and experiences close to educational field.
- vi. *Cross Categorical/Multi-tiered formation*. Diversity needs a global and common vision; philosophy, values, legal framework, language and shared knowledge as learning theories, special educational needs, support systems, educational intervention; strategies for large and small groups and individuality, tutoring and curricular adjustments. Inclusive education must characterize all training teacher programs, offering skills and common benchmarks for everyone regardless of education levels and areas of specialization in education.
- vii. *Mentoring*. New teachers must participate with experienced teachers at least during the first two years. This includes dialogue sessions, reviews of situations, decision-making arrangements and work plans, among others to provide the following to the new teacher: intervention (guidance), facilitation (advice), and cooperation (co-responsibility) (IEA, nd).

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CHALLENGES OF PROVIDING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN NIGERIA

Clara K. Adeyemi

Introduction

The education of children with visual impairment in Nigeria started with the efforts of individuals and Christian organizations who became interested in the welfare of persons with disabilities. The Federal Government's interest in the education of children with disabilities did not start till the early 1970s when the then military head of state, Major General Yakubu Gowon, declared government's interest in special education (Uzor & Uzor, 2000).

A major achievement of special education in Nigeria in the 20th century is the government policy on the education of persons with special needs which is contained in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004). Two of the aims and objectives of Special Education were clearly stated by the NPE as: "to give concrete meaning to the idea of equalizing educational opportunities for all children, their physical, sensory, mental, psychological or emotional disabilities notwithstanding" and "to provide adequate education for all children with special needs in order that they may fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation."

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Brief History of Educational Services for Children with Visual Impairment in Nigeria

A landmark in Special education in Nigeria is the establishment of special education centers for children with visual impairment by missionaries. The first school for individuals with visual impairment started in 1940 in Kano. Other centers followed in Gindiri, 1953; Kaduna, 1955; Oji River, 1958; Ogbomoso, 1958 and Lagos, 1962 (Mba, 2002). The realization by the Federal Government that mainstreaming is a realistic form of education for children with special needs led to the establishment of special education services in regular secondary schools thereafter. Some of these schools admitted children with visual impairment.

Challenges of Providing Educational Services for Learners with Visual Impairment

Poor Legislation and Lack of Legal Backing

Although the Federal Government and some State Governments (e.g. Lagos state, 1957; Plateau state, 1981) had enacted laws or legislation providing for the education and equal opportunities for people with disabilities (Obisesan, 2006), these legislations or policies are not properly implemented. There is no legal backing to punish discrimination or to prosecute employers who refuse to employ people with disabilities.

Exclusion from Policy Formulation and Decision Making

Disabled persons are excluded from policy formulation and decision making bodies in matters concerning them. Members are simply drawn from ministries and other parastatals. This results in unrealistic and wasteful investments because such members are ignorant of the priorities or pressing needs of individuals with disabilities.

Inadequate Personnel

There are inadequate specially trained personnel for most categories of special needs. Visual impairment is particularly affected because of the special reading and writing skills, namely braille. Also, other supportive staff in mainstream schools are unfamiliar with braille and so are unable to help the children in the resource centers.

Funding

Special and integrated schools, where children with visual impairment and other categories of special children are educated, are inadequately funded. This means there is not enough money to buy the necessary equipment or materials required for their education, as well as the funds needed to pay the numerous special and supportive staff and to provide all other special facilities required.

Non-Effective Advocacy Groups

Many professional associations have been formed to represent advocacy groups who have common interest in the education of children with special needs. They meet annually or periodically to discuss special education programs and advocate on behalf of persons with special needs. However, most of these associations have lost the main purpose for which they were formed. They hold annual conferences as a tradition after which members disperse to their various locations and do nothing. This and other challenges have continued to dog the provision of adequate educational services for learners with visual impairment in Nigeria.

Suggestions

The Government should implement fully the provisions stated in the National Policy on Education. Most of the recorded legislations are mere policy statements and need to be translated into laws. There is need for legislative provisions addressing a wide range of services for children with visual impairment such as identification, assessment and intervention programs, personnel preparation and administration. There is need for increased professional preparation through pre-service and in-service training for teachers, more research on teaching strategies and counseling of persons with visual impairment and their families, establishment of Braille press and libraries for production of Braille materials, and more departments providing educational support to individuals with visual impairment. Finally, professional associations in special education should liaise with government and different agencies to ensure adequate implementation of their communiqués after their conferences or workshops.

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ACCESS ACADIA: AN INCLUSIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

M. Lynn Aylward Ph.D.

As part of an ongoing national and international dialogue, Canadian disability advocacy groups and academic activists have worked to situate the discussion of disability issues squarely within the realm of human rights and citizenship (Frazee, 2002). Participation in higher education and employment are two key markers of full participation as citizens (Greenholtz, Mosoff, & Hurtado, 2007). While access to post-secondary education has improved greatly for many students with disabilities in North America, those with intellectual or developmental disabilities have not seen the same level of improvement in access as their peers without those labels.

The need for increased opportunities for diverse learners to acquire life and work skills that will facilitate transition to the community has been clearly documented in many Canadian jurisdictions (Aylward, Farmer, & MacDonald, 2007). However, secondary special educators and transition teams do not usually present going to college or university as a viable option for continued learning after high school for students with intellectual disabilities. In fact, it is not uncommon to see students with intellectual disabilities remain in public school settings until the age of twenty-one while their peers without disabilities go on to a variety of post-secondary settings (Casale-Giannola & Wilson Kamens, 2006). In many cases, students with intellectual disabilities experience a “transition to nowhere” when they leave high school and are often destined to a life of “clienthood” rather than the possibility and “promise of adulthood” (Aylward, Farmer & MacDonald, 2007; Ferguson & Ferguson, 2000).

Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) is a growing Canadian initiative that gives students with intellectual and developmental disabilities opportunities to continue learning in a post-secondary environment, such as a college or university (Hughson, Moodie, & Uditsky, 2006). While specific definitions of IPSE programs will vary, researchers and program staff generally define IPSE as a set of practices that enables students with diverse learning needs to enroll in generic college and university experiences rather than specialized programs that target persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (Hafner, 2008). Motivation to learn is the principle criterion for admission, and individualized supports are provided in a way that facilitates a post-secondary experience that is comparable to that of IPSE program participants’ peers.

Benefits for students with intellectual disabilities through their participation in IPSE programs have consistently been observed in the areas of improved academic and personal skills, employment outcomes, self-confidence, self-advocacy, transition to community, and independence (Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez, & Will, 2006; Thompson, 2010). Further to these benefits for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, studies contain evidence that IPSE programs have a positive influence on institutional structures as well as faculty, staff, and all students connected to the programs (Grigal, Hart, & Paiewonsky, 2010).

In the fall of 2012, the School of Education at Acadia University in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education began the first provincial IPSE program on a university campus: *Access Acadia*. Working from a Disability Studies in Education framework (Danforth, 2006), the *Access Acadia* program offers a new way of conceptualizing, creating, and sustaining diverse learning communities on post-secondary campuses. One program aim is to prompt divergent thinking about the label of disability in order to disrupt traditional deficit conceptualizations. The program challenges assumptions about who belongs on university campuses; about academic achievement in a post-secondary setting, and about how we live and learn together as diverse members of a contemporary inclusive society. *Access Acadia* is a participatory audit program that was developed to address the need for inclusive post-secondary education in the Atlantic Provinces. The program is for students who self-identify as having an intellectual or a developmental disability and who would not meet the current admission criteria set by the university. *Access Acadia* students choose courses in which they are interested and that relate to individualized learning goals and to potential employment paths.

As the *Access* students attend classes the coordinator, peer mentors and volunteers of the *Access Acadia* program support the students by shaping course content and assignments to meet their unique individual needs and abilities. Efforts are also made to facilitate leisure activities in order to establish a social network for students and welcome them into the Acadia community.

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Access Acadia students who complete a program of study may graduate with a certificate of completion in: (a) Faculty of Arts, (b) Faculty of Science, (c) Faculty of Professional Studies, or (d) Interdisciplinary Studies.

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METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS FOR SMALL SAMPLES AND SINGLE SUBJECT STUDIES

George Chitiyo
Morgan Chitiyo
Aggry Tongai Musiyarira

The purpose of this presentation is to highlight the options that are available to researchers and practitioners regarding the analysis of data for (i) small samples often used when studying populations of learners with special needs and (ii) single subject studies.

Methods for Small Samples

Nonparametric Statistical Techniques

When samples are small, it is often difficult to ascertain the assumptions that are necessary in order to conduct more powerful

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parametric tests such as z tests, t tests, ANOVA, and more advanced multivariate techniques. Secondly, small sample sizes limit the degrees of freedom necessary for more rigorous statistical tests. In situations like these, one would have to use nonparametric statistical tests. When using nonparametric tests, “one has to realize though that non-parametric tests have less statistical power (and hence a higher probability of committing a type II error) compared to parametric tests (Chitiyo, Chitiyo & Musiyarira, 2011).

A list is given below of some nonparametric tests that one can use given specific instances when their parametric counterparts (also given) cannot be used.

	Parametric	Nonparametric test
Correlation analysis for assessing the relationship between ordinal variables	Pearson’s r (computed when one has interval level data)	Spearman’s rho (computed when one has ordinal data)
	Dichotomous variables	Cramer’s phi
	Nominal by nominal	Cramer’s V
Comparing two independent groups	Independent samples <i>t</i> test	Mann-Whitney U test
Comparing two dependent groups	Paired samples <i>t</i> test	Wilcoxon T test
Comparing three or more groups	One way analysis of variance	Kruskall-Wallis H test
Repeated measures for three or more groups	Repeated measures analysis of variance	Friedman’s test

These days one does not need to do any computations by hand. Almost all statistical analysis packages (including online websites) are able to compute nonparametric statistical tests. The key things important to note are: which test to use a priori so that one can select the most appropriate test to best answer their research question, and; how to interpret the results from the analysis; and making decisions based on the output from the analyses. Some of the most important things that researchers and clinicians will find useful are (i) statistical significance, (ii) confidence intervals of the estimates from the statistics computed (where applicable), and (iii) effect size (where applicable).

Data Analysis Methods for Single Subject Designs

Single subject designs are useful in educational and clinical settings when one wants to modify behaviors or outcomes that are specific to certain individuals. Treatments are administered to the individual subject (and sometimes the “subject” can be an entity” which is not necessarily an individual person). Withdrawal designs are commonly used as well as multiple baseline designs. Before selecting a design, one must consider the design that can best address their end goal, as well as looking at the threats to validity and ethical issues e.g. of withdrawing treatment.

The use of visual displays is very common in analyzing data from single subject studies. From experience working with different kinds of statistical software, we find that Excel 2007 and later versions are very good at generating graphs.

Reporting the Results

Researchers need to explicitly describe their sample, and to explain the data analysis procedure in detail before they report the results. Where applicable, this should be followed by the tests of assumptions for the particular statistical test they used. According to Huck (2008), “Those researchers who talk about (and possibly test) the assumptions...deserve credit for being careful in their use of [*that particular*] inferential technique” (p. 281). If the assumptions necessary for a particular statistical test are not met, it is not unreasonable for the reader to mistrust the results from that analysis unless the test is robust to violations of those assumptions. Justification for the choice of statistical procedure must be provided.

Researchers need also identify and highlight the threats to internal and external validity of their study so that readers are cautioned about the extent to which they might use the findings from the study. It is worth noting that single subject studies usually have significant external validity threats.

References and Resources

In addition to the references, this section consists of a list of useful resources pertaining to research design and basic statistics.

- A guide to free statistical software: <http://statpages.org/javasta2.html>
- Basics of research design and statistics: www.socialresearchmethods.net
- Choosing between parametric and non-parametric tests: <http://www.graphpad.com/www/book/choose.htm>
- Computing various statistical tests online, including sample size determination: <http://home.ubalt.edu/ntsbarsh/Business-stat/otherapplets/SampleSize.htm>
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DOES LANGUAGE MATTER? COMPARING INSTRUMENTATION TO MEASURE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TEACHING ALL STUDENTS

Jess L. Gregory
Lori A. Noto

The current educational landscape includes many initiatives vying for the attention of educators. Response to Intervention, Common Core Standards, differentiated instruction and inclusion comprise some of the current initiatives. Inclusion is the initiative with the longest history going back as far as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1976. The full impact of the inclusion movement began in the 1990's when special education leaders and researchers began advocating for inclusion (Stainback & Stainback, 1996).

A key factor impacting the success of inclusion is the attitudes of the educators. The educator's attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities are influenced by several elements. The preparation of the educators is a primary contributor. The perception of the educator with regards to his/her skills to include all students is built on the foundation of his/her teacher preparation. Another factor is the educators' perception of the impact the type of disability will have on the successful inclusion of students with disabilities. Students with some disabilities have been perceived to be better candidates for inclusion than other students with disabilities that are perceived to be more "needy" (Cook, 2001).

The current study provides an opportunity to investigate the impact of language on the validity and reliability of an attitudinal instrument, one instrument developed to measure the attitudes of educators toward the inclusion of students with mild to moderate disabilities (Gregory & Noto, 2012) and the second instrument developed to measure the attitudes of educators toward the inclusion of all students without the modifiers mild to moderate. The study was conducted to determine if "language matters" in the perceptions of educators toward inclusion.

The Attitudes Towards Teaching All Students (ATTAS) instrument is a version of an existing scale that included the qualifiers "mild to moderate" to describe a student's disability. The ATTAS does not include the "mild to moderate" qualifier. Dedrick, Marfo, and Harris (2007) found that while an undifferentiated label of "students with disabilities" may be preferable for item length, but without the qualifiers "mild" or "severe" the responses to items ignore the differentiations that educators may make. Schuman and Presser (1977) found that teachers' responses to items shifted based on the inclusion of the qualifiers "mild" and "severe." They found that the responses became more negative as the wording was shifted from "students with mild disabilities" to "students with disabilities" and were the most negative when the wording "students with severe disabilities" was used.

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Method

The pilot study for the ATTAS instrument was conducted at a private university in New England in the 2011-2012 school year. Forty respondents completed the ATTAS instrument including demographic questions and nine items that were modified from the ATTAS-mm instrument (Gregory & Noto, 2012). The current study included a sample of mainly female (80%) educators who were new to the profession (93% had 0-4 years experience) and were teaching at the elementary level (70%). As new as these educators were to the profession, over half (58%) indicated that they want to pursue school administration at some point in their career.

The setting and sample are similar to those used to establish the psychometric properties of the ATTAS-mm and the only change to the instrument was the removal of the qualifier “mild to moderate” from the original instrument. Descriptive analyses were conducted as were dimension reduction techniques to determine whether the instrument loads on the three factors as predicted by the tridimensional model of attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1972) and the ATTAS-mm.

Results

Unlike the ATTAS-mm, the ATTAS did not load onto three factors, Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral as predicted. Using factor analysis, it was determined that the cognitive factor was retained in the ATTAS instrument, but the affective and behavioral components merged when the qualifier “mild to moderate” was removed. The disappearance of the three factor result prompted a further investigation of the distribution of responses for the nine items. The items associated with the cognitive domain of attitude (Items 1, 2, & 3) demonstrate more normal distribution whereas the items measuring the affective and behavioral factors were truncated and highly skewed.

Item 1 is more negative than the other two items in the cognitive group, 30% of respondents disagreed with “Most or all separate classrooms that exclusively serve students with disabilities should be eliminated” 25% strongly disagreed, and 10% very strongly disagreed. Only 20% of respondents indicated a positive response. Item 2 (Students with disabilities can be more effectively educated in regular classrooms as opposed to special education classrooms.) was centered on “neither agree nor disagree” (42.5%) with slightly more negative than positive responses (35% negative, 22.5% positive). The last item in the cognitive scale, item 3 (Students with disabilities should be taught in regular classes with non-disabled students because they will not require too much of the teacher's time), had a relatively normal distribution.

These results are very different from the remaining six items. For items 4, 5, and 7 there were no negative or neutral responses. Over three quarters of respondents selected “very strongly agree” on these items (4, 77.5%; 5, 80%; 7, 82.5%). Items 6, 8, and 9 did include more of the scale, a few respondents were neutral and for each item there was one response of disagree. This single negative choice was not one individual, but two. One respondent disagreed with items 6 and 9 and a second individual disagreed with item 8. Even with more of the scale represented, the responses were overwhelmingly positive with over 40% of individuals selecting “very strongly agree” (6, 42.5%; 8, 57.5%; 9, 47.5%).

Conclusion

The results of this study confirm Dedrick et al.'s work that the question wording impacts the psychometric properties of an instrument, but they contradict the findings of Schulman and Presser. In this study the removal of the qualifier “mild to moderate” shifted the affective and behavioral responses to be overwhelmingly positive. This may be a result of the overall shift in education since Schulman and Presser published their work in 1977. Current pre-service educators have experienced inclusion in their own schooling as children. Their educator training has stressed the importance of providing access to the curriculum for all students regardless of ability level and they have seen an increase in accountability measures aimed at ensuring all students have an opportunity to achieve at high levels. These shifts in the educational landscape have made it clear that there is a “right” answer to including all students in the regular education classroom.

According to the results of this study, respondents felt very positively about inclusion and indicated overwhelmingly positive intentions in their behaviors, but these positive elements of their attitudes were incongruent with the cognitive portion of their overall attitude towards teaching students with disabilities. It may be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study to determine if the affective and behavioral domains become more moderate with this group of respondents as they gain field experience, or whether the cognitive component better aligns in a future study. A qualitative component to the instrument could be added to explain the reasons behind the truncated distribution of data for the affective and behavioral domains. As it stands, the ATTAS is not a psychometrically sound measure of educator attitudes towards teaching all students without the qualifier “mild to moderate.”

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REMEMBERING WHAT WE KNOW...A DOZEN GREAT IDEAS TO SUPPORT DIVERSE LEARNERS

Elizabeth M. Dalton, Ph.D.
Britt Tatman Ferguson, Ph. D.

Contemporary education has come to be influenced not only by research, but also by highly promoted topics in the field, such as in journals or at conferences. Additionally, considerable attention has been placed on student achievement as measured by the use of state standards and standardized testing. Furthermore, emphasis specifically on accountability (but not necessarily on student support) has created a difficult situation for teachers. Which approach will teachers be expected to use this year? How much, if any, training will they receive? Will sufficient time be planned for, or allowed, in order to learn and implement the 'expected' intervention before a new intervention is introduced? How does all this affect teachers' consistency of instruction and the learning of the children and youth? Trying to address every topic and incorporate each new technique may be both time consuming and not very effective.

Experience is one of the greatest teachers.... And a wealth of experience exists in the fields of education and special education. Together, the authors reach back into our own training and experience as special educators, with shared years of experience equaling close to 70 years in total, to identify and present one dozen tried-and-true techniques that will help every teacher to better address the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms. Our goal is to help new teachers to "fill their toolkit" with strategies and solutions that *really work*, and to remind ourselves and our experienced colleagues of the value of the phrase, "if it isn't broken, don't fix it".

After reflecting on the many techniques and instructional strategies we use and value, we identified the 12 most important we would like to share. In combination, these tools provide every teacher successful techniques and a solid base for working effectively with all students. Without them, a teacher may falter and students flounder.

Planning and Foundational Considerations

Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, et al., 1956), Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954), task analysis and basic classroom management help us understand students' needs and plan what we are going to do. Maslow's hierarchy of needs reminds us to ensure that our students are ready to learn, and if not, to identify their missing needs so they can be met. Bloom's taxonomy enables us to classify learning objectives according to the instructional levels and needs of students, so that we provide a base of understanding and build upon it. Task analysis is a technique that allows us to divide content and skills to be taught into manageable, measurable, and attainable units. Basic classroom management, which includes classroom organization, classroom rules and consequences, and supervision by the teacher, is essential to ensure that an effectual learning environment is established and maintained.

Instructional Methods and Strategies

Formal and informal methods that teachers would be wise to know and use include a Continuum of Teacher Behaviors, Direct

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Instruction, Cooperative Learning, See-Say-Hear-Do, and Universal Design for Learning. Bredekamp & Rosegrant (1995) identify a Continuum of Teacher Behaviors ranging from Nondirective to Mediating to Directive, each of which is necessary for a teacher to know and use in response to students' needs. Direct Instruction, a rigorously structured and consistent approach to teaching and learning that is based upon regular and varied practice, has been found to be highly effective across learners and environments (Adams & Engelmann, 1996). Cooperative Learning, when applied with rigor and fidelity, has been shown to increase achievement and retention; improve students' attitude towards school, subjects, teacher and peers; improve self-esteem; and increase psychological health (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1994). See-Say-Hear-Do refers to multi-sensory approaches to instruction which may be more natural and stronger because information is sent to the brain through multiple sensory channels (visually, auditorily, orally, and / or kinesthetically) (Shams & Seitz, 2008). Universal Design for Learning increases learning success by providing multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement that address learner variation and allow all individuals the opportunity to learn (Ralabate, 2011).

Materials and Activities

Instruction is enhanced by materials as well as activities. Basics for teachers to incorporate into their repertoire include Practice, Simple Tools that Support Learning, and the Montessori method using Practical Authentic Choice. Dr. Ethna Reid researched good readers and found that they practiced, practiced correctly, practiced quickly and practiced to mastery. Virtually any student who practices in this way succeeds in learning (personal communication, 1977.) Simple tools, such as manipulatives and color coding, are inexpensive and support students by providing multi-sensory means of comprehending the spoken word. Maria Montessori's method (Montessori, 1912) for educating children with varying needs is characterized by an emphasis on learning independence, freedom within limits, and respect for the child's natural psychological development. Through the process of discovery, and learning to make real and practical choices through working with actual materials, students engage in and learn tasks and concepts. While first published one century ago, the Montessori method continues to live on through the Montessori Institute and Montessori teacher preparation practices.

In summary, these twelve instructional practices stand the test of time, and can strengthen and enrich every teacher's toolbox of strategies and approaches to reach each and every student.

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ACCEPTABILITY, READINESS AND PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE OF TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE SECONDARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Grace Chinenye Nweke
Bibiana Ifeoma Okoli

Introduction

It can't be gainsaid that teachers are nation builders and a nation requires the services of good teachers to develop. Teaching as a profession that requires interest and commitment on the part of the teacher regardless of the little or big rewards that come from it. Hence, teachers determine what happens in a classroom.

In many developed countries of the world, the rate at which children with special needs are educated in inclusive classrooms is increasing (Kassari, Freeman, Bauminger & Alkin, 1999). The present trend in special education is towards inclusive practices with the best interests of each individual student in mind (Friend & Bursuck, 1999). However, Garuba (2003) opines that the readiness for acceptance of inclusion varies across countries and continents of the world. While countries within the advanced economies have gone past categorical provisions to full inclusion, Nigeria is still struggling to get her footing. Despite the government's intervention in educating persons with special needs in mainstream schools with effect since 1974, Nigeria like many West African countries is yet to fully put inclusion into practice. Prior to this intervention of the government, educating persons with special needs was not considered an important investment; hence, persons with special needs were educated in special schools (Nigerian Embassy – Education, 2000). This intervention of the government seemed to be the beginning of inclusive education in Nigeria. However, despite the Nigerian government having an early vision of inclusion, inclusion in Nigerian schools has had a very slow start and is currently not widely practiced partly due to the lack of attention by the government in implementing the provisions for inclusion in the National Policy on Education to the letter.

Educating students with and without disabilities in the general classroom has been described as a way of ensuring that all children have equal access to quality education. The success of this inclusive education rests on the quality of teacher preparation for this is intrinsically linked to the quality of education provided by the teacher (Forlin, 2004). To make inclusive education work and actualize its goals in Nigeria therefore, there is need for teachers to accept this approach to education, be ready to be a part of its actualization, and possess the teaching skills required to teach in an inclusive educational system. It is against this backdrop that this study investigated the acceptability, readiness and pedagogical knowledge of teachers for inclusive secondary education in Nigeria. The study therefore answered the following research questions:

1. Do special and regular Nigerian secondary school teachers welcome inclusive education?
2. Are the teachers willing to adopt inclusive approaches in their classrooms?
3. Do the teachers possess the skills required to make inclusive education work?

In answering these questions, quantitative survey research design of the questionnaire type was used to extract information from both special and regular education teachers in schools having both regular and special students across the country. Of the 200 questionnaires administered, one hundred and ninety four were returned.

The first section of the questionnaire gathered information on teachers' acceptance of inclusive education and it was discovered that teachers did not accept inclusive education because they did not see it as a good approach to learning and that students with special needs might not learn well as expected.

The second section gathered that teachers are not ready for inclusive education because of lack of training, poor remuneration, the special attention needed by learners with disabilities, insufficient time and large class size problems. This is in line with Forlin (2001) who stressed that teachers express concerns about their lack of preparation for inclusion and for teaching all learners.

The third section gathered information on pedagogical knowledge of teachers on inclusive education and it was discovered that teachers lack the pedagogical knowledge for inclusive education. Teachers reported that they lack experience and are not equipped with strategies appropriate for teaching in inclusive classrooms. This is in line with Hegarty (1994) who stressed that the lack of empowerment of teachers and the restriction in methods of delivery are problematic issues that presently affect the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. Forlin (2001) suggested that one of the greatest barriers to the development of inclusion is because most teachers do not have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to carry out this work. Also, Jordan, Schwartz and McGhie-Richmond (2009) reported that schools often exclude, or refuse to include, certain students on the grounds that teachers do not have the requisite knowledge and skills to teach them.

Based on the following findings, the study concluded that Nigerian secondary school teachers have not been prepared for and are not ready to adopt inclusive education hence, they do not accept it as a better approach to learning. Again, the pronouncement of the Government in the National Policy on Education is not enough to make inclusion a success; implementation of the policy is highly required. However, it seems that lecturers in colleges and universities have not been training teachers on inclusive education.

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Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- There is need to send lecturers in Nigerian Colleges of Education and Universities abroad to be trained on inclusive education so that upon return, they can in turn, train the trainers on knowledge and skills required for working in inclusive classrooms. This training on techniques for facilitating inclusive education should then be extended to the secondary school teachers and the principals who will put it into practice for the benefit of all the students.
- There is also need to integrate pedagogical knowledge of inclusive education into initial Teacher Education training programs in colleges and universities. This could be achieved by reviewing the current regular and special teacher education programs curricula to reflect strategies for inclusive classroom teaching/learning activities.

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BURNOUT IN PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY: DIAGNOSIS AND ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

Malgorzata (Gosia) Sekulowicz

Introduction

The problem of burnout in parents of children with disability is an important aspect in analysing how parents function in the conditions of protracted, chronic and hardly modifiable stress. Analysing people engaged in the care, therapy and raising of children with disabilities and the ill, researchers often refer to the notion of burden. Burden can be described as the sum of practical difficulties and psychological distress experienced by a caregiver in the process of care provision. Nevertheless, today researchers more and more frequently revisit the framework proposed by Sullivan et al. in 1979. Ruth Sullivan and her collaborators put forward the concept of a burnout syndrome observable in parents of children with developmental disorders. They described the syndrome, enumerating its symptoms and defining factors that cause it. Functioning in this condition is bound up with loneliness, isolation, frustration, hopelessness, helplessness, a sense of “entrapment” and a conviction that improvement in life is impossible (Sullivan et al., 1979, p. 112). According to the authors, such situation results from long and intense caring for a child with disabilities, which leads to the parents’ mental and physical exhaustion. The syndrome is also caused by the parents’ self-perceived lack of support and incompetence to properly take care of the child. Sullivan (1979) identified exhaustion caused by the care as fundamental to burnout. She discussed the exhaustion resorting to the earlier formulated burnout theories that pertain first of all to professional/occupational contexts. According to Procaccini and Kiefaber (1983), parental burnout appears as a result of chronic stress caused by constant coping with the family’s unending requirements and needs. The never-ending demands deplete the parents’ energy and motivation. The parents tend to blame themselves for what is going on in the family, for what they cannot manage or handle as they are oppressed with burdens they are unable to cope with. Such a situation breeds

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frustration and anger. It also produces a sense of helplessness in the parents who are challenged by numerous serious difficulties in their everyday functioning.

Research Aims and Method

Since relatively few analyses identifying the problem of parental burnout have been carried out, the chief aim of the research presented here was to diagnose the parental situation. Because the few studies on this issue, so far, have relied on research tools developed in professional burnout research, the primary purpose was to develop my own research instrument directly pertaining to parental burnout and to use it to assess the research subjects' risk of burnout.

In its final version, the instrument used to assess the risk of parental burnout consists of 12 items (questions) grouped into two subscales – emotional exhaustion and helplessness. Both scales are factor-homogeneous. They have satisfactory internal consistency (calculated with Cronbach's alpha equation $> 0,80$). They also render results that fit standard distribution (deviations are statistically insignificant: $p > 0,20$). Subsequently, the diagnostic survey method was used to establish the scale of parental burnout and factors determining it. Except for the burnout questionnaire of my own design, another tool was used for this purpose: the multidimensional COPE Inventory, developed by Ch. S. Carver, M. F. Scheier and J. K. Weintraub, adapted to the Polish context by Z. Jurczyński and N. Ogińska-Bulik. Because it was also important to measure the sense of self-efficacy, i.e., a general conviction that one can effectively manage in difficult situations, another tool was used: the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) developed by M. Jerusalem and R. Schwarzer, adapted to the Polish context by R. Schwarzer, M. Jerusalem and Z. Jurczyński. As the level of burnout could be influenced by the subjective well-being, the variable was assessed by means of the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by E. Diener, R.A. Emmons, R.J. Larsen, and Sh. Griffin, adapted to the Polish context by Z. Jurczyński. The assessment of burnout must also take into account the self-perceived social support, which in my research was measured with the SSOSR questionnaire developed by I. G. Sarason et al., and adapted to the Polish context by Z. Zalewski, Z. Obłój, B. Skuza, and K. Wrześniewski. The research sample consisted of 159 parents, comprising of 120 females and 39 males. The disproportion was caused by fathers' pronounced reluctance to participate in research. For many years now (cf. Sekułowicz, 2000), it has been very difficult to persuade fathers to actively take part in research; hence, many studies on family problems concern mothers only or, as in this case, include disproportionate groups of mothers and fathers. In the research sample, the average age of mothers was 43.15 years and of fathers – 45.05 years.

Analysis of Results

The results obtained in the research indicate that the risk of burnout should not be trivialised because it concerns a significant group of parents from the research sample. It turns out that 29% of the researched parental population are persons with high levels of emotional exhaustion and helplessness, who can be classified as burned-out parents. As many as 49% are parents who face the risk of burnout in various degrees, reporting a high level of exhaustion or a high level of helplessness. And 32% of the studied parents are people who do not feel deep emotional exhaustion or significant helplessness. It can suggest that they are not burning out.

The high level of burnout makes it impossible to use the preventive coping strategies that involve among others pro-active behaviours. The most severely burned-out parents use various strategies classified as emotion-focused strategies and avoidance strategies, especially concentrating on their own emotions and attempting to vent them as well as disclaiming action, which points to their helplessness in difficult situations. This is also suggested by their tendency to seek momentary emotional relief by alcohol and psychoactive substance use. Such results are undoubtedly alarming. They imply that parents lack coping skills in the face of life problems. This is additionally aggravated, as it turns out that the more helpless the researched parents feel the less actively they seek support and the less satisfied they are with the support they do receive. The more burned out the parents are, the less self-efficacious they feel. This is also a disturbing result, because it suggests that a vicious circle mechanism can gather momentum. The low sense of self-efficacy can aggravate burnout. The research has also shown a tendency of life satisfaction to plummet as the level of the parental burnout increases. The high level of burnout is also conducive to the decrease in the quality of life of the studied parents of children with disability.

The obtained results indicate that the studied mothers are more vulnerable to burnout than the fathers of children with disability. It turns out that the mean values of emotional exhaustion and helplessness are higher for them than for the studied fathers. Similar results were also obtained in the correlation analysis. Interestingly, the multiple stepwise regression analysis confirms that mothers of children with disability are more exhausted, but the fathers usually report higher levels of helplessness. Presumably, it is caused by their inability to accept the child's disability, particularly when difficulties emerge which they cannot face up to. In the Polish tradition, a man should be able to live up to various challenges, be indefatigable, confront problems and support a woman in doing this. However, when a man has a child with disability, the culturally produced requirements of the male role may not always be met. This breeds frustration, which makes adaptation either very difficult or utterly impossible.

In the overwhelming majority of cases, mothers are directly engaged in the child's rehabilitation. They carry the major burden of care, which causes exhaustion, and if their actions are poorly effective or if they face many difficulties, pertaining not only directly to childrearing but also to on-going life adversities, they feel helpless. Even the mothers who in the cluster analysis were classified in the not burned-out group had higher scores of emotional exhaustion than fathers. The coping methods they most frequently use include seeking emotional support and venting the emotions. Also, the mothers more frequently resort to denial,

and the most severely burned-out ones disclaim action. The fathers, in turn, more frequently declare that they use positive reappraisal. They are more satisfied with the support they receive than the mothers are. The fathers more frequently actively seek support. The mothers have a significantly lower sense of self-efficacy as well as a significantly lower sense of life satisfaction and quality of life.

The level of burnout in the parental research sample was correlated also with the type of the child's disability. The assessment of mean scores in the emotional exhaustion and helplessness subscales shows that the parents of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are most severely burned out and also most at risk of burnout. The parents sought emotional and instrumental support more frequently than other parents did. Their coping strategies involved first of all focusing on emotions and attempting to vent them.

Further analysis of the research results revealed that family type is a significant factor in parental burnout. Single parents have higher burnout scores than parents in full families. Importantly, the mean values are higher for both the mothers and the fathers. Such results are by no means surprising. When one is a single caregiver for a child or children with disability (in the research sample fifteen parents had more than one child with disability), the burden is presumably considerable. It consists of existential problems, financial difficulties and limited relaxation options, if the parent cannot find a substitute to look after the child. Rehabilitation effort is an additional burden. The typical life problems are aggravated by loneliness and lack of support. This breeds helplessness.

As the research results indicate, the gender of the child with disability is also a significant factor in burnout. The sense of helplessness is greater in parents of boys. Presumably, it is an effect of cultural conditioning that attaches the value of parenthood chiefly to having male offspring. It is particularly important for fathers. Correlation analysis proves also that the child's age is significant in the level of burnout. The level of emotional exhaustion is higher in the parents of younger children. It is natural because taking care of a young child requires more effort. If the child has a disability, the effort is even greater as it requires not only acquiring the basic caring/nursing skills but also developing the ability to undertake appropriate rehabilitation activities.

The results reported in the research are only a starting point for a more comprehensive analysis of the complex phenomenon. A question arises, namely, what factors determine the disparities in its scale and intensity. What is it that makes some parents vulnerable to severe burnout while, at the same time, a considerable group of the research participants do not burn out despite the difficulties they experience? It seems worthwhile to determine to what extent the *resilience* theory can be applied to the parents who are not burned out, and what factors are conducive to parental resilience that prevents the burnout mechanisms. This is the direction my further research on parental burnout will take.

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COLLABORATIVE APPROACH AND INCLUSION TO REHABILITATION SERVICES IN FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (SPECIAL) OYO, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

Giwa, Olukanyinsola Yetunde, Ph.D.

Background

The process of growth and development in humans entails the process of habilitation which empowers them to develop the maximum independence in daily living activities. When impairment sets in, which may be congenital, developmental or accidental, delay or blockage of the acquisition of skills that contribute to mobility, communication and performance of daily living activities, which enhance quality of life, set in. Hence the need for rehabilitation. [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Rehabilitation can be defined as treatments designed to facilitate the process of recovery from injury, illness or disease to as normal a condition as possible (Mosby, 2008). The services offered will enable the individuals to retrain for employment that was lost due to the impairment. It's the restoration of someone with special needs to maximum independence commensurate to his or her limitation by developing his or her residual capacity. The services are based on individual needs which are met by the assistive technology devices.

The restoration involves a combination of methods. The psychological and or physical impact of diseases, injuries and or disorders are removed or improved upon through techniques, medications and support from different professionals and therapists. These include doctors, paramedical specialists, nurses, psychologists, orthotics, prosthetics, special educators and counselors. Family members are actively involved in rehabilitation programs.

Research Design

A survey research design was used with participants at the Department of Rehabilitation Education of the School of Special Education, Federal college of Education (Special) Oyo, Nigeria where many clients have been restored.

Results

The Rehabilitation Education Department of the Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo has the philosophy of setting persons with special needs into the mainstream of the society as contributing members. It offers courses that carry 48 credit units out of which 32 are compulsory while students need a minimum of 36 units for graduation. The core courses are Introduction to disability and handicap, rehabilitation education, vocational rehabilitation and social work. Others are elementary human physiology, rehabilitation of adults and elderly, independent living and basic work skill training, general principle of teaching people with disabilities, workshop practice, physical exercise, recreation, and rehabilitation.

Students specialize in either the rehabilitation of those with visual impairment (A), hearing impairment (B), physical disabilities (C) or learning disabilities (D). The courses for the those with visual impairment are Braille writing and reading, rehabilitation of learners with visual impairment, typewriting, orientation and mobility techniques and daily living skills. The B group study total communication, basic audiology, aural/oral rehabilitation and language development for learners with hearing impairment. Those in the C group offer human anatomy and physiology, basic concept in physical, neurological and health impairment, physiotherapy, prosthesis, mobility for learners with physical impairment and uses of computer. The D group study play therapy and other methods of teaching persons with intellectual disabilities, concepts in intellectual disabilities, daily living skills, speech and language disorders, introduction to reading and writing and functional arithmetic.

The set objective for the course description was met through collaborative efforts of 9 qualified and competent personnel among who are specialists in education of learners with hearing impairment (2), intellectual disabilities (1), the visual impairment (2), an audiologist, a speech pathologist, a counselor psychologist and a social worker. Their experience ranged from 9 and to years. Their roles are made easy with assistive devices such as machines for the various vocations they offered. Clients are exposed to 26 vocational skills namely: fashion design, hair dressing, tie and dye, soap and cream making, catering, decoration, barbing, horticulture, painting, tiling, shoe making, photography, electrification, bricklaying, weaving (asooke), candle making, knitting, hat and bead making, snailry, poultry, video recording, book binding, vulcanizing and instructional material production (Department of Rehabilitation Education, 2013).

The department has produced 2075 personnel for rehabilitation services in Nigeria between the years 2000 and 2009 (Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, 2010). Each of them is skilled in any of the above vocations. Services are extended to adults outside the college. Twenty-five clients have been rehabilitated, before becoming impaired, between 1999 and 2012. Among them were chartered accountants, computer scientists (1st class honors), barristers and civil servants. They lost their jobs but have become employed after restoration. (Department of Rehabilitation Education, 2013)

Recommendations

Collaboration among personnel in rehabilitation services lead to high success of rehabilitation. This ensures high quality of the program thus enabling rehabilitees' high level of restoration. Provision must be made to facilitate recovery and transformation into an independent life. More money should be allotted the department to enable them to acquire more assistive devices. The new powerful and fast devices should be purchased. Teacher education curriculum should be reviewed to include rehabilitation education.

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WALKING THROUGH THE JUNGLE OF HOSTILITIES IN NAIROBI KENYA

**Ahmed Abdi Abdullahi
Humphrey K Kidaha**

Background

For many years back people with disabilities were regarded as a burden in many communities where they belonged and especially the children who were born with disabilities. They were neglected, abandoned or even killed by hired goons or just hidden in the homesteads unattended to and without education. The number of people with disabilities constitutes 13% of the population of Kenya, and they are people in poverty. This phenomenon haunts the African people who discard people with disabilities on the street, as commercial beggars and hire rooms in the urban slums for them to live in.

Most developing countries have not enacted legislation to safeguard the interests of people with disabilities. Even schools for special education have not been constructed all over the country in order to cater for these children in need of special education. Needless to say they, schools have not been fitted with special toilets, special seats in transport buses, writing equipment, wheel chairs, playing kits and social employees who are well trained to assist them in their daily life.

In Kenya the church was at the forefront of advocating for the establishment of special schools for children/youth with disabilities. One such establishment is Thika primary/secondary schools for the deaf and blind (SALVATION ARMY CHURCH). But not much has been achieved, hence many children with disabilities have been abandoned on the streets as beggars; even some guardians have turned them into tools of earning income for poor families who cannot make a living due to abject poverty. Since the government has abandoned its responsibility of constructing conducive homes. The children with disabilities roam on the streets of major towns, without education, without special equipment for walking, sleeping, eating, listening, hearing, reading and talking though many readers may think that by establishing special education through legislation Kenya has accomplished the welfare of children with disabilities. Not much has been achieved in this sector, since the prevalence of children with disabilities is still relatively very alarming.

Adults with disabilities should not be left out but they should be included in assistance programs to lead normal life, by equipping them with necessary facilities for their daily undertaking. Nobody seems to be interested in spearheading the campaign towards harmonization of the welfare of the people with disabilities. Though sympathetic donors/stakeholders have tried through financing the vulnerable people with disabilities in communities it has ended up in the hands of corrupt leaders who seem not to be bothered by the suffering of people with disabilities.

International Limelight

“CNN’s Brett Roegiers” and photographer “Mia Collins” who documented the growth of groups of people with disabilities in 2010 said “[He was drawn to their story] by the contradictions that embody the lives of the disabled dancers hidden from daily life and revealed on stage”

This group comprised of three two young men and one woman who founded the Pamoja Dance Group which comprises nine people with disabilities and two members without disabilities; their dance mirrors the daily struggles of people with disabilities. When they are staging their stage-shows one would think that she would collapse under her weight but she holds on until the music changes pace. The other member of the dance group holds onto a walking stick as he glides his body. Seeing the artists and

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their fluid movements it is hard to notice that they have disabilities. The creative artistes have chosen to express themselves and their ability through dance.

As the flutes melody crescendos the three wriggle and glide in slow motion. It has been a long journey for the group “through the jungle of hostilities.” Each member has got an amazing story. Lydial, aged 16 years, told me that she felt sick and she was misdiagnosed with pneumonia. She came out of the illness completely paralyzed on her left side. Another by the name of John Irungu was normal at birth but felt sick not long after he developed a form of dwarfism that considerably stunted his growth and interfered with the development of his limbs. Mr. Sylvester Barasa who is a leading dancer of the group was diagnosed with polio disease as a child and lost the functionality of his leg.

He was abandoned by his relatives and joined the street beggars for survival. He decided to begin dancing because he had seen others doing the dancing art. “He continues to state that he no longer feels disabled as dancing has taken him to a higher life, and a better world” this group has come together to promote the art of dancing among the disabled and to try to close the wide-divide between people with disabilities and those without disabilities.

So empowering are such talented youthful dancers to come together to share creative work in an environment where their abilities flourish and no one judges them based on how their appearance. These people are always happy when they are given a chance to dance with others who are willing and ready to give such chances despite what their bodies say about them. Even some complain that many dancers without disabilities refuse to welcome them to join their dance teams because they are paralyzed.

YERA conducted research on the challenges facing the implementation of free primary special education for children with disabilities.

Research Questions

1. How can the government and the society assist in the effective implementation of free special education for children with disabilities?
2. How can the available resources be effectively utilized in the implementation of special education for children with disabilities?

Significance of the Study

The significant of this study was to enable the government to carry out various remedial measures on the problems identified in this research. This information would also be of vital importance in addressing the emerging challenges of special education and facilitate the improvement of special education policy based on attaining vision 2030.

The sample information collected was further useful to stakeholders (parents and teachers) in identifying their roles to insure effectiveness of special education and measure the extent to which the government was committed to fulfilling its promises in regard to special education of children with disabilities.

Effective communication was a major barrier because most teachers were at work and therefore they lacked sufficient time to fill the questionnaires. Another limitation was that (Molo and Nakuru districts) in the Rift Valley province are densely populated areas with many children with disabilities and researchers were only able to conduct their research in limited areas due to shortage of finance needed to print the questionnaires and limited time allocated for the research.

Lastly accurate data mostly depended on the honesty of the respondents, as many parents/guardians still keep or hide their children with disabilities in their homes. Also, no census has come up with accurate figures or statistics showing the actual or estimate number of children with disabilities in the whole country so as to coordinate proper registration and enrollment of new students in schools.

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state law office in charge of Juvenile Justice later, Lectured at school of law in Nairobi, elected member of the Regulatory committee on the National council of NGOs-Board, served on the National committee of children rights which drafted and published the children's Bill Act 2003 which also highlighted the rights of the children of disabilities. (humphrey.kidaha.org@gmail.com)

PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Orly Lipka, Ph.D
Alona Forkosh-Baruch, Ph.D

Introduction

Learning disabilities (LD) influence people throughout their lives. There is a growing body of research examining individuals with learning disabilities. These include students with learning disabilities, who make up a growing number in post-secondary education. In Israel in post-secondary education, students with LD represent about 5.6% of the entire student population (Students with Learning Disabilities Rights, 2008).

Adults with learning disabilities who choose to become teachers are an intriguing sub-population. These future teachers, with their first-hand understanding of challenges, can play an important role in enhancing academic, social and emotional outcomes and skills of their students. It is therefore, important that schools embrace teachers with learning disabilities, thereby contributing not only to the well-being of their students, but also becoming models for enhancing inclusiveness within societies.

Unfortunately, teacher training is rather complex and individuals with learning disabilities face many challenges. In order to ensure that the training program of pre-service teachers with learning disabilities will be a successful one we need to provide them with the necessary support.

The first step to create adequate support for pre-service teachers with learning disabilities is to understand their perceptions. Our study aims to understand the perceptions of pre-service teachers about their professional identity during the initial years of their training program. Therefore, the goals of the study were: (1) to examine the perceptions of pre-service teachers regarding the teaching profession and the role of the teacher; (2) to examine the perception of pre-service teachers regarding their identity as teachers.

Method

This study was conducted as a follow-up study of Ezer et al. (2010), using a quantitative research method, examining pre-service teachers' perceptions of their teacher education training and its contributions to their professional identity.

Participants

Participants consisted of 61 pre-service students diagnosed with LD, a majority (79%) in the first or second year of their academic studies. The remaining 21% were in their third or fourth year of pre-service education towards their BEd degree in a Hebrew-speaking college in central Israel. All of the pre-service students participated over the second term in courses that were especially designed for students that were diagnosed with LD but were part of their mandatory courses.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire (Ezer, Gilat & Sagee, 2010), which was a variation of a former questionnaire used in a study of Israeli pre-service teachers (Gilat, Kupferberg, & Sagee, 2006). The questionnaire measures attitudes and perceptions of teachers in the following five aspects of the teaching profession and the training process: (1) Motivation for teaching; (2) Conceptions of teaching and learning; (3) Roles of teachers; (4) Components of teacher education; and (5) Agents of training.

Procedure

Pre-service teachers were asked to fill out the questionnaires at the beginning of the semester in the second term of their academic year. In addition, they were asked to complete the same questionnaire towards the end of the semester, within a pre-post framework.

Results

Consistent with previous research regarding graduate teachers' perceptions (Ezer et al., 2010) findings of the present study revealed that pre-service teachers with LD perceive their practical experience as more important to their training than disciplinary lessons or classes on education. Furthermore, both the didactic instructor and the mentor teacher were perceived as making a greater contribution than the subject matter teachers and those who taught education and auxiliary subjects. Surprisingly, the highest value was found with regards to peer influence: Peer contribution to students' training was the most significant value

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influencing the training process when examining the post-test values, following a paired *t*-test procedure. In terms of learning and motivation, pre-service teachers with LD exhibited increased values in all scales: Increase in learning (significant value for increase in knowledge), as well as increase in motivation; increase in internal motivation being the highest value in the pretest and posttest.

Conclusion

In general, students with learning disabilities exhibited patterns of learning that were similar to their peers. However, they tended to use strategies that were more practical and tended to shift their dependency to their peers as the academic year advanced. Students with LD tended to enhance their knowledge, which is easier in terms of skill attainment. Their internal motivation to be a teacher was relatively high, possibly due to former failures and the need to spare their students from such experience. However, with regards to external orientation to teaching or internal orientation to learning, these competencies were rather constant.

All in all, students gained proficiency in self-regulation, whether external or internal, indicating that support for these students with LD did have a positive impact on their training to be future teachers. This finding follows additional findings with other student populations with LD (Heiman, 2006). However, when examining pre-service teachers, this finding has a unique significance as students may teach in a pattern similar to their learning, thereby modeling their learning experiences.

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECT

Ya'u Musa Dantata

Conceptual Framework and Background

The basic philosophy which has been generated in the recent development of integration or inclusive education in Nigeria is the inception of the universal basic education. Apart from this, there is also the Nigerian Government policy on education that all children should be sent to schools which are in their locality this means that most of the children would live at home while attending schools near them. Inclusive education in regular schools is also based on the philosophy that every child has the right to remain with his/her family and in their community during the course of his/her study. Thus, all children with special needs have the right to be counted as one of the children of the family and as a member of the community. The educational opportunity of equality and obligation gives a provision for children with disabilities to receive education equal to that of their counterparts without disabilities.

Eleweke and Michael (2000) clearly identified the following as some of the major areas of concern pertaining to inclusive education in Nigeria: (1) lack of facilities and materials, (2) inadequate personnel training program, (3) lack of funding structure, and (4) absence of enabling legislation.

These aforementioned problems identified by Eleweke and Michael (2000) are in agreement with the findings of Tod (2000), a Canadian educator who is the president of inclusion inter Americana. Tod identified six problems that he called "deficiencies revealed". These deficiencies according to him can be linked to several areas of potential difficulty. These are: (1) inadequate policy and legislative provision, (2) limited coordination of social and economic agencies with school, (3) inadequate administrative provisions to ensure proactive leadership, (4) limited accessibility and provision for physical support, (5)

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inadequate training and re-training of teacher, and (6) inadequate funding for basic education and for support services for students with special needs.

The advantages of inclusive education cannot be over emphasized. Below are some of the advantages of inclusive education in Nigeria.

- Inclusion promotes diversity and acceptance to advance. Some of the children with special needs are motivated through competition to improve.
- Stout (2001) provided the following as the advantages of inclusive education.
 - A reduced fear of human differences accompanied by increased comfort and awareness
 - Growth in social recognition.
 - Improvement in self-concept of non-disabled students.
 - Development of personal principles and ability to assume an advocacy role to ward their peers and friends with disabilities.
 - Warm and caring friendships.

Method

The following research questions were framed to guide this study.

- (i) How do primary /Secondary school Headmasters and principal assess the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria?
- (ii) What is on the ground assessment of regular teachers of inclusive education?
- (iii) How do some student beneficiaries of the program perceive inclusive education?
- (iv) What is the role of parents in complementing effective management of inclusive education?

The research design adopted for this study was a cross sectional survey which was both descriptive and exploratory.

Results

Students reported that although some assistance is received from government in the area of supply of books (20%) it is ridiculously low to equip them for classroom work. Thirty five percent of the students reported that although some assistance is received from government, in the area of supply of equipment it is ridiculously low to equip them for class-work. They also claimed that there was no force to compel their parents to send them to school.

Conclusion

The cost of education has been reported to be increasing yearly and in spite of the increase in budgetary allocation for implementation of educational policies, the funds are still not adequate. In order to support government the new policy advocated for sharing the burden of funding with other stakeholders. Our communities are expected to be mobilized to provide for needed infrastructure. In this research, educational administrators/headmasters and principals of schools assessed the communities' level of involvement to be very low. The lack of commitment and general apathy toward the course of successful implementation of the inclusive educational programs has been a problem. Research conducted by Ker and Okwari (2004) revealed that this has not improved.

The headmasters/ Principals observed that the use of computers is only limited to computer awareness and literacy to a large extent. Computer use for application was not emphasized. The use of computers should not be limited to teaching and learning but for school administration. Askar and Munch (2006) noted that computers in Turkish primary schools have become widely used in administrative work and that in fact information technology has entered the life of regular teachers.

This current research reveals that only a small group (25%) respondents agreed that government was taking care of their school needs were as majority (75%) claimed that their parents were largely involved in funding their school expenses. Adesina (2000) noted that private establishments, communities and individual parents must be called upon to fund inclusive education. He continued that it was wrong and misleading propaganda that education can be obtained absolutely free. An enabling law to compel parents to leave no child with special needs behind should be enforced.

Other practical steps that could be taken to move inclusive education forward in Nigeria is to give national recognition to individual private organizations and local communities who have contributed by way of commitment and financial backing to the ideal of inclusive educational program in Nigeria

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PRACTICUM & FIELD-BASED EXPERIENCES: ARE WE BRIDGING THE RESEARCH TO PRACTICE GAP?

Adam Lockwood, B.S.
Kristen Lilly, Ph.D.
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John McClure, Ph.D.
Catherine Medina, Ph.D.

What is the best way to educate the teachers of a nation's children? Are there any universal methods that transcend culture, ethnicity, and location? The end of the 20th Century and the first decade of the 21st century saw a reevaluation of special education practices in the United States. No longer was it considered appropriate for students with disabilities to be served in self-contained or even resource settings as the first line of service (e.g. McGuire, J.M., Scott, S.S. and Shaw, S.F. 2006). Rather, we saw a shift to serving individuals with disabilities in the general classroom with typical peers as one goal of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997. Subsequent reauthorizations of the IDEA introduced Response to Intervention (RTI) and Evidence-based Practices (EBP). These practices are needed by teachers for the successful implementation of Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) and Positive Behavioral Intervention Plans (PBIP).

The inclusion of EBP, RTI, FBA and PBIP was a means to support students receiving special education services in the general education environment (Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2012). Many university special education faculty members asked themselves, "how do we prepare the teachers who are to provide this support?" Much has appeared in the professional literature regarding the best way to provide pre-service and in-service teachers with the necessary knowledge and skill sets to be successful in their professional practice. (Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2010). Included among these is the notion that teachers should base their instruction on data collected through regular monitoring of student progress (B. Cook, Shepard, S. Cook & L. Cook, 2012). While there is agreement on what constitutes best practice, some researchers (e.g. Klingner & Boardman, 2011; Stanovich. P. & Stanovich, K. E, 2003) have noted that there appeared to be a research-to-practice gap, that is a gap between what teachers knew or reported to be best practice, and what they were actually doing in their classrooms.

A structured practicum experience may be the optimal way to address and provide opportunities to deepen understanding of important concepts, while developing proficiency in the application of the concepts and skills in specific situations. A structured practicum experience has an added advantage of potential impact on self-efficacy and the outcome expectancies which are key factors affecting the motivation to apply what has been learned (Bandura 1997).

Given the research-to-practice gap, the goal of this pilot study was to determine if graduates of our advanced assessment practicum were using evidence-based practices and data-based assessments to inform their professional practice. To do this, follow up interviews with graduates from the advanced assessment practicum were conducted. The graduates were asked about

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their use of the data collection process and their perception of that process to include the usefulness of visual representations (e.g. graphs) for interpreting and discussing the data collected in their professional roles. In other words, did participation in the advanced assessment practicum have the potential to help bridge the research-to-practice gap?

Initial analysis of the interviews revealed several interesting results. When asked what they remembered most about the practicum experience, the practicum graduates reported as memorable the 'hands on experiences' and 'real time' opportunities to practice and transfer what they learned in their university classes to their own classrooms. They also remembered the impact of graphic displays of data as it allowed them to see what was working and what was not working. Moreover, they reported they were able to see the effects of the interventions they had developed.

Regarding value of the practicum experience, when asked what did they gain from the practicum, the graduates noted that they were able to gather a 'world of information' in a very short time and use that data to effect student learning. They also reported that using graphic displays of data helped showcase student progress and growth to various team members and made the collected information more real to them. Finally, the graduates noted value in being able to practice skills in the natural setting while getting feedback from the university professors.

When asked what aspects of the practicum they were still using, the practicum graduates noted the ability to use data to make instructional decisions. They also reported using the graphs and visual displays of data to show progress. These practicum graduates indicated that they were more aware of and sensitive to the classroom variables that can impact learning and behavior.

Finally, in response to the question "what kinds of things might impede your ability to carry out what you learned in the practicum in your own settings?," the graduates noted that time was sometimes a barrier to collecting the amount and type of data they would like to have. They stated that they felt the burden of collecting the data fell to them, as there was a lack of adequately trained support staff to help with data collection. Most respondents indicated they would like help with data collection but only if the person helping was trained.

Conclusion/Implication

The feedback provided by the practicum graduates in our pilot study suggests that the tasks and experiences they had in the advanced assessment practicum served to inform their professional practice. To help bridge the *research to practice gap* it is important to provide 'hands on experiences' and 'real time' opportunities to practice what is being taught in the pre-service or in-service programs. This can be accomplished through structured practicum or mentoring programs.

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INTERDISCIPLINARY PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS IN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Iris Manor-Binyamini

The subject of interdisciplinary collaboration between professionals and parents of children in inclusive settings is a focal point of the social and educational conversation in the 21st century. The social conversation reflects a growing involvement of parents in the lives of their children, which has roots in a democratic society based on equality and pluralism -- values which have been expressed in law. The policy derived from the law reflects a growing recognition of the importance of collaboration with parents, and indeed at the system level there are increasing efforts to promote collaboration between professionals in schools and parents with regards to planning interventions for children in inclusive settings (Sheridan 1997).

The educational discussion is based on the belief that collaborating with the child's parents in the educational process will lead to more effective results for the child and the family (Lacey, 2001). Many studies have shown that there is a connection between support of professionals and the family's ability to cope with pressures. In the past decade, there has also been a growing recognition that nurturing collaboration with parents leads to early resolution of disagreements with parents and prevents costly measures such as mediation, hearings, due process, and court proceedings.

Despite the clear support for collaboration expressed in the theoretical literature and in the educational field, there is a gap between rhetoric and practice (Sanders, 1999; McWilliam et al., 1999), and collaboration between professionals and parents often fails (Rainforth York, & Macdonald, 1992). Based on the theoretical survey, it is possible to underline the uniqueness of the current study: this research concentrates on the ethnographic study of collaboration in daily life, based on mutuality. It focuses on a simultaneous, two-way examination of professionals and parents in successful teams.

Research

Goal of the research: to identify, describe, and construct overt and latent aspects of collaboration between interdisciplinary teams and parents in daily life.

Research method: ethnographic case study that followed the activities of 44 professionals working in interdisciplinary teams: teachers, caregivers, paramedics and doctors, and 78 parents of children in three inclusive schools. During the three years of research the following was observed and documented: 80 IEP meetings, 122 interviews were conducted, 80 meeting protocols and 60 other documents were gathered. The research was validated through apparent validity and triangulation.

Course of the research: included the following stages: (1) open observation of verbal interactions in parent-professionals meetings; (2) observations focused on overt and latent aspects, which were discerned in the previous stage; (3) interviews with team members and parents; (4) analysis of the findings and their presentation in a manner consistent with the phenomenological existence of the actors; (5) an analytical investigation of the aspects identified in the previous stage.

Results

The research findings suggest that successful collaboration includes multi-dimensional aspects that exist simultaneously in the two-way interactions between parents and interdisciplinary team members. These aspects include several components as follows: The *organizational aspects* include: structure of the meeting, setting, hosting, summary, and decision making. The *social aspects* include: explanation of the professional terminology, provision of concrete examples, checking comprehension, asking questions, use of positive language, professional expertise, focus, balanced structure of the interdisciplinary team, clear definition of the parent's role, making room for parents' feelings and respecting them. I will present the aspects and their components as well as their behavioral manifestations.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, it is possible to present professionals with 8 principles for successful collaboration with parents: treat the parent as an expert on his child, focus on strengths in reporting to parents, communicate clearly and honestly regarding

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the child's areas of difficulty, explain professional terminology, use concrete examples, focus on professional priorities and provide a comprehensive picture of the child, clarify problems and ask questions.

Suggestions for Future Research

Three main research questions arise from the findings of this study: (1) How do professionals and parents from diverse cultural backgrounds perceive and define collaboration; (2) How can the components discovered be turned into a research evaluation questionnaire; (3) How can the components discovered be implemented in an evidence-based program for inclusive interdisciplinary teams.

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IDENTIFYING MEDICAL AND OTHER BARRIERS TO INCLUSION INTO MAINSTREAM SCHOOLING: A STUDENT HEALTH INITIATIVE PROJECT

Andy Mthimkhulu
Mohamed R. G. Hussain
Alicia Chin

Introduction and Background

One of the major issues facing South Africa today is realizing that the ideals of inclusive education involves the wide meaning of learners with special education needs, which includes not only barriers of physical and intellectual disability, but also the barriers caused by social, economic, political or emotional exclusion (Weeks, 2000, pp. 17-21). The term 'learners with special educational needs' (LSEN) refers to learners who, for whatever reason, need additional help and support in their learning (Western Cape Education Department, 2008, p. 2).

In South Africa, the 1996 School Act set out provisions for compulsory education for children, including those with disabilities, from seven to 15 years of age. A National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training led to a White Paper on Inclusive Education (Education White Paper 6, 2001). The White Paper listed a number of factors involved in excluding people from education, referred to as barriers to learning, which included socio-economic conditions, child abuse risk, negative attitudes to disability, language and communication barriers, inadequate and inappropriate educational support services, lack of parental involvement in their children's education and decision making and lack of appropriate legislation and policy to support inclusive education (Education White Paper 6, 2001). Therefore, on this basis, it is very crucial to identify and assess learners with special educational needs before inclusive education programs can be properly implemented so that all children can receive quality education.

However, in a developing country such as South Africa, the provision of quality education is still developing, and sometimes seems like a difficult task. At the institutional level, the system currently used to identify and assess children with special needs is quite deficient and needs to be restructured to include a wider gamut of assessments including childhood development, complete physical examination and laboratory services, and assessment of social and environmental factors. In addition, assessment needs to be done efficiently and rapidly so that the necessary tools and personnel are put in place to assist the learner to make progress.

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This paper seeks to report the preliminary findings of a study which examined the prevalence and impact of many social, economic, physical and medical problems that were barriers in preventing school-aged children from returning to mainstream schooling in a school for LSEN in Guateng Province, South Africa.

Method

A government operated school for learners with special education needs in Kungwini (Bronkhorstspuit), Guateng, South Africa was chosen; a total of 38 learners of school going age, between the ages of 6-18 years, were randomly selected for evaluation. Social, educational and medical records were reviewed with the educator and learners, followed by a complete physical examination to formulate a rapid needs assessment. Interviews were conducted by the educators who helped in the interpretation and communication with their learners.

The initial assessment included demographic data, developmental, medical and surgical history and description of the disabilities (from the referring physician). We also examined the use of any aids or appliances, nutritional assessment, social issues, immunizations, complete physical assessment and screening, and a neurological status assessment. The data were assessed for short and long term needs, remedial action and suggestions for eliminating the barriers.

Results

The mean age of the participants was 14.1 years with a ratio of 1:2 females (35.14%) to males (64.86%). Nine of the 34 learners (26.4%) did not fulfill the criteria of a learning disorder. They were referred to as slow learners, mild mental retardation, muscular dystrophy, or other medical condition not conducive to the mainstream school education. These students demonstrated average or above average performance in class with the educators. This group was either misdiagnosed or had improved from their original condition.

Fourteen learners (41%) had social conditions impairing their educational development. These included inadequate parenting, illness, deceased or no parents, unstable homes, absenteeism due to illness, sleep deprivation, lack of financial resources, language and cultural differences.

A number of students suffered from some form of a medical condition that prevented them from being 'included' into mainstream schooling. Some learners were HIV positive, others had hearing and vision deficits, mood disorders, congenital abnormalities, neurodegenerative disorders, cerebral palsy, respiratory disorders and disabilities including gross loco-motor dysfunction. Immunizations were not documented in some records and poorly completed on the attending medical practitioner's form. Almost all medical forms were completed as 'delayed milestones' without any description of any of the milestones assessed or inquired.

Recommendations

The following recommendations may alleviate the barriers to educational development at this institution, and could be a model for other such institutions:

1. Admission criteria. The admission and medical criteria for an acceptance of a learner to the school with special needs has to be more clearly defined. The medical form completed by the medical practitioner must include a detailed birth and developmental history, learning developmental deficits, past medical history, individual immunizations, screening for vision and hearing, detailed physical and mental status examination, medical and rehabilitation needs and identity of the practitioner. This information is imperative in appropriately providing for the learner's global needs and facilitates the rapid rehabilitation of the learner before placement of the learner. The placement committee, the rehabilitation staff and the psychologists must meet as the admission committee to correctly review the needs of each learner, and review them with the parent or guardian prior to admission.
2. Transition Class to the Mainstream School. A special class focused on preparing learners who have improved or were misplaced, needs to be established to emotionally, mentally and physically speed up integration and a return into the mainstream school. This would also alleviate overcrowding by this group of learners.
3. Learners in need of medical attention and services which inhibit their development must get the attention immediately. Physiotherapy, Speech and Occupational therapy are also lacking at the school. These are extremely important modalities of rehabilitation and education and must be prioritized. A failure to provide immediate attention, handicaps their progress as long as the condition persists.
4. Poor parenting and other parenting issues must involve the Department of Social Services and their strategies to address these issues including parenting classes. All learners not attending classes must provide a medical certificate for their absence.

Conclusion

LSEN schools should employ a coordinated service delivery model in which teachers, parents and related service personnel such as speech therapists, occupational therapists and psychologists, work collaboratively to assess student needs and provide appropriate interventions. Screening and assessment plans need to be carried out on a continuous basis to give a thorough and definitive assessment of the needs of each student, in order to truly provide quality and equality education for all children.

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INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY IN MOTION PICTURES: AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

Rhonda S. Black

Popular films profoundly influence society's perceptions and social policies, which in turn influences what we teach, to whom, and where (Safran, 1998). Stigmatizing media images negatively impact community and educational opportunities of people with disabilities (Nelson, 1994). These media messages influence the hidden curricula that says "those" individuals with intellectual disabilities need to live and learn in separate settings apart from "the rest of us."

Fifteen films were selected for analysis to determine whether films have changed over time to reflect changes in the disability community. Selected films were major motion pictures with high profile actors/actresses portraying an individual with an intellectual disability (ID). Most films won awards and were widely viewed, thus, increasing their potential for influencing public perception. Eleven films were made in the United States, four were made in other countries including Australia, Belgium, China, and Korea.

Following the analysis, films were placed into one of three categories. The films depicted: (a) Segregation from the community, (b) Partial or supported integration, or (c) Community integration. While not a direct one-to-one correspondence, films that were produced earlier (prior to the 1990s) were more likely to fall into the "segregation" category; films produced later were more likely to fall into the "community integration" category.

Segregation from the Community

Five films portrayed characters with ID as segregated from society because the individual was considered a danger to himself or others, or unfit to be "in public." Three films portrayed individuals with ID as *dangerous monsters* (Nelson, 1994) that warranted segregation from society. In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Sling Blade*, the characters were not mean-spirited or malicious, but they were considered dangerous because of past acts of violence, their fixed beliefs, and cognitive limitations. Two other films showed individuals who were a burden to their siblings. *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* and *Pauline and Paulette* characterized individuals with ID as dependent on their siblings and unable to venture into the community alone. This characterization of dependency evokes pity for the sibling, but serves to reinforce stereotypes that erect barriers to community integration and independent living for individuals with ID.

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Partial or Supported Integration

Five feature films movies were placed in the category of partial or supported integration. In *Something About Mary*, Mary's brother, Warren, lives in his family home until adulthood at which time he moves to a group home with other individuals with ID. Erming, the character with ID in *Shower*, is integrated to a community of elderly men who are regulars at his family's bathhouse in Beijing, but he is not integrated into the community beyond. In *Radio*, the main character with ID is befriended by the high school football coach. Although Radio is not fully integrated into the community at large, he is well-integrated into the community of the school. In *Tim*, the main character lives with his father and works on a yard crew with several young men. Later Tim develops an interest in a woman whose yard he cleans. She becomes his companion and "more capable other" that guides him in the community. *The Other Sister* shows Carla getting her own apartment and attending college with the help of her affluent parents. She develops a relationship with a young man she meets at college who also has an ID. The film sends positive messages about the possibilities of postsecondary education and independent living with supports provided from institutions (colleges) and families.

Community Integration, Employment and Independent Living

Five films depicted characters living and working independently in the community. Dominique, in *Dominique and Eugene*, worked as a sanitation worker and supported himself and his brother who was attending medical school. *Oasis*, shows Jong-du on his own with only limited supervision from his manipulative family. As he develops a relationship with an isolated young woman with cerebral palsy, he introduces her to places and activities in the community. *Forrest Gump* depicts a character who leads a storybook life with incredible luck (rather than skills of his own) interceding to allow him to be fully integrated into the community. In *I Am Sam*, Sam has a job at Starbuck's, lives independently, and is raising a daughter on his own. One especially positive feature of this film is the use of actors with intellectual disabilities to fill the roles of Sam's friends. *Profoundly Normal* is based on a true story of a couple who meet in an institution, then date when they are moved into the community to supported living settings. They finally marry, work, live independently, and have a child together. The individuals are portrayed as completely capable of living independently and being contributing members of society.

Summary

Media portrayals have changed over the years to provide a more positive view of community integration for individuals with ID. Most films prior to the 1990s, perpetuated stereotypes that individuals with ID should be "protected from" adult activities without more capable others moderating and intervening in their behalf. These messages influence school and community policies, curricula, and more importantly, educator and administrator expectations. It is important, then, that these subtle messages are brought to light so that more equitable opportunities exist for all individuals with ID. We must change public perception before we can end the isolation. More recent films are contributing to more positive images such as individuals with ID attending college, working and living independently, having intimate relationships, getting married and having children. This is a step in the right direction that will hopefully continue and improve in years to come.

Feature Films

The name(s) listed for each movie is/are the actor(s) portraying the character(s) with ID

Category 1. Segregation

1. *Of Mice and Men* (1992) – John Malkovich (remake of 1939 version with Lon Chaney and Burgess Meredith) based on a novel by John Steinbeck published in 1937.
2. *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) – Robert Duvall based on a novel by Harper Lee published in 1960.
3. *What's Eating Gilbert Grape* (1993) – Leonardo DiCaprio.
4. *Sling Blade* (1996) – Billy Bob Thornton. 5. *Pauline and Paulette* (2001) - Belgian film - Dora va der Groen.

Category 2. Partial or Supported Integration

1. *Tim* (1979) - Australian film - Mel Gibson.
2. *There's Something About Mary* (1998) – W. Earl Brown.
3. *Shower* (1999) - Chinese film - Jiang Wu.
4. *The Other Sister* (1999) – Juliette Lewis, Giovanni Ribisi.
5. *Radio* (2003) - Cuba Gooding Jr.

Category 3. Integration Into the Community

1. *Dominique and Eugene* (1988) – Tom Hulce.
2. *Forrest Gump* (1994) – Tom Hanks.
3. *I Am Sam* (2001) – Sean Penn plus several actors with intellectual disabilities cast in roles as Sam's friends.
4. *Oasis* (2002) - Korean film - Sol Kyung-gu.
5. *Profoundly Normal* (2003, Television) – Kirstie Alley and Delroy Lindo

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ATTITUDE OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN REGULAR CLASSROOMS IN EBONYI STATE, SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA

Beth Oluka .N.
Ncheke Chijioke D., Ph.D
Eke A. N.
Ngwoke Dominic U., Ph.D.

Introduction

Attitude is a concept which is researched in education, social psychology and social science. Attitude as a concept is of interest to educationists and researchers in areas of teaching/learning for several reasons. According to Johnson (2009), attitude is defined as a combination of concepts, verbal information, and emotions that result in a predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably towards particular people, groups, ideas, events, or objects. Attitude comprises beliefs, emotions and behaviors which characterize human beings in intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions (Ozaji, 1993). Attitude represents an orientation towards or away from some objects, concepts or situations and a readiness to respond in a predetermined manner to these or related objects, concepts or situation (Thomas, 2008).

Going by Thomas' (2008) definition, attitude can be seen as a reaction of an individual or group of individuals towards or away from others or objects. This reaction may not be acquired in just one instance. People view and perceive persons with special needs from different angles. Some people look at people with special needs as people like themselves but with disability, which is not of their own making. Others look at persons with special needs with disgust; people in this category will always discriminate against persons with special needs at every opportunity, at school and at work (Abang, 2003). These people that do not accept persons with special needs undoubtedly have negative attitude towards this population.

However, classroom teacher attitudes are bound to influence the teaching/learning process involving persons with special needs in regular classroom. Ozaji (1993) summarized attitudes likely to prevail in a mainstreamed classroom to include tolerance of the child in the class, isolation of the child from meaningful interaction, devaluation/valuation based on academic incompetence and above average school performance respectively, and finally, interaction leading to social closeness. Teacher understanding of attitudes towards the children is also perceived to influence the intellectual, social and emotional adjustment of the children for inclusive education.

The practice of education in Nigeria which gives room for segregation and integration has deprived so many persons with disabilities the opportunity to acquire basic education. Apart from depriving persons with disabilities the opportunity to be educated formally, segregation and integration have also hindered most Nigerian citizens from gaining relevant information about the potential and capabilities of persons with disabilities. Recent developments in education all over the world are geared towards inclusive education. This is a system which gives every individual the opportunity to have access to formal education in regular school settings in the neighborhood regardless of their disabilities. This perhaps will help in eradicating the problem of deprivation, denial and discrimination suffered by persons with special needs and also improves the level of awareness of the capabilities of persons with special needs in the society.

Inclusive education is concerned with a system of education which offers every member of the society an equal opportunity to acquire basic education in the regular neighborhood school environment (Chukuka, 2006). This implies that everybody in a given society has a right to be educated in the regular school irrespective of his or her mental or physical status or condition. Chukuka further explained that the thrust of the matter on inclusion is that children with disabilities should be unconditionally mainstreamed into the regular education system without regard to the nature and severity of their disability. It is based on this that the study seeks to investigate attitudes of classroom teachers towards inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classroom of primary schools in Ebonyi state of Nigeria.

The questions which the researchers posed to guide the study are: (a) Do teachers believe in the inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classrooms? (b) Do teachers behave positively towards inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classrooms? (c) What kinds of emotional feelings do teachers have towards the inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classrooms?

The researchers hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between the mean ratings in the perceptions of: (a) teachers belief and their behavior towards the inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classrooms (b) teachers beliefs and their emotional feelings towards the inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classrooms.

Discussion

The findings revealed that teachers did not believe in the inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classrooms and that teachers have negative feeling towards persons with special needs for inclusive classrooms. Analysis of the relationship between the mean ratings of teacher's beliefs and their behavior, and teachers' belief and their emotional feelings toward inclusion show that significant difference exist between the mean ratings of the two formulated hypotheses.

Conclusion

The attitude of classroom teachers towards the inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classroom has been negative as indicated by results of this study. In order to improve and facilitate positive attitudes towards the inclusion of persons with special needs in regular classrooms there is need for more enlightenment on the concepts of inclusion of these regular teachers. There is also the need for re-orientation and in-service training for these teachers so that they can have better insight about person with special needs.

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TO BEHAVE OR NOT TO BEHAVE: A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH SEVERE EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES

Myka J. Breymann B.Sc., B.Ed., M.Sc.
Darci Fulton B.A., B.Ed., M.Ed.

The A.B.C.'s of classroom discipline are essential to a proactive approach when working with students with severe emotional and

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behavioral challenges. The framework consists of a basic foundation to understanding the four elements essential to classroom discipline (Breyman & Fulton, 2011). Keeping students and staff safe begins with educators acquiring knowledge and understanding student's behavior as well as their own. The application and analysis of this knowledge can be implemented to successfully create safe classrooms schools.

The A.B.C.'s of classroom discipline guide educators to reflect on their own personal teaching styles, develop a teaching framework, illustrate the importance of defusing and preventing challenging behaviors while building positive relationships with students with severe emotional and behavioral challenges. Although closely associated, classroom management and classroom discipline have two separate focuses. Classroom management focuses on establishing behavior expectations (Makenzie, 2003). It is enhanced when expectations are explained, modeled, practiced, reinforced and then practiced again. Classroom management is essential for effective teaching and learning. Without it, the classroom will lack behavioral expectations and becomes an ineffective teaching and learning environment (Colvin, 2007).

Classroom discipline focuses on how the students are behaving in compliance with the classroom management expectations. Discipline is a process where the teacher is responsible for teaching, guiding and managing student behavior. Students and educators are responsible for impulse control and compliance with classroom management.

The A.B.C.'s of Classroom Discipline

A = Teach Attitude and Skills (Expectations)

Students need to be taught how to behave appropriately (Greene & Ablon, 2006). They need to be given the opportunity to practice and review the new skills as well as positively reinforced for appropriate behavior (McGinnis & Goldstein, 2003). Educators must not assume that the student knows how to behave appropriately. According to the Phases of Acting out Behaviors, (Colvin, 2004) it is important to remember to teach these new skills when the student is in the calm phase.

Research reveals a strong correlation between academic success and strong social skills in students (McGinnis & Goldstein, 2003). By teaching conflict resolution/anger management skills, friendship skills, classroom learning expectations and how to deal with feelings and stress, student will begin to demonstrate success in their potential to learn and therefore, will increase their academic performance (McGinnis & Goldstein, 2003).

B = Manage Behavior

Students will begin to manage their own behavior independently as they begin to experience success within the learning environment. When educators teach and guide, students become more confident with their choices and begin to develop self-managing skills. The A.B.C.'s of classroom discipline work interchangeably with each other and will develop at different rates for each student. Educator involvement is imperative for student.

C = Guide Compliance

Teachers will guide student behavior by implementing choices. If an appropriate choice is made the student will experience positive reinforcement and a successful school day. If an inappropriate choice is made, the student will experience predetermined negative consequences. By focusing on the small behaviors, educators can set a precedent for compliance on the bigger behaviors. While students begin to comply with the rules and expectations of the classroom they will begin to manage their own behavior as well as be open to learning new appropriate behaviors. Although the A.B.C.'s of classroom discipline occur concurrently the student will move in and out of each of the A.B.C.s. As their skills and attitudes develop, their self-managing skills will grow stronger and they will require less guidance.

R = Relationship

As the ABCs of classroom discipline are implemented, a teacher student relationship is being built. This relationship is the most important element of the ABCs of classroom discipline as this is where the student begins to trust and take risks. Typically students with behavior challenges will struggle with relationships with individuals in positions of authority. By using the ABCs of classroom discipline, teachers can build this relationship and begin addressing the function of student behavior.

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Darci Fulton has 27 years of teaching experience in the field of special education. In addition to being a contributing writer on the B.O.A.T.S. resource, Darci co-authored Supporting Positive Behavior in Alberta's School with Alberta Education. Darci shares her expertise nationally and internationally working with school boards and individual teachers.

THERAPEUTIC EDUCATION FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

**Aonghus Gordon
Gamal M. Ibrahim**

Established in 1987, Ruskin Mill Trust [RMT] is today a major provider of day and residential education for some 295 students, aged 16-25, with complex learning difficulties and disabilities. Students attending its four colleges of specialist further education constitute approximately 10% of this low-incidence, high-cost cohort of learners currently enrolled at independent specialist day and residential colleges of further education in England and Wales.

Over 70% of RMT's students have an autistic spectrum condition as part of their formal diagnosis of learning disability. Within this cohort there is also a high degree of comorbidity with other conditions such as ADHD, developmental dyspraxia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorders, attachment disorders, epilepsy, and a range of sensory and mental health difficulties. Underlying and typically associated with these disorders is a triad of impairments, namely: impaired social skills & understanding; impaired communication abilities; and impaired imagination and cognitive inflexibility.

Over 25 years of action research within RMT's four specialist colleges of further education has shown that when young people with complex learning difficulties work with crafts-people in natural environments on real-life, purposeful tasks, their cognitive and social skills improve dramatically, as do their physical health and emotional well-being (Collins & Mercer, 2011). This emphasis on the educational and therapeutic benefits of craft work is grounded in the insights and inspirations of John Ruskin [social and aesthetic theory], William Morris [the Arts and Crafts Movement] and Rudolf Steiner [anthroposophy and human development]. Their insights have been braided into the distinctively anthroposophical architecture of the Trust's Practical Skills Therapeutic Curriculum, which sees the combination of practical, skilful craftwork and the environmental context as the medium which enables young people to experience and re-embodiment the skills of thinking [*the head*], feeling [*the heart*] and willing [*the hands*].

According to this theory, the potential inherent in natural materials unlocks, through their transformation in the craft process, the potential, for thinking, feeling and willing inherent in the individual young person. Central to this process is the value of experiencing and understanding the craft process as a whole, from how the basic materials have evolved in nature, right through all the stages to selling or making use of the product (Gordon, 2001).

In the first year of their three-year course, students engage in a variety of crafts – the *Descent into Matter* craft curriculum (Gordon, 1997). In subsequent years students typically specialize, according to interest and aptitude, in one or two of these crafts. In doing so they work with experienced crafts tutors – in ratios of 1:2 or 1:3 - in an apprenticeship model, which entails learning by:

- I. Modeling – the student observes the craft tutor
- II. Scaffolding – support from the craft tutor to help the student carry out the task
- III. Coaching – the thread weaving through the entire experience
- IV. Reflection – comparison with the thinking of the craft tutor and other students

Although on leaving RMT some students proceed to further vocational training in the crafts in which they have specialized, the great majority do not. The purpose of the *Descent into Matter* craft curriculum is not to create craftsmen, land workers or farmers but to create confidence, creativity, and a sense of personal achievement in young people who have previously experienced educational difficulties and failure. Indeed the aim is to develop general cognitive and social skills that will enable students to stand more securely and be better able to manage the practical affairs of life.

In parallel with the distinctive anthroposophical provenance of the RMT Practical Skills Therapeutic Curriculum, with its emphasis on Steiner's theory of the three stages of child development - *willing, feeling and thinking* – and the role of the *12 senses*

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in that process (Steiner, 1970), the Trust has also attempted to identify some of the reductive neurological processes that are thought to inform the educational and therapeutic benefits of craft work.

In two reviews of the secondary literature on the relationship between the learning brain and movement of the hands commissioned by RMT, claims are made, albeit at a high level of generalisation, about the efficacy of practical, hands-on learning (Sigman, 2008 a & b). It is, for example, claimed that using tools in craft activities develops “muscle memory” or the student’s ability to replicate an activity in a skillful way. In turn, this is said to strengthen widely distributed, yet highly interactive, brain cell networks that go far beyond the skills, hand-eye and muscle coordination related to a specific craft it is further claimed that tool use also involves and stimulates a range of “social, cognitive, perceptual and motor processes” (see for example, Wilson, 1998 & 1999). Here the mechanism by which craft activities produce these effects is thought to be achieved by their role in addressing executive dysfunction and reinforcing and cultivating a greater internal *locus of control* within students, leading to a greater sense of control over their lives. This locus of control is defined as the ability to delay gratification; to tolerate ambiguous situations; to resist coercion; and to sustain attention.

In summary, it is claimed, that a curriculum primarily based on craft activities cultivates precisely the cognitive and physical experiences necessary for full social, emotional and cognitive development in students with complex learning disabilities.

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LEARNING THROUGH SUN SAND AND SURF: A SOCIAL SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

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Social competence, social skills, and self-concept are factors influencing individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). General and special educators, administrators, parents, and support service personnel agree that identification and intervention for

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social skill deficits must be a focus of instruction if students with ASD are expected to achieve increased success and independence (Stichter, Randolph, Gage, & Schmidt, 2007). While there is no cure for ASD, early intervention treatment can improve one's academic and social development. Once diagnosed, individuals with ASD can receive school-related interventions such as speech and language therapy, social skills instruction, and/or music therapy.

Children with ASD also have difficulty with sensory processing skills. Sensory processing difficulties result in an inability to correctly organize and interpret stimuli so their responses are likely to be inappropriate and interfere with learning (Stancliff, 1996). Individuals with ASD need experiences to develop social-emotional and sensory processing skills that will enhance their academic success.

In response to the need to further social development and sensory processing skills, a two-day surf camp for students with autism was created and implemented for students with ASD as a school district field trip. The goal of the camp was to improve social development and provide sensory motor activities to students with ASD through surfing.

Learning through Sun Sand and SURF Curriculum

A curriculum for the camp, entitled *Learning through Sun Sand and SURF*, was developed and researched by related service and instructional service personnel, as well as university professors and researchers. The curriculum consists of four components: (1) A Lakeside Pre-camp Family Social, where campers and their families, camp staff, and volunteers meet one another, learn basic surfing safety, and learn to stand and paddle on a surf board; (2) The Surf Camp Group Activities that include yoga, surfing lessons, arts and crafts, a paddle relay, sand castle building, and a beach cookout; (3) *The SURF Social Skills for Camp and School*, where individuals with autism are taught a set of social skills to be used in school as well as at surf camp; and, (4) a Post-camp Family Social, where campers and their families reconvene and receive a copy of a surf camp DVD consisting of pictures and videos.

SURF Skills Development

The *SURF Social Skills for Camp and School* is an important component of the curriculum because of its emphasis on teaching social skills. The acronym, SURF stands for the social skills campers were taught prior to camp and were expected to demonstrate during various camp activities. The SURF steps are: Stay in the group; Use my SEE steps (good body language to represent a pleasant Sound of voice, a pleasant Expression, and maintaining Eye contact); Remember to ask questions; and, Form a friendship. Campers were taught the skills prior to attending camp. While at camp, campers were prompted to use their SURF skills during group activities. At the end of each activity, campers were prompted to use a SURF Skills Self-Monitoring Checklist to rate their social skill performance.

The instructional methodology for teaching each SURF skill lesson is based on the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM), developed at the University Kansas Center for Research on Learning (KU-CRL). Specifically, the SEE steps for good body language were adapted from *The SCORE Skills: Social Skills for Cooperative Groups* (Vernon, Schumaker, & Deshler, 1996). These critical teaching behaviors include: giving advance and post organizers, direct instruction of each skill, demonstration and modeling, practice activities, checks for understanding and teaching to mastery. Video clips of student models, similar to the ages of campers, were developed to depict examples and non-examples of each SURF skill.

Research

The *Parent Perceptions of the Surf Camp Curriculum* (PPSCC) questionnaire was created to determine the effectiveness of the *Learning through Sun, Sand and SURF curriculum*. This questionnaire was designed specifically to measure parent perceptions of their child's social skills in relation to the surf camp curriculum. The questionnaire was administered two weeks prior to camp (pre), immediately following camp (post), and then again two weeks following camp (retention). The last open ended question on each questionnaire was: "How do you believe the surf camp curriculum will impact your child's overall social skills?" (pre); and, "How do you believe the surf camp curriculum impacted your child's overall social skills?" (post and retention).

Results

Prior to attending camp (pre), parents felt that the surf camp curriculum could have positive effects on their child's social skills. One mother felt, "...the social skills activities in the fun and safe setting and environment will help to improve his social skills in a group setting when he doesn't really know a lot of the kids."

Immediately following camp (post), statement themes of positive confidence, engagement, friendship, and interaction emerged. One mother wrote that surf camp was, "...a safe place for him to practice his skills. I think there will be many long term benefits!" Another parent wrote the curriculum, "helped him to interact and speak up on the group activities."

Two weeks following camp (retention), one parent wrote that the SURF camp curriculum helped her son with learning to, "...take turns and listen to others and follow rules." Another parent wrote, "I saw such a level of cooperation among all the kids. It was amazing to watch. He became more aware of others and more willing to initiate appropriate (and reciprocal) conversation."

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Summary and Conclusion

Initial research on the implementation of the *Learning through Sun, Sand, and SURF Curriculum* during a two-day day surf camp for students with ASD resulted in positive outcomes. Specifically, parents reported that their child's social skills had improved based on the camp experience. This may be due in part to explicit instruction of the *SURF Social Skills for Camp and School* that was provided prior to camp, and that campers were expected to self-rate their use of each skill during group activities. While parents reported the social skill benefits they observed as a result of the curriculum, the challenge lies in analyzing and reporting the changes experienced by children with ASD over time. For this reason, the authors of the *Learning through Sun Sand and SURF* plan to use the data obtained through this research to create a measurement tool specific to this curriculum.

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Mr. Grahame Rance entered teaching as his second career four years ago. Prior to this he served as CEO of multi-billion dollar public and private companies all over the world. An electronics engineer by training, Grahame has chosen to work at an Alternative Day School for students with emotional/behavioral disorders and students on the Autism Spectrum. He serves as Lead Teacher there and performs many crisis intervention duties in addition to teaching high school Math and a Computer Repair and Maintenance Class.

HELPING MATHEMATICS EDUCATORS ADJUST THEIR TEACHING STYLES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

**Edel Reilly
Joann Migyanka**

Teaching In and Out of Your Comfort Zone

According to the United States Department of Education, nearly 42 percent of all students in U.S. public schools are students of color; approximately 20 percent are second language learners, and approximately 14 percent have an identified disability. Almost half of the students who have an identified disability spend 80 percent of their school day in general education classrooms. It is not always possible to get every student to exactly the same point in the curriculum at exactly the same time; however, it is possible to guide most students through the curriculum in a way that helps them achieve desired standards (Voltz, Sims & Nelson, 2010). The diversity of the student population and the expectation that all students can achieve high standards requires a shift in instructional practices and design. Differentiated Instruction can be instrumental in meeting this goal.

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Theoretical Framework

Teaching and Learning Styles

Differentiated instruction is a model of instruction that embraces an engaged, student-centered, constructivist approach to teaching and learning. The three key elements of differentiated instruction are: 1) readiness, 2) interest, and 3) learning profile (Allan & Tomlinson, 2000). These elements form the philosophical and theoretical basis of this approach.

Student readiness is as diverse as the classroom population. Readiness involves multiple factors that can affect the level of difficulty at which a student learns and achieves. A theoretical basis for readiness can be understood through Lev Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978), the ZPD is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p86). Interest can be considered one of the mitigating factors of readiness. The more interested a student is in the content, process, or product being studied, the more the student's level of readiness will be positively influenced.

Thousand, Villa, and Nevin (2007) contend that the process of differentiating content, instruction and assessment begins by knowing your students. Teachers need to apply to a universal design approach and gather information about their students' strengths, interests, learning styles, preferences, and intelligences. The theoretical work of Kolb (n.d.) on learning styles and Gardner (2011) on multiple intelligences provide a framework for assessing students' learning profiles. Understanding your students' learning profile is essential; however, understanding how a teacher's own learning profile affects his or her instructional practices is equally important.

Applying Learning Styles Theory to Mathematics Teaching

As the student population continues to diversify, all disciplines need to find ways to better meet the different learning styles of their students. One discipline in which this is particularly challenging is mathematics. The primary focus of mathematics is on problem solving, and this has led to mathematics being taught in a very standardized way. This traditional approach involves showing students how to solve mathematics problems, and then asking the students to practice these problem-solving techniques. Most mathematics teachers believe very firmly in this teaching method. They assume that as students practice solving mathematics problems, the students are developing an understanding of the concepts on which the problems are built. However, according to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (2000) "learning mathematics without understanding has long been a common outcome of school mathematics instruction... and has been a persistent problem since the 1930s" (p. 20). This problem has led to numerous students memorizing facts and problem solving strategies rather than developing conceptual understanding. To solve this challenge, teachers need to give students mathematical experiences that make sense to them, that connect with their prior knowledge, and that are applicable to their lives. Developing a broader range of methods for teaching mathematics can not only help meet the needs of diverse students, but can also help more students learn concepts rather than problem solving tricks.

Research Project

Putting Learning Styles Theory into Practice

Of course calling for change is much easier than creating it. Most teachers like to teach what they know the way they learned it. This makes sense since being familiar with a teaching method gives teachers confidence. Unfortunately, using only one repeated teaching styles has grown less effective over time because today's students are more and more diverse and have a wider range of learning styles and educational needs. Teachers need to develop an awareness of students' readiness, interest, and learning profile (Tulbure, 2012).

This is certainly applicable to the mathematics classroom where memorizing formulas and rules tend to be the norm. While this procedural approach to teaching and learning mathematics may make sense to a given teacher, it may not suit all students. As already noted, plug and chug approaches to teaching mathematics often leave students with poor conceptual understanding. While a one-size fits all approach to mathematics no longer works given the diversity of the student population, it is also unreasonable to expect teachers to design a different activity for each and every individual student in a class. What is needed, therefore, is for teachers to learn how to develop a broad range of learning activities from which students can choose while teachers also stay within their teaching comfort zone.

Matching Teaching Styles to Meet the Needs of Students

Our research reports on a collaborative project where a mathematics professor and a special education professor designed and helped K-12 teachers implement successful differentiated instruction strategies for diverse learners in math and science. Our research examines how teacher educators from different departments working with in-service teachers from the local community can together successfully meet the diverse needs to students in K-12 classroom. Emphasis is placed on our efforts to link special education and mathematics.

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EXPERIENCING SPRECHGESANG: THEATRE'S FORGOTTEN INSTRUMENT

Susanna Uchatius, BFA (Theatre)
James Coomber, BFA (Honors Music) BFA (Theatre)

This article is an abbreviation of the original study (2011) available at: nightswimmingtheatre.com/pure-research/

The seeds of this research paper originated from Nightswimming's Pure Research award granted to Theatre Terrific artists Susanna Uchatius and James Coomber. Nightswimming's Pure Research provides space, money and resources to artists who are pursuing provocative theatrical questions that are not specifically linked to the creation of a new work, but rather to address a query in the practice of theatre craft. This entails three intense eight-hour days of studio research. In Theatre Terrific's practice with artists of all abilities, we wished to pursue the question: Is there a primal element missing in our pedagogy of voice practice in performance speaking and singing? Further, how can we use singing as a tool for open natural acting to build pure communication?

Why this question?

Theatre Terrific works with artists of all abilities who have a wide range of difficulty with set text speech. Kieran Naugler, one of Theatre Terrific's students and performers, was a unique example of this.

Goals of the research:

- To better understand the voice as a whole entity
- To support the voice in developing performance and communicative elements that perhaps have not been discovered or fully utilized

Participants

Keiran Naugler: a 20-year-old who loves to sing. He lives with adrenoleukodystrophy (locked in body syndrome) causing extreme difficulty in speaking. Yet, it was later discovered that he can sing freely, without the physical struggle required to speak. He has performed with Theatre Terrific and wishes to continue performing. (Please see the story: *The Boy That Talked* at www.theatrtterrific.ca) Kieran agreed to participate in this research.

Trevor O'Rourke: a classical opera singer who also trained in Flamenco Cante in Seville and presently sings and plays percussion for local Spanish dance companies. He agreed to participate in this research.

Procedure

We approached the research knowing it would be personal for the participants and that we needed two experiments that could be quantified. We plotted two methods:

- (a) *Personal Questionnaires*: We drafted personal in-depth questionnaires that would hopefully give us and the participants' toeholds on the personal signposts into how, when, why, where, what and with whom they personally do or don't speak or sing; along with early years, music, movies, books, songs, sports, people and places.
- (b) *Batch Experiments*: We drafted a set of experiments that would use sounding, singing and speaking from a wide variety of contexts and combinations using known, unknown and impoverished material. We also used the ritual format that we use in our regular theatre development process. This includes the three elements of ritual: enter, enact and exit. Enter is done in circle silence passing a stone to establish presence and acceptance. Enactment is the work needed to attempt to do the experiments we had devised. Exit is acknowledgment and gratitude to oneself and fellow participants in the work.

Day One Work, Observations and Discoveries

Our first experiment involved sounding. We set Kieran and Trevor at opposite ends of the room. They were to sound familiar sounds, such as gasping, breathing, ahhhhing, etc; then face each other and laugh; then onto speaking known text loud, soft, fast slow etc. Both Kieran and Trevor became static and stuck. We then asked them to sing to each other. Bingo! Everything opened up. As researchers, we realized we had fallen into practiced pedagogical patterns of speaking first. We then realized that if we were to research the space between speaking and singing, we had to acknowledge that singing does something to the voice, to the physical body and to the psyche. Singing would be first from now on.

Day Two Work, Observations and Discoveries

We decided to investigate all the ways to communicate singing. We had Kieran and Trevor do call and responses led by James, sing accompanied by the piano, and then we broke down the word 'hippopotamus' phonetically and did the same. We were going around in circles; nothing took off. It dawned on us that perhaps the researcher/subject relationship was a hindrance; so we all joined in.

Revelation! The *us* and *them* became *we*. We flew through the morning! For the afternoon we had planned to attempt an emotional connection by having Kieran and Trevor have a word war that we hoped would open the voice in gleeful swearing indulgence. It didn't happen.

Second revelation! There needs to be a reason, a connection for the emotions to live in the voice. As researchers, we stepped back and had Kieran and Trevor tell each other a personal story in hushed private tones. Afterwards, we asked questions. The voices in response from both Kieran and Trevor were full, rich and detailed. Sharing a personal story with each other has built relationship, the opportunity to risk trust, giving and receiving, ultimately freeing the voice from its constrictive bindings.

Day Three Work, Observations and Discoveries

We had asked before we even started this research: Why doesn't Kieran sing everything to make himself understood? We began day three singing well known songs at the piano: Then we decided to throw all methods to the winds, jumped off the cliff and started a conversation about movies we love talking/singing to the melody of "White Christmas" with James playing at the piano. Then it happened! The conversation amongst all four of us went on and on and on. We all discovered that speaking-sort-of-singing our free-flow thoughts to a melody, let our voices fly untethered by judgment. It was like dancing in voice. This was *Sprechgesang*. James played random notes, without any musical ideas and we continued.

James: Howwww does it maaaake you feeel?

Kieran: I feeel like I'mmmmm normal. What noooote is that?

James: It's a Beeeeee-flat.

Compared to any other time we had had a conversation with Kieran, this was the most detailed, lengthy and full cup of Kieran we had ever heard!

What was This all about and Why Was it Important?

Kieran, and we with him, had accessed that place between singing and speaking. That place is a huge storage vault full of emotional events, memories, personal heritage, beliefs, confusions, fears, joys—just about everything that makes you, you. All of us have this unique ‘vocalprint’ in its own unique form.

The Possibilities of *Sprechgesang*

Sprechgesang, that place between talking and singing, could alter how we perceive what is correct in speaking and singing. The great differentiation of voice could open huge untraveled rich vistas for all actors and in particular those who live with challenges that are deemed to hamper their voice. *Sprechgesang*, as a valid pedagogical tool, would aid students to access and disseminate their own truth.

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Susanna Uchatius, Artistic Director of Theatre Terrific since 2004, brings a deep passion to working with actors of ‘all abilities’, believing those who love with difference deserve the respect of inclusive, rigorous challenge in theatre. She teaches widely and has written/directed over 20 produced works for the company.

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ENHANCING LITERACY SKILLS OF DEAF STUDENTS IN NIGERIA USING BABUDOH'S COMPREHENSION THERAPY

Gladys B. Babudoh (Ph.D)

Background of the Study

Most students who were born with profound hearing impairment (deaf) perform below expectation in reading comprehension and in nearly all language related subjects. This is because reading comprehension, which is the understanding of written texts, is in the language format of the hearing which they know very little about (Kalin, 1964; Liben, 1978; Udoh, 1987; & Ojile, 2006). Deaf students, like their hearing counterparts are equally expected to express themselves fluently in writing using the format of hearing language. According to Ojile (2006), the development of these skills requires a complete integration of the individual into the family and the society so that they will always have something to talk about. However, hearing people in the immediate environment of the deaf do not integrate them into events and conversations because of the language barrier. Consequently, they lack verbal language and experiential background which they need to assist them to comprehend written texts, and also help in their own written expression (Texas Education Agency, 2002). The cumulative effect of the students' comprehension problem is their poor performance in external examinations where they are often regarded as academically backward.

A critical analysis of the performance of the deaf students at Plateau School for the Deaf in Jos, Nigeria for instance, shows that out of the 136 students registered for the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) and National Examination Council (NECO) external examinations between 2004 and 2008, only seven students had a pass grade in English Language, signifying 94.8% failure. The implication was that none of the students that graduated from that school between 2004 and 2008 could further their education into the university because of their deficiency in English language. This confirmed the views of Udoh (1987) that educational wastage and under-achievement are likely to occur among potentially able students, unless and until reading skills are effectively identified and taught, and reading difficulties remedied. It was in an attempt to identify and remedy some of the reading problem areas of the congenitally profoundly hearing impaired students that this research was undertaken.

Single group, pretest-posttest, quasi –experimental design was used for the study. Ten participants were selected using multistage sampling technique from a population of 35 deaf students in Junior Secondary School two (JSS 2) in Jos, Nigeria. The criteria used at the different stages were: degree of hearing impairment (profound), onset of hearing impairment (congenital), performance (average), chronological age (14-20 years), and sex of the students (male and female). The participants therefore were 10 students who were born with profound hearing impairment, whose ages were between 14 and 20 years. Three of them were males and seven were females. Five tests, the treatment method, and the students' dossiers were used to collect data for the study. The tests were audiological assessment (used only at pre-treatment stage), word recognition test, comprehension assessment test (using Umolu Informal Inventory), continuous writing ability test, and formative assessment test. (used only during treatment to monitor progress of the participants).

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The treatment was the Babudoh's Comprehension Therapy, which is a tool specifically designed to enhance the comprehension and writing skills of students with congenital and profound hearing impairment. It is a method of helping children to learn language through active participation in reading story books. The activities were carried out in five stages: stage one entailed the learning of the new words in the story books (meaning and sign of each word), and the use of the new words in sentences (in sign language and in writing); stage two entailed reading the story (silently and in sign language), answering of questions (in signs and in writing), and retelling the story (in signs and in writing); stage three entailed discussions, cloze exercises, and maze exercises; stage four entailed dramatizing the story, and a creative activity based on the story. Finally, stage five entailed the making of a big book by the students. In this study, three simple story books were selected and read after applying the Fog Readability Index to determine the appropriateness of the books. The exercises mentioned above in the treatment tool were carried out for all the three story books selected. Simple percentages and arithmetic means were used to analyze the research questions while t-test for related samples was used to test all the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The analysis of the tests and exercises showed that Babudoh's Comprehension Therapy (BCT) is a good method of enhancing reading comprehension and continuous writing of students having congenital and profound hearing loss. This was because of the repeated reading, acting, retelling and writing exercises in the treatment tool. The study revealed that the sight vocabulary, comprehension and writing skills of the students improved after treatment. This can be seen from the difference in the students' mean scores for the pre and post treatment. The improvement observed in sight vocabulary was between 110 and 474 words. The t-test analysis confirmed it as it showed the t-calculated as 11.11 while the t-critical was just 2.26 which showed that the post-treatment scores were significantly better than those for the pre-treatment. Similarly, the improvement in the comprehension mean scores were between 8% and 29%. The study further showed that the writing skills of the deaf students improved as there was a considerable increase in the number, length, and quality of the sentences used by the students after treatment. Legibility of characters, spellings of words, word order, and punctuations of the sentences also improved considerably after the treatment.

Given the fact that the State/Federal Government of Nigeria under the Universal Basic Education Program is working hard to practise inclusive education system in Nigeria where the children with special needs are to be taught alongside their normal counterparts using the same facilities (Axiom Learning Solutions, 2012), the deaf students' English language needs have to be enhanced to enable them to receive the maximum benefit from the school program.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that teachers of deaf children should ensure that they give the children a rich experiential background (so that they would have something to talk about) and provide enough opportunities for them to use the experiences while discussing events of similar occurrences and expressing their feelings in language, drama, and dance. Furthermore, students should be encouraged to always write simple sentences of the things they read and say in discussions. This will give them practice on how to express themselves in writing, so that inclusive education for children with congenital and profound hearing impairment could be successful.

Suggestions for Further Research

It is suggested that research involving students with congenital and profound hearing impairment be replicated adopting the instruments used in this study and should be carried out in other countries for the purpose of general inferences and comparisons with outcomes of previous researches.

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UNDERSTANDING POVERTY: LINKING LANGUAGE, BEHAVIOR AND PERSONAL RESOURCES

Dr. Bob Bayuk

Children in poverty think and act differently than middle class children. Cognitive and learning strategies, language register and discourse patterns differ. Class differences make teaching and learning challenging. Families from poverty often understand neither the expectations nor the “hidden rules” that govern how we think and interact in schools.

All individuals have eight resources to tap in dealing with life’s events. These include financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationships/role models, and knowledge of hidden rules. Our goal is to foster resilience in young people by understanding how to strengthen non-financial resources that would mitigate the negative effects of poverty on everyday living.

The purpose of this presentation is to: (a) define eight resources of young people, (b) distinguish among five different registers of language, and (c) utilize story structure and discourse patterns in shaping behavior

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify eight resources of a student
- Explain language register and discourse patterns
- Explain how language and behavior are intertwined
- Explain how economic realities affect patterns of living
- Understand how to strengthen non-financial resources to promote resiliency in young people

To better understand students and parents from poverty one must have a working definition of the concept of poverty. Typically, poverty is thought of in terms of financial resources only. For our purposes, poverty is the extent to which an individual does without resources: financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationships/role models, and knowledge of hidden rules. The resources of our students need to be analyzed before interventions are offered. Those who work with young people, usually in a school setting, have almost limitless opportunities to influence the non-financial resources that make a difference in students’ lives.

Resilience is the capacity of people to cope with stress, adversity and catastrophe. It is also used to indicate a characteristic of resistance to future negative events. This definition of resilience is often contrasted with "risk factors". Risk factors include the adverse negative impact of poverty on coping with everyday life events, including hunger, domestic and street violence, and, perhaps, homelessness. By building resources we strengthen the resilience leading to improved coping and the abilities to be successful in life.

Economic realities create “hidden rules,” unspoken cueing mechanisms, which reflect agreed-upon tacit understandings, which the social class group uses to negotiate reality. These “hidden rules” come out of cause-and-effect situations in social interactions. They reflect the behaviors and mindsets that are needed to survive in the economic reality of the class. Students need to be directly taught the hidden rules of middle class, not only in terms of language and register but in terms of attitudes and behavior. The casual register use of such phrases as ‘This sucks,’ grates on the ears of middle-class teachers who would prefer ‘This does not fit with what I want to do right now.’ Assumptions made about individuals and their approach to school and work are likely to relate more to their understanding of the hidden rules than to intelligence and motivation.

Education is a key way people move out of poverty. A person’s level of education is tied to economic class. The amount and complexity of language, including the abstractness of language, is related to education as well. Education is about learning to use abstract representational systems, language, which is critical for shared understanding. Language and its use are tied in a complex way to economic realities, education and social context. An understanding of the culture, values, and use of language register will lessen educators’ frustration when interacting with students and their parents who come from poverty.

One of the reasons there is so much violence in poverty is that, when you only have casual register, you don’t have the words to resolve a conflict. You only have action! To resolve a conflict you must be able to get away from the personal to the issue. To get to the issue, you must have abstract words in your vocabulary. Casual register does not include abstract vocabulary.

Severe and long-lasting stress, found universally in poverty, has a negative effect at all levels: physical, emotional, spiritual, and even the cellular level. High stress reduces levels of serotonin, norepinephrine and dopamine in our brain chemistry. These neurotransmitters are sometimes referred to as resilience-enhancing agents. Strengthening the mental, emotional and relationship resources of an individual from poverty enhances their ability to withstand stress and enhances their ability to combat crises in their lives. By building these various resources we strengthen an individual’s coping skills leading to more positive outcomes.

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Mental resources can be strengthened by focusing on learning, providing strategies for inputting information, mediating the information learned, and teaching appropriate output strategies. Emotional resources for young people can be strengthened through support systems at school, by using appropriate discipline strategies and approaches, and by establishing long-term relationships with positive role models (teachers/staff). Relationships are the primary motivators for young people from poverty. Establishing natural connections between young people and their mentors will enable this vital resource to take root and grow.

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FIRST SCHOOL THEN WHAT? TRANSITION PLANNING FOR DEAF STUDENTS IN BARBADOS

**Stacey Blackman
Allyson Murray**

Conceptual Framework and Background

The bridge from segregation to the inclusion of students who are Deaf in school, community and society remains 'under construction' in the island of Barbados. The metaphor of the bridge in the context of the conference theme connotes a dichotomy between the opposing philosophies of segregated versus inclusive approaches to educating and accommodating students with disabilities. It can be argued that although powerful philosophical and practical arguments exist for the adoption of inclusive education for all students, the transition from a segregated approach to education for all children in an inclusive education system is not so easily achieved. Barbados has a five tiered approach to education that comprises: early childhood education or pre-primary education for children between the ages of 3-4 years old, primary education for children ages 5-11 years old, secondary education for children ages 11-17 years old, tertiary level education with lower level matriculation for students who are 17 years old and special education for students with disabilities (Mini Digest, 2001).

The delivery model for special education has three distinct components: *special schools* (segregated settings), *special education units* where students attend classes but apart from their peers and *inclusive settings* that combine intensive instruction in resource rooms for students who experience difficulties in basic mathematics and language skills and general education settings with non-disabled peers. It could be argued that the multi-tiered approach adopted by Barbados represents an attempt to achieve parity of access to education for all students. However, it has had unintended social and psychological consequences that include: firstly, the maintenance of segregated schooling for students who are Deaf, Blind and those with more severe developmental disabilities.

Secondly, secondary school age students who are deaf remain at risk for poor post school outcomes in terms of employment, access to higher or further education and a lack of access to transition services and social integration in their respective communities. Employment opportunities for persons who are Deaf remain a key area of concern in the literature. In Barbados few studies have been conducted to date that examine the employment experiences of persons who are Deaf. According to the results of one multiple case study conducted among a sample of persons who are Deaf in Barbados by Blackman and Maynard (2009), it was discovered that: persons who are Deaf mainly accessed part time rather than full time work, were underpaid by employers, experienced attitudinal and environmental barriers on their jobs, and found it difficult to advocate for themselves with employers. These results are supported in the international literature as well by Punch, Hyde and Creed (2004); Foster and Macleod (2003); Laroche, Garcia and Barrette (2000). These findings suggest that the inclusion of persons with disabilities and in particular those with sensory impairments remain a work in progress.

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Research

An embedded multiple case study was used to investigate the perspectives of students who are Deaf about their likely career and social pathways after school. This approach recognizes the importance of context in the lived experiences of these students and therefore the dialogue between students and researcher is influenced to some extent by the school environment. The case therefore comprised of 5 students ages 16-18 years old from the Mount Gay School for the Disabled in Barbados. Kohler's (1996) *Taxonomy for Transition and Planning* guided the inquiry, however, the researchers devised a flexible interview guide to further explore student's perspectives about their post school plans and used focus groups as a medium to elicit students' views.

Results

Interview data was distilled using a Miles and Huberman (1994) framework with common themes displayed in Meta Matrices on the following domains: employment, further training and education, daily living, community participation, self-determination, communication and interpersonal relations. The themes that emerged out of the study revealed that students had successfully negotiated internships with the help of either family or someone in their community, they were ambivalent about how to pursue further training for their desired careers, they expressed confidence about how to manage money and practice good hygiene, participation in the community was dependent on parents, basic literacy skills were weak, students reported they enjoyed good interpersonal relationships with family and close friends.

The results suggest that while students expressed some confidence about their post school outcomes in terms of career selection and employment, the areas of concern are: their ability to successfully access and pursue further training to make desired career goals a reality, poor literacy skills, continued dependence on parents to ensure that their rights are not infringed upon and the appropriate location of services in their communities.

In light of this research it is clear that post secondary institutions and education opportunities need to be identified in Barbados that can equalize opportunities for employment and career development for students who are Deaf. One key area of concern will be how persons in Barbadian society including teachers in further education settings and employers will seek to bridge the gap in communication between themselves and individuals who are Deaf to ensure that full inclusion and parity of access is achieved.

Recommendations

In Barbados a national policy on special education is urgently needed to guide the development of schooling, further education, transition planning services, and career development for students who are Deaf. In addition a concerted effort is also needed at the community level to provide services that integrate technologies that can assist individuals who are Deaf participate and communicate with those of the dominant culture in the wider society. In order to facilitate this, there is a need to sensitize the general public about the Deaf community, their culture and their needs to suggest ways that they can be further integrated into all spheres of Barbadian life.

Suggestions for Future Research

There is a need for longitudinal studies to track the progress of students who are Deaf after they leave secondary school in order to understand what kinds of transition services and further training are needed to assist the development of persons who are Deaf in Barbados. Further research is also needed to understand how best to facilitate the move from segregation to inclusion of students who are deaf in regular education settings and at the wider community in Barbados.

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SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING: HOW DO DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS SUPPORT INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING? AN EXAMINATION IN NEW YORK AND LOWER AUSTRIA

**Maria-Luise Braunsteiner
Susan Mariano-Lapidus**

Conceptual Framework and Background

Segregation experienced by people with disabilities not only induces conditions that lead to poverty but marginalization itself diminishes the fullness of the individual's experiences. Even the term 'inclusion', particularly in the educational setting, is based on a deficit view. Perceptions of 'dis'-ability create barriers to true inclusion and are often reinforced through higher education training programs. To promote inclusive values, acceptance of individual and cultural differences must be included in all curricula not solely within 'special education' coursework.

Using questions derived from the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow 2002, 2011) the present investigation seeks to understand the perceptions of and attitudes toward inclusive schooling in students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate education courses at a college Mercy College in New York, USA and at Paedagogische Hochschule Niederoesterreich in Baden, Austria. Additionally, the present study seeks to gather information regarding the attitudes and perceptions of inclusive schooling of administrative candidates in the school building leadership program at both institutions. Results are reported in terms of graduate curriculum development and of creating and sustaining school cultures that support differences.

The Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2002, 2011) provides a tool for developing inclusive schools. "Fundamental to the Index for Inclusion is the creation of a school culture that encourages a preoccupation with the development of ways of working that attempt to reduce barriers to the learning and participation of all students" (Oswald, 2010, p. 91). The Index for Inclusion presents the most detailed explanation of what an inclusive school should look like (Ainscow, 2007) and describes key concepts to support thinking about inclusive school/preschool/community development and provides two things, a set of indicators describing inclusive education, in terms of cultures, policies and practices and an approach to school/ institutional/ community development (Braunsteiner, 2010).

Research

Participants

Participants in the present study were recruited from the Paedagogische Hochschule Niederoesterreich in Baden, Austria and Mercy College in the United States. All participants were teacher candidates or students working toward a degree in educator or school building leadership.

The present study utilized responses from a survey format containing a total of 49 questions. The following guiding questions were used to conduct data analysis; What are the thoughts and attitudes of stakeholders towards inclusion? Do stakeholders feel that inclusive values are essential for educating all children? Do different stakeholders feel prepared to meet the needs for working in inclusive settings? Do Stakeholders perceive inclusion to be the domain of special education? What are stakeholders' conceptions of inclusion? What are stakeholders' perceived limitations to inclusion?

Results

Statistical analysis revealed several significant differences between groups of participants. First, data showed that Teaching Candidates had more positive perceptions of inclusive schooling than School Building Leadership Candidates. For this category,

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responses from all both Teaching Candidates (primary and secondary education Teaching Candidates and experienced and inexperienced Teaching Candidates) were compared with the responses of all School Building Leadership Candidates. The present study also found that Elementary Education Teacher Candidates had significantly more positive perceptions of inclusive schooling than Secondary Education Teacher Candidates. This category included responses from both experienced and inexperienced Teacher Candidates. Finally, Teacher Candidates with no previous work experience had more positive perceptions of inclusive schooling than Teacher Candidates with previous or current teaching experience.

Further qualitative analysis of participant responses to open ended questions aided in providing context for these significant findings and in contributing valuable information for interpretation.

Discussion

Results of this investigation are commiserating with the current literature regarding teacher candidates and school building candidates perceptions of inclusion and inclusive education. However, the finding that teacher candidates with previous teaching experience have more negative perceptions of inclusive schooling than teacher candidates with no teaching experience is a finding that is not well addressed in the literature. Implications of these findings are vital to understanding and creating successful inclusive education. Results will be discussed in terms of the need for shifts in culture and practices regarding inclusive education currently in practice and in reducing segregation in the educational systems in the US and Austria through pedagogical shifts in teacher and administrator training coursework.

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MEETING DISTRICT AND STATE NEEDS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS: EVERY CHILD DESERVES AN EXCELLENT TEACHER

Cory Cooper Hansen, Ph.D.
Pamela J. Harris, Ph.D.
Martha A. Cocchiarella, Ph.D.

Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College

Excellent students, faculty, and programs have elevated Arizona State University (ASU) to one of the top 100 universities in the world (<http://www.asu.edu/excellence>). Part of ASU's commitment to excellence, access, and impact is an obligation to use-

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inspired research: research that contributes to the public good. In no one college is this more evident than Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC). Through a partnership between MLFTC and Teach For America, ASU has redefined its teacher preparation program. This innovative partnership, named iTeachAZ, is funded through an investment of over \$18 million dollars by entrepreneur and philanthropist T. Denny Sanford and builds on faculty research (<http://education.asu.edu/faculty>) that informs quality teacher preparation (e.g. Hansen, 2012; Harris, Oakes, Lane & Rutherford, 2009; Hart & Malian, 2013; Mathur, Rutherford, & Cocchiarella, 2005). A key element of iTeachAZ is a Senior Year Residency (SYR) during which teacher candidates complete two semesters of co-teaching with a mentor teacher following the school calendar (rather than the University calendar) providing a highly interactive clinical experience four days every week for an entire school year. University faculty members travel to the partner schools to teach method courses on the other day. Adopting SYR requirements opened the door to meeting the high demand in Arizona for teachers dually certified in Early Childhood (EC) and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE).

Early Childhood Special Education Certification Requirements

A number of factors have contributed to the dearth of teachers certified to teach in ECSE settings. In July 2012, the Arizona Department of Education (AZDoE) changed requirements for elementary certificates to cover grades one through eight. Elementary certified teachers who wanted to teach kindergarten needed to take earn an EC endorsement. Options include an EC degree from an accredited institution or a passing score on Professional EC Exams together with eight semester hours of practicum. Rather than recertify, many teachers just left kindergarten.

Certificates for teaching in special education are at odds with these grade level requirements. An Arizona special education certificate covers kindergarten through grade twelve (cross-categorical). An ECSE certificate covers birth to age five. Therefore, a student who is interested in teaching special education with young children is somewhat in limbo. The content of a certificate for children with special needs from approximately age five to seventeen is daunting, and birth to age five may or may not include children in kindergarten.

Clearly, as the largest teacher preparation college in the country with faculty members committed to use-inspired research, ASU needed to address the high need for ECSE teachers. The number of children with disabilities spending 80% or more of their time in general classes in regular schools has increased from 33% in 1990 to 59.4% in 2010 (Aud, Hussar, Kena, Bianco, Frohlich, Kemp, & Tahan, 2011). Teachers dually trained can identify, differentiate, and support the achievement of all children, including those with disabilities, and early intervention is effective intervention. The high demand for ECSE teachers led to collaboration across EC and ECSE faculty and administration resulting in a dual certification program launched in fall 2012.

Steps Leading to Success

Existing early childhood faculty members completed a survey informing administration that 85% (n=20) felt they could infuse special education content into their courses with 85% again agreeing or strongly agreeing that the time to move forward with this was now. Mapping state requirements for each certification program created a matrix of how content, field experiences, and student teaching hours could overlap, stand alone, or amalgamate and stay within the 120 semester hour limit for degree programs at ASU. In sum, students complete five hours of child growth and development including health, safety and nutrition before admission to MLFTC as well as the three hours of state approved Sheltered English Immersion required by AZDoE. Foundations of Early Childhood Education, a three-hour course, stood alone to meet ECE requirements. Meeting Special Education requirements resulted in four stand alone courses: Social and Emotional Development, Assessment and Evaluation, Orientation of Education for Exceptional Children, and Special Education for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children and Youth for a total of twelve hours. Ten content and methods courses met the requirements of both certificates for thirty hours.

AZDoE requires a minimum of four semester hours in a supervised field experience, practicum, internship or student teaching setting serving birth through preschool/ECSE for the ECSE certificate. MLFTC teacher candidates complete eight hours: two during field experience in an inclusive birth to age five setting, and six in an ECSE (birth through age five) student teaching experience. Requirements for an EC certificate are a minimum of four semester hours in a supervised student teaching setting (kindergarten through grade three/early childhood setting). MLFTC teacher candidates complete seven hours: one in a K-3 setting as field experience and six while student teaching in EC (K-3). During SYR, MLFTC teacher candidates complete 15 credits of student teaching (almost twice the number of required hours). Through clinically embedded assignments, teacher candidates learn to set meaningful goals, invest students in their own learning, and use data to inform instruction (<http://sanfordinspireprogram.org>)

Preparing for evaluation of our redesigned teacher preparation program included aligning all major assignments to four sets of professional standards: Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers, and Council for Exceptional Children Division of Early Childhood Special Education/Early Intervention. Creating an ECSE curriculum map demonstrated introduction, reinforcement, and eventual mastery of standards across the program.

Results

The first cohort of dually certified iTeachAZ ECSE students will graduate in spring 2014. Results of student focus groups led to switching one ECSE course to term eight and replacing it with a foundational course originally slated for term five. Students have two very full days of classes, one online course each semester, one day for internship and time for part-time jobs, homework, etc., which suits their needs.

Should results replicate the success of the elementary dual certified iTeachAZ graduates, our students will be exceptionally well prepared. Teacher candidates will flourish, co-teaching with their mentors, and impact the achievement of their students. Principals will note that iTeachAZ students demonstrate proficiency in lesson planning and professionalism and often will ask teacher candidates to sign letters of intent even before they graduate. Districts laud this teacher preparation program and vie to partner with ASU. (<https://asunews.asu.edu/20120912>)

Arizona is in the unfortunate position of being towards the bottom of the list of states that spend the least per pupil for education (<https://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/KIDSCOUNT>). Dually certifying teachers, is one way to mitigate the negative effects of minimum educational funding. Young children will be identified sooner, intervention can be planned and implemented during formative years, and all children will benefit from a highly professionally trained early childhood educator.

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STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (ID/D) AND AUTISM WHO DISPLAY CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR: MEDICATIONS AND HOW TEACHERS CAN ENHANCE STUDENT CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES

**Simone Kirwan, BA (adv.), B.Ed, PBDE, M.Ed. Student
Dr. Beverley Temple, RN**

Introduction

Knowledge translation studies have highlighted the importance of a cooperative partnership between researchers and knowledge users (Kitson, 2007). Having shared goals for a researchable problem will ensure that knowledge users will be engaged in a non-hierarchical network partnership and as engaged members of the partnership will assist in future dissemination and uptake of knowledge. In this study, researchers from the St. Amant Research Centre collaborated with teachers from the St. Amant School, a specialized school in Western Canada that works with individuals with developmental disabilities, to address research information requests from the teachers to supply them with the most relevant research products about medications that can be useful in their classrooms. A working group was established to supply teachers with this information.

This paper addresses the process and findings from the working group related to medication use for challenging behaviors in children with intellectual or developmental disability (ID/D) and/ or autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and the effects of the medications on school performance and classroom behavior.

The research team, consisting of researchers and teachers surveyed teachers from St. Amant School about their informational needs, vetted the questions for priority, and refined the questions into more researchable language. Working groups were established to address a variety of questions. Extensive literature reviews were undertaken to gain a greater understanding of the relevant research available on the topic. The products of each review varied depending upon the appropriateness to address the teachers' questions.

Increasingly, medically complex children are in the classroom and this impacts the teacher's role and responsibilities. This is especially important in classrooms for children with I/DD, where challenging behavior and medication use are common. Several previous review studies have been published on the effects of psychopharmacological medication use in autism (Temple, Dong, Heinrich, Virues Ortega, Martin, Shoostari, Kirwan, & Hurtado-Parrado, submitted 2013). However, few studies have examined the effects of these medications on school functioning and overall learning (Kubiszyn, Mire, Dutt, Papatopoulos, & Burrige, 2012). Sedation associated with these medications is likely to decrease challenging behaviors, however, side effects of medications may be observed related to dosages and potential polypharmacy prescriptions for other medical conditions. Teachers are often poorly informed of medication effects on the behavior of their students (Ryan, Reid, & Ellis, 2008). A knowledge translation study that could make findings more readily accessible to teachers working with individuals with developmental disabilities may improve both the teacher and the student experiences. The research problem being addressed by this working group of a larger study was to summarize the effects of medications typically prescribed to individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities as they relate to classroom behavior, academic behavior and behavior management in a school setting.

Method

The review of the literature from 2000 - 2011 regarding medications prescribed for children with intellectual or developmental disability and autism displaying challenging behavior used a structured review process using multiple databases (Temple, et al., submitted 2013). The initial review yielded 605 results. Two reviewers read each of the abstracts and once the inclusion criteria were applied, and the duplicates were removed, the review included 25 studies. The review paper summarizes the effects of the following drugs relevant to the children with ID/D displaying challenging behaviour: divalproex sodium, olanzapine, respiradone, ziprasidone, aripiprazole, atomoxetine, citalopram, levetiracetam, loxapine, venlafaxine. Respiridone has been most widely studied and has demonstrated some reliable results in reducing challenging behaviour (Temple et al, submitted). However, the common side effects of respiridone are weight gain and sedation.

Findings

The studies to date on this topic have generally been small; few studies use randomization or control groups and often involve single case studies. Studies indicate that a more positive result for children occurs with not only medication but also a behavioral approach (Matson & Dempsey, 2008). Educational approaches used in the classroom to manage challenging behavior should be used prior to prescribing medications. If teachers are not informed by parents of the medications that their children are taking, then it is more difficult to provide behavioral approaches that may complement the medication effects. The side effects of drugs need to be monitored carefully; teachers are in an ideal place to provide information to a multidisciplinary team about the effectiveness in reducing the challenging behaviours in the classroom or if sedation is so great that little educational benefit is being achieved for the child. Parents and teachers need to be well informed of the desired effect, the time that this may take, and the possibility of improvement of side effects that may occur over time. To take full advantage of a teacher's time with children, their improved knowledge of side effects is required.

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Recommendations

Knowledge translation studies can benefit the teachers, by addressing some of their informational needs. There is often enough information available in the current literature but for teachers, the need to spend time reviewing and reducing the literature into usable documents is often unrealistic. Therefore, the collaboration between researchers and teachers provides more usable information and is more likely to support uptake of research in practice. Students will be the beneficiaries of better educational experiences and outcomes.

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A STUDY ABOUT THE USE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN BRAZILIAN SCHOOLS

Eduardo José Manzini

Conceptual Framework and Background

In 2008, a new Special Education policy focusing on inclusive education enacted by the Brazilian government influenced the assistance of students with disabilities (Brazil, 2008). The new Brazil law defined a new kind of special service and gave financial support for the acquisition of assistive technology resources and devices. Multifunctional resources rooms (Alves, Gotti & Griboski, 2006) were established, composed of: computers and software to be used by physically and blind disabled students; adapted pedagogical resources for learning mathematics, reading and writing; different kinds of toys; and adapted tables and chairs.

In 2009, more than 15,000 multifunctional resources rooms were operational. Many questions have emerged because of the new educational reality and one of them is: Are teachers prepared to deal with assistive technology resources? Some studies have shown that teachers of disabled students included in regular classrooms had not seen or had contact with educational assistive technological devices and resources (Verussa, 2009; Galvão Filho, 2009). However, other studies confirmed that special education teachers were more familiar with educational assistive technologies resources and devices, but they were not able to use them to a large extent. For instance, some of the teachers were able to use resources and devices for visual impaired students because they received training for that, but they did not use other kinds of resources, such as the boardmaker software, which was available in the multifunctional resource rooms.

Method

A questionnaire was developed to answer the research question noted above. The instrument had 86 items that referred to resources and devices for assistive technology to education and listed the names and colored photos of these resources and

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devices. All the 86 devices were available to be purchased in Brazil at that time. The questionnaire design favored the identification and visualization of resources that could be unknown to regular schoolteachers who had students with disabilities in their classrooms. The questionnaire was divided into resources and devices for students with deafness, visual impairment and physical disability and asked four questions: 1) Is the resource available in the school? 2) Is the teacher familiar with the resource or device? 3) Is the teacher able to use these resources and devices? 4) How was the resource acquired? The questionnaire was validated in a pilot study.

The questionnaire was administered using two versions. The first version was administered in hard copy print during a training course with teachers from several Brazilian states sponsored by the ministry of education. The second version was an online questionnaire that had a link to access the questions. The questionnaire was answered by more than 800 teachers from various geographical regions of Brazil, specifically in the states: São Paulo; Brasília; Maranhão; Paraíba; Sergipe; Paraná; Mato Grosso; and Espírito Santo. These states are in the north, northwest; center-west, and southeast of the country, respectively.

Results

Teachers indicated a need for training in how to use the resources for learning mathematics, reading, and writing destined for blind students. Notebooks and computers with installed software to work with blind people were familiar, but the teachers indicated that they needed training to use the software. The resources for physical disabilities best known by the special education teachers were those used as support for moving or sitting, such as wheel chairs and walkers. The software to create communication boards were familiar to the teachers but they were not able to use them. Resources such as Brazilian Sign Language, CD-Rom books written in Brazilian Sign Language; story books written in Brazilian Sign Language were familiar, but the teachers were also not able to use them. The least-known resources were: Display Braille, Voca, adapted furniture, and specific software for deaf students.

When the teachers were asked about *knowledge of software* for special students, 25% related that they knew software for visual impairment students, 25% related that they knew software for deaf students and 19% indicated that they knew software for physically disabled students. Most teachers (60%) did not know any software to use with special students. This data corroborates the hypothesis that in general teachers still have not acquired high-technology resources to this date.

Conclusions

The teachers that work in regular classrooms that include disabled students indicated that they are not familiar with Assistive Technology resources and devices. Furthermore, they indicated that they do not know how to use these materials. Some teachers claimed that some of the devices and resources are known to them and they know how to use them, but the materials are not present in their classrooms. On the other hand, in other situations, the resources and devices are present but the teachers are not able to use them.

For all categories of disability, the resources that the teachers indicated they need training to use are those designed to teaching to reading, writing, and mathematics. The results highlight the need for training teachers to use the devices and resources of assistive technology in multifunction resource rooms.

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REVERSE INCLUSION INTERVENTION FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM: TRANSITION TO FULL INCLUSION

Sharon Matthews

Project Goals

The primary goal of this project was to design a cost-effective school-based intervention for students with autism at the local school district level to allow students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) the most access to the general education classroom. Within this framework, the following goals were addressed: 1) effectively integrate students with autism into general education classrooms; 2) educate general education teachers about the needs of students with autism; 3) educate general education students about the needs, similarities and differences of students with autism; 4) educate special education teachers about the demands, curriculum and routines of the general education classroom; and 5) foster communication and collaboration between special education and general education teachers.

Rationale

The number of identified students with autism has increased exponentially over the last decade, and this trend is expected to continue (Goodman & Williams, 2007). This project explored an alternative model for the inclusion of students with ASD, a reverse inclusion intervention that may prove more effective than current practice. Students with autism are often placed in self-contained, autism-specific special education classes with inclusion opportunities ranging from minimal interaction with typically-developing peers (e.g. playground, lunchroom) to full day inclusive situations with and without one-to-one instructional aides. This study explores a reverse inclusion transitional step between the special day class and full inclusion in the general education classroom.

Problem Facing Educators

The significant increase in students identified with ASD has created challenges for public educators both nationally and locally. To help students with autism improve their communication, social skills, and behavior, schools often focus on inclusion. However, when students with autism go to general education classes, they often become over-stimulated, sometimes referred to in the literature as disregulated (Mesibov & Shea, 1996) resulting in difficult behaviors and leading to difficulty generalizing the skills they are supposed to be learning in the inclusive setting. Without direct intervention or instruction, this behavioral disregulation can impact the learning of all students. The purpose of this study was to design an intermediate step between the special education environment and general education environment for students with autism. The study looks at the needs of both teachers and students.

Results

Through survey and interview methodology general educators identified the skills they think students with autism need to possess to be successful in the general education setting. Data indicate four central skill areas: attending/focusing, responding to redirection, organization, and academic skill level. Additionally, general and special education teachers indicated a need for support with: support-staff, collaboration, training, and classroom accommodations. Training for general education teachers, paraeducators and typically developing students were identified as central to a support system. A team approach, including teachers, paraeducators and therapists was seen as important. General education teachers identified the importance of accommodations – developed through a collaborative process and implemented with the assistance of a paraeducator – to be a key support.

Special education teachers were interviewed and they indicated they could better support inclusion by assisting in training general education teachers on strategies for working with students with ASD, acquainting general education teachers with the child, their specific needs and IEP goals before the transition, and initiating and participating in on-going collaboration. The needs of typically developing students must be addressed simultaneously with the needs of students with autism.

According to the results of data collected for this study, students with autism have vastly different classroom behaviors and skills from their typically developing peers. Paraeducators observed students with autism and typically developing students in the general education class and observed the typically developing students in the general education classes are more likely to make eye contact, engage in active listening behaviors, process information quickly and are able to integrate and apply learned information to new settings. The students with autism whom they observed demonstrated difficulty focusing for long periods of time, often appeared not to be attending to or engaged in instruction, are very concrete in how they understand information, and often get agitated by sensory over-stimulation. The key to a successful intervention will be reconciling these differences so all students maximize learning.

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Addressing the Problem

In order to effectively address the problem of integrating students with autism into general education classes in a cost-effective manner, issues related to staff and student training, as well as the specific characteristics of autism must be addressed. The reverse intervention process that was designed involves students with autism staying in the special education environment while typically developing peers come to them for a portion of the day (Rafferty & Griffin, 2005; Schoger, 2006), instead of the reverse which is currently in practice. First, general and special educators must collaborate on curriculum and scheduling. Then, both general education teachers and typical peers will be given specific training in autism and ways to interact with students with. After this initial training period, typical peers will join their “buddy” with autism in the special education setting for two periods of the school day for both academic instruction and social times. The reverse inclusion intervention process will last for approximately an 8-week period. Following the intervention, the students with autism will be introduced slowly to general education classes and participate alongside their typical buddies.

By addressing the five goals laid out above, both typically developing students and students with autism may enjoy better educational outcomes (Harper & Maheady, 2007; Jones, 2007) including gains in social skills and academic success. The creation of this reverse inclusion “middle step” will facilitate the successful transition of students with autism from the special education classroom to inclusion in the general education class to increase the chances of success for all students in the general education classroom.

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INTEGRATING LEARNING STYLES AND MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AND EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO SUCCEED

Lynn Vona, PhD

Are your students’: Word Smart? Music Smart? People Smart? Develop your students’ diverse intelligences and enrich lesson plans.

Multiple Intelligence means viewing students as individuals and using instruction that recognizes students’ interests and talents. “Multiple Intelligence theory teaches us that all kids are smart, but they are smart in different ways” (Hoerr, 2000). Strong intrapersonal (knowing and understanding oneself) and interpersonal (knowing and understanding others) intelligences allow us to successfully navigate situations to capitalize on our strengths and minimize our weaknesses (Hoerr, 2000). The art of holistic education lies in its responsiveness to the diverse learning styles and needs of evolving human beings. This workshop will provide educators a method to recognize and appreciate the uniqueness of each individual child. Educators will discover how to

encourage students to develop their strengths and explore their areas of interest. The theory of multiple intelligences brings a pragmatic approach to how intelligence is defined and allows us to use our students' strengths to help them learn.

Learning is based on the student's metacognitive needs, interests and learning styles and empowers the students to reach benchmarks and demands of the education standards in a personal and relevant way. This methodology highly motivates and inspires a child, leading a student to learn how to learn and yields a life-long learner.

Carl Jung (1923) identified four dimensions of personality. *Sensing*, tells you that something exists; *thinking*, tells you what it is; *feeling*, tells you whether it is agreeable or not; *intuition*, tells you where it came from and where it is going.

"Integrated learning is an approach to curriculum, instruction and assessment designed to help teachers and schools fuse multiple intelligences and learning styles in a meaningful and practical way" (Silver, Strong & Perini, 2000).

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CAPITALIZING ON CONNECTORS: PARAEUCATOR SUPERVISION TRAINING INFUSED IN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Caron A. Westland, Ph.D.

Ritu V. Chopra, Ph.D.

Conceptual Framework and Background

Paraeducators are increasingly being used to provide direct instructional services to student with disabilities. They typically have little or no formal preparation for their duties. Additionally, they work with teachers who are reluctant and or unprepared to work effectively with them (Chopra, Sandoval-Lucero, & French, 2011, Chopra, 2009; French and Pickett, 1997; Pickett, Gerlach, Morgan, Likins, & Wallace, 2007). Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 requires that paraeducators be "adequately supervised" by certified professional. However, IDEA doesn't provide any guidance with regards to what adequate supervision looks like (Ashbaker & Morgan, 2012; Lewis & McKenzie, 2009). The topic of paraeducator supervision is neither adequately addressed in pre-service programs nor in professional development occurring after employment. As a result, teachers often lack preparation to effectively supervise and utilize paraeducators (Chopra et al., 2011; Pickett, et al., 2007).

Paraeducator Supervisory Skills: Professional and Expert Guidance

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has recognized that supervision of paraeducators is an important role of the special education teacher (Council for Exceptional Children, 2009). The CEC has identified paraeducator supervision skills for special educators: a) skills in structuring, directing and supporting the activities of paraeducators, b) knowledge of roles and responsibilities of the paraeducators related to instruction, intervention and direct services, and c) skills in observing, evaluating, providing feedback to paraeducators (p. 211). Experts in the field have identified the following as the teacher's ethical responsibilities related to paraeducator supervision: assigning specific tasks, providing on-the-job training, holding planning meetings, designing instructional plans, directing and monitoring day-to-day activities, and providing coaching to paraeducators (Ashbaker & Morgan, 2012; Wallace, Shin, Bartholomay, & Stahl, 2001).

The well-recognized paraeducator supervision training offered by the Paraprofessional Research and Resource (PAR²A) Center which is directed by the second author is based on the extensive research of French (2002) as well as the above mentioned recommendations of the CEC and experts. This training focuses on the following five functions of the teacher's supervisory role: 1) Assign tasks to paraeducators based on knowledge of legal, ethical, and liability concerns; 2) Develop written plans (which

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include IEP goals, objectives, student strengths, needs, materials, permissible adaptations, use of cues, prompts, data structure for documenting student performance etc.) for paraeducators to follow; 3) Conduct meetings with paraeducators and general education teachers to direct, plan and resolve conflicts; 4) Conduct observations of paraeducators while they support students in the classrooms; and 5) provide feedback and coaching based on observations.

Integration of Paraeducator Supervision Content into Teacher Preparation Curriculum

Whether paraeducator supervision content is taught as part of a professional development session or through a teacher preparation curriculum, the content needs to be disseminated to teachers in a meaningful manner. Ideally, the content should be offered during a teacher preparation program. But, with all the push for different content, how does one convince colleagues that the content should be a high priority and integrated into the curriculum? The first author was fortunate to have the PAR²A Center housed at the University of Colorado Denver, making it feasible to invite the second author as a guest speaker into the classroom to share the content. The natural place to integrate this content was during the Collaboration with School Professionals course. The course is targeted toward special educators (and required in their curriculum), yet any student from the School of Education and Human Development may enroll in the course. As a result, the college students represent teachers working on general education and special education licenses. The outreach to both types of students allows the content to be discussed outside of the classroom, and potentially, to those who have not taken the course.

Through anecdotal correspondence with teacher candidates who have taken the course, completed licensure, and have begun teaching, it is evident that the coursework has made an impact in practice and has better prepared the pre-service teachers to work with paraeducators in the field. Teachers utilize the resources and materials from the website and the worksheets that are used in the sessions. Anytime you can put resources in the hands of teachers, give them the ability to manipulate it to meet their needs, and reinforce the value of the information, the teachers are more prepared and more confident. Prepared teachers, who are able to effectively supervise paraeducators, can utilize the support to address student achievement.

Implications for the Field

The authors have collected data with regards to application of the learned paraeducator supervision techniques from teachers who took the training as an in-service or when they were teacher candidates. Teachers have reported that they have utilized the techniques learned in the workshop and have integrated materials from the PAR²A Center website (www.paracenter.org).

Based on the work the authors have done in implementing a collaborative approach to training pre-service teachers in the area of paraeducator supervision, it is recommended that teacher preparation programs take the initiative to develop an understanding of the components of paraeducator supervision and develop an understanding of how the paraeducator supervision content can be integrated into existing courses of teacher preparation programs.

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EVALUATION OF PUSH-IN/INTEGRATED THERAPY IN A COLLABORATIVE PRESCHOOL FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Stephen J. Hernandez

Conceptual Framework and Background

This report is an evaluation of integrated, or push – in therapy at an inclusionary early childhood program serving children ages 3-5 with special needs. The process evaluated involved assessing several factors relating to integrated therapy including the usefulness and effectiveness of a criterion based instrument used to determine whether a student should be provided therapy in an integrated manner. In addition, the evaluation was intended to determine whether collaboration between speech-language pathologists and special education teachers was enhanced as a result of this process. Finally, the evaluation attempted to determine if students benefited from integrated therapy.

Collaboration amongst professionals in the special education environment is considered best practice and viewed as an opportunity to enhance the development of skills and abilities of students with special needs (McWilliam & Young, 1996; Barnes & Turner, 2001). Collaboration's ability to enhance the educational and therapeutic intervention provided to students with special needs is further enhanced when alternate modes of therapeutic interventions, such as push-in therapy, are provided to students in the classroom setting (Barnes & Turner, 2001; Ritzman, Sanger, & Coufal, 2006). Dule, Korner, Williams and Carter (1999) add that "integrated therapy" (p. 244) has been found to aid in collaborative approaches that bring professionals together to help create quality educational programs with high levels of student involvement.

Research

The evaluation was both formative and summative in scope. The formative context of the evaluation was applicable to the intent to collect data regarding the effectiveness and usefulness of the assessment tool in determining whether students should be provided therapy on a push-in or pull-out basis. The formative nature of the evaluation also pertained to the staff's ability to make collaborative decisions while engaged in the push-in/pull-out assessment process. The summative nature of the evaluation would indicate if the data indicate that the push-in/pull-out assessment tool is ineffective in relation to its intended use.

Results

In summary, the data indicated that the questions being addressed in this evaluation were answered in the affirmative. Specifically, quantitative analysis indicated the following: 1) the push-in/pull-out criteria were useful; 2) the process generated by use of the criteria facilitated collaboration; 3) collaboration was enhanced by the implementation of push-in therapy; 4) push-in was successfully incorporated into the classroom, and finally; 5) push-in therapy was beneficial to students.

Recommendations

Along with the growing ethnic and cultural diversity taking place in American society, the growth of the inclusion movement and its emphasis on placing students with special needs in typical classrooms has placed greater pressure on teachers and therapists to work together and share service strategies. As a result, programs should view push-in or integrated therapy as a means to successfully creating inclusive environments where a multitude of service providers can work collaboratively with each other for the benefit of children.

Suggestions for Future Research

Further research and inquiry into integrated therapy and its associated processes is warranted, including the potential for push-in therapy in other areas of therapeutic intervention including occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling and play therapy. Additional research needs to consider the role interpersonal maturity, professional efficacy, collaborative culture and discipline affiliation has within an organization and the impact it has in the implementation of collaborative measures including push-in therapy. Finally, future investigation should also determine if the collaborative processes, including push-in/integrated therapy, has any real benefits for children.

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ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN SCHOOLS

Débora Deliberato

Introduction

The discussion regarding inclusion in the context of augmentative and alternative communication requires not only the discussion of procedures in regular schools, but also the understanding and inserting resources and procedures of augmentative and alternative communication in different environments to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities into educational activities planned in the regular education curriculum.

Ensuring programs best suited to the need of every child with little or no functional speech could favor the learning of reading and writing and thus provide greater independence and promote better quality of life for children and youth with disabilities (Blau, 1986; Smith, 2003).

The research on the contribution of augmentative and alternative communication technologies in schools is still scarce, especially as a tool of inclusive actions for students with disabilities. In this context, the present study had the following objectives: a) analyze the contribution of the use of augmentative and alternative communication technologies on the communicative skills of students with disabilities in schools; and b) analyze the use of augmentative and alternative communication technologies for learning to read and write.

Research

Based on the criteria for participation selection, nine children and youth with cerebral palsy were selected. Participants were characterized by using information obtained from the assessment instruments: Gross Motor Function Measure System (GMFCS) that classifies the level of gross motor function (Palisano, Rosenbaum, Walter, Russell, Wood & Galuppi, 1997); Manual Ability Classification System for Children With Cerebral Palsy (MACS) classifies the manual skills of children with cerebral palsy (Eliasson, Krumlinde-Sundholm, Rosblad, Beckung, Arner & Ohrvall, 2006); protocol for assessing communication skills in school environments proposed by Paula (2007); and vocabulary assessment protocol proposed by Paura (2009) and Vocabulary Test in Peabody images (Dunn & Dunn, 1981).

Data Collection Procedure

This research followed the program proposed by Deliberato (2005, 2009). The program described by Deliberato (2009) proposes three basic steps and discusses the need for specific and tailored strategies to each school.

Results

The activities were recorded by audio recording, video recording and continuous recording notebook. From the information organized following the Triviños (1992) assumptions, categories were established: vocabulary (appropriateness of vocabulary, characterization, vocabulary and phrasal construction), production of adapted text (subjects: Mathematics, History, Geography, Portuguese, Physical Education).

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Conclusions

- a) Augmentative and alternative communication systems allowed the students with cerebral palsy to participate in educational activities planned by the teacher.
- b) Students with cerebral palsy performed text production tasks of different complexities.
- c) Students with cerebral palsy participated in math activities and text comprehension tasks.
- d) Augmentative and alternative communication systems expanded the classroom vocabulary used frequently.
- e) Augmentative and alternative communication resources favored the communication skills of students with cerebral palsy.
- f) The programmed activities favored the use of adapted educational activities.
- g) The programmed activities favored the training of teachers.

Final Considerations

Augmentative and alternative communication systems are important tools for the participation process of students with disabilities in schools. The implementation of adequate and tailored resources to each specific student involves the active participation of teachers and other school professionals. In this context, the presented paper stressed that augmentative and alternative communication systems favored the inclusion of students with disabilities in educational activities proposed by the teacher. The program also expanded the students' linguistic possibilities, as observed by increasing communication skills and expanding text production.

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ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL FOR PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY CONDITIONS IN PRE SCHOOLS IN A BRAZILIAN CITY

Priscila Moreira Corrêa
Prof. Dr. Eduardo José Manzini

Introduction

Schools that have good physical accessibility are the result of architectural designs that consider the proposal of the innovative paradigm of inclusion, which value differences as an inherent characteristic of human condition. However, the accessibility in schools may be compromised because many were built years ago and did not take into account the presence of students with disabilities as regular students.

In addition, accessibility can be hampered by the presence of architectural barriers, defined as "... any natural element, installed or erected to prevent the approach, transfer or movement in space, furniture or urban equipment" (Brasil, 2004, p. 2).

Moreover, many educational managers do not know how to act to make the necessary adjustments and adaptations of school spaces, for they are not provided with training or specific materials to assess the physical accessibility in schools (Dischinger et al., 2004). It should be noted that the mere application of existing technical standards to regulate the physical accessibility in public buildings such as schools, does not guarantee good condition, because ways to adapt these places should be planned and developed in advance. These ways must be based on an understanding of students with disabilities' needs and also of architectural barriers in existing schools. In this perspective, we designed a protocol for assessing the conditions of physical accessibility of pre schools, which aims to assist the professional in charge of remodeling and adapting school buildings, as well as education professionals or educators in identifying the conditions of physical accessibility in their school.

Protocol for Assessing the Conditions of Physical Accessibility of Pre Schools

The protocol is divided into two parts: Part A and Part B. The first part aims to assess the conditions of physical accessibility of eight predefined routes and the second part aims to assess the accessibility and safety of the recreational playground equipment, as well as to provide recommendations for access to the playground and recreational adapted equipment.

With this format, education professionals can use both parts of the protocol together or can choose to use one single part of it, according to the needs of his/her school.

How to Use Part A of the Protocol

Part A is designed to assess physical accessibility conditions of pre schools. Eight routes regularly used by the students within the school boundary were determined. This form of assessment was also used in Audi and Manzini protocol (2006) to assess the conditions of physical accessibility in elementary schools. Routes are continuous, unobstructed and signposted paths, which provide free walk to all people in the school environment (Brasil, 2004; Audi; Manzini, 2006).

Thus, eight routes were established:

- Route 1 – school entrance to place where teachers welcome students;
- Route 2 – welcome location to classrooms;
- Route 3 – classrooms to indoor facilities (e.g. library);
- Route 4 – classrooms to half-open facilities (e.g. gym);
- Route 5 – classrooms to outdoor facilities (e.g. playground);
- Route 6 – indoor, outdoor and half-open facilities to cafeteria;
- Route 7 – cafeteria to sinks where children brush their teeth;
- Route 8 – indoor, outdoor and half-open facilities to restrooms.

The education professional or educator must take the established routes himself/herself and note the items that are present on each path. These items, referred to as architectural elements were listed in a hierarchical order - the most to the least accessible, i.e., the first alternative is described as the most accessible, while the latter is the least accessible.

The routes involve the following architectural elements: 1) types of gates and doors, 2) types of flooring, 3) types of obstacles such as concrete blocks, trees, trash cans, holes, carpets, water gutters, lampposts, 4) width of corridors or paths; 5) changing on the levels of floor; 6) sports court; 7) sand box; 8) swimming pool; 9) soccer field; 10) water fountain; 11) restrooms.

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How to Use Part B of the Protocol

Part B refers to the assessment of the playground, which is divided into: 1) access to recreational facilities, 2) characteristics of recreational equipment, such as the slide, swing, seesaw, roundabout and 3) safety of recreational equipment. In this part of the protocol the items that are found in the playground should be assessed.

Final Considerations

With this assessment, the education professional or educator who participates in the process of adapting his/her school, is able to plan the school environment, in order to make the school more inclusive from the architectural point of view, i.e., to identify what the major architectural barriers are and interfere in the implementation of educational activities on behalf of students, or even adapt them to suit the use of school spaces. It is hoped that this protocol be a useful and practical measurement tool intended for education professionals, as well as be used for purposes of adaptation and remodel of existing pre schools and not only for the construction of new school buildings.

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ARAB AMERICAN PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR THEIR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Heidi Abadeh, Ph.D.

The purpose of this study was to examine reasons that Arab American parents of children with disabilities often fail to comply with directions from professionals to manage their children's disabilities. Arab American families often are unsure of how their children with special needs should be educated. According to Hadidi (1998) parents were interested in obtaining information regarding services available for their children with special needs as well as ways to explain their child's condition to family and friends. Parents are in need for information regarding their child's disability, education, and prognosis for the future (Yousef & Hadidi, 1992).

Arab American parents need to be able to communicate with trained professionals regarding their concerns about their children with disabilities (Moosa, Karabenick, & Adams, 2001). They need access to services, such as behavior management or strengthening their child's academics activities. Parents believe in protecting and caring for their children with disabilities in their homes rather than placing them in residential settings for school (Hadidi, 1998).

Arab American families may require culturally relevant assistance to increase their involvement in schools. They may feel insecure because of a lack of communication skills and cultural differences (Moosa et al., 2001). Modes of communication for Arab American families should be considered because it could make a difference between the success or failure of their involvement. Effective ways of communicating (e.g., face-to-face meetings, translated information, phone calls, etc.) could enhance ways that parents have available to obtain information about their child and the school. Good communication can determine areas of agreement and differences.

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Teacher perceptions affected their relations with parents. Culturally aware teachers had better relationships with Arabic parents of children with disabilities. As they taught the Arab children and interacted with the parents, their ability to communicate became more effective. Teachers who received support from the administration responded positively to parents.

Research

Fifty-four Arab American parents (35 [64.8%] female and 19 [35.2%] male) who were seeking help from the schools for their elementary aged children with disabilities participated in the study. They completed surveys that had been translated into Arabic by a certified translator. The researcher read the survey items to parents who had difficulty reading either English or Arabic.

The findings of this study indicated that parents felt empowered to help their children learn to cope with their disabilities and perform at their optimal levels in school and in the community. Parents need to be fully involved with their children's education if they want their children with disabilities to be successful. The responses to the survey supported their interest and desire to be involved in every aspect of their children's lives. However, the comments indicated that the parents were not following through with the suggestions made by the teachers. While many of their comments indicated that they were willing to do the exercises, family constraints and time limitations often interfered. Another possible explanation for their comments was cultural dissonance between the teacher and parents. Many parents were born outside of the United States and English was their second language. Some parents were unable to understand the extent of their child's learning disability and the prognosis for overcoming the challenges confronting their child. In some instances, the disability had no name in Arabic (i.e., autism, attention deficit hyperactive disorder) and the explanation of the disability was confusing to them. The parents may not have felt that they were being treated as equals in making decisions about educational programs. Parents in the study need to have a better understanding of their child's disability that could be achieved by having in-depth discussions of the disability, where their child's ability to function with the disability, and the importance of home care in working with their child. A collaborative dialogue is needed to discuss the child's disability and build background knowledge to help parents understand what is happening with their child and what to expect in the future.

The outcomes of this study indicate that families are proud and want to appear to be fully involved in their child's education. Additional research, possibly in the form of focus groups or face-to-face interviews is needed to obtain information from Arabic parents regarding follow-through with educational professionals' suggestions for their children with disabilities. Care should be taken to ensure that future research on this topic uses a facilitator who is fluent in Arabic to elicit comments and responses that accurately depict the condition within the family.

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GIVEN A VOICE: SCHOOLING EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS WITH SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES

**Eva Brown Hajdukova
Garry Hornby
Penni Cushman**

Conceptual Framework and Background

The complexity of social, emotional and behavioral difficulties (SEBD) poses real challenges for those who are determined to provide effective education and create supportive environments to allow these students to reach their full potential through

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developing skills necessary for living happy and productive lives. Students with SEBD are over-represented in exclusion figures, are more likely to have the least satisfactory experiences with schooling of all disability groups, and often exhibit negative attitudes towards schooling. Research evidence has also shown that these students achieve lower grades, fail more courses, are more likely to drop out from high school, less likely to attend post-secondary education and face difficulties in securing jobs (Cooper, 2000; Farrell & Polat, 2003; Hornby & Witte, 2008, Tankersley, Kauffman, & Landrum, 2003). From these findings it can be concluded that students with SEBD face an uncertain future and this presents a major challenge to governments in their attempts to implement policies around social inclusion.

Students with SEBD have special educational needs, but they have a right to voice their opinions and recommendations, and participate actively in decisions about their education (Hamill & Boyd, 2002). Students with SEBD can provide valuable insights into their schooling experiences and the schooling environment in mainstream and residential schools. These insights have the potential to raise a number of critical issues and questions pertinent to effective educational practice, and possibly indicate potential solutions. The development of effective practices should be informed by children's views (O'Connor et. al., 2011). Having their active participation enables us to create positive educational environments in which each child can thrive and reach their potential. Student voices provide valuable insights into schooling experiences that can be used effectively as a tool for developing context-specific responses to the unique situations and needs of these students (Cooper, 1993).

Research

Following the phenomenological tradition (Moustakas, 1994), participants who had experienced the phenomenon in question and were willing to share their experiences of schooling were selected. A set of criteria to locate appropriate participants was constructed and the participants were successfully located in a residential school for students with social, emotional and behavioural problems in New Zealand. By following the transcendental phenomenological tradition, the data was collected through 29 in-depth semi-structured individualised interviews with the boys attending the residential school, ranging from 9 to 12 years old. The data collected were analysed using Moustakas's steps of data analysis in order to generate themes that were further explored and developed in a series of six focus groups with the same students.

Results

The thematic units that emerged in this research reflect the schooling experiences of the participants both in the mainstream and residential school settings and consist of many subthemes. The theme of mainstream school experience includes the following subthemes: relationships with teachers, limited academic support, teachers' physicality, overreactions and responses to misconduct, discipline, relationships with peers, bullying in the mainstream schools, bullying due to learning difficulties, and being a bully. The theme of residential school experience includes the following subthemes: relationships with teachers and staff, settling down, relationships with peers, reflections on past behavioural problems, focus on academic improvement, and discipline and bullying in the residential school.

There were patterns to be found in the stories of these students. Most of these boys perceived themselves as bearers of the 'naughty and challenging student' label and believed that on many occasions they were treated unfairly in mainstream schools because of their misbehaviour in the past. They also called for better understanding and acceptance, and underlined the need to be listened to and liked by their teachers and peers. Learning difficulties and limited assistance from teachers in dealing with their special educational needs were reported by the majority of the boys as a part of their mainstream schooling experience. They often found the schoolwork too difficult and thus experienced frustration and anger that often led to negative behaviors and school disaffection. In contrast, they believed that they were provided with better support and help with their difficulties in the residential school and thus were able to improve their behavioral and educational outcomes.

One of the most prevalent themes that emerged was that of bullying. Most of the boys believed that they were victims of bullying in mainstream schools, and to a lesser extent at the residential school, and they described their negative responses to this and their desire for revenge and protection. Furthermore, the majority of boys perceived bullying issues to be more prevalent in mainstream schools due to a lack of rules and discipline, as well as limited staff supervision in the places where bullying behavior was occurring and little enforcement of the negative consequences for bullying behaviors.

Recommendations

Making the shift to a more positive, holistic approach to the needs of students is vital. Schools need to focus more on the development of a nurturing, safe and positive school environment, as well as close collaboration with parents, professionals and communities in order to provide the best support and education for all students. Teachers in the mainstream schools also need to be better supported and provided with special education training in order to improve the outcomes for students with SEBD.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should concentrate more on the voices of students with SEBD, because this focus allows for the exploration of new and underrepresented perspectives. Research of this type can result in the empowerment of students with special needs and the results could be utilised for the improvement of pedagogical practices and lead towards school improvement and better inclusive practices.

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A COMPARISON OF SPECIAL EDUCATION BETWEEN THAILAND AND THE UNITED STATES: INCLUSION AND SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

**Doris Adams Hill
 Sasipin Sukbunpant**

Conceptual Framework and Background

The histories of Thai and U.S. special education, as well as international initiatives, impacted each other as the evolution of education for students with disabilities and inclusive strategies for educating them developed in both nations. The U.N. Declaration on Human Rights came thirteen years after Thailand made education compulsory, and the Thailand National Special Education Plan (1995) came on the heels of the World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994). In 1975, the United States passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, with Thailand passing the National Education Act in 1999, just as there was a global shift from the medical to the social model for disability.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability characterized by deficits in communication, socialization, repetitive behavior and/or rigid adherence to rituals, and difficulty accommodating change (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). It is one of 13 disabilities eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1990). ASDs are prevalent across race, culture, socioeconomic status, and region. Western Europe, Canada, Latin America, Asia, Africa, Korea, and the Middle East, have all reported a rise in the incidence of autism and the challenges associated with accessing care (Global Autism Project, 2011). Currently, Thai Children with autism have been perceived as having a deficiency of physical development, communication, and social interaction with strange behaviours (Jeekratok & Chanchalor, 2012).

Support for Children with Autism in the Classroom in Thailand

Instruction within the six types of inclusive classrooms for students with autism in the regular schools, along with parallel classrooms in general schools, is provided for children with moderate to severe autism (Tanmanee, 2012). Two teachers are responsible for teaching at least three students (Onbun-uea, 2008). Resource rooms also provide support of children with autism in

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the inclusive class with materials. In addition, education coupons are provided to assist in acquiring needed technology and special services. Each student with a disability is entitled to a coupon of minimum baht 2,000 (US\$ 70) per year which can be exchanged for assistive technology as well as additional services such as occupational therapy and speech therapy (Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education, 2008). Even though there is much support provided to children with autism in the inclusive class, there exist several obstacles of inclusion for these children, including a lack of specific curriculum for teaching children with autism.

Support for Children with Autism in the Inclusive Classroom in the US

In the U.S., autism has been considered one of the thirteen separate categories under IDEA since it's reauthorization in 1990 (Hulett, 2009; Yell, 2012). As more children are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, interventions to support them have been researched and examined for efficacy. The National Autism Center (2009) completed the multi-year National Standards Project to establish standards for effective, research-validated educational and behavioral interventions for children with autism, in order to identify treatments that effectively target the core symptoms of ASD. Many of the established and emerging treatments for autism can benefit all students, especially those who might be culturally and linguistically diverse. Thailand's progress may have begun later, but both countries continue to move in a positive direction in providing special education services to children with disabilities. The same can be said of the provision of services for children with ASD. While overall numbers may differ from country to country, in the US it is currently one in eighty-eight children (CDC, 2012). In Thailand, it is one in 167 (WHO, Regional Office for South-East Asia, 2011). The differences may be in how ASD is diagnosed and in the ability to reach the entire population. Even though there exists differences in diagnoses rates, the number of children diagnosed with autism continues to increase each year.

Environmental barriers, lack of accessible transportation, services, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities continues to exist around the globe. In Thailand, monitoring of compliance with disability law and negative attitudes by service providers and society overall toward individuals with disabilities continues to impede change (Cheausuwantavee & Cheausuwantavee, 2012). Societal perceptions hamper enforcement of law, distribution of resources, family involvement, and access to mandated programs for students with disabilities.

One avenue to solve the problem is through teacher training. The applied research focus on interventions and effective outcomes as documented by the National Autism Center (2009) and the Global Autism Public Health Initiative (Autism Speaks, 2012b) should be expanded across the globe (The National Autism Center's National Standards Project (2009) was limited to studies in English). While effective treatments for autism have been documented in the US, this knowledge and training on effective interventions is often not filtered to more rural US schools or outside US borders. Increased collaborations within and between countries to share research and increase knowledge and expertise are recommended. Research based interventions should be taught and implemented in countries such as Thailand and other nations. Expansion of research regarding effective interventions for ASD globally, as the incidence becomes pandemic in proportion, can help change perceptions of children with disabilities, foster access to education and services, and expand the body of global knowledge regarding all individuals with autism and other disabilities.

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HIGH INCIDENCE DISABILITIES IN GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS IN MORO, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

Jonathan Omoniyi Olukotun

Introduction

An attempt to give Nigerian children with special needs formal education in home/ school settings started in 1916 by European Missionaries. Specifically, the first school for the blind in Nigeria was established in Gindiri, Plateau State in 1953 (Olukotun 2003). This marked the beginning of western education in a segregated school setting for children with disabilities in Nigeria. Other special schools in purely segregated settings were established by Missions, government and philanthropists. Realizing the demerits of segregation such as discriminating tendency, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1981) in her National Policy on education adopted integration to replace segregation. Integration of children with disabilities into general education in ordinary schools was fully practiced in Nigeria for two decades.

Inclusive education of children with special needs was entrenched in the Federal Government's Universal Basic Education (UBE) Program (FRN, 2004). This policy was in consonance with the United Nations standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities (1993) and the UNESCO Salamanca Statement on Special Needs (1994). The UBE made it mandatory for all children of school age to receive basic education at the primary school and the first three years in the junior secondary school. Although inclusive education had been adopted for students with special needs, it is obvious that students with low incidence disabilities are still learning in segregated special schools. The researcher observed in the school of study that learners with low incidence disabilities were mainly educated in special residential schools. Many children with high incidence disabilities who were enrolled in the general education classes were not given the desired special assistance in the classroom. The study therefore focused on high incidence disabilities in the population of the study which, according to Klingner (2005) are disabilities that occur with highest frequency.

Research

Three null hypotheses were tested:

1. Significant relationship between awareness of high incidence disabilities and identification of disabilities.
2. Significant relationship between awareness of high incidence disabilities and teaching skills.
3. Significant relationship between identification high incidence disabilities and teaching skills.

All the tested hypotheses were rejected.

Discussion

It was found out from this study that significant relationship exists between awareness of high incidence disabilities and identification of the disabilities. Responses to research questions 1- 3 confirmed that teachers in the general education classes were aware of high incidence disabilities in the general education classes. About 759% representing 179 respondents were able to identify through classroom academic performance and progress reports that many students were learning disabled in specific areas of the school subjects and outside classroom activities. A total of 172 (72.9%) observed that many students exhibited some

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unusual emotional or behavioral disorders. There were 170 respondents (72.0%) who understood what behavioral or emotional disorders and learning disabilities meant. Although teachers in the general education schools lack basic technical and special screening techniques for diagnosing behavioral or emotional disorders and learning disabilities, 174 (73.7%) were able to identify the disorders. About 122 (51.7%) confirmed the percentage of those with high incidence disabilities. Teachers in the general education schools were not trained to teach children with special educational needs. They were trained to manage regular education classes and 133 (56.4%) attested to it. A subgroup of 148 teachers (62.7%) had not attended in-service training on teaching methods for students with disabilities. They could not manage the class in which students with learning difficulties and emotional or behavioral disorders are included.

Conclusion

Findings from this study confirmed the findings of Meloy and Olukotun (2010) that majority of teachers observed in the general education classes even though were aware of the existence of high incidence disabilities in their schools, they were ignorant of what to do to assist them to learn effectively. In most cases, students with learning disabilities were ignored in the classroom while the teacher moved on with other brighter students at their pace. Many students with behavioral or emotional disorders were assisted in a little way they could since they lack the required professional skills and expertise to work with them. Many services in the classroom could not be rendered to the students. Only a few guidance counselors were posted to some schools that have large numbers of students. Not all schools in the state had guidance counselors which did not help matters either. It could be concluded from the findings of this study that total inclusion of students with learning disabilities and emotional or behavioral disorders is not yet feasible in the general education schools in Nigeria.

Recommendation

More awareness programs of the high incidence disabilities should be made in the general education schools. Teachers in the general education classroom must undergo in-service training on teaching methodologies, coping skills, screening skills and diagnostic measures for the disorders. Parents also should be encouraged to accept inclusion of their children with disabilities into the general education classes as the best educational placement option. Qualified specialist educators and professionals must be adequately employed into inclusive schools. These will enhance collaborative efforts of both the regular classroom teachers and the specialist teachers in the inclusive classroom.

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RESEARCH ON ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND DYSLEXIA: FINDINGS FROM THE EVIDENCE-BASED LITERATURE

Paul J. Gerber, Ph.D.

Introduction

The heterogeneous nature of learning disabilities (LD) and dyslexia in adulthood reveal a wide diversity of characteristics and

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challenges. The population is noted for a mild to severe continuum of severity, average to superior intelligence, intra-individual differences, and outcomes from highly successful to marginally-adjusted to adulthood (Gerber, 2012). Moreover, adulthood is more complex as the educational focus of the school-age years becomes challenging as domains such as employment, family, community, social settings are confronted on a daily basis. All in all, the 70 years of adulthood, the longest of human development, necessitates a differential approach because the required developmental tasks of early, middle and later adulthood. All in all, the literature reveals a prognosis for individuals with LD and dyslexia as being competitively employed, living independently, possibly pursuing post-secondary education, participating in varying degrees with family and community (whether civic or spiritual) as well as socializing and being involved in recreation and leisure pursuits (Gerber, 2012).

View of the Research

It should be pointed out that the research literature is sparse and a lot of the extant work lacks methodological rigor. The majority of the research focuses on the earlier years of adulthood with many studies targeting populations 30 years old or younger. Most of the longitudinal studies are follow-up studies, containing two data points that are time-compressed, providing only a glimpse at long-term trends. Studies lack a conceptual model of learning disabilities and dyslexia in adulthood, being devoid of considerations for context, developmental phase, and typical adult norms. Designs are quantitative, qualitative (ethnographic, surveys and questionnaires) and mixed-method. Case study analysis is rare and is excluded from this review. All in all, generalizing about the adult LD and/or dyslexia can be very complicated because “one size does not fit all.” LD and dyslexia in adulthood must be nuanced and contextualized because of the trials and tribulations in navigating the challenges of adulthood, day-to-day and year-to-year.

Bodies of Research

There are a number of areas of the research on adults that have yielded interesting findings. They are (1) prevalence, (2) follow-up studies, (3) employment, (4) disclosure, and (5) attitudes and perceptions of the lay public. Below are some selected studies of two of the listed areas that are important to this area of inquiry.

Follow-up studies have been reported throughout the years. In a follow-up to their seminal study by Rogan and Hartmann (1986) found that the positive trends seen in their 1976 study still prevailed, but those who were not doing well did not improve in the ensuing 10 years. Haring, Lovett and Smith (1990) followed up New Mexico high school students 1-4 years after leaving school and found minimal adjustment with concomitant high unemployment. Holliday, Koller and Thomas (1999) studied individuals with LD who had been referred to a vocational rehabilitation clinic and interestingly, they found that a sub-group had very high IQs, but they were never told about their exceptional abilities. This finding proved to be a good example of LD being a “deficit model” of disability. In a 14 year longitudinal study Seo (2005) studied a cohort of 24 year olds. He found rate of employment and earned income similar to nondisabled peers. Similarly, he pointed out that post-secondary school attainment was similar in the LD and nondisabled group at age 24. Gerber et al. (1990) studied the persistence of LD across the life span. For 133 adults with LD who had a mean age of 42 years, they found that specific issues of LD during their school-age years got worse over time. Last, Gerber et.al (1992) investigated highly successful adults with LD and proffered a derived model to the field of LD. They identified both internal and external “alterable variables” which if managed well could facilitate control, the key ingredient of employment success. The identified internal variables were desire, goal orientation and reframing. The external variables were persistence, goodness of fit, learning creativity and social ecologies. The integration of these variables provided an understanding of success as well as less than successful adjustment. To summarize the body of research for adults outcomes, Gerber (2012) observed, “The studies investigating adults with LD are illustrative of a heterogeneous group of individuals whose commonality is simply that they are all LD.... There are too many mediating variables, such as cognitive abilities, severity, context, self-determination, and support” (p. 238).

Attitudes and Perceptions of LD in Adulthood

Much of what happens to adults with LD and dyslexia has to do with the way the terms are perceived are understood by those who are nondisabled. According to a Roper-Starch Poll (1995), albeit dated, found that LD is widely misunderstood. Moreover, the term LD was confused with disabilities such as mental retardation (ID), and emotional disabilities. Current day lay-person thinking folds autism and Asperger’s syndrome into that confusion.

The field of LD and dyslexia is in need of systematic and well-planned research in order to guide practice for adults who have very different issues than students during their school-age years. This research is also necessary because it targets a direction for secondary school teachers who are in need of evidence-based findings to provide for reality-based transition and planning purposes. The absence of useful research runs the risk of a disconnect from school-age programing and the complexities of functioning in the beyond school years.

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INCLUSION/COLLABORATION WITH PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES FOR SPECIAL LEARNERS: PRACTICES AND TRENDS

Madalen Sugrue, Ed.D.

Schools have or are adopting policies which support all children in regular classrooms. Providing a challenging and motivational atmosphere in the regular primary classroom to keep special needs/special learners is one of my primary goals as a special educator who works with regular education teachers in inclusion.

Inclusive schools are possible and necessary for our present and future education. This does not mean that every student is educated at all times with peers, but that the responsibility of discovering effective means for all students to learn together is taken seriously. Inclusion involves contemporary means of achieving the ultimate ends of special education: high quality instruction so that students can reach their potential.

Including students with and without disabilities in general public schools and classrooms has become more and more common throughout the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Education (1996) the percentage of students with disabilities served in the resource rooms has gradually decreased, and the percentage served in general education classrooms has increased considerably. Since the 1990's school districts have made a strong effort to provide more inclusive education (Hobbs & Westling, 1998).

Students learn in many ways. Research and education know that we do not all learn the same way and/or find interest in the same things. (McCoy, 2009) The teacher must adapt or modify instruction to meet the needs of the special learner. This instruction gives opportunity for special learners to be involved in the actual learning process.

As inclusion in our schools increases, teachers have a greater challenge in meeting the individual needs of all the children within the classroom. Collaboration among professionals is important for inclusion. Students remain in the least restrictive environments and learn to work independently as well as in a group. Special learners much accept the responsibility for themselves when working or engaged in activities. They must follow the rules of the class and teacher. With a variety of materials to allow students to THINK and a variety of instructional strategies INVOLVING them in activities, children feel good about themselves and understand inner values, thus being a part of that class and enjoying friendships.

Teachers are in need of quick and practical activities to teach and to motivate students. The special education teacher must present a variety of activities to help the regular educator introduce and to reinforce concepts in language arts, math, science and art appropriate for the special learner. Active student involvement, be it through peer tutoring or in teacher collaboration, will help these students develop fine motor skills, increase vocabulary skills and increase motivation while enjoying the basics of the classroom.

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Science and art can be challenging and exciting in the classroom with “included learners.” Children delight in transforming a part of themselves into a seasonal art/craft and or science project. Both can enhance the creativity within every child and for some it is the only class in which the special learner may be successful.

Modifying lessons and creating a school environment that fosters self-esteem and readiness for the outside world are all suggestions for creating a learning community (Friend & Bursick, 1996). Some suggestions are: (a) promote curriculum integration, (b) foster more collaboration among teachers, (c) focus on individual learning needs of students, (d) engaging students in projects and activities, working in teams, working effectively with small groups to meet a wide range of developmental needs, and (e) developing learning centers and activity manuals that involve all students in exploring multiple content areas (Friend & Bursick, 1996).

The objective of my presentation is to focus on the needs of the student, sharing classroom curriculum tested activities and guiding the student to the next step through successful learning experiences by allowing him/her to use a variety of activities and materials to support the basic needs skills-thus reinforcing a program so very important to inclusion.

Mini-units in science can be fun as well as science experiences in making a *Crystal Garden* or actually doing the activity after the story of *The Little Red House*. Other science activities can include *Hairy Potato Head*, *Shapeless Plastics*, *Floating Liquids*, *Bubbles & Fizzes*, and making a weather windsock - all examples of suggestions for use in the regular classroom in the ‘inclusion process, *Market Math*, *Circus Math*, *Animal Math* and *Monster Multiplication* are examples of quick and effective Math curriculum ideas.

Language Arts and phonics are interesting and fun when *Rainbow Phonics*, *Seasonal Phonics*, *Reading Mysteries*, *Hidden Pictures*, *Mystery Letters* and *Reading Dinosaurs* are used. Art-fun Activities may include *Hand Shaped Art*, *Crayon Mosaic*, *Stained Glass Fish*, *Blossom Bunny*, *Scary-Cary Cat* and *Shake-My PawPuppy* while incorporating social skills in doing a *My Love Keeps Growing* project, making birthday cards, calendars, thank you notes and get well cards for absent class members and adults. Candy airplanes are fascinating and great art projects as well as gifts.

All the above-mentioned experiences are useful and the more we provide for children in the mainstream/inclusion of society, the better we are preparing them for inclusion later in life. Last, but not least, the teacher must always remember that inclusion and working together along I with commitment and attitude, teamwork, flexibility and collaboration are the most important factors in the special education program.

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MAKING INCLUSION WORK: A SYSTEMATIC MODEL FOR INCLUSION IN YOUR COUNTRY

Jill Williams

Conceptual Framework and Background

It would be redundant to repeat the growing data about the incidence of people with disabilities throughout the world. It would be equally redundant to express the need for professional development for all stakeholders in how to include people with disabilities in the general population.

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This paper will discuss the importance of implementing an inclusion model for professional development that is well-planned, replicable and sustainable for all those impacted by this process. Teacher “training” emphasized by many governments is not enough. “Like the social model, inclusion must concentrate on the totality of the environment. ‘Training’ is of course a component of this, but to be effective, it cannot be treated separately from all other aspects of school life. Indeed it must be intrinsic to change: preferably brought about by the school community (because they can see the need), but necessarily including the school community in the planning, implementation and monitoring” (Williams, 2006).

The model outlined here takes into account not only the professional development of teachers, but the sustainability of the process and the assessment of its success. The model was first implemented in the Arab Republic of Syria in 2010. Pieces of this model were also introduced in Kuwait and selected countries in South and Central America.

Systematic Model - Preparation, Replication, and Sustainability

Preparation

Commitment from all stakeholders is a necessity. The Ministry of Education in any country where this model is implemented must support the idea of inclusion for students with disabilities. Educators in most countries are bound by the dictates of the ministry. In Syria, the then Secretary General for the National Council on Disabilities, Dr. Tarif Bakdash, worked closely with the US Embassy to arrange for the initial professional development for supervisors from the Ministry of Education and for the coordination among all members and of local Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). This coordination enabled the model to include follow-up sessions and observation of classrooms to assess the success of the program. The initial participants chosen were supervisors and administrators from throughout the country – *these are the people who must be trained first*.

Another crucial component of an inclusion model is a “needs assessment” among the participants and stakeholders *before* the training takes place. In discussing how to move “research” of evidence-based practices into “practice” in the classroom, Cook, Cook, and Landrum state that “if consumers don’t want or need it, a product won’t sell well.” (Cook, Cook, and Landrum. 2013) Thus, a pre-assessment of demographic information as well as participants’ knowledge of content and skills levels when dealing with people with disabilities provide valuable information as the training is developed. If the participants don’t believe they need it, they won’t buy into it.

Using the information gained from the “needs assessment,” content of the training must be developed and reviewed by local organizers. In the months prior to the initial training sessions in Syria, the Secretary General and board members from local NGOs reviewed the training documents, content, and materials. They provided feedback on the appropriateness of the materials, gave insights into the customs and culture of the country, and made recommendations based on their knowledge of the community. For an outsider coming into another culture, this was so valuable and prevented embarrassing situations.

The content of the training is drawn from “evidence-based practices” (EBP’s), which are currently being implemented in classrooms around the United States. The US is at the beginning stages of implementing EBP’s and still struggles with paradigm shifts for classroom teachers. Therefore, the training included “lessons learned” by the education system in the US and suggested ways to avoid these situations.

Replication

As stated earlier, the stakeholders had the power point presentations, handouts, professional articles, and working documents before the training took place to study while taking the training and available for them to refer to in the future. This way, all of the content can be made available to the participants. While this training does not lead to formal degrees or certificates, it does provide the necessary information.

The train-the-trainer model appears to be the most valuable model when an entire country is implementing an inclusion program. The initial participants (now trainers) should have an opportunity after the first training sessions to use the knowledge and skills gained as they begin to develop a way to redeliver the content to their local teachers, supervisors, parents, and NGO staff and volunteers. For example, the first training group may be trained in the Spring. The second session of the initial participants (trainers) then would be held in mid-summer so they can plan their redelivery training for Fall, before teachers return for school. This second session gives trainers an opportunity for give feedback on the initial training and plan together how best to present this new material to their teachers.

This leads to the third component of replication, the “cohort” approach. The initial participants have now formed a “cohort” of trainers. Together, they can plan their redelivery. The advantages of the cohort approach are: mutual academic, emotional, and logistical support for program success and timely completion; camaraderie and collaborative learning with experienced colleagues; and lasting personal ties and professional networks that aid in career development, ongoing professional growth, and reform initiatives across schools, districts, and countries.

Sustainability

As has been stated earlier, one training session alone (even if it consists of eight full days of training as was the case in Syria) is inefficient and a waste of professionals' time. "Even schools that have been able to implement reforms successfully find that sustaining them is difficult when the schools confront other demands" (Klingner, Boardman, McMaster, 2013).

The inclusion plan must account for follow-up and more follow-up extending over more than a year. This means support for teachers implementing inclusion and training of more educators to build capacity.

The other piece of this sustainability is to involve local NGO's in the entire process. It is from these NGO's that the student population to be included in government schools most likely will come and NGO involvement is crucial. Teachers who are implementing innovative programs often feel alone unless they are supported by the other professionals who are important to them. The school and local administration composed the initial training group and they have delivered the training to the local teachers. That is just the beginning. Frequent training meetings, support groups, online support, classroom visits, and feedback are as crucial as the training itself.

The last and possibly the most important component of implementing change is the assessment. The initial training group in Syria developed three documents: a parent survey for all parents (parents of students with disabilities as well as parents of general education students), a teacher survey (again of all teachers within the school), and an observation rubric to assess the effectiveness of the "inclusion classroom." The questionnaires should consist of demographic questions as well as questions regarding attitudes toward inclusion and be administered before the school year begins, at the mid-point of the school year, and at the end of the school year. The observation rubric should consist of the types of behaviors one would observe in an effective inclusion classroom: evidence-based practices, flexible grouping, meaningful interactions among all students, etc.

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SERVING AS A BRIDGE FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN HONG KONG

Hazel Delfina Chang

Young adults with special needs in Hong Kong are facing difficulties in realizing their post-secondary dreams of being successfully included and able to participate and achieve as an independent and contributing member in the Hong Kong society. The young adults I am referring to include those who may be physically or mentally challenged and/or have special educational needs. Hong Kong has 270,000 people with disabilities in addition to 87,000 people with mental handicap (Wan, 2004). The education system in Hong Kong requires a 9-year compulsory universal basic education. Starting 2008, senior secondary education is provided free through public sector schools. For students with special needs, most are included in ordinary schools. However, for those with severe special educational needs or multiple disabilities, they are referred to special schools (Education Bureau, 2012). The Rehabilitation services of the Social Welfare Department in Hong Kong provide persons with disabilities who are aged 15 and above and possess basic self-care and work ability, but unable to enter into open employment, the appropriate vocational training to enhance their working capacity so that they can enter into a workplace in society (Social Welfare Department, 2012). Despite this elaborate system of hardware support to transit students from school to tertiary education or towards society, the much-needed software needs are not met. These needs include the preparedness of parents to begin to pass over autonomy to their children; the equipping of the young adults to face a new life stage and the readiness of society to include the young adults in everyday work environment and into the community as a whole.

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Serving as the Bridge: A Special Parent's Initiative to Give Hope

It started with realizing the pain and cry of the young adults and of their parents, the helplessness and loneliness they have lived with as a minority group in society. The need to belong and to be 'normal' is so great! The first bridge was "welcome and accept". I welcomed the young person and accepted their special gifts. Although it was a home environment, they belonged somewhere that accepted them and listened to their hearts. They were given space and encouragement to express themselves. They grew in confidence and came to realize that they were individuals who could take up responsibilities and make decisions. The next bridge was "connect and support". Connect the young person to an employer and support the employer so that they do not feel stranded. With this strategy, Sunny, was given the opportunity to be a teaching assistant in a mainstream international primary school up till today. We maintain constant communication with the employer on social harmony and periodic evaluation on Sunny's job performance. Sunny was also given support on continuous education and emotional counseling. The Rock Foundation was founded a few months later to fill this service gap in Hong Kong. The mission of The Rock Foundation is to *enable* students by looking at their abilities and gifts. With the realization that they are *able*, the young people begin to live meaningful and dignified lives by taking up ownership of themselves.

The Rock Foundation: The Coaching and the Practical Training Tailor-Made

It is vital to be able to look at the Big Picture when giving support to the persons with special needs. The Milwaukee Village School, a school designed to educate the whole child, to implement true reform, to take children "from where they are", to respect the intelligence and abilities of all children, is our role model of coaching (Lee & Budzisz, 2004). To embrace the Big Picture, we have defined the following three targets in our program, namely "Owning Yourself"; "Common Sense" and "Career Development." With these three areas of continuous education, the persons with special needs can cope well holistically when they transit from one life stage to another. As each person is unique, it is important that every individual is given full attention as to their learning needs and learning style, so that they progress step by step every day. The teacher to student ratio is 1:1 or maximum 1:6. Once the concept or knowledge is grasped, reinforcement of the learning is done through practical application and usage in everyday life. Every young adult in our center transits from in-center learning to employment or integration into society in phases according to their own progression timeline.

The Bridge and the Result

We are the bridge to help parents pass autonomy to their young adults; the bridge to help employers and society create space for the young adults; the bridge to help the young adults understand themselves and make sense of life. We have served 60 young people and integrated 10 young adults into society via their passion and talents. Many regular students and young people have come to spend time and work with them. In the end, they are the ones that have found new inspiration for their own lives. The parents feel more hopeful towards their children who have special needs. Teachers feel fulfilled for the positive change they see in their students. Society's needs are being met as every human being is being respected and allowed to give their best.

Recommendations

The bridge from segregation to inclusion need not be a long journey if we take the next step that will make a positive change in the life of the other person. Continuous education for the young people, for society must go hand in hand. As Ben Carson reminded us to see The Big Picture in life "Success is defined when one is privileged to be given an opportunity and a platform to positively affect the lives of others." (Carson, 1999) Henri Nouwen, in his search for the true self and Jean Vanier, the founder of L'Arche, has inspired me to follow in the footsteps of community. "Every community is a body, and in it all the members belong one to another" (Vanier, 2003).

Further research

For the schools: How can we better prepare persons with special needs to be more socially integrated from young? For the educators: How can we learn from each student to teach better? For the community: Instead of elitism of the individual, can we foster the atmosphere of co-operation and goodness of diversity? International collaboration: How can we begin to introduce international exchange and put our human resources into areas most in need?

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THE FACE OF CO-TEACHING IN OHIO

Martha G. Michael, Ph.D.
Kimberly K. Miller, Ph.D.

Given the history of collaborative efforts in teacher education programs in the United States, as well as results from a recent survey of teacher-education programs in Ohio, it is evident that deliberately designed collaboration is not readily taught as a needed skill in personnel preparation. However, it does appear to be valued (Authors, 2011). A survey of teacher educators' perceptions, completed by teacher educators representing all of Ohio teacher education programs, has indicated a need for teacher education programs to shift from discrete to integrated or merged programming. While this recent study by Authors (2011) reveals an overwhelming need for continuing reform in teacher education programs in order to incorporate deliberately designed collaboration as a skill to be taught to both special and general educators alike, modeling of this approach at the higher education level would also promote the practice most effectively.

University teacher education programs graduate new teachers that find that they are expected to collaborate with other educators in K-12 settings in which they find themselves. Employers seek individuals that are "team players" and those that share and work well towards common goals with others. Many new teachers have not experienced deliberately designed collaboration such as the practice of co-teaching in their teacher education programs, and therefore are not prepared to face the sometimes overwhelming and unfamiliar task of collaboration. Collaboration that is deliberately designed would, in effect, be a sanctioned approach in a school setting that encouraged collaborating teachers to co-plan, co-teach and co-evaluate their instruction. In turn, if teacher education candidates do experience deliberately designed collaboration in their teacher education programs, they could possibly become new teachers prepared to collaboratively teach all K-12 students in inclusive environments.

There certainly are special education programs in some universities and colleges that do emphasize collaboration and consultation. However in the corresponding general education program counterparts, candidates have not had this preparation. According to Pugash and Blanton (2009) however, there is a growing trend in teacher education preparation to teach candidates how to collaborate. Teaching collaboration may create new ways in which new practicing teachers can meet the diverse needs of all students. But, instruction at the pre-service level, with authentic experiences of deliberately designed collaboration in clinical practice would give candidates opportunities to grow in this skill even more. Further research is called for to determine if clinical practice in other state teacher-education programs includes the practice of co-teaching or the teaching of deliberately designed collaboration.

As K-12 classrooms become more inclusive, teacher education programs clearly need to provide exposure to authentic inclusionary practice for teacher education candidates (Hardman, 2009). *Integrated* or *merged* programs encourage higher education faculty members to engage in deliberately designed collaboration (Young, 2011). The faculty within teacher education programs that employ and value these inclusionary collaborative approaches benefit from the expertise of both special and general educators sharing knowledge about pedagogy and content delivery strategies, unlike programs that are considered to be *discrete* that may display little or no interdependence at all (Blanton & Pugach, 2007).

The growing need to identify if co-teaching is valued as an instructional approach for teacher education programs led to an investigation of current practice in Ohio (Bacharach, Heck, & Dahlberg, 2008; Authors, 2011). Specifically explored were current Ohio teacher educators' knowledge, practice, and intention to practice levels regarding co-teaching. In addition, Ohio teacher educators' current knowledge level about co-teaching, their practice and intention to practice levels were examined in reference to how collaboration and integration of programs are valued. Also examined were the intentional levels of teacher educators to co-teach in the future as these may indicate movement toward integrated or merged programming, where special and general educators are trained together in pedagogy and content.

In two important ways, the quantitative results demonstrated a genuine dichotomy that teacher education candidates experience as a result of their teacher preparation programs. In addition, a disconnect was also denoted when analyzing one of the patterns found in the qualitative responses at the end of the knowledge section of the survey. A few teacher educators revealed that they had little to no knowledge of any models of co-teaching; indicated by statements such as; "I have little knowledge of the literature on co-teaching; my insights have come predominately through observation and reading on inclusion", and "I do not have much formal knowledge on co-teaching, but have what I have gained through practice".

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The authors (2011) also found that the study results indicated that there was little to no expectations for university education faculty to collaborate, which is important for candidates to experience, according to Blanton & Pugach (2007). It is argued that higher education programs must nurture their teacher –education faculty to make collaborative, purposeful, and explicit connections across courses and field experiences with a common goal of similar preparation for all candidates. Just as in K-12 settings, general and special educators may want to regularly share their expertise in order to ensure that their teacher education candidates are experiencing an intentional approach to making connections for required future collaborative practice (Blanton & Pugach, 2007; Pugach, Blanton & Correa, 2011).

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PREDICTIVE INFLUENCE OF PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS ON THE EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT OF GIFTED STUDENTS IN NIGERIA

Fakolade Olufemi Aremu

Introduction

Nurturing the talents of our most gifted and talented children are one of the most exciting yet controversial issues in education today. The base of the controversy is society’s “love-hate” relationship with giftedness and talent (Benbow & Stanley, 1996; Gallagher & Weiss, 1979).

On one hand, we admire the talent and drive of individuals who rise from humble backgrounds. On the other, our nation has a long standing commitment to egalitarianism, reflected in the mighty phrase “All men are created equal”. Educators and people on the street are caught in the confusing tension between encouraging yet restraining individuals accomplishment (Gardner, 1982).

Traditionally, education of the gifted has focused on their cognitive abilities and has ignored their social and emotional needs. Gifted students sometimes become underachievers and quit school because of social and emotional challenges. Certain social situations led to the eventual surrender of these gifted and talented students (Hansen & Toso, 2007).

It is assumed that to be well-adjusted, individuals need to have a healthy self-esteem, to feel satisfied with their relationships, and to have some control over what happens to them. Since Terman’s finding that gifted individuals were well adjusted was compared with Hollingworth’s conclusion that gifted children are vulnerable emotionally and socially, there has been an ongoing debate

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about their emotional status (Grossberg & Cornell, 1988). Naturally, gifted children can experience the same traumatic life events such as their parents' divorce or deaths in their family –that all children experience. Specifically, the major issue is whether they have additional problems as a direct result of being gifted.

There are three claims made about whether gifted children have unique emotional characteristics which in turn make them vulnerable to emotional difficulties. The first is that the qualitative differences between gifted and average learners are largely emotional and contribute to gifted individuals' heightened social-emotional vulnerability; the second claim accepts the emotional differences between gifted and average learners but contends that the difference advantages gifted individuals; a third view is that there is no qualitative difference at an emotional level.

Other authors (Manaster & Powell, 1988) argue that, while overall adjustment is similar, gifted children face different issues from average learners. It is therefore possible that while developmental dissonance and social asynchrony are inevitable for gifted children, feelings of being emotionally or psychologically 'out of sync' could arise from how the children interprets their circumstances and so could be changed with a change in their thinking.

Method

Participants

A total of 20 students (12 boys and 8 girls) were selected by their schools to be part of the study by participating voluntarily. These students were in primary schools and were between the ages 6 and 11.

The use of their consistent school academic records and also the observation of the students by the teachers, the use of their consistent school academic records and also the observation of some specific traits of the participants. Since there are no generally accepted standard measures for identification of gifted students in Nigeria schools, thus, the participants were sampled from a broad age range, and could be regarded as relatively heterogeneous due perhaps to their giftedness and talents.

Procedures

All the participants were selected randomly from the schools that participated voluntarily in the study. The participants were given two separate instruments, namely; Anxiety scale for primary school children (ASPSC) and the social skill deficit scale SSDS to assess the participants emotional adjustment problems.

All the participants completed these instruments anonymously, and were assured that the data they provided were confidential and would be used for research purposes only.

The research questions were raised and answered in the paper; they include;

- (a) Are there any relationship between anxiety and social skill deficit on the emotional adjustment problem of gifted students?
- (b) What is the composite effect of anxiety and social skill deficit under psychosocial factors on the emotional adjustment problem of the gifted students?
- (c) Which of the psychosocial factors of anxiety and social skill deficit could predict the emotional adjustment problem of the participants?

Results

The result in the study indicates a significant difference in the influence of psychosocial factors (anxiety and social skill deficit) on the emotional adjustment of gifted and talented students.

Recommendations

Research with improved methodology, such as increased sample size, sampling from lower socio-economic families and different cultures, should prove beneficial in understanding and addressing the emotional adjustment problems of gifted children.

Also, investigation in the area of social and emotional development will facilitate a better understanding of the gifted population, better identification of those at risk of emotional problems, and more effective treatment, differentiated educational program and guidance. This will help to increase the validity of the result and then more accurate claims can be made about adjustment concerns of the gifted children.

Conclusion

The gifted children have powerful resources to support themselves. Thus, teachers and parents should pay attention not only on their intellect, but especially on their emotions. However, neglect of the emotional lives of children impacts on their intellectual achievements as emotional adjustment, but they need help to apply their critical thinking, reasoning ability, inventiveness, imagination and willingness to explore to their own emotional intensity and sensitivity.

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SEGREGATION AND MENTAL HEALTH: UNDERSTANDING STIGMA FROM FAMILY PERSPECTIVES

Carla Reis Abreu-Ellis, Ph.D.
Jason Brent Ellis, Ph.D.

Background

According to the National Institute of Mental Health (n.d.) “mental disorders are common throughout the United States, affecting tens of millions of people each year, and that only a fraction of those affected receive treatment” (§ 1). Corrigan (2004) suggested that many individuals diagnosed with mental illness do not seek or fully commit to treatment partially because of stigma; the social-cognitive processes that “motivate people to avoid the label of mental illness that results when people are associated with mental health care” (p. 614). Further, Corrigan (2004) suggested that two specific manifestations dissuade people from treatment: “the threats of diminished self-esteem and of public identification when labeled ‘mentally ill’” (p. 614).

Methodology

In order to participate in the study family members were required to have cared for a sibling, spouse, child or other individual who had a diagnosed mental illness. Participants were invited to participate in a 30 - 90 minute face-to-face interview and answer a series of probing questions. Participants' stories were transcribed and common themes were identified.

Results and Discussion

Corrigan (2004) proposed a theoretical framework for how stigma manifests with regards to the procurement of mental health services. He suggested that stigma is composed of “four social- cognitive processes: cues, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination” (p. 615). For the purpose of this paper these four criteria were used as a theoretical framework for the interpretation of the interview data in terms of family support and the procurement of mental health services.

In Corrigan's (2004) framework cues are defined as how the general public infers that a person has mental illness based on psychiatric symptoms, social skills deficits, physical appearance, and labels. Corrigan's cues are congruent with interview data from this study. In terms of psychiatric symptoms, a mother of an individual identified with schizophrenia noted that when her son started “chanting” incoherently in nonsense words a family relative suggested that they would have to “get a priest down there and he's got to bring a certain holy water and a certain oil. . . like an exorcist.” This illustrates that the individual was being judged based on psychiatric symptoms of the schizophrenia, but in terms of the lens of the person doing the judging, the youth was being possessed by something synonymous with an evil spirit. In terms of social skills and physical appearance the same mother observed “I feel protective of him, but slightly embarrassed because he doesn't present himself rather well, forgets to bathe, dressing and hygiene issues. I get nervous about him going into new situations, what people will think of him.” The mother

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presents concerns about how both social functioning and appearance can limit her child's opportunities since people making these types of social judgments can hold an element of power over opportunities of the one being stigmatized (employment, housing, medical services, etc.).

Labeling is also of concern in terms of mental health and stigmatization. From the interview data, a mother of a young adult with multiple psychiatric diagnoses (including bipolar, depression, & anxiety) explained "our neighbor came over knowing our daughter's diagnosis back in high school (bipolar) to tell us about a mutual friend's daughter who was in the hospital with a life threatening disease, a physical disease, and he said how this was a 'real illness.'" This event illustrates the divide between mental health and other health related conditions. Mental illness has consistently been stigmatized, whereas generally other medical conditions have not experienced the same amount of stigmatization through labeling. As a mother, interviewed in this study noted, "it is not a casserole disease. . . if someone goes in the hospital for a physical illness, people will bring casseroles over, try to help, bring flowers or whatever. But if someone is hospitalized with a mental illness. . . nobody says anything. It's hush hush. There were no flowers, no casseroles, no calls. . ."

In Corrigan's (2004) framework, following the cues that people use to identify individuals for stigmatization, the process contains three other components; stereotype, prejudice, and discrimination. Stereotyping would be the equivalent of believing that everyone with a mental illness is violent. It is a broad generalization without foundation. Prejudice springs from the stereotype based on predication; if all individuals with mental illness are violent then I am afraid of them. Finally, discrimination occurs because of the prejudice; if I'm afraid of individuals with mental illness, then I will isolate myself from them or provide little opportunity to associate with them by limiting their proximity to me. From the interview data, a mother of an adult with multiple diagnoses observed that she had a very small network of friends because of the stigma surrounding her son's mental illness. In fact, she had even experienced the stigmatization process with her own family: "I have two sisters and a brother, at one point when my son was a teenager, my one sister had five boys, and she told me at one time that he wasn't welcome to play with her boys at all . . . and he loved to play with them . . . he never had done anything wrong . . . she'll never know how much it hurt."

Conclusion: Family Support and the Reduction of Stigma

The question then circles back to how stigmatization affects the dynamic of family support and procurement of mental health? Firstly, family support is a catalyst in both procurement and retention in mental health services (Pernice-Duca, 2009; Corrigan, 2004) based on several types of support structures including: (a) informational, (b) instructional, (c) emotional, (d) instrumental, and (e) advocacy (Hoagwood *et al.*, 2009). Secondly, negative stigmatization by family members of the individual with mental illness can have large repercussions in the individual seeking treatment and retention in psychiatric services (Schomerus, Matschinger, & Angermeyer, 2009; Corrigan, 2004). Thematically, transparency may be key. One participant discussed that a good family friend who helped her through her daughter's diagnosis never shared that his mother was diagnosed with schizophrenia until two years later. This participant believed that transparency could have helped her cope with her child's diagnosis better at the time. Both education and sharing stories were recurring themes that participants noted as important in tearing down stigma.

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INCREASING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' COMMITMENT TO MORE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

Laura J Daily

Conceptual Framework and Background

While students with disabilities have been able to participate in the educational systems in both Ireland and the US for decades, they have often experienced marginalization despite the fact that there has been a growing trend toward more inclusive practices. Teacher attitudes and commitments toward inclusive practices have been presented in the research as an important variable to the success of inclusion (Booth et. al, 2003; Bishop & Jones, 2002; Florian and Linklater, 2010; Avraminds & Norwich, 2010). Sapon-Shevin (2007) asserts this even more strongly the critical nature of teacher attitudes and perceptions when she says that “the single best predictor of whether or not a child with a disability is included is not the nature of a child’s disability or even the availability of resources, but the level of commitment to including that child” (p. 34).

The Warnock Report (1978), which laid the groundwork for the development of educational provisions for students with disabilities in both England and Ireland stated that “the positive attitudes required of teachers in recognizing and securing help for children with special educational needs, and the necessary skills, must be acquired in the course of training” (Section 12.1).

Wolterstorff (2004) would say that in order to foster appreciation of difference we need to present to the person “the human faces and human voices of suffering” (p. 151) Scruggs and Mastriopieri (1996) indicated that direct experience with children with special educational needs was mentioned by several studies as an important variable in shaping positive attitudes towards inclusion. Booth and Ainscow (1998) suggest that pre-service teachers must also be provided with opportunities for critical reflection, and encouraged to explore assumptions that frame their perspectives in order to unveil some of their more negative ways of perceiving persons with disabilities.

Research

Comparisons between American and Irish standards and practices in pre-service teacher education were made by exploring documents related to state standards for teacher preparation, the federal requirements of IDEA, and the professional standards developed by the Council for Exceptional Children. The standards for pre-service teachers in Ireland were explored as outlined by the Irish Teaching Council, the Post-Primary Guidelines for the inclusion of students with special educational needs (2007), and the Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004). Informal interviews were also conducted in person or via telephone with all five of the universities in Ireland responsible for the preparation of primary teachers. Documents related to curriculum were also shared by faculty who were interviewed from some of the institutions.

Results

It should be noted that Ireland is currently undergoing massive changes in teacher education. Formerly, teacher education involved 3 years of training with one semester of clinical practice to be included. In the fall of 2012, programs were required to revise their programs to include a 4 year training sequence to include a year of clinical practice. In comparing current standards and practice within pre-service teacher education, it was discovered that many of the issues and challenges were similar in both countries in terms of equipping students to work in inclusive classrooms. To address diverse student needs both countries have a heavy emphasis on practices in differentiated instruction. The development of more positive attitudes and commitments are fostered through readings, presentation of historical perspectives of injustice and discrimination, hearing the stories of and seeing the faces of those with disabilities via readings, video, guest speakers, practicum experiences to enable interactions with students with disabilities, and critical reflection were also included in the training in programs from both countries.

Recommendations

Given the fact that changes in teacher attitudes and perceptions have changed very slowly over the past decades toward the inclusion of students with disabilities, continued emphasis on ways to foster positive attitudes and commitments of pre-service teachers towards supporting students in more inclusive environments should be explored. Many researchers have suggested that creating a single system for education versus the current dual track for educational programming (general and special education) and licensure could help more teachers feel both increased commitment and preparation to work with students with diverse learning and behavioral needs.

Suggestions for Future Research

There is a need for a more systematic study focused on comparing standards and practices in pre-service teacher education between Ireland and the US. There is also a need to conduct comprehensive, methodologically sound research on the most effective ways to foster positive attitudes and commitments among pre-service teachers as well as a study of in-service teachers to determine important variables for the persistence of positive attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities.

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REMEMBERING WHAT WE KNOW...A DOZEN GREAT IDEAS TO SUPPORT DIVERSE LEARNERS

Elizabeth M. Dalton, Ph.D.
Britt Tatman Ferguson, Ph. D.

Contemporary education has come to be influenced not only by research, but also by highly promoted topics in the field, such as in journals or at conferences. Additionally, considerable attention has been placed on student achievement as measured by the use of state standards and standardized testing. Furthermore, emphasis specifically on accountability (but not necessarily on student support) has created a difficult situation for teachers. Which approach will teachers be expected to use this year? How much, if any, training will they receive? Will sufficient time be planned for, or allowed, in order to learn and implement the 'expected' intervention before a new intervention is introduced? How does all this affect teachers' consistency of instruction and the learning of the children and youth? Trying to address every topic and incorporate each new technique may be both time consuming and not very effective.

Experience is one of the greatest teachers.... And a wealth of experience exists in the fields of education and special education. Together, the authors reach back into their own training and experience as special educators, with shared years of experience equaling close to 70 years in total, to identify and present one dozen tried-and-true techniques that will help every teacher to better address the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms. Our goal is to help new teachers to "fill their toolkit" with strategies and solutions that *really work*, and to remind ourselves and our experienced colleagues of the value of the phrase, "if it isn't broken, don't fix it".

After reflecting on the many techniques and instructional strategies we use and value we identified the 12 most important we would like to share. In combination, these tools provide every teacher successful techniques and a solid base for working effectively with all students. Without them a teacher may falter and students flounder.

Planning and Foundational Considerations

Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill & Krathwol, 1956), Maslow's hierarchy of needs, task analysis and basic classroom management help us understand students' needs and plan what we are going to do. Maslow's hierarchy of needs reminds to ensure that our students are ready to learn, and if not to identify their missing needs so they can be met. Bloom's taxonomy enables us to classify learning objectives according to the instructional levels and needs of students, so that we provide a base of understanding and build upon it. Task analysis is a technique that allows us to divide content and skills to be taught into manageable, measurable and attainable units. Basic classroom management which includes classroom organization, classroom rules and consequences, and supervision by the teacher, is essential to ensure that an effectual learning environment is established and maintained.

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Instructional Methods and Strategies

Formal and informal methods that teachers would be wise to know and use include a Continuum of Teacher Behaviors, Direct Instruction, Cooperative Learning, See-Say-Hear-Do, and Universal Design for Learning. Bredekamp & Rosegrant (1995) identify a Continuum of Teacher Behaviors ranging from Nondirective to Mediating to Directive, each of which is necessary for a teacher to know and use in response to students' needs. Direct Instruction, a rigorously structured and consistent approach to instruction that includes practice, has been found to be highly effective across learners and environments (Adams & Engelmann, 1996). Cooperative Learning, when applied with rigor and fidelity, has been shown to increase achievement and retention; improve students' attitude towards school, subjects, teacher and peers; improve self-esteem; and increase psychological health (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1994). See-Say-Hear-Do refers to multi-sensory approaches to instruction which may be more natural and stronger because information is sent to the brain through multiple sensory channels (visually, auditorily, orally, and / or kinesthetically) (Shams & Seitz, 2008). Universal Design for Learning increases learning success by providing multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement that address learner variation and allow all individuals the opportunity to learn (Ralabate, 2011).

Materials and Activities

Instruction is enhanced by materials as well as activities. Basics for teachers to incorporate into their repertoire include Practice, Simple Tools that Support Learning, and the Montessori Method using Practical Authentic Choice. Dr. Ethna Reid researched good readers and found that they practiced, practiced correctly, practiced quickly and practiced to mastery. Virtually any student, who practices in this way, succeeds in learning (personal communication, 1977.) Simple tools, such as manipulatives and color coding, are inexpensive and support students by providing multi-sensory means of comprehending the spoken word. Maria Montessori's method (Montessori, 1912) for educating children with varying needs is characterized by an emphasis on learning independence, freedom within limits, and respect for the child's natural psychological development. Through the process of discovery, and learning to make real and practical choices through working with actual materials, students engage in and learn tasks and concepts. While first published one century ago, the Montessori Method continues to live on through the Montessori Institute and Montessori teacher preparation practices.

In summary, these twelve instructional practices stand the test of time, and can strengthen and enrich every teacher's toolbox of strategies and approaches to reach each and every student.

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EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES FROM REGULAR CLASSROOM: NIGERIA PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Tolu Eni-Olorunda
Temitayo, Kofowola Adebayo

Background to the Study

Children with an intellectual disability are often times excluded from the regular classroom by the regular teachers in Nigeria. In situations where they are not excluded for one reason or the other, they are merely neglected in the classroom while teachers concentrate on regular pupils. According to the report on the implementation of the convention on the rights of the child by the United States Department of Justice, Disability Rights section (2005) people with disabilities are the least cared for and discriminated against within the societies and even in their families, and this has contributed to a large extent to why they are excluded from the educational system and social activities (Akindenor 2007).

The National Policy on Education (2004) categorically stated that all children should be included in the regular classroom irrespective of the nature of disability. To a large extent, this policy is merely on paper, most of the states are not implementing it, hence in Nigeria, what is mostly practiced is segregation. Baker (2013) however remarked that the practice of inclusion or mainstreaming students with disabilities in regular classrooms is required by law. In other words, the nations of the world should strive to practice inclusion.

Many factors have been thought to have contributed to exclusion of children with intellectual disabilities (ID) in the regular classroom. For example, the cultural beliefs in Nigeria, like some of other African countries, is often associated to the cause of disabilities or other unpleasant situations in an individual's life. The belief is that most conditions are as a result of metaphysical, in contrast to natural scientific explanations for the astrological factors of intellectual disability in developed countries such as the United Kingdom and United States (Brown, 1991). One of the authors of this study witnessed an unpleasant situation in one of the primary schools in Nigeria, in which a pupil with intellectual disability was excluded within the class while the teacher concentrated on the regular pupils. It is imperative that Nigeria Regular Teachers move with the global trend by embracing inclusive education, rather than excluding children with ID from the regular classroom. The study therefore investigated the factors that could be responsible for exclusion of children with an intellectual disability from the regular classroom in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. Would regular Teachers readily include children with ID in the regular classroom?
2. Is the culture the factor for exclusion of children with ID by the regular teachers?
3. Is there a difference in the reaction of teachers in Oyo and Ogun States towards exclusion of Children with ID?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' years of experience and their opinions on exclusion of CWID from the regular classroom.
2. There is no significant difference between Christian and Muslim teachers in their opinions on exclusion of children with ID from the regular classroom.

Methodology

Design: study adopted an investigative survey research design.

Sample/Sampling technique: 169 regular teachers that were randomly selected from some selected primary schools in Oyo (90) and Ogun (79) states, participated in the study.

Instrument: A structured questionnaire developed by the Researchers was the instrument used. This was made up of the demographic data and 15 items that elicited the questions related to the study. The coefficient alpha of 0.75 was obtained using Cronbach alpha.

Procedure: Four Research assistants assisted in administering the questionnaire in the two states to the Regular teachers.

Method of data analysis: ANOVA, Pearson Product - moment correlation and t-test were the methods of analysis used in analyzing the data.

Results and Discussion

The study revealed that 57% of the teachers as against 19.6% were not disposed to having children with ID in the regular classroom simply because of the learning difficulty of children with ID. Regular teachers also felt they do not have adequate experience in teaching these children. The majority of the teachers (84.1%) disagreed that culture has nothing to do with the exclusion of children with ID in the regular classroom; this is in contrast to the submission of Brown (1991) which states that differences in attitudes of teachers towards children with special needs education may be linked to differences in cultural beliefs. The study also revealed that most of the teachers (62.1%) agreed that the over population of pupils in regular schools influence the exclusion of children with ID in regular classrooms.

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Teachers' opinion about exclusion of children with ID in the regular classroom was higher in Oyo State (mean 50.93) than Ogun State (47.09) meaning that teachers in Ogun State are more predisposed to having pupils with ID in the regular classroom than the teachers in Oyo State.

Looking at the relationship between teachers' years of experience and their opinions on exclusion of children with ID in regular classroom, the study revealed that the higher the years of teaching experience, the less of the opinion of exclusion of children with ID.

Summary and Conclusion

Regular Teachers excluded children with ID because of their learning difficulties and their lack of experience in teaching them. Overpopulation in regular schools was also found to be a factor by the teachers for exclusion of children with ID.

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CREATING AN ALL-INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM IN TANZANIA: INCLUDING THE COMMUNITY IN THE PROCESS

Swaleha (Sally) Mohamedali

The stepping stones...

Ever since I first started teaching 25 years ago, in the back of my mind, my vision was to cater for children with difficulties... It was the year 2005 when I joined Jaffery Academy, in Arusha, Tanzania as an assistant pre- primary teacher, that I first saw myself faced with an opportunity to follow my dream...An opportunity so tiny, hardly flickering...but, as I would find out in the coming years, it was a protracted opening nonetheless.

Initially, out of silent contemplation, I would observe the mainstream class I was given and, at the same time, learned that in Tanzania, 1 – 2% live with a disability, as found by Mohamedali (2011). Along with that, out of the 15,000 schools in Tanzania, only 12% actually have a special needs teacher, as noted by the International Aid Services (2011)! They were not treated as they were supposed to by the teachers who lacked the knowledge on the specialty. One little nine year-old boy named Akber sobbed all day long. I went for a home visit to understand why his speech was so poor. I found out his mother was deaf and mute and his father was hearing impaired with very little speech. Their environment was totally unhealthy and they struggled to pay his school fees.

After this heart-throbbing observation, I told the headmaster of the school that I wished to have a small room to start a class for children with difficulties. At first he instantly refused, saying that we do not cater for those with mental retardation. I substantiated my request with research, and finally, he moved my proposed project to the board of trustees. Then after 12 months of

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deliberation, I got my little room, Akber, and another student. I promised my superiors that if I failed to show results in three months then they could close the special education needs unit down.

Building the Bridge...

As described by Mohamedali, one of the reasons that Tanzania suffers from poverty is that few people think about our neglected members of society. Having one child with difficulties in the family means that the whole family becomes disabled; whether it is financially, educationally, or socially as all of their basic needs are affected!

My one small classroom blossomed into a new two story building with 13 classrooms serving our special children. Because there are people in our community who are beginning to understand and support my dreams...there is now a four story building proposal which has been approved and is ready for implementation! This occurred because the father of one parent with a special child understood why his grandchild should...and could be served. The bridges are beginning to be built!

We have a huge lack of resources such as equipment, finance, and most importantly, specialized teachers. However, it is not just our school which suffers from this setback, but rather, the whole country has to endure this, as Stone-Macdonald (2012) has proven. We therefore welcome visiting specialists, therapists, teachers and those with special education expertise. Being an International Association of Special Education Volunteer Service Project site will enable us to learn from others who will give some of their time and energy to share learning techniques and methods to help all of us. Our teachers take every opportunity possible to attend meetings, conventions, and training workshops to gain more skills. Our success rates are gaining recognition so that locally we have made inroads and changes for the benefit of our students.

In addition to new academic classrooms, we are developing occupational and physical therapy rooms, too. Addressing the needs of the "whole child" are our goals.

The Final Stretch...

In Tanzania, people with disabilities (PWD) are high up on the vulnerability ladder, as illustrated by S. Nilsson and A. Nilsson (2011):

"...PWD suffer from frequent violation of rights – often by the police, district officials and the legal system itself. A recent example of human rights violations is the killing of more than 45 persons with albinism — of a total population of about 17,000 people in Tanzania. They have been killed due to widespread belief in witchcraft, which makes wealthy people ready to pay several thousands of dollars for albino body parts in order to ensure own good luck. ...according to a study conducted by TACAIDS in 2009, 9% of those tested were HIV positive and 40% claimed to know a PWD who had been raped".

Our desire is to provide optimum learning activities for our students, so that they can reach their full potential and so, each student has an individual learning plan. Future plans include adding a prevocational training in our class offerings. A visual art and skills enhancement room is hopefully, soon to be added. Student success and community support has begun to carry our dreams into reality.

I enjoy my work thoroughly and have my entire faith in The Almighty, who will continue guiding me in all the ways with his blessings. It's a job where you feel directly connected with your lord through the children, the most precious resources of this world!!!

Presently I have been window-shopping for potential jobs for my SEN kids. My to-do list includes travelling, observing, researching, talking to people, and reading different websites. I also schedule meetings with the City Council of Arusha, create connections with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, and visit different schools.

After all of that, I've concluded that local businesses need an awareness program about the needs of persons with disabilities. Nine percent of the population of Tanzania has a disability (Nilsson & Nilsson, 2011) and according to the Tanzanian government, 2% of persons with difficulties should be employed in every sector, as researched by Maswanya (2007). So that gives us some implementation leverage.

Job opportunities available for persons with disabilities in Arusha are as cleaners, assistant chefs in hotels and messengers. Because our city is located in an international tourist area, our students could make bags, create beaded African jewelry, and sew colorful clothing ready to sell.

My future plans are to create a 99% job employment for persons with difficulties. I do not want them to be beggars and parasites on the society and community. Therefore we must develop their skills and their strengths and enable them to be good future citizens of Tanzania.

Belief in empowering every child and adult has propelled me to the epitome of inspiration. As a community let us work [Back to Table of Contents](#)

together to capitalize on the strengths. So, my slogan is *disability is not an inability*. Together we can enhance their inert skills so that everyone can be included and become productive members of our society.

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SUPPORTING TEACHERS' JOURNEYS TOWARDS FULL INCLUSION OF STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Emma Goodall

Conceptual Framework and Background

My doctoral research followed on from the New Zealand release of guidelines for best practice in meeting the health and educational needs of people on the autism spectrum disorders (ASD) (Ministries of Health & Education, 2008). I worked with a group of teachers over a year to examine their attitudes and willingness to teach their students with ASD. This research indicated that teachers are still on the long journey to full acceptance of students with ASD as learners with potential. It has been suggested that teachers who fail to see the potential of a student then see themselves as unable to teach that student (Morton, 2011).

Inclusion of students with ASD is the norm in New Zealand, however my research indicated a lack of understanding of the AS by general teachers (Goodall, 2011). Neuro-typical teachers often struggle to see how students' differences in communication and learning can be reconciled with an ability to learn, achieve and potentially excel in any field. Research indicates that children and adults on the AS have a different style of thinking to other people and that this is pervasive throughout all aspects of life (De Clerq, 2011). Therefore when teachers fail to understand students on the spectrum they can miss opportunities to identify potential learning opportunities.

Working with teachers following on from my research I have found that teachers can develop their understanding of students with ASD. Additionally, scaffolding this understanding to problem solve difficulties in the classroom enables these teachers to the plan and deliver more appropriate learning opportunities for their students with ASD.

Research/Intervention

An intensive half-day course was developed to be delivered to teachers and other professionals around understanding the autistic brain. This focused on real life examples of the way students with ASD experience their environments and their reactions to these experiences. A range of children and adults on the spectrum have given permission for their examples to be used to help teachers understand that the presentation of an AS changes over time, but that the thinking style remains the same. For example a child who is initially non-verbal may end up with degrees and full-time employment (Grandin, 2010).

Following on from participant feedback requesting more examples of why students refused to participate in particular activities or tasks, the course was lengthened to a full day with the afternoon devoted to exploring classroom issues from both an ASD and a neuro-typical (NT) perspective. This enabled participants to develop the ability to see a problem from the perspective of a AS child and build problem solving skills which result in solutions that are acceptable to both teacher and student.

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At the end of the morning session, the participants are told which of the examples are from my own personal experience as a student at school. This provokes intense discussion as the participants have to confront the reality of a colleague being on the autism spectrum which challenges the prevailing discourse of autism as a childhood disability (Stevenson, Harp & Gernsbacher, 2011).

Results

Participant feedback demonstrated that NT teachers had been thinking that difficulties in understanding demonstrated by students with ASD were as a result of cognitive deficit, rather than neurological difference. When faced with an articulate, tertiary educated teaching professional, who openly states they on the autistic spectrum and personally experienced classroom difficulties, these teachers were forced to re-evaluate.

The communication misunderstandings examples appeared useful to NT teachers in gaining an understanding of autistic thinking. It gave them a better understanding of autistic thought processes. Another benefit of this study was providing teachers with a safe, non-threatening, non-judgemental forum in which to discuss lived experience, reactions and interpretations. Participants openly shared their changing insights regarding the autistic students within their class room. Further-to-this, they genuinely appeared enthusiastic to implement strategies to maximise the child's learning and improving self-esteem, while minimising miscommunication (and hence 'melt downs'). Another important issue that surprised the cohort of teachers in the study was that a perceived throw-away comment which to them was unimportant could have such a huge and lasting impact on students with ASD.

Recommendations

Only when teachers see potential will they teach towards that potential (Morton, 2011). Developing teachers' understanding neuro-diversity should be an effective way of enabling teachers to understanding the behaviours and learning potential in students with ASDs. This could be achieved through the sharing of lived experience of adults with ASD in terms of their experiences at school, which for some were very unpleasant.

Suggestions for Future Research and Interventions

It may be useful to collect a large number of lived experience examples of communication misunderstandings, positive and negative experiences of school, particularly when others erroneously assume that all children on the autism spectrum don't need or want friends resulting in social dislocation from peers and a subsequent sense of loneliness. Further-to-this, it would be advantageous to collect a more comprehensive set of examples of the presentation of autistic thinking styles because a 'one size fits all' mentality is very unhelpful for these children and often only serves to further marginalise them.

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HOW INCLUSION PRACTICES VARY ACROSS U.S. REGIONS

Faith E. Andreasen

Integrating Special Education Students

U.S. law requires special education students to be taught as often as possible with their general education peers, known as the “least restrictive environment.” Thus, the inclusive model is increasingly emphasized. Accordingly, special educators should inform general educators of new and on-going special education policies at the beginning of the year. One district provides “IEP at a Glance” training; the 33-page IEP is reduced to 3 pages which are reviewed with detailed focus on present levels, accommodations, goals and other pertinent information. All students have one period daily for extra time and assistance for work completion. Another district’s colleagues collaborate regularly. Interventions are delineated and implemented, then reviewed for effectiveness. Another district implements student support time (SST). The SST team includes an administrator, counselor, the student, the parent, and the student’s teachers. They discuss the student’s unique needs, accommodations, and specific strategies that need to be implemented.

Collaboration

Collaboration occurs when individuals or groups work together to meet the needs of students (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010). One district partners special and general educators for as many classes as possible so the students’ needs can be understood and addressed. There is mutual planning time for co-teachers to create lesson plans and reflect on their current strategies. In another district, special and general educators collaborate on their own time via emails and phone calls. They discuss how to modify grades and curriculum to ensure continuity across the curriculum.

Mediation

Disputes occur between staff members for a variety of reasons. Matuson (2005) asserts when staff members acquaint themselves with common causes of conflict, the issue can be preempted. One district has a Program Specialist who handles high-profile cases, legal matters, and provides guidance as needed. All regions agree mediation is often mitigated when issues are informally and immediately addressed.

Classroom Strategies that Support Students Academically

Science teacher Robertson (n.d.) found that the strategies she has used to support her inclusive population are equally beneficial for her general education students. One district assesses students on IEPs as they enter the school to ensure proper placement. Usual accommodations include preferential seating, color coding and frequent check for understanding. Another district has established a Support Den, which is where students can go to receive accommodations. An adult is always present who can assist students with their content needs. Whiteboards and calculators are available and the “talk aloud” strategy is permitted. Teachers in another district provide copies of their PowerPoint presentations. Students test in alternative testing rooms. One high school educator develops his lesson plans as if there were no included students. He ensures alternative resources are available and provides various means of assessment such as verbal response, drawing pictures, or written poster presentations.

Classroom Strategies that Support Students with Emotional Exceptionalities

Statistically, most EBD students experience failing grades, social inadequacies, discipline issues, and high dropout rates (O’Brien & Guinery, 2005). To assist this population, one district created a Mobility Pass permitting students to see their counselor or case manager prior to a meltdown. Another uses a “Think Time” area. After two infractions, the student is sent with a form to another teacher’s classroom for “Think Time”. When that teacher is able to get to the student, the teacher asks which of the five school rules were broken. After talking to the teacher, the form is signed by the student and taken home for the parent to sign. The student must bring back the form the next day. If he does not, lunch detention ensues, meaning the student must sit away from his friends while he eats.

Using Data to Drive Decision Making

Most districts implement data-driven-decision making, but it is often done differently. Some break data down and use it only inter-departmentally to remediate content-specific material. Other districts share data across grade or content levels to better convey which concepts are understood and what needs remediation. Some districts use data analysis to provide additional student instruction during late start or early release; others incorporate remedial instruction into their class time. Many districts’ special educators attend content strands instead of special education department meetings so they can provide support and suggestions to their general education colleagues.

Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring is comprised of student partnerships to ensure struggling students work with a capable classmate. Although this is

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usually discouraged, one teacher successfully permits his students to choose their seats and partners. Most partnerships occur by matching personalities within content areas, pairing stronger students with weaker ones. One teacher creates groups of four by teaming one higher functioning student with one lower functioning student and two with average abilities. All students in the group have a job such as recorder or leader. After a project is completed, students are assigned to different groups.

Buy-In from General Educators

Constructing an inclusive environment that all educators will embrace is a challenging undertaking. One district was successful by permitting teacher teams to collaboratively develop their inclusive program with subsequent administrative approval. Counselors ensure special education students are “heard” before being scheduled into classes. Another district avoids using the words “special education” or “special education teacher.” Another district slowly integrated inclusion, permitting faculty members to digest each step in the process. Collaborating as a team was considered important, but keeping learning fun was deemed equally vital.

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UNITED STATES TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE PRACTICES: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY

Donna Tortu-Rueter, Doctoral Student

Introduction

United States school districts still struggle, despite existing legislation and previous litigation, with meeting targets for educating students with disabilities inside the regular education classroom for more than 80% of the school day (Becker, Roberts & Dumas, 2000; Pennsylvania State Data Center, 2012; Waldron, McLeskey, & Redd, 2011). United States federal law mandates access to the general curriculum, also known as inclusion, for all students with disabilities.

Justification

Becker, Roberts, and Dumas (2000) cite numerous studies that have documented educational success for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms without negatively affecting other students. These studies also document that this success partially depends on needed supports for teachers and students. Specifically, they cite a conclusion of Smith (1990), stating the need for further research to explore the relationship between teachers' perceptions of inclusion and their expectations of outcomes for students with disabilities.

Hypothesis

The purpose of this study is to examine possible differences in the perceptions of inclusive practices among regular education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators. Based on the literature review, this study predicts that positive perceptions of inclusive practices among regular education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators contribute to the success of inclusive practices.

Therefore, this study will address the following research question: What is the relationship of the perceptions of inclusive practices among regular education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators? [Back to Table of Contents](#)

The study will examine a school district in the northeastern United States. The researcher will use purposive sampling to select participants based on proximity and willingness to participate. The data collected will determine if perceptions about inclusion differ among the three groups with respect to their perceptions about the planning and support of inclusive practices at their school, and the effects of inclusive practices on students receiving special education services.

Instrument

Description

The Inclusion Inventory (Becker, Roberts, & Dumas, 2000) consists of eight sections. The first section asks 23 background questions, such as years in education and current assignment, types of disabilities with which the participant will be working in the upcoming school year, and teaching arrangements and supports. The remaining sections of the survey ask questions relating to planning and support for inclusive practices, use and implementation of inclusive practices, beliefs about inclusive practices, effects of inclusive practices, and classroom teaching practices.

Results

Results will not be available until after dissertation completion. However, based on the literature review, the hypothesis is that special education teachers will have higher ratings for the effects of inclusion.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research in this area should school districts with varied demographics such as rural, urban, and suburban settings to determine if perceptions differ among the regular education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators in those settings. In future studies, once school districts disseminate information from The Inclusion Survey, school districts can address areas of need to promote increased inclusive practices. Future research can also use results of individual subscales within the survey to address low scoring subscales in order to promote efficient allocation of resources in these areas.

This study also could explore pre-service teacher training and current trends in states regarding special education courses in teacher preparation programs. The need exists to equip future educators with the tools and the skill sets necessary to increase positive perceptions of inclusion for students with disabilities so that they have as few barriers as possible to an education in the least restrictive environment.

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THE ROLE OF A SPECIAL EDUCATOR: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POLICIES IN THREE COUNTRIES

Jodi D. Katsafanas, EdD

At its core, special education has always been about *what, where and how*. *What, where and how* were at the center of the debates leading to the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) in 1975; the Act that still grounds current policy and practice. The purpose of the Act was to assure that all handicapped children have available to them a free appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services.

After the passage of EAHCA in 1975, multiple re-authorizations of IDEA since 1990 have refined, revised and renewed this commitment to providing well planned, public, inclusive and appropriate education to all students with disabilities. But

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definitions of *where, what and how* have differed, creating conflict in defining the role of the special education teacher. The question left unanswered is whether or not current interpretations of legislative mandates like EAHCA and IDEA define this role in ways in which fulfill the promise of legislative mandates.

This comparative analysis of special education systems in three countries highlights the different practices regarding the role of the special educator arising from different perspectives on the *where, what and how* of educating their students.

Windows on Practice

While the United States special education system was marching towards inclusion in 1990, the Netherlands were crawling toward integration with the passage of the Back to School Together policy of 1991. The inspiration for this policy was not initiated by unhappy parents but by increasing costs of educating students with disabilities in separate settings. The next year brought the Going To School Together policy giving parents the opportunity to choose the regular school or a separate school for their child.

In the 20 years since these legislative initiatives, Dutch educators have not demonstrated any sense of urgency to move towards inclusiveness in schools as is now mandated in the US. In fact, the philosophy of inclusion as superior to segregation has never taken hold. Teacher training in the Netherlands still maintains separate degrees for a general education teacher and a special service coordinator, and the delivery of services for students with disabilities remains the exclusive task of special education. Their interpretation of *where, what and how* remains a separate system with a specially trained teacher providing instruction to students with disabilities to meet the individual needs of each student.

In Greece, the practice of inclusion has been imported from the US without ever emerging as practice, with many students with disabilities never receiving specialized services to meet their educational needs. There are not many special education teachers, either. In 1991, while US and Netherlands were enacting legislation towards inclusion, only 9 percent of teachers in Greece had received any training or coursework in methods of instruction for students with disabilities. Greek Universities began offering a 2-year in-service training program for certified, practicing teachers to learn methods of special education, but did not offer degrees in special education at all. In the year 2000, teachers began petitioning for separate education for special education teachers, but as of today, these teachers remain a minority in the Greek system.

Inclusive schooling in the US is what Steiner-Khamsi (2010) calls ‘traveling reform’ with the inclusive agenda moving along with other initiatives such as Education for All and reforms such as teacher competences. The questions of *where, what and how* have all succumbed to pressures of politics, policies, philosophies and budgets. For special educators this means reframing their role to include co-teaching in inclusive classrooms and helping general educators implement adaptive learning environments for all students. The preferred specially designed instruction now consists of small differentiation in assignments and assessments made available to groups of needy children in diverse classrooms. The very idea of teachers being trained differently, either as generalists or as specialists is being rejected because of the belief that specialization divides educators from each other, creating a lack of collegiality that negatively affects the quality of inclusive instructional practices. It is time for us to ask ourselves: Are students with special educational needs receiving the appropriate education promised to them in 1975?

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INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: THE JOURNEY SO FAR

Ishola Akindele Salami

Every child in Nigeria has the right to quality education, friendship and environment where holistic development of the potentials is ensured irrespective of the developmental challenges. The Nigerian government has been making effort to ensure that children are given quality education right from birth. That is why there have been several policies about Early Childhood Education and, recently, the government has shown interest in providing quality pre-school (for age 4-5+) education in the existing government-owned primary schools (FGN, 2004). What this paper examined is the extent to which the education of children with challenges is being catered for by the government.

Many scholars have examined and suggested better ways of educating children with challenges and almost all support the ideal of inclusive education (Soodak et al 2002; Berg, 2004; Wang, 2009). The merits of Inclusive Early Childhood Education (IECE) for both challenged and regular children are plenty. To the children with challenges, it gives exposure to better academic activities which lead to better academic success, better socialization with regular children, improve self-respect and self-esteem and it increases employability of the children with challenges while the children without disabilities also benefit the development of the spirit of acceptance and tolerance of the challenged ones, understand individual differences and reduce stigmatization (Berg, 2004). Wang (2009) submits that segregation not only negatively affect the learners but the teachers as well.

The Nigerian government must have realized these facts when putting together the policy on inclusive education in the National Policy on Education (Section 96, sub-section c (i)). The government promised to provide necessary facilities to ensure easy access. Such facilities include inclusive education or integration of special classes and units into ordinary/public schools under the UBE scheme (FGN, 2004). Also, in the National Minimum Standard for Early Childhood Care centers in Nigeria, all the centers are enjoined to provide screen services for children periodically to detect any special needs; provide requisite facilities to assist children with special needs and motivate full participation of physically challenged children in learning activities (NERDC, 2007). The National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development in Nigeria (NERDC, 2007) also supports the IECE (Section 8.7). These good intentions of the government have been documented, but nothing has been done to investigate their implementation. It is worthwhile to carry out such an investigation, especially since 2004 when the programmes were introduced, in order to ensure their success. Based on these premises, this study found answers to the following research questions:

- i. Do the National Policies on IECE reveal that Nigeria is really ready for inclusive ECE?
- ii. To what extent are the necessary inputs for IECE put in place in Nigerian public primary schools?
- iii. To What extent is the government providing IECE in Nigeria?

To answer these questions, qualitative (Consultations to the Nation Policy on Education Documents) and quantitative (survey research design of the questionnaire type) were used to extract information from stakeholders in IECE across the nation. The first policy document that features IECE is the National Policy on Education (2004), section 96, sub-section c(i) in which the government promised to provide *inclusive or integration of special classes* and unit in public schools under UBE. This reveals that government is not sure of whether to provide an inclusive system (whereby both challenged and regular children will be in the same classroom) or integration system (whereby separate classroom(s) will be dedicated to challenged children in regular primary schools). The needed resources for these two systems are not the same. The other policy document that mentions IECE is the National Policy for Integration Early Childhood Development (2007). The only pronouncement related to IECE is found under section 8.7 which states that government will *make provision for early detection and management of children with disabilities*. This pronouncement is too short to guide the practices of IECE in public schools. The last document, National Minimum Standard for Early Child Care Centers (2007) promises, under the section for special children, that there will be periodic screening, provision of requisite facilities, and the ensuring of full participation of physically challenged children in learning activities. All these policy documents have shown that it seems the nation does not understand the meaning of inclusive education, the practices and what it takes to have it.

The resources, starting from the teacher preparation, provision of learning resources and equipment and school structures, are grossly inadequate. Some states like Abia, Lagos, Oyo and Plateau practice what they termed "IECE" but in the real sense, what we have in these states is integration which is not well funded. Based on these findings, the study concluded that Nigerian Government has not started IECE in the real sense and if, truly, they are aware of the benefits and ready for it, it is high time it was started. The following recommendations are proffered:

1. During the review of the National Policy on Education, the ideas of inclusive system should feature in the Early Childhood section. Besides, the review of the National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development and National Minimum Standard for Early Child Care Centers should emphasise inclusive system in its full meaning. Experts should be consulted on this.
2. The resources needed, especially regular and special teacher preparation and employment should, be visited. Learning resources, aids and equipment for all categories of children with challenges; classroom blocks that are barrier-free and attractive, should be put in place.
3. The pronouncements that have to do with promises on provisions should be religiously adhered to by the government because this is the only way government-owned schools can become models for the privately owned ones.

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USING STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES TO SUPPORT INCLUSIONARY EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

James T. Jackson, Ph.D., M.F.A.

Inclusionary education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, like all students with disabilities, has been a long and challenging endeavor. It is not a new idea. However, what is new is that school systems across the country are placing many more students with disabilities in regular classrooms (Johns, Crowley, & Guetzloe, 2002) and expecting general educators to teach to a wider range of learning, behavioral, sensory, and physical differences among their students than ever before (Heward, 2013).

Nonetheless, students with emotional and behavioral disabilities are still unwanted in regular school placements (Johns, Crowley, & Guetzloe, 2002). General education teachers often express a dislike to have students with disabilities in regular classrooms if they perceive their behaviors to be unmanageable (Cook, Cameron, & Tankers, 2007). However, since placement in the regular classroom has always been a stated goal of special education for students with disabilities, to include those with emotional and behavioral disorders, it is no secret that a full continuum of placement options must remain available. This continuum of placements will make it possible for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, as well as others with disabilities, to receive reasonable amounts of programming geared to their individual needs and promote a sense of full inclusion when they have demonstrated a consistent record of readiness.

Moreover, regardless of the placement, educators – both special and general- need to consider the impact that stress has on the lives of children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders. Gaining an understanding of how stress impacts the lives of these students and employing strategies to help them cope and manage it may serve the ultimate goal of special education by helping these individuals integrate more successfully into a full inclusion environment where the potential for less stigmatization is more likely. This paper will highlight how stress impacts the lives of students with emotional and behavioral disorders and provide strategies that educators may employ to help them minimize negative behaviors that often accompany stress.

Research on Stress and Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

The early school experiences of children and youth depends in large part on successful social-emotional development (Blair & Diamond, 2008). However, students with behavioral disorders are lacking in this domain. Typically, they are individuals who experience a myriad of problems (Kauffman & Landrum, 2013). Characteristically, they induce and arouse negative feelings in themselves and others, experience academic failure, social rejection, and alienation.

An increasing number of researchers (Hemmeter, Ostrosky, & Fox, 2006) have emphasized the role that motivation, self-esteem, and self-regulation play in a student's adjustment and connection to the school setting. However, students with emotional and behavioral disorders often have problems engaging in self-regulatory behaviors, lack motivation, and often have problems with self-esteem. Many of these behaviors may be a function of the individual child's or youth's inability to manage and cope with

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stress. Researchers (Fallin, Wallinga, & Coleman, 2001) have indicated that stress is often manifested in overt physical ways. Dacey & Fiore (2000) have suggested that it appears more covert by the display of depression and avoidance, excessive shyness, hyper-vigilance, excessive worrying, “freezing-up” in social situations, seemingly obsessive interest in objects and routines, persistent concern “about what comes next”, and excessive clinging. Jewett and Peterson (2002) have noted that children with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), and other behavioral disorders are particularly vulnerable to stress as they frequently suffer from low self-esteem, experience school problems, have difficulty making friends, and lag behind their non-disordered peers in psychosocial development.

Strategies for Managing Stress

Teaching stress management techniques to students with emotional and behavioral disorders has the potential to redirect behaviors and change outcomes. Brown and Vanable (2008) concluded that stress management interventions are a promising approach to facilitate positive adjustment. These strategies are many, but may simply start with teaching students how to recognize stress and its associated symptoms.

When students are able to identify their stress, educators can introduce techniques for handling it. These techniques may include statements that inform students of what can be done when they feel stressful. Others involve diaphragmatic breathing, muscle relaxation training, and visualization exercises, listening to relaxing and calming music in a separate area of the classroom, manipulating the environment (e.g., dimming the lights and playing soft relaxing music or playing other relaxing instrumental music during class instructional time), rearranging the schedule to provide a morning physical education break before the instructional period begins, and beginning the day with a “rap session so that students have an outlet to defuse tension associated with problems at home and in the community under the guidance of a caring educator.

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USING COMPUTERS TO FACILITATE LEARNING FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS IN AN INCLUSIVE NIGERIAN CLASSROOM

Blessing U. Chukuka
Evangeline U. Chukuka

Introduction

Students with a visual impairment constitute a group of learners who suffer a deviation from the normal condition of the eye such that they are unable to see at all or see properly as the case may be, depending on the severity of the damage done to the eye. The inability to see at all or see properly places them at a disadvantaged position in an inclusive classroom when compared with their sighted peers who make use of their visual cues to take notes during classes. This is prevalent in Nigeria where most students with visual impairments do not make use of the computer, in the classroom.

Reasons for this are not far-fetched. First, most of them do not own a computer because of the high cost of procuring one. Second, power supply from the electricity corporation is unstable. Third, most of the students with visual impairment lack basic computer skills. Such students therefore depend on tapes which are recorded by their sighted classmates much later after lectures, some braille their notes through dictations from their classmates and others try to record directly from the teacher or make use of slate and stylus to braille their notes in the classroom. All of these strategies seem cumbersome and places a heavy burden on the students with visual impairment in the learning process.

Students with Visual Impairments and the Computer in the Classroom

One thing that has remained a puzzle for most people in Nigeria is the fact that persons with visual impairments can make use of the computer. This obviously is because they cannot imagine how an individual without sight can operate the computer, a device that is heavily dependent on the use of sight to operate. Unknown to them, the computer is a device that runs, using applications or software.

In the event to solve the problem of accessing information for students with visual impairments, computer programmers have developed a software that is capable of reading text on the computer screen. It is known as speech synthesizer or screen reader. This software enables individuals with visual impairment to effectively use the computer with little or no support from individuals with sight. A screen reader is a software application that attempts to identify and interpret what is being displayed on the computer screen (Disabled World, 2009).

Technological tools play significant role in allowing access to students with visual impairments with same materials as fully sighted peers (Robinson, 2012; Hasselbrin & Glaser). With a screen reader installed in a computer, a student with a visual impairment has equal access to the text on the screen as his peers with sight. The screen reader reads to his hearing all the texts on the computer screen. He is therefore able to type his notes and saves them on the word document in his computer. The saved notes can easily be retrieved anytime the student wants. Increasingly, blind and visually impaired people are making use of adaptive technology. They may make use of devices such as talking calculators, computer programs with speech-output such as JAWS or Kurzweil, and adapted electronic writing tablet with speech-output which make taking notes easier (Snow, 2012). The sound from the screen reader can be controlled with the use of a head phone in order not to distract others in the classroom.

Students with a Visual Impairment and Computer Operation

Computer users with sight frequently click the mouse and punch the keys on the keyboard in order to input data in the system. However, users with a visual impairment do not need to click the mouse at all. This is because sight is required to follow the cursor on the screen as the mouse is being clicked so that the user can know where and when to open a particular programme. They are therefore restricted to the keyboard as an input device. What is interesting here is that the computer system and the screen reader software have been developed to function with key combinations known as keystrokes or shortcuts sufficient to perform the same operation as the mouse. For example, to open a word document, all a sighted user needs to do is to get to the desk top of the computer and uses his sight to follow the cursor on the screen as he moves it to word document by clicking on the mouse. He double clicks to open as soon as the cursor is on the word document. A user with visual impairment on the contrary, gets to the desk top and punches the windows or menu key. He then uses the up or down arrow keys to navigate the programme menu. He listens to the screen reader as it announces the various programs on the menu each time the cursor gets there. He presses the entre key to open the word document as soon as the screen reader announces the location of the cursor on it. All that is required for students with visual impairment to be able to use the computer is to familiarize themselves with the keyboard and get to know the keystrokes for performing various operations.

Benefits of the Computer to Students with a Visual Impairment

The computer is an electronic device that has highly impacted all aspects of different fields of study such as education, medicine, engineering, architecture and law. It is a useful tool that has helped a great deal to solve the peculiar problem of limited access to information by persons with a visual impairment. Unquantifiable volumes of information can now be made available to students with visual impairment through the computer with very little effort. It is also a tool that can facilitate learning for students with visual impairment.

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Recommendations

The computer is a veritable tool to facilitate learning for students with a visual impairment in Nigeria. Ensuring its provision for this special population of students is therefore of paramount importance. This could be achieved through the intervention of government and non-governmental organizations. Achieving a stable power supply by the electricity corporation will boost students' interest in using the computer. Also, effective and suitable computer training programs would enhance their skills.

Conclusion

A typical inclusive classroom in Nigeria is characterized by some difficulties in taking notes by students with a visual impairment during classes. This no doubt places an extra demand on them in the learning process. The use of computers with speech synthesizers in inclusive classrooms offers a ready solution to this problem.

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THREE STEPS TO SUCCESS: EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF EXPOSITORY TEXT TO ALL LEARNERS

Gail S. Cahill
Barbara L. Govendo

The ultimate goal of reading for all students is comprehension. As the nature of text changes in our society, educators need to use more precise tools to help all their students negotiate the demands of informational, digital, visual and graphic texts (Moss & Lapp, 2010). Two influences on the increased amount of informational text read in U.S. classrooms have been the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessments and the Common Core State Standards, now accepted by most states. The 2009 reading framework in NAEP (2010) requires students to read an increasing proportion of informational text as they progress through the grades (from 50% literary/50% informational text in grade 4 to 30% literary/70% informational text in grade 12). The 2010 Common Core State Standards similarly reflect "...the need for college and career ready students to be proficient in reading complex informational text independently in a variety of content areas" (p. 4).

The past decade has been replete with evidence-based research and curricula to support highly structured comprehension instruction for struggling readers (Rapp, van den Broek, McMaster, Kendeou, & Espin, 2007). Explicit comprehension instruction enables students to learn strategies and practice them over time to ensure internalization and generalization of skills (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002). In general, the three main interventions reported in the research are the teaching of expository text structure, cognitive strategies and content enhancement strategies. These interventions are the basis of the following three steps in teaching expository text.

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Step One: Teach Expository Text Structures

As early as 1990, Chall noted that, "...effective use of expository texts in early childhood classrooms may help to minimize what researchers have referred to as the "fourth-grade slump" (Chall et al., 1990, as cited in Hall, Sabey & McClellan, 2005). Moreover, explicitly teaching text features has repeatedly been shown to have a positive effect on reading comprehension as early as third grade (Akhondi, Malayeri, & Samad, 2011). Some common features of expository text include: title, table of contents, index, glossary, headings or subtitles, sidebars, pictures and captions, labeled diagrams, charts and graphs, maps, cutaways and cross sections, and inset photos (Kelley & Clausen-Grace, 2010).

Step Two: Use Content Enhancements

Content enhancements are adaptations or techniques to help students identify, organize, understand and remember information. They are methods that teachers use to organize and present content to students, while actively engaging them in the curriculum. All students benefit from content enhancements (Schloss, Smith, & Schloss, 2001).

Today, reading informational text is not confined to the printed page. Teachers are currently experimenting with multimedia content (Valenza & Stephens, 2012). For example, students may read a selection of text and then search for information on the Internet about the same topic, participate in a blog, or view a video online. The opportunities to enhance content are endless.

Step Three: Use Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies are processes that students intentionally use to learn information. Gajria, Jitendra, Sood, & Sacks found that systematic instruction in cognitive strategies enhanced the comprehension of expository text (2007). Teachers, therefore, need to ensure that they use instructional methods and strategies to enhance students' comprehension and retention of expository text. Some strategies that help students read, discuss and understand content include self-questioning, group discussion, summarizing, and cognitive mapping (Conley, 2012).

The research has identified three areas in which students should be supported to understand informational text: knowledge of text structures, use of content enhancements and cognitive strategies to aid comprehension. The important message for teachers is not in the "how" to teach expository text, but rather that there is a critical need to teach expository text in order to support the learning of all students.

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THE HIDDEN DEFICIT OF CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES: INTERVENING FOR SOCIAL SKILLS

Kay Hanson, Ph.D.

Introduction

The common perception of Learning Disabilities (LD) is that it is an academic problem. However, for many children with LD there is another, hidden, deficit. Approximately seventy-five percent of students with LD also have inadequate social skills (Elksnin & Elksnin, 2000; Kavale & Forness, 1996). The social skills deficits of childhood actually increase over time (Strain & Odom, 1986), affecting all aspects of life, including jobs, wages, social relations, and self-esteem (Hayes, 1994). McIntyre (2003) defined social skills as "those communication problem-solving, decision making, self-management, and peer relations abilities that allow one to initiate and maintain positive social relationships with others" (p. 2).

Proactive and Reactive Interventions

There are several ways to frame interventions aimed at improving social skills. One is based on when the intervention takes place: instruction before the strategy is used (proactive) or after a social error has occurred (reactive). One example of a reactive intervention is the Social Skills Autopsy (Lavoie, 2005). First, the adult first listens carefully to the child's retelling of the event without judgment or interruption. Then the adult and the child together discuss what alternative strategies might have achieved a more positive outcome. Next the adult begins a 'social story' similar to the one under discussion to give the child the opportunity to replace the unsuccessful strategy with a more appropriate one. The student is encouraged to try out the alternate strategy in a similar situation with a feedback session to follow.

The Social Skills Autopsy includes all the elements of a second way of framing social skills interventions for children with learning disabilities: social/emotional intelligence.

Social/Emotional Intelligence and Social Skills Interventions

Bradberry & Greaves (2009) defined emotional intelligence as the "ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others, and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships." Emotional intelligence affects the way behavior is managed, social situations are navigated, and decisions are made" (p. 17).

Howard Gardner expanded on the concept of intelligence with his multiple intelligences, which included both inter-personal intelligence and intra-personal intelligence. Since then, the concept of social/emotional intelligence has received considerable attention in the field of education, which has adopted the term social-emotional learning (Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Frey, Greenberg, Haynes, Kessler, Schwab-Stone, & Shriver, 1997) because it relates social and emotional skills to classroom learning. Social emotional learning has been defined by Johnson & Johnson (2004) as a "mastery and appropriate use of interpersonal and small-group skills (e.g., recognizing, managing, and appropriately expressing one's emotions)" as well as the "internalization of pro-social attitudes and values needed to achieve goals, solve problems, become emotionally involved in learning and work, and succeed in school and throughout life" (p. 40).

These skills and abilities can be divided into four major areas, broadly defined as self-awareness (using an understanding of one's emotions to successfully manage behavior; self-management (using an understanding of one's emotions and those of others to manage relationships); social awareness (perceiving and understanding other peoples' emotions and perspectives); and relationship management (using one's skills in self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness to conduct successful social interactions).

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Children with LD and social skills problems have issues in all four areas of social competency. For example, they have problems in recognizing, understanding, naming, and regulating their own emotions (self-awareness), regulating their behavior (self-management), recognizing and understanding the emotions of others and anticipate their reactions (social awareness), and working cooperatively and taking other people's perspectives (relationship management).

One intervention that addresses self-control, social awareness, group participation and critical thinking is the Social Decision Making and Social Problem Solving (SDM/SPS) program (Elias, 2004). In the instructional phase, students learn to self-evaluate their feelings and reactions through self-talk. In the application phase students practice, review, and are offered feedback.

Interventions can also come in the form computer-assisted instruction, shifting the learning from auditory centered to visual centered. One such technique is the Personal Problem-Solving Guide that takes children through a series of problem solving steps to develop their social emotional skills (Poedubricky, Brown, Hoover, & Elias, 2000-01).

The impact of poor social/emotional skills across a child's lifetime can be devastating, affecting every aspect of family, work, and feelings of self-worth. It is therefore imperative that children with learning disabilities receive direct interventions on how to manage their feelings and maneuver through social situations successfully.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA

Abiodun T. Adewunmi

Conceptual Framework and Background

Persons with learning disabilities constitute a vast group in the society, but these categories of people have unfortunately been left without services. For instance in Nigeria, it is glaring that persons with learning disabilities have not been considered an important

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category of persons requiring special needs (services) and attention, at least up until the 1980s, as evident in the definition of exceptionalities by Mba (1991), while maintaining that these are by no means all the categories of exceptionalities, but are considered the most prevalent and the most demanding of attention: the hearing-impaired; the visually impaired; the physically handicapped (cripple, etc.); the mentally retarded; the intellectually gifted; the emotionally disturbed; the multiple handicapped; the brain-injured; and the hospital bound.

Antecedent studies showed that special education services for persons with special needs in Nigeria have gone through several phases from the pre-missionary periods when provisions of services to persons with special needs lack recorded history to the missionary era when voluntary organizations mainly religious agencies established a few special centers, notably for the blind and the deaf. Later in the 1950s, some charitable and philanthropic organizations established homes for children with severe physical disabilities or mental retardation aimed at providing home and care rather than formal or informal education. The mid-1970s up to date may be regarded as the post-missionary period with the formal introduction and establishment of special education services and training centers viz-a-viz vocational and rehabilitation centers in the country. The government in the 70s took over all the schools including the schools for the Handicapped through the Universal Primary Education Scheme (UPE). The Federal Government's involvement in Special Education became established at the Third National Development Plan period, followed by a nationwide Broadcast of 1st October, 1974 in which a nucleus of the special education unit was created under the Teacher Training Section of the Federal Ministry of Education. This marked a new era of hope for persons with special needs in Nigeria, and led to the inclusion of Section 8 in the National Policy of Education 1977, revised in 1981 and 2004 respectively. The goals and objectives of the new policy tend towards uniformity, which was envisaged through integration of persons with special needs with the mainstream normal students. Apart from these events, there are other bodies that were involved in the education of special needs in Nigeria, these include the Nigerian Educational Research Council, and the British Council.

Though education of persons with learning disabilities has not been taken seriously in contemporary Nigeria, nonetheless, a progression of practices over the years was designed to integrate general and special education for persons with learning disabilities. Lerner (2000) suggested three placement practices that promote integration for persons with learning disabilities: Mainstreaming, Regular Education Initiative (REI) and Inclusion. The aim of inclusion is to place all children- regardless of the severity of their special needs in the regular education class. This study was therefore conducted to determine the perceptions of teachers towards inclusion of persons with learning disabilities.

Research

The participants were purposively selected from the cluster of secondary school teachers in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State. 100 teachers from ten secondary schools formed the sample population. The researcher used random sampling technique in selecting the schools. The participants were of both male and female gender, and were between the ages of 25 and 59 years. Educational qualifications of the participants varied from National Certificate in Education (NCE) to Ph.D. certificate, professional groups varied from secretary to principal officer. The instrument used for the research was the Inclusive Education Questionnaire (IEQ) developed by the researcher. The IEQ comprised 2 sections: A and B. Section A addressed the participants' demographic characteristics, while Section B consisted of 20 items on inclusive education for persons with learning disabilities, scored on a four-point Likert scale. With Cronbach Alpha Technique, the reliability coefficients of the items were set at 0.67.

Results

The data computed were analyzed with the use of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The variables were analyzed and the important ones selected- the problems and the solutions of inclusive education.

At the end of the sorting, it was discovered that teachers disagreed that regular classroom teachers can do individualized teaching for pupils with learning problems in schools; teacher in regular schools can take care of special needs students; selective teaching of special needs students in the regular class cannot be stigmatizing, and that time, persons and training facilities on ground are adequate for inclusive education in the region. The component solutions to the problems of inclusive education showed that teachers strongly agreed that; screening and assessment centers should be put in each school for a successful implementation of inclusive/resource room program; and that there should be collaborative effort between classroom teachers and special educators in an inclusive setting. Also, the teachers agreed that more special educators should be employed as instructional experts in the country, and that the government should set up a think tank that will enable the nation create and discover appropriate instructional techniques and materials.

Based on the findings of this study, it is clear that there is shortage of facilities for special needs students, while existing ones are operating under pressure, i.e. they are serving purposes below their capacities.

Recommendations

Quality education for persons with learning disabilities can be achieved through the Government employing more special educators as instructional experts in the country, modification of the curriculum in use in schools, frequent and consistent on-the-job training for school teachers in order to acquaint them with adequate knowledge of inclusive education practice, as well as

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modification of instructional materials and techniques in use in schools to meet the current needs. More so, it is imperative that strategies be put in place in order to implement the provisions of the National Policy in Education, and the realization of the objectives of inclusive education.

Suggestion for Future Research

There is need for a similar study to be carried out in regular schools where there are no provisions and facilities for persons with special needs. Also, there is need to replicate this kind of study among parents of persons with special needs viz-a-viz experts handling cases of special needs in both regular and special schools, so as to evaluate both the strengths and shortcomings of placement practices available.

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BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CENTER-BASED EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS PROGRAM: PUTTING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

David M. Sudia, M.Ed.

The issue of inclusion for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities is profound. Students who are identified are served in alternative settings more than any other disability population. Outcomes are worse: 50% of these students drop out of school, and 70% have contact with law enforcement within three years of leaving school (Duncan, 2008). Clearly, a new approach is required to serve these students in a way that increases their success and positive outcomes. Given that this is the most excluded disability group, creating a program that successfully includes these students is paramount.

Behavior RTI Program

The most important defining aspect of our program is that we started with the research base in this field, and then figured out how to mold our site around the best practices that came out of the research. The field has identified a “research-to-practice gap” (Greenwood & Abott, 2001) that we aim to close at our site. We start at Tier I because our students are fully included, so it remains the first intervention level even for our intensive students.

Tier I Research Basis

Our Tier I program is based on research, including work by Lewis, Sugai and Colvin (1998), Lewis, Jones, Horner & Sugai (2010), and Tobin and Sugai (2005). These journal articles, and many of the articles they reference, provide a clear structure for a School-Wide PBIS program, consisting of three tiers.

The first level of supports within the SWPBS process is the establishment of a universal or core social behavior curriculum that applies to all students and staff across all settings...Within the universal system, school teams also review current data collection efforts, develop consistency within those retained, and develop additional systems... (Lewis, et.al., 2010, pg. 85)

Tier I Supports

Critical supports at the Tier I level include a well-designed School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (SWPBIS) program, a method for tracking data, and a team to analyze the data and make ongoing decisions. Our program uses four common expectations posted around the school with site-specific skills listed as appropriate. Teachers provide reinforcing tickets when they observe these behaviors that the students turn in for adult and peer recognition. The staff use cue cards to help students navigate conflicts in a way that keeps the responsibility with the student. [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Once per month, the school behavior team meets to review data, consider adjustments to the school-wide program and consider interventions for students who may be at-risk based on number of referrals. Additionally, this team has developed new systems. This team also provides professional development for the entire staff, including support staff, on how to evaluate behavior functionally and use various behavioral interventions.

Data is tracked universally at Tiers I and II. At Tier I we are most concerned with referrals. Once a student has received more than two referrals at Birch, he/she goes on a watch list for possible interventions. The Behavior Support Team meets with the classroom teacher to determine if any further steps are needed to support the student. This process may result in a referral to a Problem Solving Team and a movement to Tier II.

Tier II Research Basis

Lewis, et. al. also provide direction for Tier II: “The second level of supports, small group or Tier II, is focused on students who are not responding to universal supports but are not displaying intense and chronic behavior problems.” (2010, pg. 85)

Tier II Supports

The Behavior Support Team provides several supports to teachers for students on Tier II. All Tier I interventions continue. Without completing a formal FBA process, the team provides options such as a CICO program, consultation on classroom behavior management strategies, and coaching on teaching social and behavioral expectations and skills within the classroom.

Tier III Research Basis

According to Lewis, et. al, “...both the law and the field recommend the use of FBA-BIP as a matter of best practice when social behavior concerns arise long before the student is removed from school.” (2010)

FBA and BIP Process

If a student continues to receive referrals on Tier II, then the student’s problem solving team may decide to move the student to Tier III. This process is considered if the student receives six or more referrals. At this tier, the behavior support team completes a formal FBA process and then meets to create a behavior support plan that is customized to the student’s environment and needs.

Conclusion

Why have we not mentioned E/BD or special education since the introduction? This is the process we use for all of our students, regardless of their identification. By reframing how we approach our intensive students and ensuring they receive continuous access to all three tiers of support, we have found that support needs vary. At the same time, we have improved outcomes for struggling students without special education identification. That is the true definition of inclusion.

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE GREEK CO-TEACHING MODEL

Dimitris Anastasiou
Tryfon Mavropalias

Introduction

Co-teaching is one way to deliver services to students with disabilities or to other students with special educational needs (SENs) as part of inclusive practices. Co-teaching has been defined as an instructional delivery approach in which general and special education teachers coordinate their efforts and jointly teach special and general education students sharing planning, presentation, and classroom management to promote successful outcomes for their students in inclusive settings (Friend, & Bursuck, 2009; Friend & Cook, 2012).

Austin (2001) and Walter-Thomas (1997) provided evidence that most co-teachers valued collaborative teaching and co-teaching-based methods. However, general education co-teachers perceived that they did more than their special education partners in inclusive classroom. Also, co-teachers considered collaborative practices, preparations, and supports less valuable in practice than in theory (Austin, 2001).

The Greek co-teaching model called “parallel support” was first applied in Greek elementary schools after the enactment of Law 2817/2000. The current Greek law of special education (Law 3699/2008) states that students with SENs can attend the general classroom with parallel support by SETs, when required by the nature of SENs (in terms of kind and degree of needs).

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of the co-teachers about the model of parallel support, as implemented in Greece. The main three research questions of the study are: (a) How do teachers perceive the model of parallel support? (b) What is the role and responsibilities of teachers in the model? (c) What are the problems associated with the model?

Method

Participants and Semi-Structured Interviews. Individual interviews with six pairs of co-teachers and two principals (14 participants in total) were used to explore their perceptions about co-teachers' needs, roles and responsibilities.

Data Analysis Procedure. The data were organized into 28 codes, then grouped into 12 coding categories and finally into 5 themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The emerged five themes were as follows: a) roles and responsibilities in the PS model, b) collaborating issues, c) academic methods and support, d) social support, and e) suggestions.

Findings

(a) *Perception of the parallel support (PS) model.* Of the twelve co-teachers, 9 teachers perceived the PS model as a way of supporting a child with SENs in the general classroom: “Parallel support is about supporting children with SENs with the assistance of a second teacher in general classroom” (GET/M4). “In the PS, the child is the focus of attention of two teachers trying to achieve common goals” (SET/W9). “PS is about helping children by providing individualized teaching in general classroom” (Principal/W7).

Six participants evaluated the model as important and necessary to positively impact the child (6 comments) and family (5 comments). Seven teachers and principals also reported that they deliver individualized instructional program.

b) *The role of teachers.* Four special education teachers reported that their role is to support the child in the general classroom: “I'm the teacher who helps the child to remain in a mainstream school” (SET/W/12). Also, participants stated that the role of special education teacher is complementary (3 comments) but difficult (2 comments): “My role is complementary to general teaching. I have to keep the child on task” (SET/W/13). “I don't have a clear role within the program of PS” (GET /W1).

(c) *Problems related to the implementation of PS.* Seven teachers and two principals reported that cooperation with the collaborating teacher in the classroom is problematic: “Unfortunately, there is no cooperation. The other teacher for me is like non-existent there” (SET/W/13). “Our cooperation has to do with formal issues but it is not substantive” (GET/W4). “I would expect both teachers to collaborate better when working with children. I'm not pleased” (Principal/W8).

Also, teachers reported that there is not adequate administrative support for the successful implementation of PS by school counselors, and interdisciplinary teams such as the Centers for Diagnosis, Differentiated Diagnosis and Support (KEDDY) (8 comments). Moreover, the training of co-teachers in co-teaching was deemed to be inadequate or non-existent (14 comments from all the participants): “All teachers in the school should be trained on the parallel support” (GET/W/2). Additionally, participants evaluated that the lack of school infrastructure in terms of: a) special educational materials (e.g., enlarged books for a child with visual problems): “Actually, I help a child with visual problems with material that I buy myself. This is the job of the school” (SET/W13), and b) small classroom space (4 comments): “We definitely need more room and two desks; so both teachers are able to work more easily” (GET/W4). Finally, teachers expressed concerns about their delayed hiring (5 comments) and low salaries of

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co-teachers (3 comments) that hinder an effective implementation of PS: “We should be hired in September, not two months after school started. We should be paid better” (SET/W/10).

Discussion

The parallel support model, which is applied in practice in Greece, seems to be closer to what the literature has described as a model of “One Teach, One Assist” (Friend, & Bursuck, 2009; Friend & Cook, 2012). In most cases, general education teacher takes the lead role and the special education teacher is the assistant who usually teaches or supports one child, and rarely two children (mostly in lower-secondary schools), within the general classroom.

The most important challenges that co-teachers face are related to the collaborating everyday practice, the lack of specific training, and the inadequate administrative support. Finally, some co-teachers seem not to have a clear picture about their role and responsibilities.

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THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION REFORM ON SPECIAL EDUCATION INCLUSION POLICY IN QATAR

**Brenda B. Lazarus
Asma M. Al Attiyah**

The Impact of Education Reform on Special Education Inclusion Policy in Qatar

This paper will explore special education policy development in Qatar during a twelve-year period of rapid development and education reform from 200 to 2012. The topics include the impact of the reform efforts on services for students with special needs, recommendations for continuing development of policies, and the efforts to prepare professionals to work with individuals with disabilities.

Many countries are undergoing education reform. This is particularly true in the developing world. It is important that students with special needs are not left out of reform efforts and that they are included with their typically developing peers to the maximum extent possible. The education of students with special needs should not be an afterthought; rather it should be an important focus from the very beginning.

Teachers in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have traditionally been prepared as content specialists in their academic fields. This predominant academic emphasis has diminished the amount of time and effort given to instructional methods and the kinds of teacher education commonly practiced in many western countries. Among these instructional methods in the West are methods that facilitate the learning of all students in schools with a diverse student body. Teaching in the 21st Century requires that educators be prepared to be problem solvers and to work cooperatively teams, as well as to have a deep knowledge of their subject matter. This paper describes the experience of one Middle East and North African country that has twelve years of experience in education reform that has had outreach to students in a diverse student body; from this example there are lessons to be shared.

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Background

Since 1995, the Emir of Qatar, Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, has led the country on a course of significant economic and social development. His reforms have positioned the country to be a leader in education reform in the Middle East by accomplishing a number of changes to Qatar's kindergarten through grade 12 (Kindergarten–12) and higher education systems.. This study examines the relationship of these reforms to the development of special education policy in Qatar.

In 2001, the Emir commissioned the RAND Corporation to help redesign the country's kindergarten–12 education system by conducting an in-depth study of the education sector. The RAND Corporation recommended that Qatar institute a comprehensive education reform with a standards-based education system at its core (Brewer, et al., 2007). In 2002, implementation of the reform initiative, entitled Education for a New Era (ENE) began and the Supreme Education Council (SEC) was established to lead the reform (Zellman, et al., 2009). The SEC was designed to supplant the traditional Ministry of Education over the years as Ministry schools were converted to independent schools with their own autonomy, governed by appointed advisory boards from the community.

Special education was part of this initiative. The Supreme Education Council (SEC) gave two administrative bodies the direct responsibility for enacting policies and developing a plan for students with disabilities. These bodies were the Education Institute and the Additional Educational Support Needs (AESN) department. The AESN was created to assist the schools in the use of best-practice teaching strategies to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the independent schools. "Additional educational support needs" was the term adopted for identifying students with disabilities and others with special needs who are attending the independent schools. All services and supports for students with AESN were to be provided in the general classroom (SEC, 2009).

Qatar was a signatory to the *Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD)* in 2007 at the United Nations. The right to an education for all children in inclusive settings came to the forefront after this development. By signing the Convention, each signatory agreed to protect and enforce the rights of individuals with disabilities to be given a learning experience commensurate to the general student population and to facilitate these special needs students their rights to full participation in society.

The Education Institute has adopted the response to intervention (RTI) model for students with disabilities. This model is based on research and is used to design and support follow-up plans (RTI Action Network, 2011). The components of an RTI model generally include screening of children, progress monitoring, and a multi-level prevention system. These are all employed in the general education classroom (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2011).

Recommendations

We recommend the implementation of a comprehensive model of education. Such a model asks the classroom teacher to collaborate with specialists when providing support because this facilitates meeting the child's needs in an expedited manner. An approach that uses the talents of teachers working with specialists helps maximize the effective outreach to help special needs students. The key is cooperative exchanges back and forth emphasizing specialists' expertise and teachers' experiences. This is a powerful combination that saves times when drafting a plan for a student with special needs. The use of a self-evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of the education model is recommended to monitor the implementation of the reforms.

Schools should promote parent participation in teaching their children and provide parents with the support they need to do this. The school should welcome parents and work closely with them when a child is having difficulty learning. These actions of support confirm to the parents that their point of view is respected and will be taken into consideration.

The reform process in Qatar has been an attempt to integrate an evolving model of inclusionary schools into the larger picture of educational reform. The planners have had to find ways of meeting special education needs in the regular schools even while lacking an adequate number of professionals trained to work with children with special needs. This has led to the creation of special education training interventions and university graduate programs dedicated to the preparation of special education professionals. As this need is being filled, the overarching goal that still remains is the need to establish collaboration across all sectors of the society. This cooperative effort needs to be translated into a societal goal where an atmosphere is developed that supports cooperative efforts to accomplish a shared goal rather than, as previously might have occurred, all worked independently (and sometimes, competitively). Building trust, cooperation, and professional quality in a period of rapid population growth takes time and determination to "stay the course" with the policies that have been developed. In the end, the reward for Qatar's most vulnerable learners will be the gift of better and more productive lives.

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LEARNER DIVERSITY: A SUCCESSFUL BLENDED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING APPROACH FOR QUALITY INCLUSION

**Hugh Clench MEd (Psych), MPA
Brian Smyth King, MEd**

The international inclusion movement has evolved significantly in the decades since the Salamanca Agreement (1994).

Increasingly more and more students with disability are being educated in regular classes in regular schools. This evolving trend has been spurred on by legislative reform internationally (*UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disability, 2006*) and domestically in many countries (*Australian Disability Discrimination Act, Standards for Education, 2005*). It is being further shaped by changing social and community expectations of education, schools and teachers.

A "one size fits all" approach is challenging schools and education systems as the educational outcomes and retention of many students with disability remain significantly below those of other students (*Disability expectations; Investing in a better life, a stronger Australia, Price Waterhouse Coopers 2011* and the *2011 Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability Green Paper, United Kingdom Government*).

Skilling and sustaining regular class teachers to address the diverse learning needs of their students has become a critical focus for many schools and education systems. This paper explores how blended online professional learning in special education developed for teachers and support workers in the United Kingdom has been successfully implemented in many education systems across Australia. The New South Wales (NSW) public education system is Australia's largest education system and is presented as a case study to detail this success.

The Background to the Development of Online Training in England

In 2000 the UK Government funded a network of 13 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Regional Partnerships throughout England. The remit was to promote greater consistency in services and provision for all learners with special educational needs within and across 150 local education authorities. An online training model was developed in one region to achieve this, to be available on a flexible 'just-in-time' basis and to be delivered by local support services normally available to schools. The first course was developed in 2001 and subsequently the online training content and framework has been developed through an iterative process based on user feedback, and has been used across all regions.

Effective Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Research by Hustler et al (2003) and Bluestone et al (2012) has identified the characteristics of effective CPD. These comprise the use of multiple techniques that allow for interaction, and the processing and application of information in the workplace. The online training model incorporates these features.

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How Online Learning has Been Blended with Teacher Practice in New South Wales Public Schools

Online training has been introduced progressively in New South Wales since 2009. It is delivered through a blended learning model in which face to face interaction is mixed with tutored online learning. Online tutors are drawn from those who would normally provide support and advice within and to schools. These include school based executive, specialist or advisory teachers or educational psychologists.

Online tutors are supported by a comprehensive learning management system which enables them to set up online forums and discussion groups, to track the progress of course members, determine criteria for passing the course, and to issue Certificates of Online Completion for formal accreditation.

A small central team supports the regions, tutors and participants with technical support and advice, and works closely with the UK online training company to develop and adapt courses for local use.

Evaluative data is systematically collected from course members, including the use of Goal Attainment Scaling (Kiresuk & Sherman 1968) to assess the extent to which targets for individual children and young people have been achieved as a result of the courses.

All courses are accredited for 20 hours of professional learning with the NSW Institute of Teachers, the State's teacher registration authority.

At the end of 2012 there have been more than 13,353 course completions undertaken by 9,045 participants, representing 10% of the workforce, covering 5 specialist areas. Formal evaluation shows highly significant gains in knowledge and understanding, selection and use of appropriate interventions, and confidence in meeting student needs. Ninety five percent of participants say they would recommend the training to other staff.

Other education jurisdictions in Australia began implementing the training during 2012. Preliminary data indicates very similar results to that already available in NSW. In 2013 the Australian Government will conduct an independent evaluation of the training as part of its national reform of special education.

Discussion

Online resources can be as dry and uninspiring as the textbook, and online learning is often presented in a repetitive format that discourages sustained attention. Merely "putting something online" falls far short of achieving the level of outcome that this medium can support.

The current model demonstrates how online training can be implemented to provide bespoke professional training that is much more flexible, and a potentially cost efficient basis for CPD, if used as part of a package of blended learning which meets the critical success factors outlined in this paper.

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EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING FACILITIES TO FACILITATE KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING IN PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN OYO STATE

**Dr. Theo Ajobiwe,
Dr. E. O Adeniyi,
Olabisi A.O.**

Conceptual Framework and Background

Schools exist for the purpose of teaching and learning. School learning facilities are the materials resources provided for staff and students to optimize their productivity in the teaching and learning process. The realization that the transfer of knowledge from teachers to students does not only take place in the four walls of the classroom, but rather, learning takes place through discovery, exploration, and interaction with the internal and external environment has necessitated the creative and innovative development of teaching and learning facilities.

Facilities management is a collective responsibility of the federal, state, and local government authorities, staff and students of individual schools, and the community where the schools are located. The federal government through the Federal Ministry of Education provides the policies that guide the educational system and oversees the implementation of those policies at the state level. On the other hand, the state government ensures the implementation of the National Policy on Education by providing the enabling environment for effective teaching and learning.

Adedoja (1994) observed that management of learning facilities involves the utilization, inspection and maintenance of learning facilities to accomplish designated objectives. It is the function of top management. For management of learning facilities to be effective, it must seek to produce the required results of improving knowledge and learning. Effective management of learning facilities requires that the principal formulate plans to ensure adequate utilization, supervision, and maintenance of learning facilities. Management of learning facilities in these special schools will be discussed under the following headlines: Utilization of learning facilities, inspection of learning facilities, maintenance of learning facilities, and how it influences knowledge and learning.

According to Ipaye (1996), learning facilities are designed to serve specific purposes which facilitate teaching and learning in various ways such as contributing to the schools instructional effectiveness and financial well-being, improving the cleanliness, orderliness and safety of the school, reduce the operational costs and life cycle cost of the buildings, help staff deal with limited resources by identifying facilities proactively rather than reactively, extend the useful life of buildings, and increase energy efficiency and help the environment.

Consequently, this study looked into how appropriate management and handling of equipment use for educating persons with special needs will help improve what is being taught, and how the proper usage of equipment for teaching persons with special needs enhance their learning.

Research

The study was carried out in Oyo State, Nigeria. This study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised forty students in the schools for persons with special needs in Oyo State. These children were drawn from all the schools for persons with special needs in Oyo State. Through the stratified random sampling technique four (4) schools were selected for the study. Through the same process, ten students (10) were selected for the study. The study was carried out all the schools simultaneously.

A survey questionnaire titled Facility Management Rating Scale (FMRS) was used to collect the relevant data for the study. The researchers used simple percentage in the analysis of the data collected considering the nature of their special needs.

Results

The study revealed that teachers of persons with special needs need to be oriented towards the appropriate awareness and usage of equipment meant for the teaching of these children with special needs. It was also discovered that most schools for persons with special needs are not fully equipped to meet the challenges of this present reality in the area of inclusive education. The respondents agreed that the provision of necessary and adequate materials and equipment provides meaningful and useful teaching experience to persons with special needs. The study also show that effective management of the materials for learning will go a long way in stimulating and also enhance pupils with special needs interest in the whole process of learning.

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The study also shows that a majority of the teachers teaching these children with special needs do not have access to courses that refresh them on the work they are doing and the few people that had the opportunity are not teaching others. Phurutse (2003) is of the opinion that great importance is attached to knowledge and learning for the development of any Nation. Management of school facilities remains an essential factor in the transfer of knowledge from teachers to students most particularly persons with special needs.

Recommendation

Schools generally exist for the purpose of learning and transfer of knowledge and this does not exclude schools for persons with special needs. School facilities should be in top form to be able to achieve the aims and objectives of establishing the schools. Principals, head of schools and school authorities should carryout regular inspection of learning facilities in their schools and make necessary repairs where and when necessary.

The students, teachers and the community should make maximum use of school facilities for the purposes of learning and knowledge. Government should include programs that will include facilities maintenance in their budgets and ensure that the budget is well implemented for it to achieve the reason for which it was meant for.

Lastly, school facilities management should be the collective responsibility of the federal, state, local government authorities, staff and students of the individual schools and the community where the school is located.

Suggestion for Future Research

Learning facilities are designed to serve specific purposes which facilitate teaching and learning, and also contribute to the schools instructional effectiveness. Therefore, there is the need to conduct more researches on those facilities that are relevant to the educational needs of persons with special needs considering the availability of such equipment.

Researches must also be carried out to determine how persons with special needs could be included in the regular school setting using these materials and not causing distractions in the classroom.

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THE IMPACT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON AFFECTIVE DISPOSITIONS OF STUDENT TEACHERS IN NORTHERN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

**Charity A. Andzayi
Abu E Ozegya
Juliana R. Bodang**

Conceptual Framework and Background

The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating uniqueness of each person's rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and community involvement. [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Inclusive education is a process of enhancing the capacity of the education system in any country to reach out to diverse learners. The basis of inclusion is that persons with special needs have a right to the benefits of a full school experience, with needed modifications and supports, alongside their peers without disabilities who receive general education. Today in Nigeria, special educators, parents of students with disabilities, policy-makers and other stakeholders continue to debate the benefits and challenges of this education paradigm (Ajuwon, 2008). Inclusive education was the outcome of the Salamanca statement in 2008 and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO's) emphasizes that regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. p. IX (UNESCO, 1994).

Government's intervention in special education started in 1975. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), (2008) which devotes Section 10 in 2004; 2008 to special education. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) section 10 subsection 95 p.48 outlined the aim and objectives of special education as follows; to give concrete meaning to the equalizing educational opportunities for all children their physical sensory, psychological or emotional disabilities notwithstanding; provide adequate education for all people with special needs in order that they may fully contribute their own quota to the development of the nation; provide opportunities for exceptionally gifted and talented children to develop their talents, natural endowments/traits at their own pace in the interest of the nation's economic and technological development; and design a diversified and appropriate curriculum for all the beneficiaries.

The department of special education and rehabilitation sciences was established in 1980 and as a fully fledged department has witnessed phenomenal growth in its units, namely Visually Impaired (VI), Hearing Impaired (HI) Learning Disabilities (LD) Teaching Subjects and Rehabilitation Sciences. It now awards diploma, post graduate; master and Ph.D. degree certificates to qualified graduates. The attitudes to include all students in the regular public schools and classrooms of both regular teachers and special educators (Stoler, 1992; Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman, & Schatma, 1993; Snyder, 1999; Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001) have been documented in the policy. However, in the context of Nigeria, much of the debate regarding inclusive education has remained theoretical and speculative; yet, we know that teacher attitude is one of the most important variables in determining the success of innovative programmes in special education (Larrivee & Cook, 1979; Stoler, 1992).

The success of inclusive education in any context depends to a large extent on student teachers' preparation as they are essential components to ensure the quality of students' inclusion in the school environment. Teachers interact directly with the students' and play a crucial role in determining students' experiences in the classroom on a daily basis. Special education curriculum at the University was deliberately planned to develop affective domain skills. The affective dispositions have to do with the manner in which the teacher and students deal with issues emotionally, such as attitude, empathy, compassion, and appreciation of cultural diversity (Banks, 1977). The special education specialist requires skill of empathy and the virtue of compassion, that is, grief, suffering together with others, being sympathetic towards the feelings of others. The cultural diversity of individual persons with special needs should be considered as they all come from different cultures to meet and relate freely for the development of each other. The teacher should note gender issues for access to education as their own gender could influence classroom practices as females seem to be generally considered as more emotional (Fagbemiye, 1997).

Results

The study was evaluative in nature and used the survey and causal comparative design with first and final year students using a sample of 200, 100 year 1 and 100 year 4 with 50 males in year one and 4 each and 50 females in year one and four respectively drawn to determine Empathy; Compassion; Appreciation of Cultural diversity and Gender;. The overall reliability of 0.89 was obtained. The descriptive method was used to answer the three questions, the researcher settled for. The Likert scale of Students' Teacher Climate Rating Scale (STCRS) of mean, standard deviation and percentage were answered using descriptive statistics and t-test for independent sample was used for analysis. These three components using year 4 exhibited high level of empathy, compassion and appreciation of cultural diversity. In addition, t-test was run and it was found that there was significant difference between year 1 and year 4 student teachers as year 4 student teachers demonstrated high level in the three components. There was significant gender difference between the mean scores of year 4 students in their affective disposition for empathy, compassion and appreciation of cultural diversity too.

The findings also revealed similar result of qualitative data that the curriculum develops high dispositions in empathy which include joy, sorrow, mood, concern, and understanding of emotions of others. There was high dispositions to compassion, which has to do with the ability to show concern when others are troubled, upset, in difficulties, moved when others are sad, suffering and feel pains when others suffer. High dispositions to appreciation for cultural diversity include respect irrespective of social status, ethnicity, discrimination against students, and purposeful interaction across diverse groups.

The Likert scale questions seemed to support higher dispositions of year IV student teachers which is an indicator that the special education curriculum has significant impact on affective disposition of year 4 students in the areas of empathy, compassion and appreciation to cultural diversity with many crucial issues to address as regard student teacher education. Available literature and findings from this study revealed that special education policies in Nigeria are geared towards meeting the requirement for student teacher educational needs towards the education of persons with special needs. Existing Policy of Government and theory must meet practice through implementation of legislations, occupations required for production/services, funding in terms of infrastructures, delivery packaged processes, equipment and materials, training institutions, advocacy groups, e.g., parental involvement so successful, implementation of inclusive education.

Recommendations

Curriculum implementers that are in government must ensure full implementation of special education curriculum, so as to enhance the success of student teacher education. This will help to provide high quality training programs for access to available opportunities in order to ensure adequate disposition of the student teachers for positive attitude and commitment to education of individuals with special needs.

Suggestions for Further Studies

There is the need for research involving other affective variables of affective disposition of student teacher dispositions to special education curriculum. A longitudinal study of year I should be followed up through final year 4 so as to further monitor the trend of their affective dispositions. Dispositions to respect for individual Human rights should also be researched into. There is the need to extend this study to other geographical zones of Nigeria and the nation at large in order to compare student teachers affective dispositions for determining the impacts of inclusion of persons with special education in Nigeria.

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CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING IN THE 21ST CENTURY INCLUSION CLASSROOM

**Bridgie A Ford
Denise H. Stuart
Shernavaz Vakil**

Introduction

Within the United States the legislative emphasis on academic preparedness and rigor for all students including those receiving special education services has undergone a paradigm shift. While the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 does not specifically use the term “inclusion”, it indicates that to the maximum extent appropriate, the least restrictive environment for most children with disabilities is within the general education setting with their peers unless the severity level of the disability makes this impossible. Despite legal mandates under the IDEA (2004) and other federal mandates including No Child Left Behind and more recent, Race to the Top Initiative to enhance the academic curriculum for all learners, productive schooling remains fraught with challenges and stress for individuals with disabilities particularly for those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds (Ford, 2011). The disconnect between teachers who are primarily white and an increasingly CLD population of students deepens the problems of effective services (Gay, 2010). This dissonance often results in the disproportionate representation of CLD (e.g., ethnic minorities) in special education, academic failure and lower expectations (Sorrells, Rieth & Sindelar, 2004).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

For varied reasons teachers often do not recognize or acknowledge the impact of diversity in their interactions with CLD students. While diversity itself is not a problem, the potential cultural mismatch between teachers and CLD students is an issue (Dray & Wisneski, 2011). Culturally responsive pedagogy enhances the learning experiences of CLD students by focusing on their cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and performance styles. Teachers are required to move beyond superficial approaches such as simply celebrating holidays of cultures to infusing culturally relevant practices in the classroom. They must learn and respect the cultures represented in their classrooms and translate this knowledge into deliberate, planned instructional practice (Gay, 2010). Culturally responsive pedagogy for children with special needs is perhaps more critical due to the dissonance between their CLD background and the culture of the school they attend. These incompatibilities can impact the assessment results and curriculum of students from CLD backgrounds who may be disproportionately represented in special education. Not only can standardized tests be culturally biased, but work requested by teachers may limit the skills the CLD student can demonstrate (Cartledge, Gardner & Ford, 2009). Rather, teachers should be cognizant of the differences between disabilities and cultural/linguistic differences to make informed instructional decisions (Hoover, 2012).

Many behaviors displayed by the CLD child in the classroom are often misinterpreted as behavior problems rather than cultural differences in responses, especially among African American males. Irrespective of whether they are in special education or general education, CLD students are consistently facing academic failures, suspensions, dropouts and disproportionate representation in special education (Sorrells et al, 2004). Cultural competence begins with a willingness to understand, accept and implement the CLD student in the classroom. The first step requires of teachers an awareness of their own culture and expectations and how they differ from those of CLD students in their classroom. They must have knowledge of the background of the students and integrate it into their instruction. Critical to effective inclusion of the CLD student in the classroom is an understanding of CLD students learning styles taking into account both their disability and cultural and linguistic differences (Gay, 2002).

Culturally Responsive Strategies in the Inclusive Classroom

According to Hoover (2012) to maintain cultural integrity in the classroom, guidelines determined by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence should form the framework of instruction. They include 1) functional language in the classroom to promote academic competence, 2) home community partnerships to optimize contextual learning, 3) cooperative learning, 4) verbal interactions and communications which encourage academic/instructional conversation and 5) a challenging curriculum which holds everyone to high expectations

CLD teachers connect new learning to prior knowledge and experiences of their CLD students (Ladson-Billings 2009; Ford, 2011). New instruction is supported through various delivery modes including modeling, demonstration and visual representation rather than lecture. Additionally, culturally responsive teachers build positive relationships with students and families by recognizing the central role culture plays, especially in literacy. Recognizing the importance culture in learning, culturally responsive teachers connect with learners using their own experiences to scaffold instruction, allow for verbal interaction and discussion to promote understanding of key concepts (Klinger & Gonzalez, 2009). The challenge for teachers is to teach content through the cultural lens (vignettes, scenarios, examples) which enhances understanding of principles, concepts, values, ideals and generalizations behind the facts (Gay, 2010).

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The need for effective communication between schools and families for children in special education cannot be overstated as they progress through the assessment, IEP and instruction process. Together they should plan a consistent process to share information. When parents and teachers engage and collaborate they learn from each other and enhance student performance (Cartledge et.al, 2009).

Essential to engagement between teachers, families and community is effective communication founded on respect, clarity, integrity, and most important a value for cultural and linguistic differences. Teachers are challenged to establish authentic bonds with culturally and/or linguistically (CLD) students and obtain in-depth knowledge about them by networking within their communities and incorporating relevant experiences and resources into classroom practices (Ford, 2011). Using this paradigm, a *culturally responsive school-community* structure would (a) provide meaningful services which improve educational outcomes for CLD students, (b) utilize significant cultural resources that possess knowledge about multicultural students' experiential backgrounds, and (c) support the resiliency and empowerment of (CLD) learners and their families. Unfortunately, public schools (like society in general) have traditionally viewed CLD communities or economically disadvantaged/disenfranchised communities from a deficit perspective (Ford, 2011).

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THEIR ENTRY INTO THE SOCIETY – MUSIC & DANCE A PATHWAY

For Appreciation, Acceptance, Income Generation and Social Inclusion (A pragmatic Study since over three decades from developing countries point of view)

Saraswathi Devi Tallapragada (Sarah)

Introduction

Music and Dance therapies are being used at Lebenshilfe as an alternative medicine while rehabilitating the mentally handicapped people from children to adults. Music is the Divine art which impacts the human mind whereas Dance is an expressive form of art

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which involves various body movements giving a head to toe experience to both players and the viewers. When people with intellectual disabilities sing or play instruments, it may not sound like music to many ears but yet they steal the show every time by tuning to the hearts of listeners. They catch the attention of people by splendid performances.

Using music and dance as a therapy to mold these people for overall development producing stunning results. The therapists of music and dance are well prepared to train them to work for body-mind connectivity. Mentally challenged people too, get some thoughts, but they can neither realize nor retain. However, music provides them a sense of joy, activates their damaged brains and ultimately, touches their souls which helps them finally emerging into God. Lebenshilfe works based on this belief and hence introduces music, both vocal as well as instrumental, as a therapy for training these people for a life with reasonable quality and human dignity. To achieve this goal, clear thinking on choice of music is important. Active music helps people having a mild type of retardation, and passive music suits people with aggression. A wrong choice leads to disturbance physically and mentally, causing severe behavior disorders.

Planning is essential. Basic thinking of what kind of music, how to organize, which type helps which child, and how much time for application is required etc. are needed to be well planned; otherwise the outcome will not be constructive. Each child requires separate tune and rhythm for tuning their minds towards positive development. Music therapy plays an awesome role and introducing positive results when applied on mentally challenged people of all ages, irrespective of the level of retardation (from severe to mild). Many fail to make an expression how they enjoy, but most of them give expressions by gestures. The therapist must be smart to find out if the applied sound or song is suitable for that particular student. Similarly, dance is an effective tool and helps the retarded to channel the extra energy and to drive away the accumulated negative feelings connected with behavior disorders, as well as sex-related problems. Indian Classical Music has healing effects. This was mentioned even in the 'VEDAS', which Indians consider as an authoritative statement. "Indian Ragas produce invaluable sound waves. Listening to these sound waves work wonders and has the power to impact the whole human body if they are properly tuned and listened to without disturbing original rhythmic sound waves. Many Saints and Musicologists experimented on this subject and proved that the sound waves bring an impact on neurological system. The human body is but an inner universe which responds to physical and neural communication. Music, delivered in a calibrated dosage evokes a neural response". Dr T.V.Sairam, renowned Indian author of several books, including *Medicinal Music*.

Dance as a Therapy

Most of the mentally retarded having aberrant behavior problems have no self control. Some have limited awareness whereas many are not aware of their self. To my experience, they are good in acquiring self- help and other required skills. They pay a lot of interest in dancing and give movements in a rhythmic way for any kind of music or movie songs no matter with no or less communication skills. Once they are trained to associate and adjust their movements, including the irregular gestures, with a tuning to the instrumental play, sure behavior disorders come under control. *Music and Rhythm* help greatly to assess the level of development in the areas of perception, reception and retention. Music, playing musical instruments and dance therapies are producing amazing results. They bring social recognition and help to become socially fit in the society.

Dance therapy helps to strengthen the small and large muscles which produce accurate results if coordinated with each other. Children learn about their body and its position in the space through dance therapy. Large motor skills are used for walking, running, kicking, hopping, throwing, catching, jumping, climbing, pulling, pushing, balancing, carrying etc. Small motor skills help to move the wrist, hands, fingers etc. Physical growth is the foundation for all the other areas of development, and dance provides necessary physical growth besides expression of ones feelings.

The WHO defines 'Health' as 'a state of physical, mental and social well-being'. Tiger Dance was developed basing on this belief to deal with the physical body, vital movements, mental thoughts, intellectual convictions and emotional feelings. "Through the steps using legs and feet, and karanas using hands and fingers, the physical body is brought into a graceful relationship to the cultural-environment-learning how to move, to talk ,to sit, carry oneself with grace and dignity. Through the Bhavas (inner feelings) the emotions are engaged and channeled." ('A Yoga of Indian Classical Dance: The Yogini's Mirror'. Written by Dr Roxanne Kamayani Gupta, PhD, USA).

Tiger Dance Therapy

Tiger Dance Therapy is a new conceptual and therapeutic innovation developed to drive the mentally retarded with aberrant and other behavior disorders towards overall development. Tiger Dance found to be an effective therapy to help children gain emotional control and as an outlet for accumulated aggression, tension, stress and other such feelings besides physical and mental health promotion leading to overall development. As a significant therapy activity, it creates relationship between the mentally retarded and the society through tiger dance presentations on various festive occasions promoting social recognition.

As tiger dancers they receive appreciation, acceptance and social recognition from the viewers that encircle them while dancing, besides income generation. During this dance their feet and hands (palms) touch the ground (sensorial experience through touch) and ears are tuned to the drum beat (sensorial experience through hearing), eyes are pointed to the colorful attire (sensorial experience through vision) and as a result the minute nerves located in the finger tips, ear drums, and eyes connected to the brain receives enough pressure to activate the brain. This works on nervous system providing massage to finger tips and four Paws. It helps for concentration promotion also.

Benefits are multifarious:

Psychological Aspect. (a) promotes concentration, (b) increases power of attention (c) develops observational skills, (d) strengthens expression skills, and (e) develops reasoning.

Physiological Aspect. (a) provides body concept, (b) develops fine and gross motor activity, leading to best loco motor function, (c) promotes excellent body balance, and (d) strengthens both upper and lower limbs. Even the minute muscles and nerves are strengthened by certain postures like picking up currency note with the eye lids and lips.

Social Aspect. (a) promotes sociability as a group activity, (b) increases a sense of unity (c) promotes a sense of urge for friendship, and (d) gains societies' appreciation and recognition.

Health-Promotional Aspect. (a) regulates all most all the systems of the body, (b) digestive system (c) respiratory system (d) excretory system, and (d) circulatory system

Conclusion

Helps crossing the barriers attain self-confidence achieve recognition, respect, social integration earn livelihood with a feeling 'Yes I Can Do' and 'I am no lesser than anybody.'

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INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN SAUDI ARABIA

Ghaleb Alnahdi

Introduction

The first special education initiatives in Saudi Arabia were implemented during the end of the 1950s. Nevertheless, one of the turning points in special education history in Saudi Arabia occurred in the late 1990s when the Ministry of Education started integrating students with disabilities into regular schools by designating special classes in a number of schools to be used for students with disabilities.

The first institute for students with intellectual disabilities opened in the early 1970s, about ten years after special education services were launched in Saudi Arabia (Althabet, 2002). In the late 1990s, when the Ministry of Education started integrating students with disabilities into regular schools, students with intellectual disabilities constituted the majority of students who benefited from this change compared to students with other disabilities (Al-Ajmi, 2006). Once special education services for students with intellectual disabilities began to be offered, 100 students enrolled in the institutes that opened in the early 1970s; fifteen years later, in the mid-1980s, there were 827 students enrolled in institutes for students with intellectual disabilities in the entire country (Directorate General of Special Education [DGSE], 1981, as cited in Althabet, 2002).

By 2008, there were 11 institutes and 718 programs for students with intellectual disabilities all over the country, with 1,244 students studying in 170 classes in institutes. Meanwhile, 11,805 students studied in 2,307 classes in regular schools (Directorate

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General of Special Education in Saudi Arabia [DGSE], 2008). During the same year, 2,272 teachers were working in programs or institutes for students with intellectual disabilities (DGSE, 2008).

Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia provides two educational options for students with intellectual disabilities, institutions and mainstreamed schooling (Al-Mousa, 2010). In institutional schools, students with intellectual disabilities study in specialized institutes based on their disabilities. Students in this environment are separated from all other students, except students with intellectual disabilities. Currently, this option is the last choice for students with intellectual disabilities, and it is mostly for students with severe disabilities, multiple disabilities, or autism. The other schooling option is "mainstreaming programs", a term used by Al-Mousa (2010) in his book, *The Experience of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Mainstreaming Students with Special Educational Needs in Public Schools*, to refer to special education programs in regular education schools in Saudi Arabia. He defines these programs as including, "self-contained classroom programs, resource room programs, itinerant teacher programs, teacher-consultant programs, and follow-up programs" (p. 17). For students with intellectual disabilities, only self-contained classroom programs are available in mainstreaming programs, which this researcher refers to as "special education programs" in the current paper.

Research

The data for this study were collected by the researcher during visits to eight special education programs included in regular schools; seven of them are within elementary schools and one within high school. Also, two special education institutes for students with intellectual disabilities were visited. Data were collected by the researcher during these visits and through observations from nine years of teaching as special education teacher. In addition, data from observations were checked later by three interviews with teachers who are working in special education programs for students with intellectual disabilities.

Results

Several themes emerged from the collected data. Three of these themes, that summarize the main issues, are discussed in this paper because of their direct relation to including students with intellectual disabilities in regular schools.

Partially Included

First, the paper examines criticism of the current situation of the inclusion aspect in special education programs for students with intellectual disabilities. Students with intellectual disabilities are namely included in public schools, but in practice there are no integrated activities with other students. They spend the school day in separate classes (self contained classrooms). A special education teacher said that "what is happening in these schools is not inclusion" and another special education teacher also said that "Even in the breaks [when students have their breakfast].... Our students [students with intellectual disabilities] stay together without any interaction with others".

From the researcher's experience as a special education teacher for nine years, one of the main difficulties of integrating and including students with intellectual disabilities in with their peers with no disabilities is that regular teachers often do not welcome any initiative that will include students with intellectual disabilities with their students. Regular teachers usually use the fact that special education teachers get paid 30% more than other teachers to claim that students with disabilities are the responsibilities of special education teachers only.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Applications

The second problem, or theme, is IEP applications in special education programs. Teachers in special education programs for students with intellectual disabilities have to have an IEP for each student. Normally the self contained classroom contains eight to fifteen students. Due to the difficulties teachers face creating around ten IEPs, they divide students into two levels based on their abilities and create two IEPs and make copies for each student. This practice shows that there are misconceptions regarding the idea behind the IEP. When copies of one IEP are made for other students, it is not an IEP anymore. Teachers who were interviewed said that this is the only way that IEPs could be done, and teachers should not be blamed for this practice. They believe the Ministry of Education should solve this issue by reducing the number of students in each class or providing assistant teachers to work with special education teachers. "I have 12 studentshow can I work with them individually on their IEP," said one of the teachers.

Special Education Teachers and Regular Teachers

Another issue is special education teachers' relations with regular teachers, generally speaking. In all visited programs special education teachers' offices are in separate areas from other teachers. This kind of practice emphasizes segregation more than inclusion. Special education teachers need to be included first, and then the inclusion of students with disabilities will follow.

Recommendations and Conclusion

There are three main issues the researcher noticed need to be considered in order to take inclusion students with intellectual disabilities to the next level. The absence of any kind placement besides self-contained classrooms, IEP applications in special education programs, and special education teachers' relations with regular teachers.

The first change that needs to take place is to link the 30% additional payment in salary with the specialty (special education degree) instead of as reward for working with students with disabilities. For instance, if a special education teacher works in any other administrative position, he should still get the 30% as a special education specialist. This change might help encourage regular teachers to lend a hand to students with intellectual disabilities when they are needed, especially after knowing that the extra payment is for the specialty and not for working with students with disabilities.

Also, the ministry of education needs to make it clear that students with intellectual disabilities are the responsibility of all teachers in the school, and regular teacher have to help in making the school environment a supportive place for inclusion. This can be accomplished through a clear regulation that insists on the role of regular teachers in special education programs. Also, this kind of regulation will help to take special education programs to the next level, where students with intellectual disabilities could have the chance to be in a regular classroom.

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SPECIAL EDUCATORS IN TANZANIA: PROJECT RESULTS ON ACQUIRED SKILLS TO DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION

Laura M. Frey, Ph.D.

A national teacher shortage in Tanzania contributes to the challenge of access to post-secondary education. Abosi (2007) wrote that students with disabilities across Africa have not been given proper planning organization orientation. Teacher training and recruitment is critical to effective special education instruction in Africa. Sun (2007) reported that children with special needs, regardless of disability, improved their likelihood for post-school independence as a result of increased participation in the general education setting. This pilot study on the preparation of pre-service teachers in the field of special education was implemented at Sebastian Kolowa University College (now referred to as Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University; SEKOMU) in Lushoto, Tanzania. This university is a participating site for the IASE International Volunteer Service Project. This study was one of the first to implement at SEKOMU with a focus to directly examine knowledge and skills of special education teacher candidates' in terms of their ability to: (a) analyze needs of students receiving special education, (b) understand the concept of differentiating instruction, and (c) develop a plan and effective classroom instruction.

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Procedures

This investigation was seamlessly integrated into a course *Classroom Administration and Management in Inclusive Classes* taught by project investigators on site at SEKOMU. The investigators as course instructors, sought to develop participants' capabilities in organizing classroom practices for effective instruction. This included dissemination of knowledge on inclusive education and differentiated instructional practices for students who receive special education services.

The course instructors invited to teach this course through the IASE International Volunteer Service Project, worked with the SEKOMU administration to align all components to meet standards established by Tumania University. The investigation participants were a convenience sample of students in a class taught by the authors. Throughout the course, a total of 136 students received instruction and were present on the day of the summative course assessment. Fifty-seven percent of the course participants were male and 43% were female. Each participant received a coursepack to support provided instruction on effective teaching practices.

Course participants were engaged in discussion on the definition of disability. They completed an introduction to differentiated instruction, lesson planning, effective classroom practices, and teacher responsibilities. Course participants were provided knowledge of along with examples of the follow strategy structures: (a) KWL, (b) graphic organizers, (c) study guides, (d) notetaking strategies, (e) cognitive strategies, (f) mediated scaffolding, and (g) peer-mediated assignments. The investigators provided instruction for participants to demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics within 13 special education categories, the stages of a lesson plan, concept of a lesson plan objective, and connection to an individual education plan. Course participants were involved in guided practice activities to identify and explain strategy accommodations to student needs through provided profiles of students with learning differences and challenges in the areas of (a) reading, (b) math, (c) behavior management, (d) language and written expression, (e) communication skills, (f) independent living, and (g) motor skills.

Summative Assessment Results

Overall, course participants met investigators' goal and demonstrated 85% accuracy or above on course assessments. Summative course evaluation components were designed to assess participants' knowledge to review learning needs in profiles of students receiving special education services. Course participants demonstrated mastery knowledge in reviewing lesson plan objectives and determining acceptable learning strategies to meet students' needs.

Course Portfolio

Course participants' submitted a professional portfolio assignment, earning an average of 49.6 out of 50 portfolio points with 81% demonstrating 100% accuracy. Two course portfolio components were specifically directed at knowledge and skills of lesson plans and differentiated instruction. Ninety-two percent of course participants received 100% accuracy on a lesson plan worksheet activity. One hundred percent of course participants demonstrated 100% accuracy on a guided worksheet activity on identifying accommodations and differentiating instructions for students with learning differences.

Student Profile Summative Assessment

Results indicate course participants demonstrated knowledge of differentiating instruction and using learning strategies in lesson plans to meet student needs. The mean participant score on the summative course profile assessment activity was +46 out of 50 points for 92% accuracy. Ninety-one percent of the course participants earned a score of 85% accuracy and above. The course profile assessment activity consisted of 6 subcomponent and results are provided to more fully understand participants' post-course knowledge.

The first subcomponent involved reviewing student profiles and identifying 2 key student learning needs for the teacher to address in the classroom; 95% of the course participants demonstrated 100% accuracy. In the second subcomponent, 92% of the course participants demonstrated 100% accuracy when asked to identify 2 key skills the teacher needs to have in order to help the students in the profiles to be successful in the classroom. Course participants demonstrated an average score of 7.8 out of 8 points on this skill. On the third profile assessment subcomponent course participants were provided a lesson plan objective aligned to the student profile and they demonstrated an average of 85% accuracy on identifying the lesson concept and explaining the skill to be learned within the LPO. The mean earned score was 5.10 (out of 6 points); 95% of the participants scored 5 or 6 on this subcomponent.

The fourth profile assessment subcomponent related to identifying strategies to use in class to help the identified students learn the lesson plan skill; 100% of the course participants' demonstrated 100% accuracy. The fifth subcomponent extended this skill and course participants demonstrated an average of 85% accuracy on explaining how to use the previously identified strategies. Course participants earned an average of 17 out of 20 points on this subcomponent. The sixth and final profile assessment subcomponent asked participants to take another look at the student profiles and identify 2 more skills for the teacher to work that would increase student success. Course participants earned an average of 3.8 out of 4 points; 87% demonstrated 100% accuracy on this assessment subcomponent.

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Summary

The pilot project results demonstrate success at SEKOMU for special education teacher candidates. They demonstrated acquired knowledge on inclusive education and differentiated instructional practices for students who receive special education services. Their education contributes positively to special education services as well as teacher shortages in Tanzania.

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ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON PREDICTORS OF SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

Kelechi Uchemadu Lazarus, Ph.D

Nigeria took a bold step as a member of the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in particular to respond to several inclusive education-related international proclamations, declarations and agreements, such as the Salamanca Statement and its accompanying Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994) and The United Nations Disability Convention (2005). In fact, the Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria (2008) stated that Nigeria's concept of inclusive education has been influenced by several global and national normative instruments and frameworks to which she actively subscribes. Thus, in principle it is specified within the broader Universal Basic Education Scheme in The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) National Policy on Education that there should be inclusion of all children with disabilities into regular schools. More so, at the various state levels, inclusive education has also been adopted theoretically as a core aspect of the educational policy. For instance, the Lagos State government through the document of the Lagos State Office for Disability Affairs (LASODA) (2012) stated in Section 28 that all children with disabilities should be included in the school system, regardless of any difficulties or differences:

Every person with disability is entitled to free state education up to tertiary level as long as they have been certified by the office. All schools must be run so that they are accessible to persons with disability and they must have specially trained personnel and facilities that can teach persons with disability. In other words there should be no segregation, the schools should be inclusive. The teaching of Braille, Sign Language must be included in the schools' curriculum. (LASODA, 2012, pp3-4)

Despite these legislations, implementation of inclusive education policy in Nigeria has not fully been realized. Presently, not all the thirty-six states in Nigeria have commenced the implementation proper. Hence, the need to undertake a study into perceptions of administrators (such as principals, vice principals, accountants/bursar, and administrative staff) and teachers on factors that predict successful implementation of inclusive education at the secondary school level for students with learning disabilities.

Researchers have identified some salient predictors of successful implementation of inclusive education. According to Hallahan and Kauffman (2006) five essential factors that lead to effective participation of students with disabilities in regular education are (a) teacher competency and attitude (b) collaborative consultation (c) cooperation in teaching (d) utilization of appropriate teaching strategies such as cooperative learning and peer-mediated instruction and (e) accommodation and adaptation. Similarly, Winter and O'Raw (ICEP Europe) (2010) in conjunction with the 2007-2009 NCSE Consultative Forum identified the following keys to successful inclusive education: visionary leadership, teachers support, beliefs and attitudes, teacher training, teachers'

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needs, teaching assistant, training and expertise, voice of the child that is, those with special educational needs, and accessible and flexible curricula. This study therefore, sought to examine administrators' and teachers' views about factors that contribute to successful implementation of inclusive education for students with learning disabilities in Oyo State, Nigeria.

To elicit information from administrators and teachers, the descriptive survey design of the questionnaire type was used while three hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study. The hypotheses are as follows:

- i. There is no significant difference in the perception of administrators and teachers on teacher training as a predictor of successful implementation of inclusive education for students with learning disabilities.
- ii. There is no significant difference in the perception of administrators and teachers on utilization of effective teaching strategies as a predictor of successful implementation of inclusive education for students with learning disabilities.
- iii. There is no significant difference in the perception of administrators and teachers on collaborative teamwork as a predictor of successful implementation of inclusive education for students with learning disabilities.

The study revealed that administrators and teachers agreed that the three variables namely, teacher training, use of certain teaching strategies and collaborative teamwork are factors that contribute to successful implementation of inclusive education for students with learning disabilities.

The implications of the study border on the need to intensify the training of both regular and special education teachers on the basic elements of inclusive education. The study also has implications for Nigerian government, school administrators and other stakeholders in education. In line with these findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

- For successful implementation of inclusive education, the Nigerian government should embark on professional development in terms of training in-service regular and special education teachers on inclusive education.
- Both regular and special education pre-service teachers should also receive adequate training on inclusive education.
- School administrators should encourage the teachers to employ research-based teaching strategies to teach all students in inclusive education classrooms.
- The usefulness of collaborative teamwork among all teachers, and then among teachers and support staff in the school should be emphasized.

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INCLUSION THROUGH MUSIC IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE SETTING

Sue Carpenter, Ph.D.

Positive Trends toward Inclusion

Over the past 25 years, access and attitudes toward the developmentally and intellectually disabled have changed. In 1987, Willowbrook in Staten Island, the inhumane overcrowded institution, was closed. In 1990, the *Americans for Disability Act* became law, and in 2004, the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, which included directives for “the least restrictive environment,” was passed. In 2008, *The Higher Education Act* authorized colleges to create or expand high-quality inclusive postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities.

The Melissa Reggio Higher Education Program at Kingsborough Community College

Since 2008, the Melissa Reggio Higher Education Program (MRHP) at Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn, NY, has enabled students over the age of 21 who have developmental disabilities to be part of the Kingsborough College community. The MRHP students are involved in coursework, career exploration, socialization, and self-awareness programs. Students, each being supported by a student mentor, audit undergraduate courses specific to their individual interests and proposed career path, including courses in the Department of Tourism and Hospitality, Education, Visual Arts, English and Physical Education.

Influences

Influenced by the work of Dr. Peter Muir, Director of the Institute for Music and Health in Verbank, NY, I have worked for many years with students with disabilities in schools. Muir facilitates many inclusive music programs, including a weekly choir, “Singing Songbirds”. I observed, and later joined, a group of approximately 30 people who come together to sing, regardless of ability or experience. The inclusive choir is made up of family members, including those with autism and developmental disabilities, seniors, musicians and interested members of the community. Practice sessions are tailored to challenge each individual, and each member is respected and of equal importance in a truly inclusive environment.¹

Inclusion in the Music and Movement Education Course

In 2012, as a new faculty member at Kingsborough, and with the Singing Songbirds model in mind, I decided to launch an ongoing program to include MRHP students in the Music and Movement in Education classes that I teach. The 12-week, 2-credit course, meets for two hours a week, and is designed for undergraduate students whose career path is in education. The MRHP students who are enrolled are also interested in music and working with children.

Philosophy and Outreach Principle Applied

The basic goal of the music class is to instill the confidence in the students to enthusiastically lead music and movement activities with children. To be able to do this, students need to have confidence as music makers themselves, **to enjoy** and feel confident singing and dancing. This is a simple idea, but difficult for some to achieve. In the past, many have come across the judgment of others who have criticized them for being “off key,” or told that they “can’t keep a tune.” Out of this climate of judgment, many adults believe they are “not musical” and “can’t sing” (Carpenter, 2009). A different philosophy and approach is, therefore, taken to counteract these ingrained assumptions. This model draws on the music outreach principle based on the work of Dr. John Diamond, M.D., a medical doctor and psychiatrist, who is the leading authority in the field of arts and health² In this system, the main criteria are to give music as a gift to others and to use music as a vehicle for communication and connectivity between people. The specific technical skills are of no importance. As a result of these different criteria, musical skills actually develop rapidly (Garber, 2004). Furthermore, stage fright/performance anxiety is also greatly reduced, as the teacher/musician is thinking of others, and not of him or herself. This approach can be used between teacher and student, student and student, student and family member, and so forth, as exemplified by members of the Singing Songbirds choir.

Outcomes

Students within the Music and Movement in Education course are also encouraged to help each other. It would seem obvious that the undergraduate student teachers would be able to assist and help the MRHP students. However, all the MRHP students who have attended have been enthusiastic and committed to the course, and have become role models in the courses. They have been the first to come forward, and to volunteer to demonstrate a song or a musical game. The roles are then reversed and the “helped” become the “helpers” (West & Garber, 2005).

¹ For further information, visit the Institute’s website: musichealth.net

² For further information on the work of Dr. John Diamond go to: Drjohndiamond.com

Students' Responses

Ongoing analysis of data so far has included questionnaires, interviews, observations, and discussions. An MRHP student commented that it was “really an honor” to be in the class, that he “was made welcome every session,” and that he had “found ways to interact with small kids.” When asked if he had any other comments, he replied, “Did I enjoy myself? I did!” Undergraduates commented that the course would have not been any different if they were not there, as all students were treated equally. Other students suggested that, by including the MRHP students, it gave them an opportunity to immediately put into practice the outreach principle. Another student reported that one MRHP student jokingly commented about being asked to participate in a children’s movement game, a comment she felt she herself might have made – they were in essence the same.

The Future

So, what can we hope for, and aspire to, in another 25 years’ time? Presently, a mere 15% of youth with intellectual disabilities move into postsecondary education. Only a small percentage of professors at Kingsborough include MRHP students in their courses. Inclusive choirs such as Singing Songbirds are rare. In an increasing technological era, the positive personal affect and enthusiasm which students with developmental disabilities often readily display will, I believe, become increasingly important for us to develop, and crucial to building a caring society. Will the very term *inclusion* become obsolete? All educational institutions, classrooms, and teachers will, without skipping a beat, include diverse learners of different ages, intellectual and developmental disabilities. And each student will help the other. Mindell (1995) stated: “College is a place where our capacity to change sociopolitical conditions in which we live is nourished.” I would, therefore, suggest that the vehicle of music is an ideal method of transporting us to a much needed, empathetic and inclusive society.

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THE CURRENT SITUATION OF TRAINING FOR HUMAN RESOURCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION IN HO CHI MINH CITY OF VIETNAM

**Le Thi Minh Ha
Vo Thi My Dung**

Background

In 1991, Vietnam signed the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. Since then the state and the government have issued a series of legal documents guiding the implementation of this commitment: The Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children (1991), the Ordinance on the Disabled (1998), Education Development Strategy of 2001 - 2010, Law No. 51/2010/QH12 for people with disabilities (2010), with reference to the Regulation on Inclusion of Handicapped/Disabled (2006).

To realize the goal of inclusive education for children with disability, teachers play the fundamental role. This article is about the training and professional development of special education teachers - the main force of human resource in meeting the learning needs of children with disability in Vietnam.

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The Demand of Human Resource Training in Special Education in Ho Chi Minh City

According to the survey of children with disabilities (CWD) in 8 socio-economic areas of Vietnam in 2005 conducted by the Ministry of Education and Training (2005), the number of children with disabilities aged 0 to 16 years is 914,483 children, of which the number of children aged 0-5 is 67,767; 6-11 years old 332,825 and 12 -16 years old 568,896. Consequently, the demand for teachers of special education is as follows: at early childhood education level: 15,248; primary level: 158,092; secondary level: 227,558.

Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) is one of the biggest cosmopolitan cities in Vietnam. A report from HCMC Department of Education and Training (2011) indicates that there are 5354 children with disability go to special schools and inclusive schools with 2534 and 2808 respectively.

In a study by Nguyen (2012), an investigation of 38 inclusive kindergartens in 9 districts shows that 45.7% teachers attended courses on inclusive education with only 6.8% has special education qualification and 38.9% received 30 hours training. This means more than half (54.3%) of teachers without any training about inclusive education are working with children with special needs. At management level, it is even more inadequate with only 7.9% managers of inclusive schools were trained in special education. "Regulations on Inclusion for the Handicapped/Disabled / " (Attached by Decision No. 23/2006/QĐ-BGD & Training May 22, 2006 of the Minister of Education and Training) states that each inclusive class should have no more than three students with disability of the same type. Therefore, to accommodate for 2808 children, there should be at least 936 teachers to be trained in special and inclusive education.

The study also surveyed the priority the schools set when they plan to recruit teachers of special education in 30 special schools and centers for children with disability. Managers of the schools are required to rank with 1 is the highest priority and 10 is the lowest:

- *1st priority*: 80% of the schools selects 1st priority as follows: 37.5% go for teachers of children with Autism, 25% teachers of children with Language Disorder, 12.5% teachers of children with Hearing Impairment, 12.5% teachers of children with Visual Impairment and 12.5% teachers of children with Intellectual Disability.

- *2nd priority*: There were 60% of schools would recruit teachers as follows: 43.9% of schools would select teachers of children with Language Disorder, 16.7% teachers of children with ADHD, 16.7% teachers to teach children with Emotional/Behavioral, 11.1% of teachers to teach children with Hearing Impairment, 11.1% teachers to teach children with Autism, 11.1% selected teachers to teach children with Physical Disability, 5.5% teachers to teach children with Intellectual Disability and 5.5% teachers of children with Multiple Disabilities.

Current Situation of Training for Teachers of Special Education in Ho Chi Minh City

During the period of 2002-2003, 6 universities of education in Vietnam in turn established the faculty of special education to train teachers of special education. After 3-4 years of completing the course, most of graduates worked in special schools to teach children with disabilities.

Ho Chi Minh City has two institutions that provide training program of special education including University of Education and College of Education. In the period of 2006-2012, there were 909 graduates of university and college level of which 458 were college graduates who would work with preschoolers with special needs and 451 were university graduates who can teach at both early childhood and primary level. In addition, the faculty of special education of Ho Chi Minh City College of Education delivered courses on inclusive education (30 hours) for 1200 students of early childhood education. However, this group of teachers is to work not only in Ho Chi Minh City but they also can work in southern provinces of Vietnam. Consequently, compared to the current demand, there is a lack of number of teachers of special education as well as the competence of the teachers who would work with children with special needs. In the other hand, special schools and parents are in need of short training workshops on knowledge and skills to teach children with autism, language disorder and ADHD but the institutions were unable to deliver in-depth trainings to meet those needs.

Conclusion

There is a discrepancy between the number of children with disability and the number of teachers of special education in Ho Chi Minh City. Training institutions has yet supplied sufficient human resource to cater for this group of children. This is a real challenge for the education for children with disability in HCMC in particular and Vietnam in general.

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AUTISM AWARENESS OF COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS IN TURKEY

Pinar Yasar, M.A.
Kathleen A. Cronin, Ph.D.

As autism awareness is raised all around the world, educating children with autism and their teachers becomes more important because of the effectiveness of early educational interventions for a child with autism. There are different programs for educating children with autism; therefore there should be different teacher training programs to develop highly qualified teachers for this student group. All around the world teachers and pre-service teachers have concerns about their knowledge levels and effectiveness of their teaching strategies on their students (Pasco, 2011). Teachers may have students with autism in every classroom setting. It does not matter whether they teach math, science, art, or physical education. They should be trained and have knowledge about autism, because their knowledge, beliefs, and thoughts affect their teaching activities and approaches in their classrooms. Teachers’ attitudes and understanding about autism is an important factor for the child’s education. Attitudes are shaped by observational learning, parents and peer behaviors, and interactions between past experiences and the person’s environment (Park, Chitiyo, & Choi, 2010).

Teachers’ beliefs and thoughts affect outcomes of students, teachers’ instructional skills, and their activity choices for their class. There are studies which show that teachers’ knowledge about a specific disorder has a massive influence on the teaching process and the children achieving their goals (Siu & Ho, 2010). Teachers’ understanding about the subject they are teaching and their students’ strengths, weaknesses, and disabilities influences students’ achievement levels (Bishop, Brownell, Klinger, Leko, & Galman, 2010). Teachers who believe in students’ achievement are more effective than the teachers who do not support student achievement. If teachers have high expectations, they inspire better performance (Mehring & Dow, 2001). This emphasizes the importance of the educators’ knowledge about autism.

Teachers should know about autism in order to effectively help children with autism. There are not many research studies and surveys conducted on teachers’ attitudes toward autism and students with autism. Park et al. (2010) reviewed some of the research about attitudes of teachers, principals, nonprofessionals, and professionals toward individuals with autism. The purpose of this current study is to learn future teachers’ attitudes and knowledge about autism. In other words, this study’s purpose is a needs assessment to learn more about the autism knowledge of the College of Education students in Turkey.

In Turkey, Colleges of Education do not offer any teacher training programs about autism. Without receiving any special training about autism, what do College of Education students in Turkey know about autism; the educational needs of a child with autism; and how do College of Education students feel about teaching children with autism in their classrooms? These are the main concerns which prompted this study.

This study was a survey study which was conducted in Turkey with College of Education students. Participants’ responses were analyzed to learn about their knowledge, thoughts, and feelings about teaching children with autism. This survey study was conducted in Turkey at Gazi University and Karadeniz Technical University. College of Education students at these universities participated in the study.

Research Design

This is a survey study designed by the author based on the reviewed literature about autism and teachers’ attitudes and importance of education of a child with autism. The survey was created by the author specifically for this study. Participants for this study were randomly selected from among the students in the College of Education at two different universities in Turkey. Two hundred

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seventeen participants were from Gazi University, Ankara; and 334 participants were from Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon for a total of 551 participants. Subjects were eligible to participate in the survey if they were currently enrolled in any program in the College of Education at the two specified universities and were at least 19 years old.

Results

The data from the questionnaire were analyzed with descriptive statistics to determine the mean and standard deviation of the College of Education students' evaluations of the Likert scale rated statements. A five point Likert scale indicated responses from "1-Strongly disagree" to "5-Strongly agree." The survey statements were designed to answer the research questions and provide considerable information on College of Education students' awareness and attitudes about autism.

Results showed that College of Education students in Turkey knew that autism was a developmental disability that can be improved through education, but they were not sure they were able to identify and understand the characteristics of autism. Participants stated they did not receive enough education about autism or knew anybody with autism. However, they were aware of autism and the educational needs of a child with autism. College of Education students in Turkey did not feel they were ready to teach a child with autism.

In summary, College of Education students in Turkey showed their knowledge and understanding about autism is limited. However, they have the basic knowledge. They need to be better educated to use evidence-based practices when teaching students with autism.

Future Research

This study can be expanded to other university, College of Education Programs in Turkey to evaluate program needs in areas of special education and autism. The study can be replicated after the College of Education students receive instruction in ASD to compare students' pre and post training knowledge and awareness about autism which would also evaluate the effectiveness of the college training program.

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LEARNING THROUGH SUN SAND AND SURF: A SOCIAL SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

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Social competence, social skills, and self-concept are factors influencing those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). General and special educators, administrators, parents, and support service personnel agree that identification and intervention for social skill deficits must be a focus of instruction if students with ASD are expected to achieve increased success and independence (Stichter, Randolph, Gage, & Schmidt, 2007). While there is no cure for ASD, early intervention treatments can improve one's academic and social development. Once diagnosed, individuals with ASD can receive school-related interventions such as speech and language therapy, social skills instruction, and/or music therapy that can increase their success in school and community settings.

Children with ASD also have difficulty with sensory processing skills. Sensory processing difficulties result in an inability to correctly organize and interpret stimuli so their responses are likely to be inappropriate and interfere with learning (Stancliff, 1996). Individuals with ASD need experiences to develop social-emotional and sensory processing skills that will enhance their academic success.

In response to the need to further social development and sensory processing skills, a two-day surf camp for students with autism was created and implemented for students with ASD as a school district field trip. The goal of the camp was to improve social development and provide sensory motor activities to students with ASD through surfing.

Learning through Sun Sand and SURF Curriculum

A curriculum for the camp, entitled *Learning through Sun Sand and SURF*, was developed and researched by related service and instructional service personnel, as well as university professors and researchers. The curriculum consists of four components: (1) A Lakeside Pre-camp Family Social, where campers and their families, camp staff, and volunteers meet one another, learn basic surfing safety, and learn to stand and paddle on a surf board; (2) The Surf Camp Group Activities that include yoga, surfing lessons, arts and crafts, a paddle relay, sand castle building, and a beach cookout; (3) *The SURF Social Skills for Camp and School*, where individuals with autism are taught a set of social skills to be used in school as well as at surf camp; and, (4) a Post-camp Family Social, where campers and their families reconvene and receive a copy of a surf camp DVD consisting of pictures and videos.

SURF Skills Development

The *SURF Social Skills for Camp and School* is an important component of the curriculum because of its emphasis on teaching social skills. The acronym, SURF stands for the social skills campers were taught prior to camp and were expected to demonstrate during various camp activities. The SURF steps are: Stay in the group; Use my SEE steps (good body language to represent a pleasant Sound of voice, a pleasant Expression, and maintaining Eye contact); Remember to ask questions; and, Form a friendship. Campers were taught the skills prior to attending camp. While at camp, campers were prompted to use their SURF skills during group activities. At the end of each activity, campers were prompted to use a SURF Skills Self-Monitoring Checklist to rate their social skill performance.

The instructional methodology for teaching each SURF skill lesson is based on the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM), developed at the University Kansas Center for Research on Learning (KU-CRL). Specifically, the SEE steps for good body language were adapted from *The SCORE Skills: Social Skills for Cooperative Groups* (Vernon, Schumaker, & Deshler, 1996). These critical teaching behaviors include: giving advance and post organizers, direct instruction of each skill, demonstration and modeling, practice activities, checks for understanding and teaching to mastery. Video clips of student models, similar to the ages of campers, were developed to depict examples and non-examples of each SURF skill.

Research

The *Parent Perceptions of the Surf Camp Curriculum* (PPSCC) questionnaire was created to determine the effectiveness of the *Learning through Sun, Sand and SURF curriculum*. This questionnaire was designed specifically to measure parent perceptions of their child's social skills in relation to the surf camp curriculum. The questionnaire was administered two weeks prior to camp (pre), immediately following camp (post), and then again two weeks following camp (retention). The last open ended question on each questionnaire was: "How do you believe the surf camp curriculum will impact your child's overall social skills?" (pre); and, "How do you believe the surf camp curriculum impacted your child's overall social skills?" (post and retention).

Results

Prior to attending camp (pre), parents felt that the surf camp curriculum could have positive effects on their child's social skills. One mother felt, "...the social skills activities in the fun and safe setting and environment will help to improve his social skills in a group setting when he doesn't really know a lot of the kids."

Immediately following camp (post), statement themes of positive confidence, engagement, friendship, and interaction emerged. One mother wrote that surf camp was, "...a safe place for him to practice his skills. I think there will be many long term benefits!" Another parent wrote the curriculum, "Helped him to interact and speak up on the group activities."

Two weeks following camp (retention), one parent wrote that the SURF camp curriculum helped her son with learning to, "...take turns and listen to others and follow rules." Another parent wrote, "I saw such a level of cooperation among all the kids. It was amazing to watch. He became more aware of others and more willing to initiate appropriate (and reciprocal) conversation."

Summary and Conclusion

Initial research on the implementation of the *Learning through Sun, Sand, and SURF Curriculum* during a two-day day surf camp for students with ASD resulted in positive outcomes. Specifically, parents reported that their child's social skills had improved based on the camp experience. This may be due in part to explicit instruction of the *SURF Social Skills for Camp and School* that was provided prior to camp, and that campers were expected to self-rate their use of each skill during group activities. While parents reported the social skill benefits they observed as a result of the curriculum, the challenge lies in analyzing and reporting the changes experienced by children with ASD over time. For this reason, the authors of the *Learning through Sun Sand and SURF* plan to use the data obtained through this research to create a measurement tool specific to this curriculum.

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BILINGUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES WITHIN A DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM: QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Paula Hougan M.S.

Dual language programs can be a natural bridge to inclusive services for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students with both limited English proficiency (LEP) and individual education plans (IEP). Dual language (DL) programs integrate native English speaking and English language learning students in the same classroom and provide academic instruction through two languages, one of which is the primary language of each group of students (Lindholm-Leary, 2007). Dual language programs by definition address the language learning needs of LEP students. When the LEP students also have significant special education needs, providing appropriate services becomes a complicated challenge. Current research supports placement in dual language as an appropriate option for LEP students with an IEP.

Research Findings

Thomas and Collier (2010) addressed the following question in their 2009 research in North Carolina. Are dual language classrooms appropriate placements for students with exceptionalities? They state “Based on test scores analyses there is no evidence that students with exceptionalities . . . will be harmed by participating in dual language classes. In fact, given the higher test scores that accompany such participation, a dual language placement for these students may well be more appropriate than a non-dual language class. As always, each student’s case and characteristics must be considered separately but this research finds no reason to exclude these students from dual language programs as a matter of policy.”

Lindholm-Leary (2007) also reports equal outcomes for students in dual language and special education classrooms in California. She compared progress of special education students in dual language with special education students in regular English classrooms. Her findings indicate similar results for both programs. “Dual Language special education students achieve at or above peers in English mainstream classes in English.” She continues “but DL students have bilingual and bi-literacy skills.” LEP students with an IEP will benefit from continued native language development. Ongoing communication with their parents will strengthen the family relationships. Parents are the lifelong advocates for their children and supportive interactions are critical.

Thomas and Collier (2004) in an earlier report “The astounding effectiveness of dual language for all” provide data supporting improved academics for several subgroups of students. They state “overall Reading and Math scores of students in two way dual language education are higher for all students regardless of race/ethnicity, socioeconomic, LEP, or special education status.”

Recommendations

Thomas and Collier (2004) define the following as critical components of dual language programs:

- Minimum of 6 years of bilingual instruction
- Focus on core academic curriculum
- High quality language arts instruction in both languages
- Separation of the two languages with no translation or repeated lessons in the other language
- Use of the non-English language at least 50% of the instructional time
- Use of collaborative and interactive teaching strategies

Within a dual language program students with an IEP will benefit from the consistency over time of bilingual instruction. They will be provided access to the regular curriculum and benefit from high quality instruction. Separation of the two languages and no translation are essential components of a dual language program. This separation provides a cognitive scaffold to help differentiate characteristics of the individual languages. Collaborative and interactive strategies support the authentic contextualized learning of social and academic skills.

In summary students with limited English proficiency and exceptional learning needs may benefit from the enriched environment of a dual language classroom. Research indicates academic progress equal to and in many cases above the regular mainstream classroom. Students will continue to develop bilingual and bi-literacy skills which help to maintain positive family interactions.

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**THE COACHING PARTNERSHIP: PROFESSORS AND MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS
COLLABORATING IN INCLUSIVE AND MULTICULTURAL SETTINGS**

**Shelly Meyers, Ed.D.
Susan Cydis, Ed.D.
Priti D. Haria, Ph.D.**

Conceptual Framework and Background

Educational coaching has been used in schools for almost 100 years (Sailors & Shanklin, 2010). The coaching model itself has evolved but its purposes remain the same: to provide school-wide job-embedded professional development for teachers; to increase students' competencies in subject areas; and to facilitate instructional leadership and collaboration between all school stakeholders (Blamey, Meyer & Walpole, 2008). Most recently, the popularity of the model grew because of wide spread incorporation of Core Curriculum Content Standards to improve student achievement scores and the concept of highly qualified teachers to design and deliver instruction (Campbell & Sweiss, 2010). Their value in the classroom as an educational resource reflects the growing need for experts to work side by side with teachers because of the changes required of teachers to meet the new standards for English/language arts and math (Shidler, 2009).

The Effective Coach

A coach is an expert in subject matter content knowledge. Coaches are able to analyze student assessment data, use the data to help teachers plan and implement methodology and assist them in fine tuning their practice (Blamey, Meyer & Walpole, 2008). In schools, coaches have many roles that include collaborators, trust builders, leaders, communicators, listeners, problem solvers and relationship facilitators (Denton, Swanson & Mathes, 2007).

Instructional Coaching

Coaching is characterized by a triadic relationship between the coach, teachers and students. The focus is student centered as the coach provides individualized, long-term professional development that emphasizes appropriate instruction based on the needs of students (Shidler, 2009). The coach engages in problem solving with the teacher as they analyze students' assessment data together and proceed to design and deliver content reflective of the data (Hornof, 2008). Research supports the notion that coaching increases the teachers' sense of efficacy, which leads to higher student performance (Campbell & Sweiss, 2010). Time spent with coaches in the classroom is a factor in better teacher confidence, increased flexibility when implementing a more differentiated approach to content presentation and higher expectations for self and students (Sailors & Shanklin, 2010). The Coaching Partnership project is an initiative that provides instruction on both specific content and pedagogy, as well as facilitating the implementation of strategies in the classroom, offers more time and resources to schools, while addressing the individual needs of the particular teacher and students (Shidler, 2009). Therefore, the purpose of our study is to collaborate with middle school teachers to integrate Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) and research-based reading and writing strategies into their instructional practice. In turn, the effective teaching strategies should improve students' reading and writing achievement scores.

Method

Participants and Setting

Three female middle school teachers from an urban school district are participating in this study. Forty-six sixth and 22 seventh grade students are in the three teachers' classrooms for language arts/literacy instruction for two periods per day. Three professors from the state college are coaching and collaborating with the middle school teachers to develop effective instructional strategies that enhance middle school students' reading comprehension and writing skills within the context of narrative and expository text.

Procedures

During this yearlong study, the middle school teachers and college professors meet twice or thrice a month after school to plan, discuss and design effective instructional models that integrates Core Curriculum Content Standards and research-based language arts strategies to address students' reading comprehension and genre-specific writing needs. Teachers and coaches match grade level content standards with strategies to most effectively deliver literacy instruction using the required materials provided by the school district. The coaches, then, visit teacher's classrooms to model strategies and co-teach within the context of small groups. Simultaneously, the teachers practice the strategies with the whole-class. Formative reading and writing assessment is collected throughout the study to measure ongoing student progress.

Reading Comprehension Measure

The coaches administered an informal inventory at the beginning of the project. They read a fourth grade level non-fiction reading passage and asked two prediction questions, and five implicit comprehension questions to assess middle-school students' ability to infer information from the text. The coaches allotted two points for each question (zero being no or incorrect response, one point for partial correct response and two points for accurate and correct response). Posttest reading comprehension data will be collected at the end of the study.

Results

Overall, coaches are collecting and analyzing data. However, the initial classroom observation, and student records measure indicated that the students are performing at low level in reading and writing tasks. In addition, the following descriptive statistics for pre-reading comprehension confirms initial analysis. For seventh grade students, the mean score for prediction question is 1.13 and standard deviation (SD) is 0.93, whereas mean score for implicit questions is 6.00 and SD is 2.29. Sixth grade students earned mean score of 1.10 for prediction question and SD is 1.11 and mean score for implicit question is 5.43 and SD is 2.94.

Discussion

Preliminary analysis of reading comprehension measure shows that sixth and seventh grade students found it difficult to fully comprehend fourth grade reading passage. The low mean scores for prediction and implicit questions indicate that it is not easy for students to read between lines or infer responses from the text. Thus, the results indicate that students are not able to meet the requirements of grade level core standards nor can they use prior knowledge to make sense of grade level text. The data indicates that with the introduction of new mandates, CCCS, and demands of high stakes testing, the teachers were having difficulty integrating core standards, strategies and content from reading programs such as Read 180 and Expert 21. The initial observation formed the basis of collaborative process to address the demands of today's academic needs of middle school.

Future Implications

Initial data indicate that it is important for college professors to collaborate with teachers to bridge the gap by developing effective and comprehensive instructional models that integrate CCCS and high mileage strategies (such as summarizing, main idea/details and drawing inferences) that could be used across various content areas. Today's teachers are overwhelmed and continually burdened by implementing new reforms and policies in their classrooms without receiving adequate professional development that helps them to translate research into practice. Thus, there is a need for college professors to reach out to teachers and collaboratively develop effective and efficient instructional models that not only improve students' literacy skills, but also prepare them college.

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MATCHING CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS WITH ART CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR MOTIVATION AND LEARNING

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Motivation is a key predictor of social-emotional adaptation. Mastery motivation is independent and persistent task oriented behavior in the face of a problem or challenge. How much children believe in their capacities to succeed as well as how much they value an activity also influence their mastery motivation (Morgan, Harmon, & Maslin-Cole, 1990). High mastery motivation, self-efficacy, and a subjective experience of well-being and satisfaction with life go hand in hand. The developmental impairments and activity limitations that children with physical disabilities like cerebral palsy experience may compromise their mastery motivation. These children experience more failure and less sense of control, and exhibit lower levels of motivation than their typically developing classmates (Majemer et al, 2010).

Potential of an Art Curriculum for Promoting Mastery Motivation

The nature of art and its more flexible curriculum in public school education as compared with other academic subjects offers time and opportunity for supporting children's development of mastery motivation including children with physical disabilities. To do this for children with physical disabilities requires a great deal of analysis of children's movement, the task and the social and physical environment.

Typically developing children can focus their energies cognitively in planning and thinking through their art productions while their physical participation is often effortless and joyful. Children with physical disabilities struggle with moving and manipulating materials to create art. When we look at modifying curriculum for students with disabilities, the starting point is typically the learning activities designed for their able bodied peers. Adaptations are created so that children with physical disabilities can participate in those learning activities. In some cases, no matter how well an adaptive device fits into the hand of a child with a physical disability or how well the environment is adjusted, the child is still unable to manipulate the art tool or materials in a way that he or she can create art in a way that is personally satisfying, especially when the child has good cognitive function and compares their outcomes to those of their typically developing peers. In addition, some studies of the participation of children with disabilities in general education art classes found that these students were not engaged and participatory in their art class activities. Art teachers in the studies depended on students' paraprofessionals to engage these students in the class art activity. Activities were inadequately adapted for children's engagement as paraprofessionals are not specifically educated to adapt educational activities for students with disabilities. In some cases, the paraprofessional was more engaged than the child and carrying out a great deal of the task (Causton-Theoharis & Burdick, 2008; Quay, 2003). A key problem that teachers have in creating accommodations or curricula to make better use of the educational opportunities provided by art for these students is the time to collaborate with other professionals to understand the disability fully and to create effective accommodations or curricula.

In one public school, an art teacher and an occupational therapist made time to collaborate to explore the needs of 3 third grade students with significant physical disabilities who were students in an inclusive general education class. After exploring how each child was impacted by their particular disability and what accommodations they needed to participate in the general education art curriculum, the teacher and one occupational therapist identified problems and generated questions. These children's movement patterns were more limited in range, were slower, and required more cognitive effort than their peers' movement patterns. They were engaged, but seemed less satisfied with art outcomes. While their able-bodied peers could observe and model their

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participation on peers with similar movement capacities, these children could not as they did not have models of peers with similar movement patterns to theirs. If curricular activities were matched to these students' physical skills and styles, would engagement, satisfaction, and sense of personal agency increase? What would happen if these children with disabilities were given some time to work near and parallel to each other?

What the educators decided to do was to match each child's movement patterns to the painting styles and strokes master artists used and then embed the copying of master artist works into the curriculum for these children. In this way, what is typically considered movement limitations becomes the focal movement pattern needed to create a particular artwork. For example, one child with spastic diplegia worked in the style of pointillism. In this style, art is created through the making of dots in a narrow range of movement and in close proximity to one another. Another child who has strong attentional skills, but whose movements are slow, methodical, and light worked on a work of art in the style of Monet where small, incremental brush strokes are required.

Over the course of 4 months, the children were given instruction about the artist, the style, and taught the concrete skills to create the effects that can be seen in the master artists' work. The art teacher and occupational therapists also taught the students to strategically think and plan as they concretely worked on their painting. Each child was guided to think aloud and to plan how they were going to achieve the effect of the master artist. Paraprofessionals were also included and taught how to facilitate the children's art work in the same way that the occupational therapists and art teacher did. The approach taken is consistent with models of promoting the development of executive function and self-regulation for the development of self-determination (Ylvisaker & Feeney, 2002). Throughout the process, in spite of their physical limitations which also included articulation and speech volume deficits, the children also demonstrated the motivation to learn the skills of sharing their developing work with their classmates and other students within the school. The views of other children, teachers, paraprofessionals, and the children's own parents shifted, as the works of art of these children unfolded. This curricular project positively influenced the thinking about the 2012-13 elementary school art curricular activities for all students as well as influenced how to optimally use the expertise of occupational therapists and paraprofessionals to support the art participation of all children.

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BUILDING BRIDGES FROM CAMPUS TO COMMUNITY

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Building Bridges from Campus to Community

Given the current demographic realities, students who come from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds are the fastest growing student populations in the United States (U.S. Department of Education). These students are at risk for not realizing their full potential because they often underachieve in general education due to the dual challenge of learning English while learning academics. Moreover these students are frequently taught by teachers who are not qualified to meet the academic and language needs of this population.

Since better preparation and accountability are the hallmarks of reform and restructuring in teacher preparation programs, they also support the retention of a well prepared education workforce. According to data cited in *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children* by The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2003), 46 percent of all new teachers leave the profession by the fifth year of teaching. New special educators were 2 1/2 times more likely to leave than new general educators (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). According to Billingsley (2005), novice special education teachers indicate that they are often not prepared for many aspects of their roles, including working with diverse student groups. In an effort to address the need to prepare teachers for the growing diverse student population, this paper will discuss three universities' pre-service teacher licensure programs and how they meet the unique needs of the student populations that their university serves.

Sample Teacher Licensure Programs

District Overview Served by Nevada State College

Clark County School District (CCSD) in Nevada is considered the fifth largest school district in the nation. Over 308,000 students were enrolled during the 2011-12 academic year with the two largest populations being Latino/a (43%) and Caucasian (29%). Approximately 35,000 (10.78%) of the student population are served in special education programs (Nevada Annual Report of Accountability, 2012). Nearly 92,000 (29.67%) of its students are English Language Learners (ELL) and of those, 55,502 are active ELL students, meaning they are not yet fully proficient in English. Spanish is the primary language for 85% of ELL students, however about 150 different languages are spoken in the district.

Nevada State College (NSC) addresses CCSD's need for highly qualified teachers to meet the language and cultural needs of their student body by providing pre-service teachers training on the use of sheltered instructional practices. The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model is a teaching framework that is embedded in all licensure programs at NSC to assure pre-service teachers include effective ELL instruction in their lessons. In addition, all elementary education graduates also earn certification as Teachers of English for Students of Other Languages (TESOL). Special education majors receive a dual license in elementary education and special education as well as the option to add the TESOL endorsement. In an effort to connect theory to practice, NSC has partnered with CCSD to provide TESOL literacy and math methods courses at three elementary schools.

District Overview Served by University of Colorado Denver

Jeffco Public Schools (2012) is the largest school district in Colorado with almost 86,000 students, approximately 12,000 employees supporting 154 schools. While 32.6 percent of students qualified for free and reduced lunch in 2011-12, some pockets within the district are more impacted than others. The majority of the student population is Caucasian (68%) with a Hispanic (23%) cluster of students, impacting some schools more than others. For example, the Asian, Pacific Islander (3%) representation presents some challenges as a single school might support a school population of 21 different languages being spoken. The ethnic representation of other groups averages 1%; other areas of the Denver metro area, positions adjacent to the Jeffco public school district are more impacted by a minority majority of students.

While the students enrolled in the University of Colorado Denver in the Urban Community Teacher Education (UCTE) program tends to be primarily white females, the recruitment of diverse students to support the urban school districts is a focus of the school of education. Equally important is the push to build a curriculum that supports a social justice perspective, acknowledging the needs of diverse communities and second language learners. Since the teacher candidates are different than the student population, the focus in the teacher preparation program is to build an awareness of the communities that are represented.

District Overview Served by College of Mount Saint Joseph

The College of Mount Saint Joseph (MSJ) located in Southwestern (SW) Ohio supports 49 public school districts within four counties (Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren County). According to Ohio's Department of Education (2012) the majority of students in SW Ohio were Caucasian (85.21%). The second largest student population was those students classified as

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economically disadvantaged (31.33%). The third largest student population was those students classified as students with disabilities (14.56%). While English Language Learners (ELL) in SW Ohio makes up only 2.58% of the student population, they are one of the fastest growing student populations. Ohio's Department of Education (2012) reported that the number of ELL in Ohio represents an increase of 182% over the number reported 10 years ago. Historically, districts in SW Ohio that did not make academic yearly progress also did not make the required progress for ELL and students with disabilities (Rosas, in press).

In an effort to support the need for highly qualified teachers who can effectively serve the growing diverse student population in SW Ohio, MSJ developed a Master's of Arts in Teaching with a concentration on Multicultural Special Education. This program embeds culturally appropriate practices within the context of special education throughout its curriculum. The course delivery includes a cohort model with a blended format. Graduates from the program indicate that they are prepared to meet the needs of students who come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and need special education services.

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SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS THROUGH THEIR DOCTORAL JOURNEY: REFLECTIONS FROM FACULTY AND STUDENTS

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Research and Background

The shortage of special education faculty in higher education institutions in the United States, has been a continuing issue for

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many years (West & Hardman, 2012). Doctoral programs in the United States have been traditionally on-campus programs, however, due to the need for more professionals with doctorate level degrees in special education; university programs have transitioned to new delivery approaches. However, Smith and Montrosse (2012) suggested that although more programs that use alternative formats have been developed over the past decade, most remain traditional on-campus programs. Considering that alternate formats are increasing in popularity, issues other than content knowledge must be acknowledged. Boden, Borrego, & Newswander (2011) discussed the necessity for students to interact with faculty, not only in their own content area but in a variety of areas. The socialization is critical to developing the individual to become a competent faculty member. Socialization helps the individual learn about other's areas of study but also how to interact in the "higher education" environment. Some of these issues are even more exacerbated for students from diverse backgrounds. Smith and Montrosse (2012) reported that students from underrepresented groups do not feel a sense of community, even in their face-to-face doctoral program. Many students, especially African-American students, have a difficult time assimilating to the environment and over 50% drop out of their doctoral program. Up to 45% of Latino students drop out while 38% of Asian students and 25% of Caucasian students leave their doctoral programs (Washburn-Moses, 2007). If this is the case, what happens in online-doctoral programs? Do Doctoral Students feel even more isolated? How are students from diverse backgrounds supported during their doctoral program experience?

The challenge of recruiting and retaining doctoral level learners is not unique to the United States; it is also a challenge in other countries. Another challenge many countries might experience is the lack of doctoral programs to produce future university faculty. Because of this, other countries' governments support individuals to study in the United States and earn doctoral degrees in special education. There are approximately 97 doctoral degree granting institutions in the U.S. and over 1000 institutions that prepare special education teachers (Smith & Montrosse, 2012). Students that come to the United States from other countries must learn the cultural norms, the language, and then the culture of higher education, not to mention the content of their classes. Given these challenges and the issues stated previously, when new delivery approaches are used at some universities to train their doctoral students (e.g. online and hybrid programs), it is crucial to consider the following: When the doctoral student is also an international student, does this confound the issue even more? In the last few years, the special education doctoral program at the University of Northern Colorado has transitioned from total on-campus delivery to a hybrid program. At the same time, this Ph.D. program has experienced an increase in the number of international doctoral learners. This has caused our faculty to rethink our decision to deliver special education content courses at the doctoral level online.

Our goal was to obtain information from our faculty and international students about what has worked and what needs to be changed to ensure we are meeting the needs of ALL of our Doctoral students. Two faculty members initiated the conversation with the goal to improve the current online doctoral program and increase the retention of doctoral learners, domestic and international students.

Results

Faculty reported that international students, when English was not their first language, struggled, even when they completed their Master's Degree in an English speaking country. Faculty also reported that international students needed considerably more 1:1 time to discuss the projects and class content. In our online program some of the faculty had time set-aside each week to meet with doctoral learners others had online advising hours to meet with students. Faculty members continue to struggle with the decision of an online doctoral program. The online format makes the program far more available to individuals but does the lack of face-to-face interaction hinder the development of doctoral learners into effective faculty members?

Doctoral students reported that language was the biggest barrier when they began their doctoral programs. One student stated that others treated her as not being "qualified" to study in the U.S. because of the language differences – she felt they didn't think she was a serious or intelligent learner. However, a feeling of not belonging was also an initial problem. Not knowing other students or faculty can leave a student feeling lonely and left-out. Setting up opportunities to meet other international students was viewed as a way to begin to help the doctoral learners feel more comfortable in an alien environment.

One student stated that international students must "be more dedicated, study harder" and work at forging relationships and friendships. Another student stated she was so dedicated to higher education and "my goal and passion encouraged me to overcome obstacles in gaining my dream".

Students also stated that they need staff members that are knowledgeable about the culture and country of the international student. Students have indicated that many offices that assist international students focus on one or two nationalities causing them to feel like an outsider even in an environment that is supposed to cater to the needs of the international learner.

Doctoral learners also need time to acclimate to their new environments. Currently, some international students show up the day classes begin not allowing time to explore campus, services, and develop relationships.

Recommendations

Recommendations made by international doctoral students include faculty becoming more knowledgeable to help the student feel more welcomed, provide students an in-depth orientation process specifically designed to meet their needs, and to allow learners time to get to know other international students and to fully understand their program.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY CLASSROOMS OF THE FUTURE: FOUNDATION AND COMPONENTS

Elizabeth M. Dalton, Ph.D.
Jack Eder, MBA, CISSP

To effectively support learning for all students, including students with widely ranging needs, abilities, and disabilities, it is critical that educators embrace the idea of engaging in “cultures of support” across all Special Education environments and avoid the idea of “making up for deficits.” Technology can and should play an important and successful role in these cultures of support, but only if effective models that link technology, teaching, and learning are developed and implemented. Technology is rapidly transforming our modern world, and educators must find ways to leverage the innovative technologies to make learning, expression and independence accessible to every unique individual regardless of ability.

As a team, educators, technologists, and researchers together developed the Special Education Technology Classrooms of the Future (SETCF) model. Its intent is to help special educators to answer their questions about what technologies to adopt in order to best support their students. SETCF links proven learning theories and practices in a decision-making model that guides educators' identification, selection, and integration of technology in varied learning environments for students with autism and other complex support needs.

What Learning Theories and Approaches is SETCF Based On?

The SETCF model is built on a foundation of three research-based approaches to instruction that support learner variation and

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performance: 1) Structured Teaching (UNC-TEACCH); 2) Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA); and 3) Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UNC – TEACCH, developed by psychologist Eric Schopler, is used by many public school systems today. A TEACCH classroom is highly structured, with separate, defined areas for each task, ensuring success through structure in the child’s daily experience. Major components of TEACCH include: *Physical Structures* – Set the environment for optimal use and minimal distraction; *Schedules* – Serve as a structured way to show children finite tasks and tangible; *Work Systems* – A step-by-step approach to completing the tasks systematically; *Transition Strategies* – Solutions that allow for consistent use of across environments and monitoring of effectiveness; and *Visual Structure* – Creates the bridge to help skills generalize across settings and into real life.

ABA refers to the basic theories of behavior developed by Watson (1913), Thorndike (1921), Skinner (1938), and others, which were refined into a general method of instruction for individuals with autism known as the ABA process (Baer, Wolf, & Risley, 1968; Green, 2001), consisting of a 4-step process: (a) instructional cue, (b) child response, (c) consequence (generally positive reinforcement), and (d) pause. Data are collected to monitor the child’s progress and to help determine when a pre-set criterion has been reached.

UDL is the design, identification and provision of learning scaffolds which support a wide range of diverse students to access the curriculum, determined prior to implementing lessons following a conscious design framework that supports learner variation (Hall, Meyer, and Rose, 2012). Based in the neurosciences, UDL addresses learner diversity involving information recognition, strategic planning and decision making, and affective involvement with the learning process (Rose & Strangman, 2007). UDL has three core instructional design principles: 1) Multiple means of representation (WHAT of learning); 2) Multiple means of action and expression (HOW of learning); and 3) Multiple means of engagement (WHY of learning).

How is SETCF Organized?

The SETCF model is organized in three primary sections, which support informed decision-making regarding technology and instruction:

1. Learn – Identify needs, gather information, and discover technology to address these needs.
2. Justify – Build the necessary justification within the district to get the technology approved
3. Implement – Bring the chosen technology successfully into the district system.

What are the Major Components of SETCF

First, the vision and purpose for the SETCF model is described from the perspective of a new special education classroom teacher. This includes the teacher’s goals, questions, and challenges with regard to meeting the full needs of students, as well as the meaningful inclusion of technology. Background information is shared on technology and assistive technology, and information is gathered regarding who needs the learning assistance and what other existing factors (such as environment, function, system, etc.) might influence the SETCF model. Following this, the three foundational theories described previously are explored and considered in relation to the student(s) and the learning situation.

SETCF continues the process toward an evolving solution through detailed exploration of the five environments relevant to special needs students and their relation to intervention approaches. Following this, the core student support areas needed in classrooms (relating to students’ needs) are identified, explained, and connected with relevant resources for further exploration. To build a well-founded justification argument for acquiring and integrating specific technologies, SETCF next guides the user through the following areas: a) Challenges facing educators; b) Points of intervention; c) Comparing options; d) Launching: Establishing momentum early, and e) Data gathering, management and decision-making.

In the final SETCF stage, the teacher and the team are presented with the steps that support district-wide implementation of the technologies now identified through the earlier steps. These include: a) Hurdles to effective implementation of technology, b) Choosing your approach, c) Implementing and managing change (including data), and d) Sustainability.

Results of initial implementation trials for the SETCF model are available June 2013.

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BLENDED PRACTICE FOR EMERGENT LITERACY SUCCESS

Robin A. Wells, Ph.D.
Patricia Whitney, Ed.D.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act Amendments of 2004 states that students shall have access to the general education curriculum (Pub. L. No. 108-446, 118 Stat. 2647) regardless of their disabilities. While this principle seems certainly doable to many who work with individuals with disabilities, reluctance on the part of others continues to thwart the learning opportunities for all of our school's children. Having exposure, along with direct instruction, the academic curriculums for math, social studies, science, and so on using the process of literacy, should be a goal for all children, and having educators who are ready to meet these instructional demands should be a predominant goal of faculty in Institutions of Higher Education. One way to increase the skills and abilities of educators in meeting the needs of all learners is to provide pre-service preparation through an inclusive discipline model.

Faculty who work together in blending their individual disciplines (general education and special education) into a holistic philosophy regarding best practices supported by evidence-based research, provide future educators with a more thorough understanding of how to meet each child's unique learning needs. Educators with a broader knowledge base of the varying learning styles within an inclusive classroom and the instructional approaches that are necessary to meet diverse learning abilities will be better prepared in problem solving a child's need for modifications and/or accommodations in instruction. Young children with disabilities learning language and literacy are one of these unique groups.

Emergent Literacy

Young children are often intrigued with listening to their favorite stories and may help turn pages, and hold the book while being read to them by parents and teachers (Ricci, 2011). Children love to look at the pictures, respond to questions regarding the illustrations on the pages, and may even begin to tell or "read" the story to themselves or to others. Children with disabilities are no different than their peers without disabilities; however, there are often times when parents/educators must be open to observing the cues that children may be providing us in "how" they are obtaining the literacy skills that develop naturally with most children. The term "emergent literacy" often provides us with the thought that no direct instruction should be warranted and in most instances this is accurate, however, some children with disabilities may need environmental manipulation that encourages typical skills to emerge (Clay, 1966; Teale & Sulzby, 1986; IRA & NAEYC, 1998; Sénéchal, LeFevre, Smith-Chant, & Colton, 2001 as cited in Kliever, 2008; Parette, Hourcade, Boeckmann, & Blum, 2008). These subtle manipulations may be easily and discreetly provided to a child when the parent and/or educator are aware of the child's challenge with literacy.

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While there may be differing opinions in the field of reading as to how children may learn to read (whole language or phonics), knowing the underlying philosophy and approach of both models would be important for all educators to learn (Groff, 1997). The importance of understanding the tenets of both approaches (even though the phonetic approach is receiving more emphasis in the schools currently) is apparent. Educators who are able to discern when, what, and where barriers may develop to an otherwise seamless acquisition of language and literacy may then be able to develop an instructional plan as to how to circumvent, or perhaps additionally enhance, the learning experience thereby increasing skills through a balanced approach of instruction and support toward literacy.

Interests, Meaning, and Experiences

As we know, new learning is best built with the interests of children in mind and linked to experiences of the child. Some children who may have challenges with learning to read in a more natural manner benefit from an educator who is able to observe the areas that are creating barriers for learning, and then have the ability to plan instruction or experiences accordingly. Educators who build on a child's strengths and interests are often more successful in increasing learning than those educators who continue the same instruction or activities with little positive outcomes.

"When reading has a purpose or meaning for the student, the relevant processes will be activated and the underlying abilities developed" (Basil & Reyes, 2003, p. 42 as cited in Kliewer, 2008). This is especially true of young children who may not communicate verbally. Teachers need to be vigilant as to the cues that children provide us regarding likes/dislikes, interests, favorite people or things. Partnerships with parents/families are especially critical for learning about, and uncovering, the unique ways that children communicate their thoughts to us. Kliewer (2008) provides several ideas to keep in mind when supporting emergent literacy with young children with disabilities: (1) making meaning out of the use of the visual components of peers' interactions and narratives, (2) support young children in creating and expressing their own meaning through visual modalities, (3) increase the complexity of expressions gradually, and (4) encourage an emotional link from engagement in activities.

A balanced approach to supporting language and literacy development is most beneficial for the young child who may demonstrate a unique learning style or be in need of modifications or accommodations for a successful learning experience. Knowing what each child needs for building skills is most important for future educators to learn. The ability to assess a child's needs, develop an intentional plan of support that is meaningful for the child, and implement the plan with the child's interests in mind is a critical feature of a future educator.

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WHO CAN READ THIS? EXAMINING THE READABILITY LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL PLANS

Kathleen G. Winterman, Ed.D
Clarissa Rosas, Ph.D

Services for students with disabilities in the United States are based on federal legislation known as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). One of the core principles of IDEA is the belief that schools and parents share equal responsibility in the design of education plans (i.e. Individualized Education Plans) to meet educational needs of children with disabilities. IDEA empowers the parents and school to work together amicably to share a vision of what the child's educational reality should be. With each reauthorization, IDEA has continued to strengthen the parents' role in the team meeting. Within the IEP meeting, the child's present levels, goals, objectives, placement, evaluation criteria, and duration of services are determined. Barriers still exist preventing the full implementation of IDEA due to limited resources, class sizes, and teacher training. In addition, schools do not provide families with information regarding IDEA or the information is difficult to understand. These issues minimize a parent's ability to truly be a collaborative team member at the IEP table. Since parent participation is the cornerstone of shared decision making, it is critical that all communication is accessible to all team members. Currently, State Departments of Education provide materials on their websites for assist in the education of parents regarding their rights and responsibilities.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the readability level of IEPs and training manuals on special education that are developed and published by state departments of education. These documents were examined to determine if they can be read and understood by parents of children with disabilities. The research questions that drove this study were as follows:

1. What is the readability level of sample IEPs and materials on special education provided by State Departments of Education whose purpose is to provide training and education to parents and teachers who serve and advocate for children with disabilities?
2. Are example IEPs and information on special education available on State Departments of Education websites written at a level equivalent with adult literacy levels?

Method

A review of all fifty states' departments of education was conducted to explore their materials regarding special education and to determine if these documents were written at a level equivalent to adult literacy levels.

Analysis from the sample IEP's present level of academic achievement and functional performance sections; and narratives from the training materials were surmised and reviewed using Fry's Readability Index. Two national data banks were researched to determine the literacy level and educational attainment of adults within the United States. The National Center for Education Statistics provided adult readability levels which were compared to the readability level of the sample IEPs and the training materials provided by the state departments of education. The U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau provided the educational attainment of adults which was compared to the readability grade levels of the sample IEPs and training materials on special education. Descriptive statistics was used to depict the association between the readability of the sample IEPs and training materials with adult literacy levels.

Results

Readability Level of IEPs

An examination of the fifty State Departments of Education (SDE) exposed that only seven SDE provided example IEPs. The mean grade level for all example IEPs was 12.85 (1.57).

Readability Levels of Training Materials

An examination of the fifty State Departments of Education (SDE) including the District of Columbia disclosed that training materials on special education were available. The mean grade level of the training materials was 13.58 (2.66). Furthermore, more than half of the states' training materials (62%) were at a 15.0 grade level.

The purpose of this study was to determine if the readability level of IEPs and training materials on special education, that are developed and published by individual state departments of education, are equal to the literacy level of most adults who may be parents of children with disabilities. Results of this study indicate that overall the mean readability level of IEPs provided by state departments of education was 12.85 (1.57) and the mean readability level of training materials provided by state departments of education was 13.58 (2.66).

A review of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau revealed that the majority of the US population 84% (4.09) had a high school or higher degree. Results of these findings initially suggest that IEPs and materials on special education were written at a grade level commensurate with the majority (84%) of the US population. However, in reviewing the NAAL's study, only

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13% of the population had the daily literacy skills of being proficient in understanding documents. Since the IEP forms are documents requiring complex and challenging literacy skills, when considering the results of the NAAL study, this suggests that the majority of the population (87%) do not have the necessary skills to actively participate in the development of the IEP document. In addition, since the materials developed by state departments of education fall under NAAL's daily literacy skill of prose and according to NAAL's study only 57% of the population would have the necessary reading skills to understand the training materials. Results of this study indicate that the IEPs and materials developed by state departments of education surpass the literacy level of the US Population.

Since the IEP is a document requiring complex literacy skills, this suggests that the majority of the population both those with a high school diploma and beyond do not have the literacy skills necessary to be an equal partner in the development of an IEP. Therefore, most parents are not able to actively advocate for their children without additional training that is commensurate with their literacy level.

In order to be a consumer of these publications, it requires a proficient level of literacy prose that the majority of the population does not possess. These issues minimize a parent's ability to truly be a collaborative team member at the IEP table. Since parent participation is the cornerstone of shared decision making, it is critical that all communication is accessible to all team members.

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TRANSITIONING PARAEDUCATORS TO SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Ritu Chopra, PhD

Conceptual Framework and Background

Eliminating teacher shortages and improving teacher retention require aggressive recruitment and thorough preparation of talented individuals, as well as, concerted efforts towards their retention. School districts and state education agencies have chosen to adopt innovative strategies that have been proven to be successful in keeping good teachers in the profession and for attracting new teachers (Billingsley, 2003). One example of such strategies is: "grow your own" teacher initiatives that support experienced and committed paraeducators to pursue teacher preparation programs.

Research shows that paraeducators are excellent candidates for teacher preparation programs as they are highly motivated and familiar with challenging classroom environments. Because of this high degree of readiness and existing involvement in schools, they are more likely to enter and stay in the teaching profession. Paraeducators tend to live in the communities in which they work and are ethnically more similar to their students; thus they add needed diversity and community connections to the school buildings. Additionally, their work experience is mostly in fields where there are teacher shortages (i.e., bilingual and special education); (Chopra, Sandoval-Lucero, & French, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Genzuk, & Baca, 1998; Rueda & Genzuk, 2007; Nittoli & Giloth, 1997; Villegas & Davis, 2007).

Barriers to Paraeducator Recruitment and Retention in Teacher Preparation Program

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While paraeducators are excellent candidates for the teaching profession, the transition of currently employed paraeducators into teaching careers is not easy due to social, economic, and academic constraints. Paraeducators are not traditional aged college students due to marriage and family responsibilities taking precedence, limited financial options, little encouragement, and a lack of guidance or simple lack of confidence in their own academic abilities (Gordon, 1995). They face many obstacles to college completion including lack of financial resources, lack of basic skills, child care difficulties, limited English proficiency, lack of previous experiences with college, fear of technology, and lack of self-esteem (Haselkorn & Fideler, 1996; Villegas & Davis, 2007). Because employed paraeducators typically work a 6-7 hour day in schools, they are unable to attend daytime classes, making it difficult to adhere to schedules of typical college class schedules (Gordon, 1995; Haselkorn & Fideler, 1996; Villegas & Davis, 2007).

Features of Successful Paraeducator-to-Teacher Programs

The author has directed two grant funded paraeducator-to-special education teacher projects which are anchored in the literature that supports the concept of training of paraprofessionals to become teachers. The operational aspects of the projects draw upon the literature that revealed a strong correlation between candidate retention in successful paraeducator-to-teacher programs with the quality of support services that addressed the above-stated challenges (Rosenberg, Boyer, Sindelar & Misra, 2007; Villegas & Davis, 2007). Careful and thoughtful selection of project participants is one of the key features of the author's projects. The selection process is based more on paraeducators' work experience, district nominations, and their goal statements about why they would make good teacher candidates rather than GPA.

This project considers the unique circumstances of paraprofessionals by offering an array of services. The project staff counsels/advises project participants regarding program requirements and their progress, as well as, connects project participants to resources that help them overcome obstacles they may encounter while completing their education. The project follows a cohort model which allows candidates to take courses in a sequential manner as a group, resulting in a sense of community and academic and moral support. The project pays the tuition and fees for participants and also provides textbook allowances. Additional financial support is provided for attendance at professional conferences and other professional development opportunities that allow participants to network and learn with and from colleagues and experts in the field. Furthermore, the course scheduling is flexible to accommodate participant work schedules. The instruction takes place in the form of weekend school, site-based immersions/online learning opportunities, and web-based curricular resources that can be accessed by the participants in a convenient format. Additionally, the project identifies experienced teachers who exemplify quality teaching to become mentors for the project participants. The selected mentors provide coaching and supports to the participants while they are completing the teacher preparation program. The partner teacher preparation programs utilize research based curriculum and incorporate supervised field experiences early and throughout the program, to ensure immediate application of skills gained by paraeducators in their coursework to the classroom.

Based on the literature on professional development for paraeducators that documents the need for collaboration between the universities, school districts and the State Departments of Education (French & Pickett, 1997; Pickett & Gerlach, 1997), the featured projects have created a coalition which acts as the guiding force for the projects and brings all stakeholders together to meet the project goals.

Project Outcomes and Implications for the Field

The author has collected data with regards to implementation of paraeducator-to-teacher projects over a period of last 10 years. The featured projects have successfully transition 104 paraeducators to special education teaching positions over last nine years. The author reports 90% program completion rate among the project participants. Ninety percent of the program completers have remained in teaching positions in the districts that had nominated them to the project; therefore, addressing not only the teacher shortages but also the teacher retention issue in these districts. This paper provides a model for collaborative paraeducator-to-teacher that can be replicated or adapted by interested entities, such as school districts, teacher preparation programs and State Departments of Education to "grow their own" teachers by recruiting competent paraeducators who are indigenous to the community.

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USING FORMAL ASSESSMENTS WITH RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITY: TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE FROM THE UNITED STATES TO SAUDI ARABIA

**Maha AL-Sulaiman, Ph.D.
Rashida Banerjee, Ph.D.**

Conceptual Framework and Background

Assessments are the backbone of special education; professionals use them to identify the present levels of performance, establish strengths and needs of students, monitor progress toward goals, and determine eligibility for special education services. Appropriate and valid assessments are critical to making informed decisions regarding a student's education. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2010), "these assessments are intended to play a critical role in educational systems; [to] provide administrators, educators, parents, and students with the data and information needed to continuously improve teaching and learning" (p. 2).

Students at risk for special education services perform below their peers, struggle to maintain at par academic level in the classroom, and need extra support. Many children who do not respond well in the classroom are referred either for educational assessments or for special education due to reading difficulties or reading comprehension. According to Fiorello, Hale, and Snyder (2006), an estimated 5% of children in the U.S. are identified as having a reading disability. Some of the causes of reading disabilities are genetic and environmental factors and, most often, poor reading instruction. Early identification of problems and data-based decision-making and intervention is one of the goals of assessments.

Early identification processes, such as Response to Intervention (RTI), are important to identify students with disabilities, such as Learning Disabilities (LD) and, thus, prevent students from failing. Fuchs, Fuchs, and Vaughn (2008) defined RTI as a method by which to identify students who are academically at risk. For the purpose of this article, we used Berkeley, Bender, Peaster, and Saunders' (2009) definition of RTI; that is, "RTI can be defined as student-centered assessment models that use problem-solving and research-based methods to identify and address learning difficulties in children" (p. 86). Fuchs et al. (2008) pointed out that "RTI is meant to provide earlier intervention and prevention and more valid disabilities identification" (pp. 71-72) by constantly monitoring students' academic progress. In this regard, Gatti (2004) discussed the need for a system to benefit all children, especially those who have a learning disability (LD).

Currently, students with LD in Saudi Arabia are diagnosed by what Fuchs and Fuchs (2007) referred to as the "Wait-to-Fail Method." This implies that a student must fail even before educators notice that the student has a learning disability. Consequently, students end up even further behind in their education than they would be if they were diagnosed earlier. Often a

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general educator will tell a special needs educator that a student is not performing the same as the other students. Subsequently, parents will seek more information from the general educator as to why their child is not succeeding in the classroom or behaving in a similar manner to his or her siblings or other peers. These comments are what prompt the referral steps to begin the student's process of informal assessments, observation, and building an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Schools in Saudi Arabia do not have a history of using formal assessments or implementing a system similar to RTI. Few laws exist in special education that demands evidence-based research in formal assessment methods and RTI processes. Instead of formal assessments, students are evaluated through informal testing conducted by teachers. To assess students who potentially have LD, teachers take materials from the curriculum and make a test with which students are assessed. If the student does not pass the test, the teacher will test using materials from the grade level that is lower. Unfortunately, this procedure takes considerable time and is not very accurate. Saudi Arabian students with learning disabilities may not receive intervention early enough to be truly beneficial.

The problem addressed in this study came from the lack of formal assessment and early intervention processes, as well as the lack of research-based evidence on formal assessment, intervention, and identification process in Saudi Arabia. The goal of this study was to understand the perspectives of United States professional on using the RTI process as an alternative means of identifying students who have a learning disability. This study would be helpful in informing researchers who use similar attempts to improve the identification and intervention processes in Saudi Arabia by implementing RTI and formal assessments. The findings of this study would also support the development of collaborative teamwork between educators, teachers, and parents to build laws that support the use of RTI in Saudi Arabian schools. To assist in illuminating some factors on this issue, this research addressed the following research questions: (a) How do the RTI model and assessments aid in preventing students with learning disability from failing in the United States? (b) How might the RTI model and assessments aid in preventing students with learning disability from failing in schools in Saudi Arabia.

Method

An exploratory qualitative study was conducted to understand the importance of the use of response to intervention with formal assessments in the public school systems in the United States and transfer that knowledge in order to introduce response to intervention with formal assessments in Saudi Arabia. An interpretivism theoretical perspective was used in this phenomenological study, which included structured interviews with three participants in the special education field. Three themes emerging from the findings were as follows: importance of response to intervention, implementation of assessments in the United States, and recommendations for transfer of knowledge of assessments and response to intervention to Saudi Arabia's educational system.

Findings

The participants emphasized the importance of RTI as a meaningful tool, along with formal assessments, for identification of learning and behavioral problems. They believed it could be used to improve instructional quality and provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed in school. Participants also shared their perspectives on the possible barriers in implementation of RTI in Saudi Arabia and provided suggestions to overcome these barriers. Participants agreed that, in order to apply response to intervention in Saudi Arabia, it was important to ensure the establishment of response to intervention and formal assessments by encouraging policy makers, teachers, and parents to work as a team in order to create laws that would support the implementation of response to intervention.

Recommendations for Future Research

In order to successfully implement the steps needed to implement RTI, teamwork among policy makers, educators from different backgrounds, and parents are critical in order to support the process of change. Additional research is recommended in order to improve the implementation of RTI in schools, and researchers should investigate why many educators and other professionals often have concerns with RTI. Moreover, more research is indicated to see how long interventions need to be provided and how much improvement is necessary in order to benefit students.

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DISPROPORTIONALITY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION IN EUROPE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Girma Berhanu

Mikael Luciak

Alan Dyson

Background

In countries across Europe, children from some social backgrounds – in terms of gender, ethnicity, social class and migrant status, for instance – are more likely to find themselves in special education than are their peers from other backgrounds. “Disproportionality” of this kind has long been a challenge for education systems that are trying to become more inclusive and socially just, since it implies that processes of power, racism, and classism are at work and that these discriminate structurally against certain social groups (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Gabel et al., 2009;). However, the problem is becoming more acute as globalization and cross border migration increase, and educational inequalities among different social and ethnic groups are becoming increasingly apparent. This is particularly the case in urban contexts in which the stresses of social and economic change are greatest.

Disproportionality in special education has been documented, discussed, and investigated extensively in the USA for over four decades. It encompasses over- and underrepresentation in the so-called high incidence (subjective/judgmental) disability categories and gifted and talented educational programs (Artiles, Trent, & Palmer, 2004; Donovan & Cross, 2002). However, although the phenomenon has existed in many European countries, there is a dearth of systematic information or a cumulative body of knowledge on the subject. Moreover, US research tends to focus on disproportionality in relation to race and ethnicity in a special education system that is based on categories of disability. It cannot be assumed, however, that the same racial dynamics are at work in European countries, whilst the special education systems in those countries are extremely diverse in terms of their identification criteria, and not all are disability-based (Dyson & Gallannaugh, 2008).

This paper, therefore, aims to begin the process of identifying the current state of knowledge about this issue in Europe. It asks:

- What evidence is there of disproportionality in the special education systems of European countries?
- What patterns are there in terms of the groups of students who are under- and over-represented?
- What explanations are there of these patterns?
- What is the state of European research in this field, and how might it develop further?

The paper will pay particular attention to the theoretical explanations for the phenomenon of disproportionality since these vary even in the existing US-dominated literature (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Coutinho, Oswald, & Best, 2002; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Gravios & Rosenfield, 2006). Taking a European perspective where disproportionality emerges in very different social, cultural, and systemic contexts offers an important opportunity to test and develop these existing theories.

Methodology or Methods/Research Instruments or Sources Used

The study on which this paper is based takes the form of an expert review. The authors have already researched disproportionality in their own and related national contexts. To supplement their existing knowledge, they have undertaken desk-based literature searches and have contacted experts in other countries. In this way, they have accessed educational data and research from the following countries: German speaking countries (Austria, Germany, Switzerland), Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Denmark), United Kingdom, Central and Eastern European countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary). Nonetheless, there is no central European database that can be used to study this issue, and research and statistical surveys are developed to very different extents in different European countries. One aim of the paper, therefore, is to identify other researchers or alternative sources of data that might be used to elaborate the picture drawn here.

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Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings

The paper concludes that, in all countries, there is disproportional representation in special education. Members of minority ethnic groups (particularly where these groups have migrant status), males, and children from poorer homes are at greater risk than their peers of being placed in special education. The study of the interactions between these factors is not well developed in Europe, but there is some evidence that ethnicity and gender remain factors even when controls are entered for social class. The implication is that disproportionality reflects the construction of differences in education systems. However, it also reflects real differences in educational achievement between different groups, which in turn are a product of wider social inequalities. This has clear implications for the development of inclusive education systems, particularly in urban contexts in which inequalities are most marked. In particular, it suggests that the development of more equitable procedures in relation to special education must be accompanied by efforts to develop more equitable societies overall. The paper also concludes that the understanding of these issues in Europe could be improved by better data and a coherent research effort. This is something in which trans-national organisations such as the EU and OECD might play a part.

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Intent of Publication

A corresponding article will be published in two different publications: *The Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education* and the *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. An extended version of the paper will be presented at AERA 2013 (San Francisco)

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