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- To promote special education as a discipline and profession
- To encourage international cooperation and collaborative international research
- To promote continuing education of its members by organizing conference in different countries around the world
- To foster international communication in special education through *The Journal of the International Association of Special Education*

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More than ten years ago, in collaboration with other teachers, Dr. Ikuta began assisting students with disabilities in using a sound pen to reproduce sounds by tracing two-dimensional dot codes printed on ordinary paper. This demonstrated that it was a very powerful tool for the physically and mentally challenged. However, some mentally and severely hand-and-finger-challenged students at special needs education schools were unable to trace the long straight codes correctly, disabling them to join the class activities. Therefore, Dr. Ikuta began collaborating with the business venture company Gridmark Inc. (2016) that developed new dot codes (GridOnput), and more recently created original sheets (called "magic sheets") with a "Post-it-like" removable sticker icon overlaid with dot codes. These sheets as well as the accompanying easy-to-use software and sound pens have been provided free to teachers to use with their students.

Handmade Content

Gridmark Inc. originally developed the GridOnput dot codes, in which a maximum of four audio recordings could be linked to each dot code icon. In addition to audio files, up to four multimedia files like such as movies could also be linked to the same symbol icon. Teachers were able to remove the "Post-it-like" sticker icons from the sheet (created by S. I.) and affix them to any real items they wished to link with voices/sounds and/or multimedia. By simply touching the symbol icons affixed to the real items with a sound pen such as G-Speak, students were able to hear the voices/sounds and also play the movies. Recently, with the help of one of the present authors (S. I.), Gridmark Inc. developed new software: the *GM Authoring Tool*, *Sound Linker*, and *File Linke* to assist users in more easily creating original handmade content. These three software programs are also distributed by S. I. free of charge to collaborating teachers.

School Activities

The authors have been conducting many valuable activities with the original handmade teaching materials for students with a range of mental and physical disabilities at both special needs and general schools (Ikuta et al., 2015, 2017). In this paper, two recent activities conducted at the special needs schools are briefly reviewed.

At the School for the Mentally Challenged at Otsuka, which is attached to the University of Tsukuba, the teacher was faced with developing a longer-term activity for a male junior-high-school student who was unable to express himself through language; however, he requested help and his desires by holding both hands to his chest. He was able to understand simple instructions such as standing, sitting, eating, drinking, walking, putting and taking off clothing, and putting his shoes on; he had a repertoire of utterances and often enjoyed muttering to himself. To assist him communicate better, first the teacher created a booklet that outlined the steps for the morning and farewell class

meetings, in which each step was overlaid with dot codes of the teacher's voice. By touching the symbol icons beside the photos and texts with a sound pen, each step was reproduced with the corresponding voice. He started to use the booklet with the sound pen at the beginning of 7th grade but did not really understand the sound pen and just wanted to hold it and left his chair quite often. A year later, as understood the duties of the day in his class, he often held the sound pen to join in with morning and farewell class meetings, and was able to sit for longer than ever before. Two years later, he involved himself in school activities on his own, although he had both good and bad days due to his physical condition. More recently, he began to review the day duty cards and the morning and farewell meeting booklet pages by himself, began looking at his classmates when he called the roll with the sound pen in the morning meeting, waited until his classmates finished listening to the audios he reproduced with the sound pen, was able to solve a "select one from two" problem in a looking back activity by himself and is now sometimes ready to take day duty. Using a sound pen, with no ability to pronounce meaningful words, this student can now take responsibility for some class tasks and has gained confidence and a sense of fulfillment.

At the Tomiya Special Needs Education School, Tochigi Prefecture, teachers developed an activity for a 4th-grade mentally challenged autistic male student who had very little speech except for words such as Papa, Mama, and bus but could understand demonstrative words. He expressed his will by moving his eyes, making utterances, gestures or signs, or by pointing to the card related to what he wanted. He often left his chair to go outside the classroom to the toilet or to visit his favorite teacher and classroom. His teachers wanted to use a sound pen so he could have a chance to greet his fellow students and to call the roll during daily morning meetings. First, the teachers encouraged the student to touch the card overlaid with dot codes with the sound pen, and later asked him to select suitable cards from two choices for a given event, such as "Stand up" and "Sit down." He started to demonstrate his desires to his classmates using the sound pen rather than using body language. Before starting a morning meeting, he requested a sound pen by pointing at the picture of the G-Speak pen with his finger. While he was unable to properly say the words, he often mimicked the voices from the sound pen by moving his mouth. He now uses a sound pen when he wants to ask the teachers to hold him in their arms and when he sees a bus that he likes, and he can now ask his homeroom teachers when he wants to leave the class.

Conclusion

Individual handmade teaching materials are crucial as every student has different thoughts, feelings, hopes, and learning histories. Collaborating with teachers and the developer, one of the authors (S. I.) created activity sheets with a "Post-it-like" sticker icon overlaid with dot codes. The sheets, sound pens, and the software to create the content are distributed free of charge to teachers to assist them in creating original handmade content and to conduct school activities for the mentally and physically challenged students. Teaching materials with dot-codes help students with poor verbal skills communicate with their classmates, teachers, and parents.

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The Mainstream Teachers' Perception About Individual Difference in Inclusive Education in China

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Responding to the international trend of inclusion, the Chinese Learning in Regular Classroom (the LRC) was initiated in 1994, as a national movement on inclusive education to meet expanding enrollment of students with SEN (Deng & Poon-Mcbrayer, 2004; Deng & Pei, 2009). The expansion of the LRC program has been demonstrated not only by the increasing enrollment of school aged children with disabilities every year (Xiao, 2005；Hua,2003), but also by the national policy push. In LRC program, teachers are expected to take important roles of catering for children with disabilities, changing the one-size-for-all teaching model, strengthening interaction and cooperation with classmates, etc. However, the China is far away from a culture that accepts disabilities or individual difference. Under such circumstance, it is important to explore to what extent the teachers understand individual difference among students in mainstream classrooms. Their perception about individual difference should be regarded as a crucial key factor for creating inclusive environment. This study thus reports data prior to mainstream teachers' conceptualization of individual difference. The aims of this research are to identify teachers' concerns about catering for individual difference, to identify key variables that may account for differences in teachers' perception and action.

Method

This study responding to Patton's (2002) phenomenological inquiry adopts qualitative and naturalistic approaches to inductively understand mainstream teachers' perception by investigating teachers' description of student's individual difference from the perspective of teaching.

Participant. Instead of probability sampling for statistical generalization, this explorative-oriented qualitative study adopted purposeful or purposive sampling as an effective approach to collect as much information as possible for analytical generalization. Purposeful or purposive sampling assumes that the researcher wants to discover, understand, gain insight and, thus, must choose a sample from which the most can be learnt (Merriam, 1998). As the main purpose of this study is to gain insights into the mainstream teachers' perception about individual difference, the most appropriate sampling strategy for this explorative-oriented qualitative study was considered to be purposeful or purposive.

Thirteen mainstream teachers were recommended as excellent in terms of catering for students with disabilities in their schools, by the headmasters or the resource room teachers who were in charge of the LRC program in their schools. Six of them were Mathematics teachers, and the rest seven were Chinese teachers. They taught across different grades and year groups in the primary phase.

Analysis method. Data analysis is the process of forming order, structure, and interpretation to a mass of collected data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The aim of data analysis in this qualitative study lies in gaining detailed and in-depth understanding mainstream teachers' perceptions of individual difference among students in the LRC tryout of China. Interview transcripts will be treated according to recursive comparative model used by Cooper and McIntyre (1996), which is described as following:

- reading a random sample of transcripts;
- identifying points of similarity and difference among these transcripts in relation to research questions;
- generating theories describing emergent answers to research questions;
- testing theories against transcripts already dealt with;

- carrying all existing theories forward to new transcripts;
- repeating the above processes until all data have been examined and all theories tested against all data (Cooper & McIntyre, 1996, pp. 48-49).

Findings and Discussion

The teachers' perception of individual difference is based on written form transcriptions of teachers' oral comments on each student in name list of their corresponding class. The teachers' perception sheds new light on student individual difference in China, being analyzed as five major categories:

- Difference relating to student ability, including references to academic performance or specific skills;
- Difference relating to student behavior and motivation, including references to requirement of learning in large-size classroom;
- Differences relating to students' personal attributes, involving student appearance, physiological features, and personal characters;
- Differences relating to student's family factors, including references to parents' work and/or marriage situation, family social or economic situation, and educational attitude and methods;
- Difference relating to learning outcomes, including long term or periodic, and immediate learning results.

By summarising the teachers' perception, the complicated relationship between the emerged five categories that perceived by the teachers can be depicted as following chart.
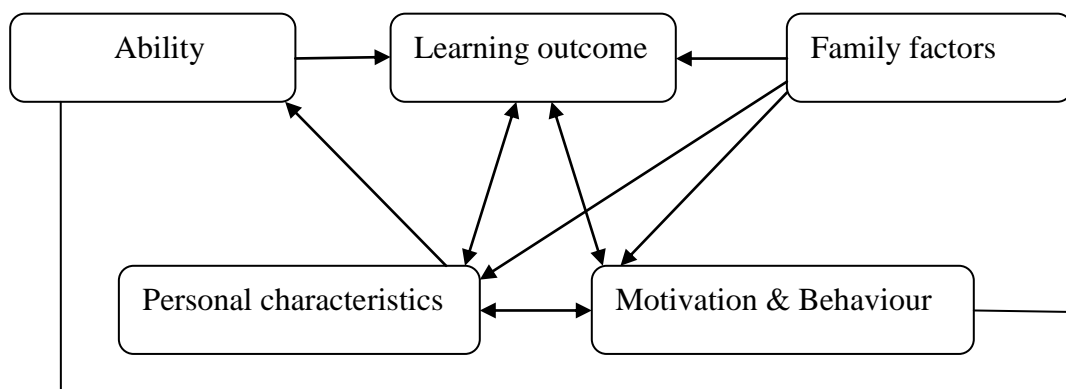
Despite the complicate relationship between the perceived categories, the most prominent concern of the teachers seems to identify differences between students that could make influence on student 'learning outcomes'. They tended to view 'learning outcomes' as the ultimate goal influenced by the rest four emerged categories, despite the complicated relationship between all emerged categories has been reported. For example, the mutual influences between 'learning outcomes', 'motivation and behavior' and 'personal characteristics' have been stated, but the influence of the first one on the later two is relatively mild, and the later two are perceived to contribute more on the first one. In teachers' perception, student 'ability' has been influenced by student 'personal characteristics', and ultimately be a significant factor to determine student 'learning outcomes'. But only 'ability' would be not enough to produce good 'learning outcomes', if student's 'motivation and behavior' is not good. The student 'ability' and 'motivation and behavior' are therefore perceived to be connected together to contribute to 'learning outcomes'.

In additional to the most prominent concern of identifying impact factor for student 'learning outcomes', a number of others concerns have also been expressed by the teachers:

- The teachers' judgment about student ability reflects their concern about evaluating whether a student is qualified for certain grade level's learning requirement, and whether a student possesses required ability as prerequisite to obtain relatively better learning outcomes.
- The teachers' judgments about student ability, motivation and behavior and part personal characteristics in relation to classroom process, aims at judging the extent to which students can be relied upon to make their own work complicate or easy, in terms of both class management and classroom teaching.
- They especially highlight student's behavioral and personal characteristics that require their particular attention in relation to maintain an expected teaching flow and collective atmosphere.
- The teachers' judgments about student personal characteristics also focus on identifying factors that could influence the development of student ability, and motivation and behavior and learning outcomes. Sometimes they used student personal characteristics to imply student's family status or parenting issue.
- The teachers' emphasis on student family factor indicates their strong need to require family's cooperation in student's learning, as they view family factors as important attribution for student learning outcomes, motivation and behavior, and individual characteristics, which they feel out of their own control.

The teachers seemed to focus on differences between students that related to their need to manage the classroom in order to smoothly conduct teaching activities, and to ultimately improve student learning outcomes. Their underlying consideration thus tended to figure out the extent to which students were competent for academic contents in unified texting books, and the degree to which students' own needs and abilities could be displayed clearly and accessibly to themselves in whole-class situation. They tended to indicate a preference to students with high level of ability and/or good learning outcomes, whereas view students who below the general ability and/or average learning outcomes as problematic from pedagogic and organizational view points. They also expressed a preference to students who could constantly abide by classroom discipline and follow their guide or teaching, regardless of student ability level or academic achievement level. This seemed to not only reflect the teachers' need of managing large-size classroom, but also their authority status in terms of both knowledge and classroom control.

The teachers seemed to feel especially challenged when student's learning outcomes is lower than their expectation in relation to corresponding ability level they perceived. This thus explains why the teachers always tried to identify attributions that would influence student learning outcomes. They tended to view student 'learning outcomes' as a result in relation to student' own and their family issue. Hence, they see few of their own influence on student's individual difference.

The innate and fixed feature of student individual difference can be revealed not only in their perception about ability (e.g., gift), but also in part of student motivation and behavior and personal characteristics, 'gender influence on behavior and personality'.

A strong sense of moral judgment emerged from the teachers' perception about individual difference, e.g., the concepts of 'careless'. It is especially prominent when referring to students with high ability level, on whom the teachers expressed higher moral requirement than other typical students. Consequently, students with high ability level were given more opportunities in classroom learning and managing, and higher expectations.

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Adaptation and Standardization of Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3™) fro 6 to 36 Months of Age

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Rationale

Adaptation and standardization of a developmental screening toolkit in a different country with unique culture and language brings more benefits than designing a new one. The Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3™) is a system of questions for parents/caregivers to screen for disabilities and monitor the developmental process of a child from 1 month to 72 months old based on five domains, including Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving and Personal-Social. ASQ-3™ allows children to be monitored and taken care of for a long time since this toolkit is in accordance with the natural development of children at a point that risk factors are indentified to the point of the Early Intervention process. ASQ-3™ is created, and being researched by American authors. It is used to screen young children for disabilities, indentifying risk factors, assessment and Early Intervention for children in various countries in the world such as China, Southeast Asian Nations, Australia, Africa, India, Europe, Central America and South America. Moreover, ASQ-3™ has been translated into multiple languages including Korea, France, Mongolia, Somali and China.

In fact, Vietnamese parents and teachers have a strong desire for diagnoses, assessment, and Early Intervention for children at risk or with disabilities. Therefore, we have been conducting a research about "Adaptation and Standardization of ASQ-3™ from 6 to 36 months" in order to apply this toolkit in Vietnam as soon as possible, help parents/ caregivers, teachers and experts have one more useful questionnaire for screening, risk identification, and Early Intervention for children with special needs.

Method

According to the ITC Guidelines for Translating and Adapting Tests of International Test Commission (ITC) [3] and the guide of Brookes Publishing which has the copyright of ASQ-3™, we conduct the process of adaptation and standardization of ASQ-3™, including following steps.

Step 1. Requesting permission from Brookes Publishing to translate, standardize over a wide area, and promulgate ASQ-3.

Step 2. A Vietnam translation of ASQ. Selecting translators (Vietnamese) who are good at English and the children development.

Step 3. An English translation from Vietnamese. Selecting one high-quality translator (English and Vietnamese) who does not know about ASQ-3 to translate Vietnamese ASQ, which has already been translated from English, into English.

Step 4. Comparision between a Vietnam translation of ASQ and an English translation from Vietnamese. Inviting a native speaker of English who has profound knowledge about ASQ (authors of ASQ especially) to find mistakes between the original ASQ and the Vietnam translation of ASQ.

Step 5. Adjusting a Vietnam translation of ASQ. Modifying it based on the results of step 4. Choosing translators who have carried out work in step 2 and have a good understanding of child development.

Step 6. A scientific experiment on the translation. Using the newest translation in order to assess children and highly invite attendants who are parents, kindergarden teachers, early-childhood experts, language development experts, to give comments about the expression of the questionnaire and questions which are difficult to understand or unsuitable.

Step 7. Altering the questionnaire.

Step 8. A pilot study about ASQ-3™ from 6 to 36 months of age on a small scale (30 children for each age group). An experiment was conducted by parents. The questionnaire is continuing adapting before it is used on a large scale.

Step 9. Applying the questionnaire on a large scale (100 children for each age group). This experiment is performed by parents and kept modifying. We carry out standardization of a sample for research. The questionnaire is continuing adapting before it is used popularly.

Findings

Questions in domains are appropriate for characteristics of the development of Vietnamese children. The expression of each and every question is suitable for literary Vietnamese styles. The assessment of domains of Fine Motor and Personal-Social was modified and replaced with some words to be suitable for cultures of different regions in Vietnam (e.g., *a fork* is replaced with *a spoon*; *Cheerios* are replaced with *a small piece of cookies*...).

Research findings of standardization of ASQ-3™ from 6 to 36 months of age have indicated that Cronbach's Alpha was above 0.60 in all domains ($\alpha \leq 0.6$ is acceptable). Thus, the reliability of large scales, small scale, and items in small scales was stable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index was above 0.60 in domains ($0.5 \leq KMO \leq 1$ is acceptable). Therefore, the sample size was appropriate. Items in ASQ-3™ from 6 to 36 months of age have shown that the difficulty of questions in domains did not follow rules of the original questionnaire. This indicated that many items which were simple for American children were hard for Vietnamese children and vice versa.

- The Communication domain had cut-off scores of Vietnamese groups of children somewhat similar with those of American groups of children.

- Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving and Personal-Social Domains had cut-off scores lower than those of American groups of children. In this research, we recognized that Vietnamese children have not had opportunities to perform many questions. There would be two reasons for that issue. The first reason is about conceptions of Vietnamese parents. Some of them did not allow their children to stand up before 10 months because being afraid of their childen's legs would be bent. Others were worried that their child would fall down, so that they did not let their child jump with both feet. Some did not permit their child to look at themselves in front of a mirror because thinking that children would have delayed language. The second reason is that parents have not given children chances to perform tasks such as going up and down stairs, turning pages, stacking blocks, putting an item in a bottle and trying to get it, and drawing a line in accordance with a sample. Moreover, many parents look after their children too careful to encourage them to develop independent skills such as completely dressing self, feeding self, reaching for toys, and using a tool to get a toy that is out of reach. Some questions show cultural differences. For instance, rarely do Vietnamese children use a fork since a fork is not a common tool in Vietnamese meals.

- Cut-off scores of Vietnamese children from 6 months to 27 months of age are lower than those of American children aged 6 to 27 months in Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving domains. Also, cut-off scores of these groups of children aged 27 to 36 months are much the same. However, cut-off scores of the Personal-Social domain of Vietnamese children who are 27 to 36 months of age are lower since Vietnamese children have not known how to dress self independently.

Conclusion

The process of adaptation of ASQ-3 from 6 to 30 months of age proves that ASQ-3™ is such a friendly and easily usable toolkit that parents and teachers can use to screening and assessing the development of children in Vietnam. Utilizing ASQ-3™ allows children to be assessed, monitored and supported because this toolkit has a system of tasks to help areas of developmental delays of children take form and develop. Furthermore, when conducting ASQ-3™, parents know characteristics of their

children in different domains and intentionally let their child perform tasks to reach the normal development of children.

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Is Your Planning Inclusive? The Universal Design for Learning Framework for an Australian Context

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In June 1994, the Salamanca Statement called for inclusion to be the norm for students with disability. One approach to addressing the needs of students with disability is the concept of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL as a set of principles allows teachers to develop inclusive lessons by planning to the edges of a class, rather than to a core group of learners. Supports and scaffolds are built into the instructional methods and learning materials enabling all learners' full participation in the curriculum. Retrospectively fitting lesson plans with adjustments is only the first step towards inclusion (Edyburn, 2006).

UDL as a philosophy and set of principles advocates proactively planning instruction to embrace academic diversity (King-Sears, 2009). It aims to decrease potential barriers to learning whilst increasing learning opportunities and student engagement. According to Coyne et al. (2010) UDL rests on a belief that designing lessons for diverse learners results in better learning outcomes for all. In the traditional model of lesson planning students are required to adapt to an inflexible curriculum. The transition from inaccessible lesson design to accessible design will involve a shift in teacher mindset. UDL encourages teachers to ask themselves three questions: (1) Have I provided my students with multiple means of engaging with the learning experience? (2) Have I provided my students with multiple ways of accessing knowledge and skills? (3) Have I provided my students with multiple ways to demonstrate their understanding, knowledge, and skills?

These questions are useful for teachers to ask themselves during the planning process. Classroom application of UDL includes the use of technology, multiple modalities of instruction, flexible assessment, and group activities to give students choices and provide them with opportunities to empower themselves as learners. By building in flexibility UDL increases access for everyone. Research (Edyburn, 2010; Spencer, 2011) has shown that using the UDL framework saves teachers time, provides students with choice, reduces student anxiety, rewards student effort, and provides more engaging lessons which may reduce behavioural disruptions.

To evaluate the inclusiveness of lesson planning Spooner et al. (2007) developed a rubric based on the three UDL principles. An element of UDL is missing from the original rubric. It is imperative that teacher planning has a clear learning goal, that separates the goal from the means of demonstrating it. This framework was also developed in the United States thus lacking connections to the Australian Curriculum. Hence, a lesson plan may be inclusive but disconnected from the Australian Curriculum, which consequentially provides another barrier to learning. To increase the applicability of the Rubric to an Australian Context a fourth criteria has been proposed.

Teachers need to ask themselves does their lesson plan contain a clear learning goal linked to the Australian Curriculum (version 8.2), evidenced by the presence of learning intentions and success criteria. A score of zero is achieved if learning goals, learning intentions, and success criteria are not present in the lesson plan. Presence of these three elements achieves a score of one on the Rubric. "Including students in learning and assessment conversations [in relation to the success criteria] is an acknowledgment of students' rights to inclusive assessment practices" (Willis & Adie, 2014, p. 497). For this reason, a lesson plan that contains a clear learning goal, learning intentions and co-constructed success criteria receives a score of two on the adapted Rubric. Like Spooner et al.'s (2007) original scoring rubric the adjusted instrument consists of a three-point scale with a maximum number of eight points available. The higher the score the more inclusive a lesson plan. A low score (< 5) on the Rubric suggests that the lesson plan is designed for a core group of learners.

The addition of the fourth criteria, learning goal, will ensure that the lesson plans achieving a score of > 4 accurately reflect all principles of UDL and are inclusive of all students. Lesson plans that include clear learning goals, learning intentions, and co-constructed success criteria allow all students to know what success will look like. This is supported by Sharratt and Harild (2015) who argue that the presence of these instructional design features contributes to student empowerment, resulting in improved achievement for all students. Hattie (2012) identifies assessment-capable learners as having an effect size of 1.44.

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Building Collaborations with Team Members from Diverse Populations and Contexts: A Social Justice Framework

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Respecting cultural differences and cultural similarities fosters collegial interactions and relationships. Acknowledging and understanding the multiple aspects of diversity is a cornerstone for successful collaborations with stakeholders in the education of individuals with special learning needs. Educators must demonstrate knowledge and competence in working with diverse populations and contexts in their schools and communities. Using a social justice lens as a framework, educators can develop highly effective collaborations on behalf of students with disabilities and their families (Knackendoffel, Dettmer, & Thurston, 2017).

Multiple Diversities Among Students, Families, and Educators

All students, regardless of gender, disability, social class or ethnicity, race, or other cultural characteristics, should have an equal opportunity to learn in school and it is therefore appropriate to define diversity broadly. Current uses of the word *diversity* in educational settings relate to ethnicity, language, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and demographic factors and status variables of economic level, geographic location, age, gender, and other indicators of group uniqueness. Diversity includes historical and contextual bases and includes not just racial or ethnic groups, but other groups or subgroups such as female, deaf, rural, and military or ex-military. Educational systems will be called upon more and more during the next several decades to serve new pluralities with sensitivity.

Diversity and the Concept of Social Justice in Education

Diversity and appreciation of differences are inexorably tied to social justice and to the way power and privilege construct difference unequally in our society (Bell, 1997). *Social justice* is a complex term that relates to equity and multicultural education in that it has been defined as creating "an equitable and just learning environment for every student and family" (Gorski, Zenkov, Osei-Kofi, & Sapp, 2013, p. 1). Foundations for social justice in education are the works of John Dewey (2012) and Paulo Freire (2000). Social justice means addressing the axes of social difference – disability/ableism, gender/sexism, age/ageism, sexuality/heterosexism, race/racism, and the intersectionalities of oppression, power, and privilege are central to lived experiences (Bell, 1997). Social justice education is an ongoing, contextual process that impacts inequitable social, economic, and political systems through critical examination and intentional advocacy for social justice.

A Social Justice Framework for Building Collaborations

Educators who, conscious of the shifting kaleidoscope of diversity in schools and their own roles in promoting educational opportunities and success for all students, understand the usefulness of a social justice lens in developing relationships and successful collaborations. A guiding framework, based on the social justice perspective, includes these dimensions:

- Situate families and communities within an analysis of structural inequities, that is, look at the bigger picture beyond a single characteristic. Individuals exist within multiple inequitable social, economic and power relationships, institutions, and policies that limit their access to societal resources such as health care, jobs that pay a living wage, healthy living environments, and out of school resources. Considering structural inequities helps consultants avoid getting trapped into generalizing, falling back on common stereotypes (girls aren't good at math; people in wheel chairs can't play basketball).

- Reject deficit thinking that leads to negative assumptions about diverse populations. Deficit thinking is the perspective that team members from non-dominant groups or who are different from the perceived norm are inferior, needy, or at fault for their differences (Gorski, et al., 2013). The dominant culture, both overtly and covertly, promotes the idea that the elements of their culture are the "norm" and thus elements of other cultures or differences are "not normal". Deficit thinking leads to problematizing individuals because of their differences and therefore affording individuals who are different with less respect or credibility. Historically, difference has been used to marginalize, segregate and disempower those marked as "different". Teachers with a special education background can remember the history of thinking about individuals with disabilities and realize how they have been marginalized, segregated and disempowered (Collins, 2013).

- Recognize that the power of culture makes one relatively oblivious to the limitations of our own perspectives, behaviors and values. When we recognize our own limited perspectives, we are better able to develop diversity-related competencies to build teams and coalitions for excellence in the education of students with special needs (Knackendoffel, Dettmer, & Thurston, 2017).

Developing Diversity-Related Competencies

Diversity-related competencies allow consultants to function comfortably in diverse settings and to interact harmoniously with people that differ than they. Diversity-related competencies are skills and attitudes that allow collaborators to move toward build trust and establish relationships. Diversity-related competence is a reflective stance of continuously learning, unlearning, and re-learning. Striving for improved cultural competence is a journey that involves continual, reflective work that often involves these actions:

- Develop a social justice lens as one's framework for considering diversity
- Study and become aware of one's own multiple diversities
- Increase awareness of multiple aspects of diversity among collaborators
- Increase knowledge and understanding of diverse populations and contexts
- Develop skills to work effectively with a variety of collaborators on behalf of students with special needs

Being sensitive toward differences in cultural traditions, values, language, age, ability, sexual orientation, country of origin, economic and educational status, and other diversities will enhance relationships and the process of collaboration. Educators who collaborate with adults on behalf of children with special needs must foster positive attitudes toward multiple diversities and cultivate skills for developing and maintaining successful collaborative relationships with individuals who may be very different from themselves. A social justice framework provides a set of parameters in which this success can be attained.

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Pedagogical Tactfulness in Inclusive Education

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The point of departure of this research is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 2007) and the rights of children to participate in democratic educational relationships; democratic in the sense that unique children are given the opportunity to speak with their own voice. Children's rights in education with the school's constant reproduction of inequalities are reflected in the discussion about *inclusion*. Biesta (2007) points out that inclusion can be seen as the very core value of democracy. He brings up the problem of effective socialisation and how young people enter an existing order, where some people decide the terms for inclusion, while at the same time they are to include others. Instead, Biesta clarifies the need for another kind of inclusion, *the incalculable,* where a person is not excluded from an existing order. This can be seen as an alternative where a constant transformation of order occurs when unique children emerge.

This microethnographic classroom study takes its point of departure in such a perspective, by empirically exploring dilemma situations when the incalculable emerges in teaching. Four math teachers and one hundred students from compulsory, upper secondary and special schools participated. The teachers who were selected by former students, as good teachers, were recorded on video at close range. The results are presented in detailed descriptions of how the teachers relate to students, face-to-face.

A Relational Theoretical Framework

The study explores teacher-student relationships within today's schools. Social relationships between people can be understood as a kind of established relations developing over time, and emerging through communication and interpersonal meetings. In recent years, the teacher-student relationship is highlighted in international research survey as a factor of great importance, carrying implications for practices, policies as well as for research (cf. Hattie, 2009).

Within the relational field the theoretical sources emanate mainly from von Wright (2006), Säfström (2005), Biesta (2007), Lövlie (2007) and Aspelin and Persson (2011) – and are based on the notion of human beings as relational beings, and of teaching as relational processes. The researchers mentioned above have contributed to shaping what nowadays in Scandinavia is commonly referred to as *relational pedagogy* (Aspelin & Persson, 2011). Lately, the notion *relational competence* has come into use, and identifies relational processes between teacher and student and includes how teachers relate to their students.

Trustful and respectful teacher-student relationships

The results show a similar result in all four teachers´ environments. When it comes to the social and relational characteristics of the teaching, a warm and permissive atmosphere evolves between teacher and student. Diversity is the point of departure when the teacher welcomes different ways of thinking. In the teaching moment the teacher shows belief in the student's potential and takes an interest in each and every student as the person he or she is. The teachers create close relationships to the students, which takes both time and energy. Once the educational relationship has evolved, it constitutes the fundament of the mutual work between teacher and students.

Participating students describe the development of trust and respect within the teacher-student relationship in these educational environments. The teachers also stress the twofold responsibility *in* and *for* the relationship, in that they both are responsible for the teaching and for the relationship to the student. The responsibility emerges also in teachers' experiences of dilemma situations showing how

easily mistakes are made; if so, the teacher takes the first step and apologise. Consequently, the teachers need to tread a delicate balancing act in the teacher-student relationship.

Pedagogical tactfulness

The way the teachers relate to students is understood in terms of *pedagogical tact* (Lövlie, 2007). In the now, teachers' acknowledgement emerges as adaptability, which touches the student. This pedagogical adaptability can be captured in a movement, a gesture, a glance and a tone of voice. It is a pedagogical tact, which turns out to be incalculable, since it cannot be planned in advance and needs to be improvised in the moment. The microanalyses reveal different shifts of tact. When the dialogue flows teacher and students look relaxed. However, in dilemma situations when the student shows insecurity there is a change in the teacher's acknowledgement, with a shift of tact, where the teacher might turns his or her head to one side, seeking to catch the student's eye and speaks in a softer, more cautious tone of voice than before. Other shifts of tact ease tension in the atmosphere when the teacher's happy or positive tone reveals faith, humour or playing down a problem. Hence, in dilemma situations tensions in the atmosphere will develop which the teacher handles and defuses in improvised shifts of tact, where the teacher flexibly and sensitively follows the student at crucial moments. In dilemma situations, the teacher sensitively meets the student, a complex pedagogical balancing act highlighting tactfulness in each teacher-student relationship. Microanalyses of teacher-student interactions show how the teachers' pedagogical tactfulness can meet unique children even in dilemma situations.

Discussion

A key result in the study shows no difference in the microanalyses between the teachers' pedagogical tact with regard to students' varying ages, levels or school forms. Relationally, there is no difference. When a dilemma arises a responsibility stance appears, where the teacher takes responsibility for both the content and the process dimension in the teaching, which relieves the student from being the bearer of the teaching problems. Hence, the results show how the teachers' pedagogical tactfulness creates space for students to emerge and talk with their unique voices.

Participating students meet a tactfulness that can be particularly decisive for socially vulnerable students; a pedagogical tactfulness that makes a difference to individual students. The results indicate educational environments where teachers' pedagogical tactfulness, in a stance of responsibility, creates possibilities for students to engage in democratic educational relationships. From a child's perspective similar relational educational community can be understood as a necessity in a humane and democratic way of life.

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Using Curriculum-based Mathematics Measures for Beginning Elementary Students

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Educators, administrators, as well as parents and the public have become increasingly alarmed by the low level of mathematics skills proficiency among students throughout the United States, particularly in comparison with international student data (Clarke, Baker, Smalkowski, & Chard, 2008). Early intervention holds significant promise in assisting students who are struggling with mathematics. Preventing learning difficulties through early intervention that is responsive to the needs of students has been given increased attention in educational research (Clarke et al., 2008). Effective early intervention begins with identifying students who are struggling and those at-risk of developing mathematics difficulties. Early identification through universal screening has been a cornerstone of the Response to Intervention movement (Clarke et al., 2008). Screening early elementary students at particular points through each grade level in reading and mathematics has become a traditional form of assessment in schools, and should be continually validated to ensure assessment effectiveness (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2001; Methe, Hintze, & Floyd, 2008).

Adapting a data-based Curriculum-Based Measurement program beginning in kindergarten and continuing throughout primary grade school can reduce the impact of entry level mathematics skill deficits and may allow for decreasing the consequences of learning difficulties. Given that early intervention is paramount in assisting teachers to identify students who might be at-risk, determining measures that can be utilized early in a student's academic career is critical.

As the importance of mathematics in education for all students continues to increase, and with standards for employment relying on strong mathematics background, it becomes necessary to have information about learning trajectories at the earliest stage possible. It is not only important to know how students are performing, but also how they are progressing across years. As teachers examine student mathematics data, knowing which measure is most predictive at which grade and for which student, provides an additional degree of specificity.

Differences in growth rates emerged between the measures and also at different grade levels. For interpretation of Curriculum-Based Measurement data, it is important to examine characteristics such as whether growth was significant (indicating that students were demonstrating progress on the measure and not reaching a floor or ceiling); the magnitude of the standard deviation (indicating that there were differences in student growth dependent on student skill levels); and whether growth differs by covariates such as the demographic variables examined in this study, gender, race, and lunch status.

The findings from the study used in this presentation, developmentally, it seems appropriate that number sense measures like number identification and basic facts, would provide the best early indicator for kindergarten mathematics learning. Only one Kindergarten measure, Number Facts, differed significantly for students when examining demographic characteristics. For Number Facts, there were differences between males and females noted at baseline, and scores from males increased significantly over time. In addition, there were significant differences in Number Facts scores by free lunch status at baseline and students with free lunch status decreased significantly over time. So when screening students with Number Facts in particular, it might be wise to examine how data differs for males and females, as well as by lunch status. Number Facts is the only measure that demonstrated significant growth in both Kindergarten and Grade 1, so it would be important to consider if utilizing across multiple grades. This is especially true considering that for measures like counting and number identification, we tend to see ceiling effects as students get older.

From our present study, we noted that following on this logic of potential ceiling effects, in Grade 1, Missing Number, Number Facts, Quantity Discrimination, Computation, and Concepts changed significantly over time, however, only Number Facts, Computation, and Concepts *increased*

significantly. Missing Number and Quantity Discrimination showed significant decreases in scores over time. This is important to note, as the information that is provided from Curriculum-Based Measures is meant to help teachers know whether students are making progress with the curriculum provided and to help them make decisions about whether instructional changes are necessary. If measures are not capturing student growth, school personnel may be making erroneous decisions. The lack of growth for Missing Number and Quantity Discrimination in Grade 1 was surprising, as these measures have been some of the strongest psychometrically in other studies (Conoyer, et al., 2016; Lembke & Foegen, 2009).

   With also noted differences according to demographic characteristics, significant differences in scores were seen in free lunch status at the baseline for the Missing Number, Number Facts, and Quantity Discrimination measures. Of these measures, Number Facts showed significant *decrease* in scores over time. This finding indicates that for students in Grade 1, Number Facts may not be a good tool to use for screening across the year, particularly if there are large numbers of students who receive free/reduced lunch at the school. While a teacher could examine the types of errors made on the Number Facts test, given that it is timed and short duration, a better skills assessment for a teacher to administer and analyze might be a number facts assessments given with no time limit, where all errors can be analyzed.

   Finally, we found for students in Grade 2, Missing Number, Quantity Discrimination, and Computation increased significantly. It is important to note that at Grade 2, Missing Number and Quantity Discrimination look slightly different than at Grade Kindergarten. The measures become more challenging, including more complex numbers and equations. However, once again, Number Facts showed a significant decrease in scores over time, indicating that it is perhaps not as useful for screening at Grade 2 as well. With respect to demographic characteristics, only significant differences were noted for males, with a decrease over time on the Missing Number measure. This should be considered as practitioners monitor the progress of their students, particularly when unexpected differences by gender are noted on the Missing Number measure.

   While the results from these short timed measures do not provide significant information in and of themselves, the measures do serve as indicators of academic proficiency in early grade mathematics in general. The next step for practitioners would be to either collect data on the best performing suite of measures several times a year or as often as weekly, for students who are struggling.

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Developing an Effective Special Education Teacher Preparation Program Evaluation System

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Demands to effectively prepare high-quality special education teachers (Sindelar, McCray, Brownell, & Lignugaris/Kraft, 2014), adhere to accreditation standards, and comply with university guidelines require the development of a comprehensive program evaluation system (House, 2004; Stake, 2004). Moreover, since teacher quality impacts student achievement (*McLeskey*, *& Brownell*, *2015*) it is imperative that universities sustain a high-quality system of evaluating the effectiveness of its teacher credential programs (Darling-Hammond, 2012). This paper describes how a California special education teacher credential program (herein referred to as the program) developed their Evaluation System for Special Education (ESSE).

Evaluation System for Special Education

The ESSE is a multi-faceted evaluation system that (a) aligns university/program/course goals and objectives with national/state standards and student outcomes; (b) identifies assessment measures, criteria, and timelines; and (c) builds accountability for program review and improvement (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). Goals and standards are established by three accrediting bodies: Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) for universities, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) for college programs, and California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CTC) for credential programs. This paper focuses on the development of ESSE components unique to California; however others can adapt/modify the ESSE according to their accreditation, university, and program requirements.

ESSE Components and Elements

The ESSE is comprised of the following components: Program Governance, Program Assessment, Curriculum/Course Assessment, Candidate Assessment, Faculty Evaluation, and Program Supports (Diversity/Technology/Ancillary). Each ESSE component has a specific "How" question and the responses provide a basis for developing component elements. The organization below reflects the ESSE component stages that were developed concurrently.

Program Governance. *How does the program demonstrate evaluation oversight*? The program is responsible for policies/procedures, curriculum, faculty, personnel, courses, supports/resources, and program evaluation. Creating an evaluation team to develop and oversee the ESSE is the initial stage. Team members hold key positions (e.g. department chairs, assessment coordinator, curriculum committee chair) and/or are selected/assigned specific tasks according to their expertise. Team members, with faculty input, collaboratively develop a plan of action that builds a conceptual framework and identifies goals, objectives, components, elements, resources, and timelines. The conceptual framework reflects the program's mission, vision, and philosophical beliefs providing the foundation for ESSE development. Team members are integrally involved in the succeeding stages of the evaluation plan development.

Program Assessment. *How does the program collect, analyze, and interpret data for program improvement*? ESSE members (a) review and align national, state, and/or professional organizational accreditation standards, (b) review and align university, college, program, and course goals/student learning outcomes (SLOs), (c) develop assessment measures (program, credential/degree candidates, faculty/staff) that align with goals and standards, (d) determine data collection, analysis, interpretation,

and report dissemination time schedules, (e) identify key personnel to review reports and provide feedback to faculty and staff, (f) determine how evaluation results impact the program, and (g) make modifications where necessary.

Curriculum/Course Assessment. *How does the program guarantee that course content meets standards and goals*? Align (a) curriculum with standards (b) course objectives, SLOs, and key assignments with program goals/objectives, (c) course assessment with SLOs, (d) assessment data/analysis with program assessment schedule.

Candidate Assessment. *How does the program determine it has prepared highly qualified teachers*? Collect/analyze/interpret candidate data on (a) content knowledge, (b) teaching practice, (c) ability to monitor/assess P-12 students, and (d) professional dispositions, at critical transition points (program entry/duration/exit, field experience entry/exit, and P-12 classroom experience) to improve teacher quality (Anderson, Butler, Palmiter, & Erikson, 2016).

Faculty Evaluation. *How does the program ensure that it has knowledgeable and professional faculty?* Review and analyze the following university/college faculty data: (a) qualifications (degrees/credentials), (b) retention/tenure/promotion processes, (c) student evaluations, (e) scholarship (presentations/publications), and (f) service (committees).

Program Supports. *How does the program provide diversity, technology, and ancillary support*? For diversity - review and verify (a) curriculum that reflects multicultural/global perspectives, (b) faculty/staff diversity, (c) coursework that reflects diversity and equity in the teaching/learning process, and (d) field experience that ensure candidates work with student/families from diverse populations. For technology - verify that university/college technology support is infused in content courses and field experiences and analyze course data related to technology issues. For ancillary supports - review and analyze university/college candidate advisement, faculty/staff professional development, and recruitment practices.

Conclusion

Sustaining and updating an evaluation program requires a monitoring/tracking system that provides a continuous examination of the program's validity/utility. A robust and effective evaluation system builds in accountability for program review and improvement.

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Teacher Perceptions of Their Twice Exceptional Students'' Social Skills Issues

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Social competence in creating and maintaining positive relationships is an essential classroom skill. Research links social competence to acceptance by teachers and peers as well as success in inclusive classroom settings (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004). However, the influence of social skills extends beyond childhood, accounting for more than half of adults' long-term success (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). 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"(np).

Many twice-exceptional students have difficulty navigating social situations and the numbers are increasing (Baum, Olenchak& Owen 2004; Neihart, 2000). Twice-exceptional (2e) students are defined as those who are both gifted and have a designated disability.

Participants

The State of South Carolina requires that any teacher responsible for the education of students identified as gifted and talented obtain the Gifted and Talented Endorsement (GTE). One hundred South Carolina in-service teachers seeking GTE completed online surveys regarding their 2e students' social skills. The teachers completed the survey prior to taking their first of two required GTE courses.

Method

Participants' responses on their 2e students' social skills were categorized using the Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Domains of the National Research Council (2012) and Collaboration for Academic, Social, and Emotional learning (2016). The Intrapersonal skills were Self-Awareness, Intellectual Openness, Work Ethic, Conscientiousness, Self-Management, and Social Awareness. The Interpersonal skills were Teamwork, Collaboration, Leadership, Responsible Decision-Making, and Relationship Skills. These nine areas were then divided further based on specific teacher responses.

Results

When we examined the results, we found that overall 57% of teacher responses related to their student's Interpersonal skills. Within interpersonal skills, the category of Relationship received the most responses (58/100), particularly in the areas of making and keeping friends and communicating in social situations. Collaboration was the second highest category (29/100). Here the teachers focused on group work, sharing responsibility, and working with others.

Overall, 43% of teacher responses related to their student's Intrapersonal Skills. Within Intrapersonal Skills, the category of Self-Management received the most responses (30/100), particularly in the areas of Regulating Behavior, Knowing Social Rules, Handling Frustration, Taking Criticism, Asking Questions, Making Request, Understanding Sarcasm, Reading Other People's emotions, and Taking Responsible for Behavior. Intellectual Openness (19/100) was the second highest category. Teachers specifically sited Emotional Openness, Acceptance of Diversity, Listening Skills, Scientific Thinking (analyzing and reasoning) and Learning from Others.

Two subcategories stood out due to a lack of response. Leadership received only one response and Conscientiousness did not receive any responses.

Discussion

The teachers identified that their 2e students had more social skills issues related to Interpersonal Skills than Intrapersonal Skills. For both Interpersonal and Intrapersonal skills, the category that received the most responses was Relationship Skills. Overall, this survey has identified interpersonal skills and intrapersonal skills for which the teachers perceive their students need additional support.

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Closing the Gap Between Science Literacy and Special Education

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The educational reform movement supports Science for All Americans including but not limited to women and girls, all racial and ethnic groups, the physically and educationally challenged, and those with limited English proficiency (Rutherford & Ahlgren, 1989). Research studies posit that STEM disciplines are also essential in enhancing the quality of daily life for students, especially for those with disabilities (Hwang & Taylor, 2016). Furthermore, students who have advanced knowledge in STEM are more likely to acquire gainful employment. Current instructional practices coupled with lack of qualified science teachers do not support science literacy for special needs students. There are also issues of accommodation that need to be addressed in order to make science literacy a reality for special education students.

Learning strategies and adapted environments aimed at closing the gap between science literacy and special education are said to improve students' critical thinking and standardized test scores. Science literacy is defined by Villanueva and Hand (2011) as:

> an individual's scientific knowledge and use of that knowledge to identify questions, to acquire new knowledge, to explain scientific phenomena, and to draw evidence-based conclusions about science-related issues, understanding of the characteristic features of science as a form of human knowledge and enquiry, awareness of how science and technology shape our material intellectual, cultural environments, and willingness to engage in science-related issues, and with the ideas of science, as a reflective citizen (p.234).

Science literacy has always been considered too abstract, difficult, and irrelevant for students with special needs. However, it is essential that all students including those with special needs be scientifically literate. Scientific literacy for students with special needs is critical in allowing them to make connections with, and to understand their natural environment (Villanueva & Hand, 2011).

How STEM Benefits Students with Disabilities

The quality of life for persons with disabilities is enhanced when they are employed and are economically self-sufficient. According to a report by the U.S. Department of Education (2015) as cited by Hwang and Taylor (2016), up to 62% of the fastest growing careers require proficient knowledge or skills in STEM-related areas. In addition, knowledge in STEM helps students live a better quality of life because STEM is fully entrenched in daily life situations such as calculating tips, using electronic devices, e.g. smartphones and iPads, and using chemicals such as medicines, cleaning supplies, pesticides, and food additives.

Other benefits of STEM for students with disabilities are helping kids to be creative, and to be good problem solvers. In addition, STEM prepares students with or without disabilities for technological innovations. Studies have indicated that the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards emphasize the importance of high expectations for all students (Heinrich, Knight, Collins, & Spriggs).

What Scientific Strategies are Appropriate for Students with Special Needs?

Salend (1998) posit that using an activities-based approach to teaching science to students with disabilities is more effective than the traditional method of relying on textbooks, lectures, knowledge of vocabulary, and pencil-and-paper tests. Special needs students must be engaged in meaningful and concrete hands-on activities. Braud and Reiss (2006) as cited by Gebbels et al. (2010) argued that laboratory-based science should be complemented by out-of-school science that draws on the actual

world (e.g. through field trips), the presented world (e.g. through science centers) and the virtual worlds that are available through information technology (p.139). Researchers suggest that science experiences in the classroom should bridge the gap between the practices of science in the real world with students' own interests and experiences (Gebbels et al. 2010).

Salend (2010) identified the following strategies as a way to promote science literacy for students with disabilities (a) organize instruction around "Big Ideas" and interdisciplinary themes; (b) have students work in cooperative learning groups; (c) use instructional technology and multimedia; (d) support instruction through specially designed programs and curricula; and (e) evaluate student performance. Ozguc & Cavkaytar (2015) suggest that teaching practices for this population must be multisensory since most of these students have reading & writing skills deficits. In addition, differentiated instruction within the scope of the science education for students with disabilities must be implemented. Adaptations, and accommodations in science literacy can involve a variety of methods, including the use of both low-tech and high-tech devices; teacher demonstrations and pupil-led investigations, as well as extended time and modified projects in order to ensure that all pupils, including those with disabilities are given full access to the subject (Bennington, 2004).

Why is Science Literacy necessary for Students with Disabilities?

According to Ozguc and Cavkaytar (2015) science literacy not only makes students' progress academically but also socially by enhancing their interpretation and exploration of their environments. Through science literacy students with disabilities are able to see the role of science in their daily lives and how it affects the environment they live in. In addition, science is essential to preparing students for the transition to adulthood and for membership in an increasingly technological workforce (Salend, 1998). It must be pointed out that most of the students who will benefit from science literacy are those with mild and moderate difficulties (Haskell, 2000). Collaboration between science and special education teachers is also key in closing the gap between science literacy and special education.

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Difficulties in Sexuality Education for 6-12 Year Old Children with Intellectual Disability

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Gheraximovic (1988) recommended that sex education could and should start as soon as newborns left a hospital. Sexuality education provides the understandings of sexual well- beings, the positive attitudes towards sexuality, and the necessary skills to start and maintain a healthy sexual relationship (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1996; Boehning, 2006; Gougeon, 2009). Sexuality education is not only needed for typically developing children but also for children with disabilities (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1996; Boehning, 2006).

Ho Chi Minh city has 3,122 students with disabilities studying in 541 mainstream and special schools of which the majority are children with intellectual disabilities. To gain insights into the situation of sexuality education in the schools, we aimed to investigate the sexual behavior display of children with mild intellectual disabilities aged 6-10 years olds and the difficulties of sexuality education of this group of children.

Theoretical Background

Studies on children's sexual behaviors showed that children aged 6 -10 years old displayed a number of behaviors namely, touching their own genitals; touching other children's genitals during plays; showing other children their genitals; sexualising play with dolls, playing mummies and daddies. Concerning sexual behaviors for children before the age of 12-14 years old include persistently touching or rubbing themselves to the exclusion of normal childhood activities; showing other children their genitals; masturbation; touching or looking at the private parts of other children; simulating sex with other children; threatening or forcing other children to play sexual games (Stanfort & Colen-Kettenis cited in Do, 2003; Evertsz & Miller, 2012).

Methods

In this study, we conducted two surveys. The first focused on teacher and parent's perception of their children's display of sexual behaviors and the second looked at the difficulties of sexuality education for this group of children. There were teachers and the parents of 51 students with mild intellectual disabilities in a special education school in Ho Chi Minh City participating the first survey. And 71 teacher responses for the second survey.

Results

Nearly half of the teachers and parents acknowledged that the children had shown their own genitals with little discrepancy in response rate for occasional display of the behaviour for both 6-7 and 8-10 age group. There were higher rate of teachers than parents mentioned the behaviour occurred regularly for children aged 6-7 (14.3% of the teachers and 6.7% of parents) and vice versa for children aged 8-10 (9.5% teachers and 14.3 parents). Touching their own genitals was the most frequent sexual behaviours that the children had and there was little discrepancy in response rate between teachers and parents. 29% of teachers and 23.3% of parents answered that their children of 6-7 years old did the behaviour occasionally and 57.2% teachers and 53.3% parents for children age 8-10. Sexualising play with dolls is the least frequent sexual behaviour with only 4.7% teachers acknowledged this behaviours in children 6-7 years and 4.7% in children 8-10 years of age. Sexual behaviours observed in girls occurred less than in boys with only 3.9% of the teachers noted that girls showed their genitals regularly and there was no response from both teachers and parents when asked about girls'sexualising play with dolls.

The surveyed teachers recognised the issues of sexuality education for children with intellectual disabilities including the lack of necessary skills to conduct sexuality education (37.2%); lack of essential knowledge in terms of topics to be covered (25%); knowledge of sexuality education (13.2%): lack of appropriate pedagogical approach (24%); low awareness of the importance of sex education for children with intellectual disability (22.9%); and total disregard of the need of sexuality education for children with intellectual disability (16.7%). Therefore, 20.8% teachers did not collaborate with parents in educating children in this area.

Conclusions

The study's findings are in accordance with other literature which showed that children with intellectual disabilities display sexual behaviors such as showing genitals, touching genitals and sexualising play with dolls (Stanfort & Colen Kettenis cited in Do, 2003; Evertsz & Miller, 2012). Challenges in sexuality education for children with intellectual disabilities lies in the fact that teachers are under-trained in sexuality education in terms of knowledge, content, pedagogical methods which is similarly mentioned by Boehning (2006). In some cases, there is misconception that children with intellectual disabilities do not need sexuality education which led to limited collaboration between teachers and parents in sexuality education. There is a need for more dramatic measures to enhance sexuality education for children with intellectual disabilities such as training courses for teaching practitioners, informing and supporting caregivers in sexuality education (Swango-Wilson, 2008), inviting health professionals to give educational talks for children with intellectual disability about gender and sexuality, establishing partnership between teachers and parents, developing sex education curriculum that integrate sex education into daily activities in special schools (Gougeon, 2009).

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Maximizing Accessibility and Instruction Using Free Online Tools

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Online learning is growing exponentially in its capacity to reach learners around the world and in its capabilities to offer high-quality, flexible, and engaging instruction. Online instruction can leverage the power of the Internet and its vast resources, and when designed well, can offer the learner as effective a learning experience as face-to-face instruction. In fact, online learning can even offer face-to-face opportunities through video conferencing. The world is moving toward a much greater online learning presence, and professional acceptance of the same.

Design Issues

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles ensure that learning opportunities are designed to meet all needs of all learners. The growth of e-learning and the opportunities this affords of any time anywhere learning gives today's students and teachers an unprecedented opportunity to reach any learner with an Internet connection. This paper explores free online tools and resources that coupled with UDL provide carefully crafted instructional design incorporated into online learning experiences for the betterment of the individual. The core principles of UDL are simple, yet very powerful in designing instruction. These include 1) multiple means of engagement, 2) multiple means of representation, and 3) multiple means of action and expression (Meyer, Rose & Gordon, 2013). By incorporating these principles and the rich guidelines available through the National Center on UDL (CAST, Inc., 2014), teachers and instructional designers' online learning environments will be varied and engaging for all learners.

Basic accessibility is the first building block to ensure full and balanced participation in online instruction. Universities around the world recognize the necessity to consider equity of access when designing and offering learning opportunities online (Moreno, et al., 2013) The field has responded, and many learning management systems (i.e. Blackboard) and other online resources (i.e. Google) now have built-in access features such as screen reading and word prediction. As the diverse world market continues to grow in online instruction, access features will surely become even more prevalent.

Learning management systems afford a teacher the opportunity to create differentiated instructional opportunities in an online asynchronous environment. Moodle, an open source learning management system, provides a stable platform that teachers can take advantage of using good instructional design and UDL principles, to provide custom learning experiences for individuals in a secure environment. Moodle provides opportunities for within group interactions and peer assessment, advancement through a course based on milestones and feedback through Gradebook. A large global community, (www.moodle.org), for users and resources are shared freely on Moodle.net. Moodle also offers interoperability through allowing external tool plug-ins including SCORM compliant packages.

From a teacher's point of view the entire learning experience: Evaluations, interactions, communications and assignments can be delivered through Moodle. It provides a range of differing structures to meet a wide range of accommodations, and can be self-paced. Being browser based accessibility options can interact and provide text-to-speech as part of the accommodations available through operating systems.

Sakai is a FREE, open-source, web-based learning environment that supports teaching, learning, and scholarly/professional collaboration. Conceived as an alternative to rigid, business-driven proprietary systems, Sakai provides a very flexible platform for online learning. The tools within Sakai can be used to structure online courses and other online teaching and learning experiences, as well as for creating collaborative project sites.

The developers of Sakai are aware of the importance of accessibility, and every effort is made to ensure that all of Sakai's core features are (and continue to be) accessible and useable by the greatest number of users, including people with disabilities. Sakai meets or exceeds all accessibility design standards such as W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level A and AA Success Criteria.

Emerging standards and best practice design techniques (such as the WAI- ARIA Suite) that support existing and emerging adaptive technologies are also integrated in Sakai development. Some of the common design features available through Sakai include the following: Announcements, assignments, chat room, drop box, forums, gradebook, lessons, meetings, messages, my mediasite, news, podcasts, polls, resources, roster, schedule, statistics, syllabus, and tests & quizzes. Features can be added or removed as preferred. Like Moodle potential courses or trainings are developed in a design preview space, and upon completion can then be shared with the learning community. Videos, podcasts, pictures, and other multi-media content is easily integrated into the instructional framework.

Try out Sakai by going to https://trysakai.longsight.com/portal/site/!gateway/tool/!gateway-110. G-Suite for Education (https://www.google.com/edu/products/productivity-tools/) offers useful and powerful applications available to schools today through Google. Previously known as Google Apps for Education, the G-Suite for Education is free for schools and can be used with any computer, tablet, or smartphone. There is a registration and verification process that schools must follow, but once registered, the entire school (or educational entity) has access to the G-Suite tools.

The core tools available through G-Suite for Education include: Classroom (a type of LMS), Gmail (electronic mail), Drive (online resource sharing site), Calendar (interactive online calendar), Vault (archive emails and chats), Docs (online word processing), Sheets (online spreadsheets), Forms (online interactive forms), Slides (online presentation interface), Sites (website development), and Hangouts (online real-time video-conferencing). These powerful tools can be used by teachers, administrators, students, or any combination of persons affiliated with the registered school.

Google has directed much effort toward the development of easy-to-use accessibility features, to ensure that its products, including G-Suite for Education can be used by everyone. There are too many features to be listed here, however at https://www.google.com/accessibility/products-features.html you can find a complete listing of Google's accessibility features, cross-referenced with the google products and applications that they can be used with. Examples of these include voice access, switch access, low-vision features, keyboard short-cuts, a screen reader function, and many others.

MOOC courses, iTunes U and Coursera (www.coursera.org), offer University derived content, while the Khan Academy a wider range of content. There are many options for learners to engage with provided internet access is available.

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Gaining from Training: Cultivating a Professional Persona in a Rural Setting

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The Toa Nafasi Project is a *program* (not a separate school or center) that works *within* the existing public (government) school system in Tanzania, where the majority of children are enrolled. We strive to improve learning outcomes for all students, but our focus is on the most vulnerable learners in the classroom: those with learning difficulties, slow learners, or other marginalized children. We do not deviate from the national syllabus mandated by the Ministry of Education, but rather ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to learn regardless of his or her learning style. We work with teachers and parents to identify which children are struggling, what the cause might be, and how best to help them. If the problem is medical or psychosocial, we have developed a referral system. If it is scholastic, Toa Nafasi provides a "pull-out program" in which flagging students are removed from their regular lessons for short periods every day to receive one-on-one or small group tutorials from our trained staff.

The Toa Nafasi Project operates in the rural setting of a developing country, specifically in four village schools on the outskirts of Moshi, the capital city of Kilimanjaro region, Tanzania, East Africa. Infrastructure is poor, and the villages are ill-equipped to provide health or education services. There are few opportunities for employment other than subsistence farming, and many adults are under-educated and illiterate. Children are often sent to school, not so much to be taught as to remove them from the home so parents can go and farm their plots. There is little communication among the parents, their children, and the teachers at school.

Toa Nafasi works to connect these previously uncommunicating groups and to focus attention on learning differences and special education. The Project goes against the grain of "one size fits all" instruction, insisting that each child is an individual with different aptitudes and needs. To assist students, teachers must be specially trained, and parents must become part of their children's educational process.

This paper focuses on teacher training. It is an example of "action research" that identifies and analyzes a successful practice in order to further developments in policy (Lehtomäki, 2014). Toa Nafasi teachers are young women from the villages who have struggled to find gainful employment. More often than not, they are unskilled, with little or poor formal schooling. Deemed failures by their government, first in their own studies and then by being "unemployable," they have no official work options. As a consequence, Toa Nafasi has adopted the model of in-service, as opposed to pre-service, training (Kruijer, 2010). Our international special education consultants show prospective teachers a few simple yet effective teaching methodologies for slow learners in initial workshops and then in follow-up consultations throughout the year. After observation and feedback, teachers apply what they have learned to their work in the classroom, and this experience provides further on-the-job training.

If left entirely to government initiatives, special education needs would be addressed by requiring prospective teachers to attend one of the very few special education teacher training colleges. According to Sumra and Rajani, the government defines graduates' competence "in terms of formalistic certification based on passing examinations that rarely measure the attributes of an effective teacher" (2006, p.4). Moreover, a 2005 study found that only 821 teachers had credentials to teach students with special needs. Even then, training is poor as the Tanzanian understanding of disability is limited, filled with assumptions and stigmas (Stone-MacDonald, 2012). Compounding the problem, there is no generally accepted definition of disability and therefore, no accurate idea of the number of students affected and teachers needed (Lehtomäki, 2014). Finally, the Tanzanian notion of "inclusive education" is flawed: inclusive schools are considered those that have a special education needs unit on site, but continue to segregate those students from regular classrooms.

In contrast, Toa Nafasi embraces the concept that "teacher competence should be based on a balance of subject knowledge and pedagogical skills" as well as on their ability to inspire students to learn (Sumra & Rajani, 2006, p.4), with the goal of promoting teacher self-efficacy (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014). Our Project demonstrates that the in-service training of teachers yields several identifiable results: 1) a positive effect on the intended beneficiary community, the children, whose improved academic skills enables them to succeed in the regular classroom setting, thereby cultivating a truly inclusive learning environment; and 2) a growth in teacher self-efficacy, a sense of purpose in place of passivity, and the creation of an informal network of special education teachers. Our teachers' progress with their pupils is slowly dispelling assumptions and myths about disability.

Teaching with Toa Nafasi provides village women with skills possessed by few others in the community, a sense of self-worth, and hence increased value in the eyes of their neighbors. In addition to their newfound intellectual capital, our teachers achieve economic stability and independence in the form of monthly salaries, pension funds, and payment of taxes. They also gain a professional identity. Outfitted with email addresses, business cards, and brochures, they are no longer merely following directives given out by management; rather, they are equipped to assume leadership positions. They serve as ambassadors of Toa Nafasi to their community, lobbying for previously stigmatized special needs students, and building bridges among formerly uncommunicating groups (students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and local government authorities). They are poised eventually to take over directorship of Toa Nafasi.

The Toa Nafasi Project is a testament to how unskilled village women thought to be "lost causes" can achieve professionalism other than by government-sanctioned means in order to then support the "lost causes" of the next generation of students. The Project promotes self-efficacy among special education teachers by providing a livelihood, economic independence, a professional identity, and leadership potential. The more schools we add to the Project's grassroots initiative, the larger the network of formerly uncommunicating groups, and the greater a previously inactive workforce in rural Kilimanjaro.

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Accessible Learning Environment for Students, Educators and School Leaders: One Way Towards Inclusion

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The Agency has a supportive material *Assessment Tool for Accessible Education,* which focus on the physical, pedagogic and social learning environment. The expression accessible education derived from Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2016). This article describes a study of Master Degree within the field of Special Education at Malmö University.

The study is about how the Assessment tool contributes to the change in the learning environment among preschools and schools. The purpose of the research is to elucidate how the supportive material *Assessment Tool for Accessible Education* of the Swedish National Agency of Special Needs Educations and Schools is being used by educational institutions in Sweden and how it contributes to the change in the learning environment among preschools and schools. The study provides valuable knowledge for how the agency can develop their support to educational institutions, as well as for the actors of the field to make the learning environment accessible to the students.

The study looks at similarities and differences between the inclusive learning environments based on previous research, and the accessible learning environment based on *Assessment Tool for Accessible Education*. A lot of similarities can be found in the pedagogic and social aspects, while the differences become prominent in aspects of the physical environment which can only be found in accessible learning environments.

The Research

Research questions are as follow; Does the *Assessment Tool for Accessible Education* contribute to a change in the learning environment? What developing processes contribute to the change? How should institutions be supported in order to develop the accessible learning environment? Mixed methods have been used for collection of data; a poll was answered by 425 people and interviews were held with nine focus groups from four different institutions, including one group of students.

The theoretical frame of the analysis follows the organization theory; learning organization and rational-analytic, interactional, and political perspective. The empiric has been worked through thematically and is presented in a chronological order from when people first came in touch with *Assessment Tool for Accessible Education*, how the work has been implemented and processed at the institutions, and a description of what changes has been processed and its effects upon the learning environment. Obstacles and factors of success experienced by the respondents as well as the need of support for development are also presented.

The Tool Helps to Changes in the Learning Environment

The critical points in the process for a successful development are when the structural and cultural factors in the organization interact together with the model of Accessible learning model (the physical, pedagogic and social learning environment). The main points in the structural factors are; anchoring in the leading of the organization as well among employees, a clear purpose of the development, participation of all the staff, focus and direction, planning, time for forum of dialog meetings, planned follow-up and evaluation, taking advantage of the students´ apprehensions, leadership. The cultural factors are; using the model of accessible learning environments as a considering model, dialogue meetings among the staff where different perspectives enriching the common understanding, the students´ apprehensions, reflection and new input, new actions in practice, new reflections and follow-up. When all those factors interacts together with the content of the model

of Accessible learning a new understanding and a new common language are developing in the organization which contributes new actions in the teaching where the learning environment been changed.

Conclusion

The results of the research show that the assessment tools contribute to a change in how the pedagogues approach the knowledge of how the learning and development of the students is affected by the learning environment when organizational development exists within the institution. Development launches when structural and cultural conditions exist and are processed which in turn leads to development of the learning organization. Further, when good conditions exist the learning environments develop. The research shows changes that have been processed through the physical, pedagogic, and social environment. The conclusion is that the *Assessment Tool for Accessible Education* contributes to a higher level of knowledge regarding the significance of the learning environment which implies changes, provided that organizational development exists within the institution.

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Embracing the Future: Pre-Service Teachers Implement Include Strategy to Celebrate All Learners

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The importance of fostering opportunity and inclusion for all children cannot be underestimated. Indeed, research suggests teachers' attitudes influence student outcomes (Turnbull, Turnbull, & Wehmeyer, 2013). In addition, it has been agreed that collaboration is essential to addressing challenges that are present when promoting cohesiveness among organizations. In other words, collaboration doesn't just naturally occur (Miller, 2008). It takes a great deal of time and effort to make connections with others in order to ensure that shared projects are a success. Therefore, pre-service teachers were requested to collaborate with various education organizations on campus and to utilize a seven step review process (Friend & Bursuck, 2015) to guide their planning and implementation of an inclusive all day event, one intended to promote opportunity and inclusion for all children and to recognize the importance of supportive, positive interactions in establishing effective teams and developing friendships.

Procedure

Student leaders on campus worked collaboratively to plan an all-day inclusive event for area school children. The "Bring a Buddy to the Fair" event is a free carnival like field trip designed specifically for students with exceptionalities and their peers. Students receiving special education services, ages 3-10, their teachers, aides, student teachers, and general education buddies from surrounding districts are invited to campus to participate in the events. The purpose of the "Bring a Buddy to the Fair" event is to foster a positive climate of learning, equity and excellence for all students. In preparation for the event, leaders in various campus organizations used a simple seven step review process (**INCLUDE**) to help guide their planning and implementation of the event. The seven steps utilized are:

Involve others

Note roles and responsibilities

Communicate effectively

Listen, be sure to find common goals, brainstorm ideas, etc.

Understand the physical environment, procedures and materials and adapt as needed

Deepen and expand your understanding of others

Encourage and promote social acceptance and friendships

Findings and Discussion

Over 300 students from the public schools participated in the event, along with their teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents. There were over 75 campus volunteers from various student organizations that encouraged and provided supports and services that enabled all students' participation. Results suggest that student leaders recognized the importance of developing a shared vision. Success was noted when there were clear goals and objectives, specific to inclusion. Sharing information with all parties involved was crucial and holding follow-up meetings when necessary helped with the implementation of the event. The pre-service teachers report that utilizing the INCLUDE model helped them choose better options, ones that supported the needs of all the participants.

Conclusions

The general education pre-service teachers gained a greater appreciation for the importance of working together with children with different abilities and their families.   Indeed, the general education pre-service teachers had a greater appreciation of all learners and recognized several ways they could contribute to the overall growth of students with various abilities.   Furthermore, the preservice teachers contend that utilizing the INCLUDE model called them to action, that is, their productivity and success were a direct result of following the seven steps of the INCLUDE strategy.

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A Comparative Study of Adjustment of Visually Impaired Students

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Visual impairment is a medical phenomenon. It relates to impaired sense of vision loss. Usually vision is the most actively used by man and hence, his knowledge grows mainly from his visual experiences. Blindness limits perception and cognition in three ways, i.e. (i) in the range and variety of experiences, (ii) in the ability to get about, (iii) in the control of environment and the self relation to its. These limitation delays developmental stage characteristics compared to that of sighted counterparts. Blindness always produces shock; it affects the parents and the family members, and the individual who is afflicted with it. The absorption of shock, both physical and emotional is prerequisite to adjustment to impairment.

Review of Related Studies

Agarwal (2002; 2005) reported that visually impaired students going to mainstream schools both in integrated as well as semi- integrated setting were good at problem solving and reasoning skills due to greater exposure to the subjects like mathematics and science. The investigator concluded that visually impaired children should be admitted to mainstream schools in large numbers. Integrated setting should be promoted and strengthened. Special schools should be utilized to provide resource services as a supplement to integrated setting. Last but not the least important finding from the analysis of hypotheses was remarkable uniformity between visually impaired boys and visually impaired girls in academic skills. Both were equal in their performance. The investigator concluded that uniform education policy and procedures shall hold good for both. Pandey (2013) reported that adjustment of visually impaired adolescence varied significantly when compared with sighted adolescence in special set up. There was significant difference in adjustment of visually impaired adolescence when compared to VI in special and that of in integrated schools. There was no significant difference in adjustment sighted adolescence and that of visually impaired adolescence in integrated set up because of similarity in environment that provide plenty of experiences for visually impaired.

Findings and Conclusion

Visually impaired having limited experience and opportunity posed serious problem to adjust. Thus, for proper adjustment of visually impaired, it is essential for parents, teachers, peer groups to have positive attitude which in turn develop positive self-concept and positive attitude. This can be achieved only though proper attitude and awareness regarding visually impaired young adult towards society and vice versa. Adjustment is essential for rehabilitation. To cater the needs of visually impaired special and integrated institutions are established. The adjustment of visually impaired are varied according to setting. Thus, the present study was designed to understand adjustment of visually impaired students attending special and integrated schools. The study was conducted on students of 60 visually impaired students aged 14-16 years, attending special and integrated schools in the selected schools of Varanasi city, UP, India. The survey[*] method was used to elicit information about their adjustment in the home area, school area and personal area in special and integrated set-up. Data were collected using the adjustment scale developed and standardized by the investigator. Results indicate that here was a significant difference in the adjustment of the visually impaired students in the area of home, school and personal in special and integrated set-up. Thus integrated setting was found more favorable for mainstreaming of visually impaired students as compared to that of special settings. This result is in consonance with the findings of Agrawal (2005), Rukwaro, (2006), Daniel (2012) and Pandey (2013).

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The Intersection of Professional Ethics and Personal Disposition: First, Do No Harm

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There are several common sayings that can be applied to the field of teaching. The first being the Golden Rule: *do unto others, as you would have them do unto you*. A second is a concept most associated with the medical field, the Hippocratic oath of *do no harm. Doing no harm* connotes the idea that no harm should occur when working with children with and without disabilities and their families (Sileo, Sileo, & Prater 2012). Harm to children and families may result from negligence and malpractice and "it is unethical to ignore or overlook responsibilities to provide essential professional services . . . and . . . to practice any profession in a manner that brings harm to clients" (Rude & Whetstone 2008, p. 12). Preventing harm to others requires educators to balance the moral duty of *doing good* and protecting the interests of individuals with the ethical duty of *doing right* while maintaining the integrity of best practice in education (Courtade & Ludlow, 2008; Sileo et al., 2012).

The principle of *doing no harm* (Feeney & Freeman, 1999; Sileo, Sileo & Pierce, 2008; Sileo et al., 2012) implies educators should (a) remain current in special education practices and legislation that advocates and protects children; (b) embrace opportunities for professional development that rely on research and scholarship, promote reflection, and improve instructional and assessment practices; (c) develop trusting and respectful cooperative relationships with colleagues and families by appreciating multiple viewpoints; (d) advance collaboration and partnerships that facilitate students' attainment of a high-quality education; and (e) avoid participation in prejudicial and discriminatory practices.

The practice of *doing no harm* applies to interacting with children with disabilities and their families. *Doing no harm* with families necessitates an understanding that the concept of family is defined by culture, including differences in family constellations and role patterns. *Doing no harm* with families also involves teachers' acceptance of diverse family structures, and recognition that a *normal* family may comprise a different definition and perception of normal.

In addition, special education professionals and children with disabilities and their families often experience a closer relationship than do other education professionals. Many parents of children with disabilities volunteer in classrooms and/or accompany children to and from school. In addition, special education professionals often spend a good deal of time outside the school setting working with and supporting children and their families. Therefore, teachers and children and parents have increased opportunities to interact. The increased level of interaction heightens the potential for inconsistencies between personal dispositions / values and professional ethics and responsibilities.

Special education professionals often experience ethical dilemmas and value / disposition conflicts in family – professional interactions. These dilemmas occur in interactions related to racial, ethnic, and cultural differences; diverse family structures; and, disparity in child rearing practices (Sileo, et al., 2012). Hence, it is essential teacher educators prepare teacher candidates to be knowledgeable of professional codes of ethics and work with teacher candidates to reconcile differences between personal dispositions and values, with professional ethical responsibilities and practices.

In addition to teaching candidates about the various codes of ethical conduct, it is also imperative to teach strategies for solving ethical dilemmas. For example, Brophy-Herb, Kostelnik, and Stein (2001) offer a four-phase model that focuses on ethical literacy using Nash's (1996) concept of ethical literacy as the ability to recognize and comprehend ethical issues, succeed in ethical decision-making, and engage in ethical practice. Phase one of Brophy-Herb et al. (2001) included developing an awareness of and learning about various codes of ethical conduct related to professional education. Phase two looked at the ability to differentiate between ethical judgments and other conclusions (e.g.,

to determine whether a decision relates to personal morality or professional ethics). Phase three suggested using a systematic process to analyze and solve the ethical dilemma. Finally, phase four allowed educators to apply various ethical codes of conduct to problem solution. This strategy provided educators the opportunity to (a) identify the dilemma, (b) review and apply various codes of ethical conduct, and (c) choose a solution and take a course of action.

Educators should be knowledgeable of the codes of conduct and problem solving strategies as a basis for avoiding harm and fulfilling their ethical responsibilities. Special Educators' knowledge of and ability to reflect upon different family structures enables them to respond to parents in a manner that conveys positive regard for family dynamics, establishes trust, and ensures optimal parent and family involvement.

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Emergent Curriculum: Our Journey Started with a Wedding

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A late wintry spring day in March and the temperatures were cold enough to keep everyone indoors for extended free play. The children started lining up the circle chairs to make a train, which necessitated much discussion and decision making. "Let's put the chairs next to each other!" "No, let's put them all one after the other so the train will be longer!" "Put all the yellow chairs first!" "No, let's put the chairs in a pattern, red, yellow, blue!" Conversations such as this worked their way throughout the set up until finally the chairs were in a long line winding throughout the classroom in mixed color.

    "Where are you going on the train?" the teacher asked

    "A wedding!!" Bella replied with excitement!

    "Oh! How fun! Who is getting married?" the teacher asked

    "Alexander and ME!" Bella exclaimed

    "Ooohhh!!" the teacher replied

Emergent curriculum is, by definition, fluid. According to Palmer "the curriculum is not predefined but rather a dynamic process of inquiry that develops with common interests shared by adults and children alike" (2008, p26). It allows the opportunity for teachers and students to explore new concepts and build the curriculum based on each other's interests. In effect, the teacher's objective is to develop the children's curiosity, explore their thinking, and strengthen their learning (Scheinfeld, Haigh, & Scheinfeld, 2008).

"Emergent curriculum starts with a provocation introduced by a child or teacher. It can be an idea, an event, or an object that captures the children's imagination and desire to learn" (Jacobs, 2008, p82). In this instance, the students' placement of the circle time chairs and the teacher's question was the provocation. The student felt comfortable enough in her surroundings to initiate this emergent curriculum event. Had the teacher not responded the way she did, this event may not have unfolded into such an incredible experience. This pretend wedding provided opportunities for development across curricular domains (i.e., social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive) as well as allowed the participants to become co-learners in an attempt to understand an aspect of real life (Wien, 2008).

In an emergent classroom, teachers often observe their students and plan their learning objectives based on student interests. According to Scheinfeld, et al. (2008) "an emergent curriculum process begins with teachers observing and documenting children's actions, interactions, and representations through note taking, photography, tape-recording, and collecting children's work" (p59). Once the data have been analyzed, the teachers, along with their students, decide what content and activities they want included in the lesson. Alternatively, emergent curriculum may be expressed in the context of spontaneous play activities (as in this instance) or through an object that a child brings to school (Scheinfeld, et al, 2008). One of the greatest benefits of participating in emergent curriculum is that the teachers often "participate in learning alongside children, asking their own questions and conducting their own quest" (Wien, 2008, p147).

When teachers provide children with the opportunity to negotiate the curriculum with the adults and with each other, they are promoting student growth and development (Lickey & Powers, 2011). The teachers in this classroom are constantly answering questions with questions. Throughout this emergent event, both teachers ask why or how, which helps the students develop the skills necessary for problem solving.

In classrooms where emergent curriculum is used children are creative problem solvers who, in addition to working well with others, continually demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors (Thomas, 2008). Allowing children sufficient time to explore and construct their own learning helps

them acquire a clear understanding of the problem and reinforces their ability to solve the problem successfully (Barnett & Halls, 2008). When teachers provide children sufficient time to explore and construct their own learning and guide their development through the processes of communicating, negotiating, planning, problem-solving, constructing materials, and creating story lines, they help children develop their skills far beyond rote learning (Lickey & Powers, 2011).

Ideal learning comes when teachers allow these spontaneous, engaging opportunities to come to fruition. The optimum experience for both student and teacher occurs when teachers provide children the time and materials to support a satiating educational experience across curriculum as when these moments or in this case, event(s), unfold. The key is to remember to trust in your own knowledge and trust in the knowledge of the children, you will be surprised what you learn.

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Transition from Primary to Post-Primary for Students with Special Educational Needs

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The transition from primary to post-primary school has long been recognised as an important stage in young children's schooling development and has been viewed as a critical educational step for many children (Smyth et al., 2004).   Research and reports tend to suggest that the transition is an exciting time for most with the provision of new experiences and challenges, a variety of teachers, varying subject choice and the opportunity to establish new friendships. While for the majority of students, the move is seamless, for others, the transition can present a lot of anxiety and fear (Ó' Dálaigh & Aherne, 1990).

Transitions can be more difficult for students with a visual, hearing or speech and language impairment; those who have specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia and those who are on the autistic spectrum. The NCSE Implementation Report (2006) estimated that 17.7% of children in Ireland aged 0-17 had a special educational need, by virtue of a disability or other condition, as defined in the EPSEN Act (Government of Ireland, 2004). Most children will cope with transition adjustments and adapt within the first couple of weeks, while in contrast the child with SEN may require a number of school terms or additional supports to successfully engage with and access the curriculum.

Historically, students with disabilities were excluded from many elements of society, and often did not access equal educational prospects as their peers without disabilities, consequently opportunities were somewhat limited. Education for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) has vastly changed in recent years with the evolution of laws leading up to the introduction of the EPSEN Act (Government of Ireland, 2004) which sets out that students with SEN have the right to be treated with equity, educated in an inclusive environment and supported throughout their schooling. While this is extremely positive, there are still many daily aspects of life and school that present challenges and stresses for students with SEN.

In order to promote social inclusion and combat educational disadvantage, a better understanding is required about factors that have an impact on student's experiences at school. There is an ever increasing body of literature exploring these factors, with specific emphasis on social class of student, types of school, varying curriculum and modes of assessment. Research indicates that problems students encounter tend to be centred on the new school environment, academic adjustment involving curriculum change and higher expectations and social change as Hargreaves et al. (1996) refer to it as a triple transition for students, the move form a familiar school culture to a new one, moving from established friendships and peer groups to new peer groupings and the move from childhood to adolescence.

This study explores primary to post-primary transitions for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) within mainstream schooling in an Irish context. A questionnaire was distributed to a cohort of sixth class students (n=58) from four different primary schools in advance of their transfer and results were then compared with a similar cohort of first year students (n=63) from two post-primary schools following the transfer. The perspectives of the key stakeholders involved in the transition process were gained through questionnaires (n=10) and semi-structured interviews (n=5).

Findings indicate that while a minority of first-year students experience transition difficulties, students with SEN encounter greater obstacles during this crucial time of transfer with increased anxiety attributed to new subjects, new teachers and new environment and are more vulnerable and prone to bullying than their typically developing peers. Schools should place greater emphasis on transitions involving those with SEN due to their increased vulnerability. The importance of SEN supports in the transition experience must be recognised and it must be acknowledged that the student's

needs are a dominant influence on their transition experience. Viewing transition planning as a support and not as an additional burden will help to enable SEN students to reach their full potential.

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The Uncomfortable Empowerment: The Adulthood of People with Intellectual Disabilities

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The results referred in the article are a snapshot of the project about social inclusion of people with a serious (moderate and severe) intellectual disability (ID). The objective of the article is to answer the following question: "How the functioning of people with ID and social perception of them change along with intensified efforts to empower them?"
Materials and methods consistently carried out in the ongoing project include a diagnostic survey and action research. The mixed methods research that integrates quantitative and qualitative data, therefore, justifies the application nature of the project. To measure social perceptions of the place of people with ID in the society we use a 14-item scale by J. Kruk-Lasocka (Social Perception Scale - SPS).

It is an undeniable fact that persons with intellectual disabilities, regardless of the degree of disability, are members of the society in which they live. The question remains how to empower them? The transition from school to adult life for people with ID remains an ongoing issue. The indicated concern involves the insufficiency in school curricula to ensure that people with ID success in their adult and independent living (Bouck, 2010; Dyke, Bourke, Llewellyn, & Leonard, 2013). The problem with promoting a conducive environment for independent living is therefore not without significance. To decide on where adults with ID should live, therapists must have a clear overview of how they function within their environment (Hall, 2010). It implicates, therefore, the possibility of recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of their functioning. The Tower of London test (ToL) proves helpful in the assessment of independent living skills (Masson, Dagnan, Evans, 2010). At the same time, the Australian project that refers to people with ID living in their communities as equal citizens shows how difficult it is to create a tool helpful in supporting them. The individual supported living manual (ISL), which is still under improvement, may, however, serve as such an instrument (Coks, Thoresen, Williamson, & Boaden, 2014). Living in communities for people with intellectual disabilities is a definite step forward in creating conditions for social inclusion. The authors of the text (Francis, Blue-Banning, Turnbull 2014) analyze factors that affect the quality of life (QoL) of people with ID living in communities. The question that arises consequently is how to support people with ID living in communities to enhance their social inclusion. One of the possibilities is to apply Active Mentoring Model in which the existing group members mentor a person with intellectual disability. In this model, the authors of the text see the key to social inclusion (Wilson et al., 2013).

Social Perception of the Place of Persons with ID in Society

This article (as a part of the ongoing project) inserts itself into research and discussions about creating conditions for the empowerment of persons with ID. The measured perception of the place of people with ID in society, studied in the ongoing project, involved: In Poland - occupational therapists (OTs), social workers, and citizens of a small town (street survey), and in Norway - students of Psychology University. The study was conducted on 40 respondents in each group. The SPS results showed that a random sample of small town citizens presented the largest response diversity. Responses varied from "totally agree" vs. "completely disagree," "partly agree and partly disagree," to "I do not know."It cannot be said, however, whether these respondents presented stereotypical perceptions. If that were the case, opposite answers would outweigh, not be only a small percentage as shown in item 3: "The person with ID is closer to God than others" or item 6: "A person with ID is not able to live in a long-term relationship with a partner." The randomly encountered respondents (street survey) presented, however, the insufficient knowledge about people with intellectual disabilities. As

much as 33% of them answered "I do not know" to item 6, similarly to item 3, and 42 % to the contention "A person with ID is sexually deviant."

As much as 66% of these respondents agreed with the assertion "A person with ID is the 'product' of our civilization and belongs in society." The same number of the respondents agreed with the statement: "A person with ID is in many areas like other members of the community without ID." Referring obtained street survey results (in Poland) to the responses of psychology students (in Norway) shows that the perceptions of the latter were more inclusive: They perceive a person with intellectual disability as an adult. As much as 83% of respondents from Norway did not agree with the statement: "A person with ID acts like a big baby" and 78% found them capable of living in a long-term relationship with a partner. Almost all respondents (94%) believed that people with ID were easy to communicate with. In general, such perceptions induce contact but also impose the same requirements for people with or without intellectual disability.

Action Research Occupational Therapists (AROTs)

The project is scheduled for the period of six months. The action research includes 26 participants of the operational therapy workshops. The workshops are the only form of support for these people and their families. However, so far only six persons out of this group have completed the whole range of activities. The analysis of the results in Section 2 applies only to these six protégés. All participants are persons with moderate intellectual disability. They have performed intensive workshop activities since July 2016. Activities include: shopping, preparing meals, calculating expenditure, counting products needed for a meal preparation, learning to obtain information necessary for independent movement around the city, voluntary work, activity trips, work training. A weekly stay in a big, unknown city constituted a culmination of project activities. Over the following days of the stay, the participants were to perform multiple tasks. The way they performed the tasks was to show how they cope with being "cast" into the unknown environment. They lived in a flat rented for them. Two persons to whom they could turn for help watched over them discretely.

It turned out that the protégés did not want to leave the flat for shopping unassisted. They also lacked ideas for spending time, despite the city was vibrant. Their responses were "Here I feel well" or "We have a TV, we cook ourselves." They left the flat only in groups, holding hands with co-residents. Therefore, we conducted intensive workshop activities.

We posed the question: "How the project activities influence the everyday functioning of persons with ID and what is the AROTs' perception after conducting a half-year training?"

The facts were following: Six people with ID who fully completed the project started voluntary activities. Marta started to use tram unassisted, and she came to the cafe for work training, she has begun to live in a sheltered housing, and her mother wants to cooperate with AROTs. Natalia was the only person who clearly stated plans: she would like to assist in caring for people. Bartek has started going to the cafe for work training, and he checks shifts in the kitchen. Magda lives in a sheltered housing despite her initial hesitations. Arthur is looking for a job.

The AROTs'(20 specialists working with our protégés) perceptions of the place of people with intellectual disabilities in society turned out to be more critical than in Section 1. As much as 50% of them (AROTs) answered: "I do not know" to item 7: "A person with ID belongs in society same as a person without ID" (In Section 1, 61% of the respondents answered: "Yes" to the same question). The high number of AROTs found communication with persons with ID challenging and agreed they were not able to commit themselves in a long-term relationship with a partner. Because the AROTs observed their protégés more closely, the knowledge about their behaviors was extensive. Therapists have begun to recognize challenging behaviors (The number of AROTs, who observed sexual deviance in persons with ID was 10%, of OTs – 6%. The number of AROTs who think that people with ID are irresponsible was 30%, of OTs -28%). Simultaneously, AROTs expressed different perceptions of the place of persons with ID in society: one protégé received a result pointing to social exclusion, another

one to social inclusion. The other four protégés were perceived as friendly and slightly idealized. The distribution of results points to what already was indicated, namely, the need for the individual approach as a way to full social inclusion. One could also risk the assumption that more extensive knowledge about people with intellectual disabilities linked to a more critical perception. Doubts have arisen on the possibility of their independent functioning. At the same, the intensification of work with the persons with ID provoked to impose higher requirements. Consequently, this leads to the "uncomfortable empowerment," a challenge which both people with intellectual disabilities and carrying specialists must meet.

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Exploring Issues relating to 24-Hour Provisions for Children with Special Education Needs in Selected Early Years Settings in Greater Manchester

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24-hour Provisions

24-hour Provisions in United Kingdom for Special Education Needs (SEN) Children could be traced partly to judicial injunctions that compel education providers to devise strategies for extending learning opportunities for students beyond mandatory school hours.

The concept is premised on the maxim that ''An extended school maximises the curricular learning of its pupils by promoting their overall development and by ensuring that the family and community within which they live are as supportive of learning as possible'' (Smith, 2004, p. 3).

Need for the Study

The lofty aspirations of 24-hour Provisions have however, not snowballed into unearthing issues that are pertinent to 24-hour Provisions for SEN Children in Early Years settings. This precipitated the resolve to explore and identify some issues that are important to 24-hour Provisions for Special Needs Children in Early Years settings.

Method

A three-part Questionnaire was developed and employed to sample the perceptions of Early Years staff as regards the level of importance of some selected issues in designing and implementing 24-hour Provisions for SEN Children in Early Years settings.

The internal consistency of the items contained therein was assessed by way of Split-half reliability statistics (0.87). Similarly, the stability of the instrument over a period of six weeks by a test-retest reliability statistic (0.8%) indicates that the instrument was stable over a reasonable period of time.

Frequency and percentage distributions were used in analysing the data.

The sample consisted of seventy-one respondents (59.1 of total population) drawn from thirty ''I CAN'' Early Talk accredited settings in an urban area of Greater Manchester, UK.

Findings

The following issues explored in the study were perceived by almost all the respondents to be of average and above average importance in designing and implementing 24-hour Provisions for Special Education Needs Children. The issues are structured into a 24-hour Curriculum Issues Competency Assessment Questionnaire (24-hr CICAQ).

It is envisaged that the 24-hr CICAQ would be useful for training purposes.

The Issues

- Knowledge of Every Child Matters Provisions of 2003
- Importance of section 324 of the Education Act of 1996, i.e. Statementing, placement, etc
- Judicial Perspectives of 24-hour Provisions
- 24-hour Provisions as Inclusive Education Strategy
- Early Years Action, Action Plus and CAF Procedures
- Behaviour Management Strategies
- Knowledge of Specific Special Education Needs Conditions
- Knowledge of Early Years foundation Framework

- Awareness of CWDC Competence Standards
- Understanding Process of Special Education Needs Statementing
- Knowledge of Relevant Government Legislations
- Easy Access to Training Opportunities
- Variants of Inclusive provisions
- Effective and Efficient Government Control
- Parents' Involvement
- Involvement of Regulatory Bodies
- Adequate Funding
- My Personal Opinion of Inclusive Provisions
- Barriers to Achievement Provisions
- 24-hour Provisions vis-à-vis Social Integration

Directions of Early Years Education for SEN Children in UK

The Children and Family Bill (2014), the Human Rights Act (2010), the Extended School Provisions (Cummings et al., 2004) and the United Nations Conference on the Rights of the Child (1989), all combine to strengthen children's rights to mandatory educational opportunities irrespective of their abilities or disabilities. There have been government policies and regulations in the last two decades geared towards growing formidable Early Years Education . The ''Every Child Matters Provisions of 2003'' is intended to assist children achieve five outcomes among which are that every child should stay safe, be healthy and enjoy economic well-being in adult life. The Early years Foundation Framework sets the guidelines for ''Every Child Matters Provisions'.

The 2003 Ofsted Report titled ''Good Early Years Provisions for All'' seems to signal the future direction of Early Years education in UK by aligning inspection reports of Early Years with those of schools and colleges. The report also hints that parents are not happy with some nurseries. While the then Children Minister and the Ofsted Inspector seemed to be pushing for school-based teacher-led structured learning experiences for Early Years beneficiaries, a survey report carried by a national daily – Manchester edition of Metro Newspaper of 15th April, 2014, revealed that teachers in Kent and Yorkshire opined that structured learning for children should not start until age five.

However, it might be good professional judgement for Early Years personnel to devise means of engaging parents of SEN children more actively in their settings' activities as prescribed in the Early Years Foundation Framework and the 1996 Education Act.

The direction of Early Years Education in UK favours all strategies that can assist all children in general and SEN children in particular to achieve their potentials.

The ''Extended School'' campaign by Government agencies stipulates the framework for Inclusive Programmes to assist children who are lagging behind their peers. 24-hour Provisions might be the panacea to remedy the situation, Hence, good grounding in issues pertaining to 24-hour Provisions is suggested as a pre-requisite for effective design and implementation of 24-hour learning experiences for SEN children in Early Years settings.

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An Ecological Intervention for At Risk Children: Focus on the Whole Child

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Many students who are at risk for school failure struggle to keep pace with academics, however, with focused and intense interventions they can make progress. There is evidence that shows ecological based intervention approaches enhance mental health and resilience as well as promote prosocial behavior, and academic engagement of students. When interventions focus on the whole child, the outcomes are positive for all participants. The family, teachers, and peers and technology are critical in the academic and social functioning of children with and without disabilities. As a child's behavior and social adjustment in school is dependent on factors like the family stability, parents' education, occupational status, and cultural background.

Background

A strengths-based framework emphasizes strength-based assessment as a critical first step in determining the strengths and competencies of children and families rather than focusing on individual and family weaknesses or deficits. Strengths-based practice involves collaborating with families and children to discover individual and family functioning and strengths. Strength-based assessment serves two purposes: 1) It offers practitioners a reliable tool to assess the skills, competencies, and characteristics of individuals and families 2) It provides researchers a reliable and valid way to assess change in individuals following participation in strength-based programs.

Method

Students with disabilities need skills in self-regulation, social skills, and problem solving to be to transition successfully into adulthood. Classroom mainstreaming and skills training, have been used to promote social skills development in children with disabilities. A multicomponent intervention based on an ecological assessment was incorporated into an existing academic intervention for students at risk for developing emotional and behavior problems.

Behavior Management and Social Skills Development

There is a need to develop intervention strategies that address challenging behaviors and attempt to remediate the academic and social struggles of students with disabilities (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006; Koegel, Koegel, Free, & Greene-Hopkins, 2003). Research has shown that academic deficits can trigger challenging behavior and vice versa.

School wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) decreases problem behaviors and improves academic outcomes by establishing a positive social climate, where expectations for student behaviors are well defined, directly taught, and consistently acknowledged and monitored by all school personnel (Sugai & Horner, 2009). Positive behavior support strategies implemented in small group settings using the universal design for learning framework enable learners with diverse characteristics to access curriculum.

SWPBIS supports students who are at risk for problem behaviors to modify their behavior through explicit teaching and reinforcing of acceptable behaviors. Harris, Oakes, Lane, & Rutherford, (2009) observed that students responded favorably to incorporation of behavioral components incorporated into reading interventions for first grade students who were at risk for behavioral problems and struggled with reading. However, skills in math, literacy, and independent living will not assure successful outcomes in the absence of adequate social skills. Social skills form the basis for social competence (Brenner & Smith, 2004). Well-developed social skills can help youth with disabilities develop strong and positive peer relationships, succeed in school, and begin to

successfully explore adult roles such as employee, co-worker/colleague, and community member. Social skills also support the positive development of healthy adult relationships with family members and peers (Gresham et al, 2006). The social skills part of the intervention was integrated into academic areas and taught using direct verbal instruction. By infusing social skills instruction into the academic areas such as literature, language arts, and reading teachers are able to devote more time to social skills without sacrificing any instructional time. In addition, the importance of good social skills is clearer when connected to real life through infusion into literature (Forgan & Gonzalez-DeHass, 2004).

Self- Management

Self-management includes self-monitoring (process of self-observation and self-recording), self-evaluation (comparing the self-monitoring data to the individuals' standards for behavior), self-reinforcement (delivering a consequence that has reinforcing qualities) and goal setting. Though self-regulation is a critical skill that most students learn at lower grades, some students, including those with learning disabilities or attention deficits, experience delayed acquisition of the skill (Bruhn & Watt, 2012).

Kerr and Nelson (2010) identify self-monitoring strategies as an integral part of helping a student to generalize behaviors. Therefore, explicit teaching of the replacement behaviors and self-monitoring are important parts of any intervention. It is important for children to understand their own problem behaviors, the consequences of those behaviors and the replacement behaviors that will help them in a school setting.

Discussion

Proactive measures such as antecedent modifications can create environments that facilitate learning and improve social and academic outcomes for all students while preventing behavior problems. Self-regulation encourages children to become responsible to monitor their progress towards their goals, make adjustment in their effort when necessary. Students who use self-regulation procedures when learning to read and comprehend text are more involved in their learning and more likely to generalize and maintain the strategies taught to them.

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Engagement of College Students with Intellectual Disabilities Compared to Other First Year Students

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Conceptual Framework and Background

Colleges and universities are experiencing a significant growth in the enrollment of students with intellectual disabilities (ID) (e.g., Down syndrome, specific learning disabilities) (see www.thinkcollege.net) in part as a result of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 2008 (Hendrickson, Vander Busard, Rodgers, & Schiedecker, 2013) and the possibility of students with ID receiving federal funds. This trend illustrates the expanding concept of diversity in higher education and a commitment to inclusive postsecondary opportunities. Empirical data to guide the design and any needed differentiation of the college experience for students with disabilities are limited and few studies examine the transition to college of students with ID.

Disability, student development, and higher education literature together provide a conceptual framework which is likely to strengthen outcomes for students with disabilities. Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, and Swanson (2012), for example, describe a paradigm shift away from higher education as the source of expert knowledge to a model of engagement with community and university partners to co-create solutions to meet the needs of highly diverse constituents and society at large. Hendrickson et al. (2013) describe disability-related issues and supports that students may require to succeed in college (e.g., an active, on-going adviser-advisee relationship, mental and physical health counseling, family involvement, peer engagement strategies, strategies for learning and retaining information). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) examine what is known about variables that positively impact first-year student experiences. They cite evidence which supports the importance of such variables as residence hall living-learning experiences, full-time enrollment, and collaborative learning.

The University of Iowa REACH (Realizing Educational and Career Hopes) Program is a two-year, full-time certificate program for students with intellectual disabilities who reside on campus with other students. (See Hendrickson, Therrien, Weeden, Pascarella, & Hosp, 2015 for program description and comprehensive data analysis.) In this study we compared the campus experiences of students with and without intellectual disabilities after approximately six months.

Method and Results

Two cohorts of UI REACH students (*n=20* and *22,* respectively) were compared to two sub-samples of the longitudinal Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education: Wabash students who reported that they had a learning disability upon entrance to college *(n=69)* and a random sample of Wabash students *(n=25).* The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) scales were administered to UI REACH students in February 2012 and 2013 with the assistance of mentors. These scales are designed to tap "good practices" linked to student cognitive and personal development (Cruce, Wolniak, Seifert, & Pascarella, 2006). Five good practices of the NSSE were used: (1) *Level of Academic Challenge*, an 11-item scale (e.g., time preparing for class, spent reading, and writing); (2) *Active and Collaborative Learning*, a 7-item scale (e.g., class participation, amount of tutoring

received, community-based projects; (3) *Student-Faculty Interaction*, a 6-item scale (e.g., extent of interaction with faculty, feedback from faculty); (4) *Supportive Campus Environment*, a 6-item scale (e.g., campus helps academically and socially, promotes peer, faculty, and other relationships); and (5) *Enriching Educational Experiences*, a 12-item scale (e.g., interactions, values, opinions, and participation related to different cultures and new experiences). Additional measures (i.e., scales of deep learning, other academic experiences) were gathered.

Because of the small sample sizes, a series of statistical adjustments were conducted and no statistically adjusted mean difference was considered significant unless it was at $p < 0.0021$ (i.e., 0.10/48). Analyses of covariance revealed no significant differences between UI REACH cohorts and the Wabash study participants (i.e., students with learning disabilities and a random sample).

Summary and Conclusion

Research indicates that both students with and without disabilities benefit from "good practices" in higher education. The engagement experiences of students with ID appear to align with those of typical first-year college students when they have access to a collaboratively designed, competently implemented range of supports and academic/non-academic opportunities.

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Inclusion, Universal Design, and Universal Design for Learning: International Perspectives

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Inclusive learning in education has been a focus of discussion worldwide for a significant time, due to actions like the World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, 1990), Salamanca Statement on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994), Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000) and Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education (UNESCO, 2009). These all share certain foci: universal access to education, equity of educational rights and opportunities for all, accommodation and support of ALL students, and general education inclusion of all students. Understanding the term 'inclusion' can vary greatly, depending upon where and who is using it. In the USA, the term inclusion is commonly used, however it does not appear specifically in US laws governing general or special education (IDEA). Rather, two federal civil rights laws, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), define equal rights and prohibit discrimination based on disability. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) requires that school districts place students in a least restrictive environment (LRE), the least restrictive of which is the general classroom setting. In inclusive education, students of all varying needs and abilities are educated together in a general classroom setting (or LRE), with the supports and services necessary for every student to receive educational benefit. This may not be the case in other countries.

Inclusive education first appeared in South African (SA) education policy post-apartheid, after hundreds of years of inequalities and divisions of race, colour and class. Disability was marginalised. Schools were divided by race, disability, and resources. Traditional notions of disability prevented children from attending school. A 1996 investigation of discriminatory apartheid education produced *The Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education. Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (Department of Education, 2001) and introduced a new inclusive system of education which recognised that learning needs may arise out of negative attitudes, stereotyping, inaccessible environments, inadequate policies & support services, and several other factors. The *National Plan for Higher Education* (Ministry of Education, 2001) encouraged increased intake of students with disabilities. The *White Paper on Post-School Education and Training* (2013) focused attention on post-school education and training (PSET). With more students finishing grade 12 and continuing their education, there is deep will in SA to look at how effective disability support can be achieved.

The importance of post-secondary institutions' inclusive policies & practices is clear in preparing next-generation educators and professionals, and in serving an increasingly diverse student body. Universal Design (UD) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) offer guidance in developing and sustaining accessible and engaging physical/learning environments for ALL students. UD (Center for Universal Design, 1997), initially relating to physical environments, is later used in designing educational environments. It's seven principles are: Equitable use; Flexibility in use; Simple and intuitive; Perceptible information; Tolerance for error; Low physical effort; Size and space for approach and use (Ibid). UDL (Hall, Strangman & Meyer, 2003) defines three core instructional design principles: Multiple means of representation; Multiple means of action and expression; and Multiple means of engagement. UD & UDL offer means to design classroom & on-line environments which support universal access.

Higher Education Practices

Of the 26 SA higher education institutions, most have some kind of disability support, such as text conversion, Braille, Sign Language, and other accommodations. Some difficulties around disclosure, often based on psychological factors (De Cesarei, 2015), exist. Given the inequalities during apartheid, some legacy remains in higher education, as evidenced in the varied development of support systems. Some universities are evolving from disability policies to universal access policies focused on function and not disability, applying principles of UD and UDL (Burgstahler, 2015; Center for Universal Design, 1997; Dalton, McKenzie & Kahonde, 2012; Howell, 2005, 2015). As blended learning proliferates in higher education, online platforms may be exclusionary for those with disabilities. The high cost of adaptive devices and software, extensive support needs, and inaccessible Internet design serve to exclude persons with disabilities from full digital use (Watling, 2011). Physical & programmatic access, readability, usability, and individual & systems supports must be considered. In the Postgraduate Diploma in Disability Studies, Faculty of Health Sciences, at U. of Cape Town, SA, comprised of four blended courses, students with visual impairments met specific challenges:

1. Reading resources needed to be accessible on time from the Disability Services.
2. Too few licenses for all visually impaired students to get appropriate assistive technology software (Zoomtext) on their personal laptops. Open source software was used (but not comparable), allowing students minimal access the course.
3. Test and quizzes in the platform not accessible to visually impaired students were adapted into an accessible word document for use.
4. Students without Internet connections at home experienced delays, as they had to access the course from cyber cafes.

These problems could have been avoided if UDL had been the starting point and the online learning platform had been designed with ALL students in mind.

At National University (USA), two departments prepare candidates to be teachers using General State Standards and Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). The recently revised TPEs address concepts of UDL. Teacher Education (TED) and Special Education (SPED) must include these concepts as they rewrite curricula. The departments are working *together* to prepare a new credential program consisting of a "trunk" of courses candidates from both departments will take. Our colleagues from TED have been learning about UDL and are anxious to infuse UDL core principles through co-planning with SPED. It is likely that the nature and depth of UDL will be thoroughly discussed and internalized by faculty, essential that we agree on what the acquisition of UDL knowledge and skills will involve, and how best to prepare our candidates. Examples, especially for inclusion of students with severe disabilities, are needed. UD also must be addressed. Ongoing, in-depth discussion of UDL and the UD principles will ensure both learning and application by the novice teachers. The important fact is that both faculties embrace the idea that *all* upcoming teachers need to understand and apply UDL.

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Selected Determinants of Burnout in Parents of Children with Disability in a Theory of Resilience Context

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Professional burnout was first described by Freudenberger (1980), who listed the following symptoms characteristic of this chronic condition: irritability, chronic fatigue, dejection, aggravating apathy, emotional lability, frequent headaches and increased morbidity. Although discussions on the factors in and theoretical models of burnout have continued for decades now, no homogeneous, universal burnout model adequate to various professions has been developed yet. The very structure of burnout is still subject to controversy. In some frameworks, burnout is perceived as a coherent set of strongly correlated symptoms, which leads to regarding burnout as a homogeneous dimension (Pines, 1993). Other scholars argue that burnout is multidimensional (Maslach & Leiter 1997; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Following Maslach (1976), three components of the professional burnout syndrome are distinguished (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment), while their sources are located primarily in the individual him/herself, in interpersonal relationships, and in the conditions and organization of work, though macro-social and cultural factors are also considered relevant. Nearly simultaneously with the publication of the first studies on professional burnout, Sullivan and colleagues (1979) explored burnout in another – non-occupational – context. Specifically, it concerned burnout in parents taking care of a child with disability. Parents of children with developmental disorders face increased tasks related to education, care, therapy. This situation can be a source of serious physical and mental strain for many parents, especially for mothers. Handling the burden requires adequate resources and coping skills. Sullivan concluded that mechanisms leading to professional burnout and parental burnout are similar. She proposed that parental burnout is a progressing process of strength depletion resulting from the daily needs of permanent child-care and accretion of various difficulties in everyday life. Mothers are particularly vulnerable to burnout. It is so probably because they are traditionally responsible for child-care and -rearing while active involvement in the education of the child with disability is also inscribed in their role. Mothers often report difficulties in coping with problems caused by the child's disability (Ryman & Kucyper, 1994). The daily problems most frequently reported by mothers include: too little sleep, necessity to constantly pay attention to the child, being with the child all the time, lack of leisure time, impossibility to rest, necessity to rely on the public means of transport, arduousness of frequent consultations with specialists, lack of physical strength, sense of being constantly "tied" to the child, other people's lack of understanding for the problems the mother of a child with disability confronts, unsatisfying conjugal life, estrangement from friends and colleagues, disappointment with them, considerable financial burdens, misery of giving up on earlier plans and dreams, hardships resulting form the child's continuing reliance on others, having no time for themselves ("I look so unkempt"), chronic fatigue, and fear of the future. These problems and concerns of daily life, combined with the constant care for the child, upset adaptive processes and coping. As a result, emotional tension persists, as do physiological reactions correlated with it. In a longer perspective, this may lead to a gradual depletion of strength and burnout.

In this study, we target of the parental resources which are essentially related to coping with stress and the psychological as well as somatic health. Among such resources, there is a *sense of coherence* (Antonovsky, 1987) and *personal resiliency* (Ogińska-Bulik & Juczyński, 2008). The importance of these factors for functioning of the resources system was thoroughly analyzed and elucidated by Kumpfer (1999) and Hobfoll (2002). Notably, it is Kumpfer (1999) that came up with the

concept of resilience. It was thus assumed that the preferred means of coping with stress can reflect the status of resources. High quality of adaptive resources is indicated by the employment of active coping methods aimed at problem solving/change of the situation (change of the status-quo). Low quality of adaptive resources is revealed in the passive forms of coping - flight-oriented and emotion-soothing.

The aim of our research is to examine the relationship between the levels of these two key resources (sense of coherence and personal resiliency) and the level of burnout in parents of children with disability. Consistent with our earlier research findings, parental burnout has two major components: exhaustion and helplessness. We believe that exhaustion reflects the regulation system overload and/or entrenched deficits of energy resources while helplessness represents deficits in competences necessary to effectively solve problems arising from the role of the parent of a child with disability. The depersonalization/cynicism dimension is very rarely found in parental burnout since an overwhelming majority parents love their children with disability and feel responsible for them, which by default forestalls depersonalization and cynicism. Besides, even if some of the parents who report burnout are jaded with the excessively distressing circumstances surrounding their child, the social norm that commands caring for one's child impedes any expression of such attitudes.

We expected that both dimensions of parental burnout – exhaustion and helplessness – are associated with both sense of coherence and personal resiliency. The study focused on the verification of anticipated dependences of high level of both burnout indices on the low levels of (1) sense of coherence, (2) personal resiliency. Our study showed, the relevance of individual resources as factors promoting good outcomes in parents of children with disability. Both sense of coherence and personal resiliency turned out to be significant predictors of burnout.

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Collaborating for Learning: Developing Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities in Indonesia

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In policy, the Government of Indonesia is committed to inclusive education that provides full access and meaningful participation in mainstream educational programs for children with disabilities (Purbani & Tripamungkas, 2013). Indonesian declarations commit to the provision of health services to support inclusion of children with disabilities at school (Akter & Kuncoro, 2011). In practice, Indonesian educators and health sector personnel must negotiate this process within the constraints of limited resources and attitudinal barriers, while supporting collaborative engagement with families to create a shared vision for inclusion. In 2013, the UNESCO Indonesia Representative selected Yogyakarta as a designated site for developing an inclusive education strategy for future implementation across Indonesia. Aligned with this aim, a combined Policy and Action Research Workshop was conducted at Yogyakarta State University in 2016, bringing together key stakeholders from the education and health sectors to articulate a shared vision for inclusion and to develop a research action plan. This paper presents the strengths, challenges, and recommendations identified through an analysis of the Indonesian education policies and stakeholder workshop discussions.

Policy and Action Research Workshop Description

Local and regional educational leaders, school administrators, teachers, therapists, and families attended a five-day combined workshop to develop a policy brief regarding inclusive education in Indonesia and to develop Participatory Action Research plans. At the Action Research Workshop, stakeholders from seven schools, representing Yogyakarta's breadth of educational settings and inclusive education models, learned about the process of Participatory Action Research (PAR). The school teams collaborated to explore inclusive education practices through participant-driven inquiry in a developing community of practice. The workshop was supported through collaboration between Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia and the University of Sydney, Australia.

Strengths

Identified strengths related to policy content, early identification and intervention initiatives, and capacity building strategies that demonstrate a high level of commitment toward inclusive education in Yogyakarta. National legislation and provincial regulations guide the implementation of inclusive education and aim to protect the rights of children with disabilities. The health sector in Yogyakarta has initiated the development of health clinics and multidisciplinary early intervention services to identify children with disabilities who require support services. Likewise, the education sector has taken steps to increase access to education for students with disabilities. The Department of Education has focused on developing the capacity for inclusive education by designating schools providing inclusive education (SPIEs) and identifying special school educators who provide support for SPIEs. "Special schools are open to providing consultations for regular schools. We have comprehensive resource

centres, and we can help build similar understanding at all levels about inclusive education" (Workshop participant).

Challenges

Policies have focused on developing strategies to support the provision of quality educational services and supports. Comprehensive support for students with disabilities and integrated planning that ensures full and meaningful participation in mainstream educational programs across all districts in Yogyakarta is currently limited. A possible way forward is to explore collaborative planning strategies to integrate health care and therapy supports into educational programming and school routines (Missiuna et al., 2012; Villeneuve, 2009; Villeneuve & Hutchinson, 2012; Villeneuve & Shulha, 2012). The workshop participants identified additional challenges impacting the development and implementation of inclusive education practices in Yogyakarta that were grouped into six key barriers: (1) policy guidelines; (2) resources; (3) capacity; (4) leadership; (5) networking; and (6) attitudes. As one participant expressed, "We also have constraints – such as budgeting, and finances to support our collaboration."

Recommendations

Five key recommendations for building on current strengths and addressing identified challenges to meet the commitment toward inclusive education were developed through multiple stakeholder input at the workshop. The recommendations represent a shared vision of inclusion for Indonesia.

- Provide accessible, affordable, and integrated education and health services.
- Develop capacity of teachers, special educators, school principals, parents, therapists, and children to collaborate for inclusion at school.
- Develop an inclusive curriculum that empowers teachers to include all students.
- Adopt person first language in all government documents and verbal communication.
- Develop the role of universities as a resource and support for inclusion.

Future Direction

PAR intertwines a plan for action with community-based research, with the purpose of improving implementation effectiveness and outcomes (MacDonald, 2012). At the workshop, the PAR teams from the participating schools developed their collaborative plans for action focused on shared inclusion goals. The long-term goal is for the PAR teams to build their capacity for working collaboratively to support inclusion and to become a local resource for enabling quality inclusion practices within their schools.

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A Collaborative Approach to Service Delivery: Evidence-based Considerations for Pre-service Special Educator Training

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Conceptual Framework and Background

The goal of teacher education is to prepare highly qualified educators to serve students with disabilities (Sindelar, Bishop, Brownell, Rosenberg, & Connelly, 2005). Highly qualified professionals are able to apply evidence-based strategies to ensure improved student outcomes (Smith, 2006). Special education teachers, speech therapists, social workers, and counselors should provide services based on the best available research evidence, using expert clinical judgments, and considering students' individual needs.

What are Evidence-based Practices?

Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) are skills, techniques, and strategies that have been proven to work through experimental research studies or large-scale research field studies. There are numerous EBPs to address a variety of needs among students in grades K–12, ranging from academics to behavior to secondary transition, however, for many skills and behaviors, no EBP has yet been identified, as available EBPs are constantly changing and being updated (The IRIS Center, 2014). We present culturally responsive teaching, interdisciplinary collaboration, and universal design for learning practices and discuss findings from one program.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

As today's classrooms become increasingly diverse in culture, language, abilities, and other characteristics (Gollnick & Chinn, 2002), teachers have to contend with the pressures associated with increasing student achievement while balancing the complexities that arise out of changes in classroom demographics (Putman, 2012). Preservice educators' cultural bias and misconceptions about student discipline and lack of engagement are symptomatic of the cultural dissonance between the schooling experiences of teachers and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Ladson-Billing, 2011). Inclusion of opportunities for developing personal and professional critical consciousness about racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity in preservice teacher education is an amendatory practice that should be implemented (Gay & Kirkland, 2003).

Culturally responsive teaching affirms students' cultures, incorporates students' cultural knowledge and frames of reference in the teaching process, thus empowering them to take ownership of their learning; and leading to increased future participation in societal activities (Gay, 2013; Santamaria, 2009). Ultimately, the most effective interventions for culturally and linguistically diverse students will come from bringing together diverse perspectives and from careful examination of notions about disability and culture within their full socio-cultural and historical contexts.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Students with disabilities need a collaborative approach to meet their academic goals (Shapiro & Sayers, 2003). Physical therapists, occupational therapists, adapted physical education teachers, speech therapists, social workers, general and special education teachers often work as members of an interdisciplinary IEP team regarding the educational needs of students with disabilities. Preservice teachers therefore, require exposure to allied health service providers and their diverse service to better understand how to best meet individual students' special needs. In addition, allied health students need

to understand educational systems to be better able to provide appropriate service (Selle, Salamon, Boarman, & Sauer, 2008). Interdisciplinary collaboration at the preservice level includes team teaching non profession specific content, conducting joint research and projects and field or clinical experiences.

Universal Design for Learning and Technology

The term Universal Design for Learning (UDL) means a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice that: (A) provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the ways students are engaged; and (B) reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges, and maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient (Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008).

Digital technologies have revolutionized how people find and use information and expanded the scope of literacies for students and teachers, similarly, the shift in pedagogical focus from teacher-centered to more learner-centered constructivist approaches has led to the demand for new and enhanced modes of teaching and learning (Dobozy, 2013). Technology can be used to enhance teachers' abilities to create teaching and learning situations in which students work together across cultural, racial, language, and gender boundaries promoting new understanding and images of each other (Darling-Hammond, Zielezinski, & Goldman, 2014). Digital technologies applied using universal design for learning principles enable easier and more effective customization of curricula for learners.

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Inclusive Schooling: Experiences of Educationalists in Western Province, Zambia

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This paper is anchored on findings from a study that tapped experiences of educationists in Western Province of Zambia on inclusive schooling. The paper documents findings by educationists drawn over a lengthened period of 10 years.

Objectives

- To investigate the way inclusive schooling is being implemented in schools.
- To find out the challenges which teachers face in implementing inclusive schooling.

Methodology

This study employed a purely qualitative research design, following the phenomenological research method. The target population included members of the communities in the four schools accessed, parent-teacher association members (PTA), teachers, learners (from accessed schools), school administrators, Education standards officers (ESO, special education) and Senior Education Standards Officer (SESO, special education). Simple random sampling method was used to select participants. Focus group discussions and observations were employed to collect data for the study. Patterns of narratives were categorised into themes and analysed thematically.

Findings

Findings of this study point to the clear manifestation of frantic efforts being made all the four schools sampled in the study. Unanimously all the categories of participants revealed various ways they employ to promote inclusive schooling. They have shown that inclusive schooling reduces stigma by allowing learners with disability to mingle with those without. This shows how individual and school efforts have been tilted towards achieving the goal of inclusion contributing to the efforts made by the country.

Distinctively, findings corroborate with observations from many other studies highlighting: absence of proper infrastructure, equipment and limited educational materials adequate transportation for Children with Special Education Needs (CSENs) in schools for learners who are differently bodied (LSENs), the lack of adequate teacher training (colleges for training teachers to identify and handle CSENs) for dealing with the needs of learners with special education needs (LSENs).

Based on a number of focus group meetings and interviews, 15 learners with limitations in movement aged between 10 and 18; and 10 parents; 6 parent-teacher association members (PTA), 15 teachers, 8 school administrators, 4 Education standards officers (ESO, special education) and 2 Senior Education Standards Officer (SESO, special education) identified the following barriers to inclusive schooling:

- structural limitations – the physical environment (e.g. constricted doorways, stairways, ramps);
- limited skills by teachers to handle learners with disability (e.g. where do we sit a learner with poor sight);
- premeditated attitudes (e.g., stigmatising, segregation, intimidation, mistreatment);
- ignorance of effect of attitude on others with disabilities (e.g. limited knowledge, considerateness, mindfulness); and
- physical limitations (e.g. difficulty with manual dexterity).

These revelations corroborate with findings by various researchers (Hanson et al., 2001; Hemmingsson & Borell, 2000; Omede, 2010), who valued the insurmountable role of multiple disciplines to achieve inclusive schooling.

Conclusion

The study observed that for the inclusive schooling to flourish, issues that must be addressed include the role of parents and community in the inclusion process, research, increase provision of educational resources and incorporate technology in inclusive schooling.

Based on this study, we recommend that the Ministry of education should continue in its pursuit of strengthening inclusive schooling. All teachers should be trained in special education. Education materials should be inclusive. For example, books must be in large print to accommodate learners with sight problems. In addition, we recommend that districts and schools should ensure that schools are fully inclusive and model inclusive practices.

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Welcoming Mode of Students with Special Education Needs by Teachers of Universities

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Clough (1998) explained that many pressures within the general education system exist that encourage the use of special educational procedures to exclude troublesome children, Human rights approach focuses that to get education under the umbrella of equal opportunities is the basic right of each and every child. In this regard, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and particularly article 24 gives new impetus to the human rights to support inclusive education for all people with disabilities. Artiles, Kozleski, Dorn and Christensen (2006) concluded that segregated education programs have not shown a positive effect on students with disabilities. The French and English literature currently available on the pros and cons debate between segregation and inclusion unfolds sorts of issues involved in the way of inclusion. Ryndak and Alper (1996) concluded that proponents of mainstreaming and those of inclusion have argued that isolation, exclusion, and separation on the basis of disability are as injurious as they are on the basis of race or sex. Ferguson (2007) has explained that children and youth with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, could participate and learn in ordinary classrooms. For example, Plaisance (2006) has stressed that inclusion in ordinary settings is often treated in a sentimental way. If we think of including students in ordinary schools from this point of view then the jingle like everybody being together would remain empty slogan. Although, the studies show that inclusion is beneficial for all students including students with disabilities but at the same time we should not understand this process in an emotional way. Possible ways of practicing in inclusive classes will have to explore, otherwise, qualms and disillusionment about inclusion remain prevailing and exclusion from inside will emerge. The implementation of inclusion in emotional way will create exclusion from inside where students are physically present in ordinary classes and schools without being participants. These counterproductive trends and planning are big challenges in including students with disabilities in ordinary classes and schools. The American sociologist Goffman (1975) explained that in everyday interactions, certain individuals are 'stigmatised' by the others because of their characteristics (race, disability, behaviour, etc.), that is, they are the victims of discredit and disfavour. Plaisance (2008) has given the same reason in the case of school. The school which refuses to accept a disabled child basically has the same underlined cause of difference, that is, the negative perception of the child in question, reduction of his overall identity to the observed disability, without taking account of his potential. Although individual differences lead to individual limitations or impairments, but it does not mean that due to these impairments these individuals should be excluded. So, attention should be paid to restructuring society, not treating the individual. If the problem lies with society and the environment, then society and environment must change. Removal of attitudinal, physical and institutional barriers may improve the lives of disabled people, giving them the same opportunities as others on an equitable basis. If all these barriers are removed then there would not be disability. According to Mason (2008), this model makes links to the move towards inclusive education by identifying that the key barriers, and therefore the solutions, are based within the way that education is currently conceptualized and arranged. Not only people with disabilities are excluded from participation in the society but also all under-represented groups are excluded from participation. As Naidoo (2009) explains that in the allocation of social power, why under-represented groups like refugees remain excluded from the educational process. According to Naidoo, it achieves this by expanding upon an analysis of barriers to participation in the education process.

Teachers' profession has been viewed from many different perspectives. It is important to explore the ways teachers experience their teaching and the feelings they have about the working

environment of the schools. It is also important that one should understand the working conditions and the constraints which teachers are attempting to cope. To ask teachers to promote more inclusive educational practices cannot effectively be met if they themselves experience conflicting constraints and expectations, insecurity and a general lack of encouragement. Mason (2008) explained that the long-term goal of the inclusion movement is to create a different type of society which can embrace both the gifts and the needs of all its citizens without recourse to segregation or institutionalization. As teachers are the back bone of bringing changes in schools as well as in society at large hence their orientation and training is more important to gradually develop inclusive values, practices and culture.

Currently in Universities of Pakistan few students with physical disabilities rarely show their visibility. The study is designed to investigate welcoming mode of students with special education needs in Universities. The study further seeks to explore how teachers respond on accepting these students in their classes and Universities? Whether they rebuff? What barriers exist in making Universities more welcoming towards students with special education needs? Is there any need to give orientation to University teachers?

Welcoming mode of teachers enhances inclusion. This process of inclusion is associated with gradual developments in educational institutions. Booth, Nes, and Stromstad (2004) relate inclusion with teacher education institutions. Developments in institutions take place through a process of addressing diverse needs of all students including students with disabilities. Disability, as our society views, becomes the cause of segregation. Perceptions within deficit paradigm exclude students with disabilities from educational institutions and become a barrier in inclusion. We believe that unfolding and minimizing exclusionary barriers existing in Universities in particular and in societies at large, consequently, may increase participation and enable Universities to welcome all students including students with disabilities. Ryndak and Alper (1996) reported that students with moderate-to-severe disabilities in Madison, Wisconsin (USA), who were included in general educational settings, were more likely to work and live in integrated settings in the community as adults than were their counterparts who had been educated in separate settings. According to Deng & Harris (2008) the implication for China's experience is that general education teacher can master and apply knowledge and technique of special education in their education classrooms, if only the local education authorities could provide necessary support for them at minimal level. As European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2005) pointed out that inclusion in regular classes in Spain, with support adjusted to the students' special needs in the group context, has a positive influence on their learning process, self-esteem and self-concept and, at the same time, improves their relationship with their friends. Engen (2004) described that the superior challenge for the teacher was to arrange instruction so that pupils could participate in curricular activities at their own level of functioning. Purdue, Gordon-Burns, Gunn, Madden & Surtees (2009) noted that inclusion or inclusive education courses in initial teacher education programmes in New Zealand are often centered on ideas about how teachers might include and teach children with disabilities in regular educational settings.

In Pakistan like other countries, development at policy level has taken place as it appeared in the national report on the development of education in 2008 in which the Ministry of Education emphasized that the inclusive development programme needs to be embedded within the general education system with the support of professionals trained in special education. Further in this regard, government has also taken some initiatives. The purpose of this study was to explore welcoming mode of students with special education needs by teachers of Universities. How teachers accept and include students with disabilities?

We completed the definition of welcoming mode by including following components: Acceptance of students with special education needs by University teachers, Benefits that university teachers think of welcoming students with special education in university, Identify barriers coming in the way of welcoming such students, and readiness of teachers to get trained makes fourth part of their

welcoming mode. Based on the above components of welcoming mode that we develop following hypotheses:

- Teachers accept and include students with disabilities in their classes in University.

- Teachers think that including students with disabilities in their classes is beneficial for all students.

- Teachers perceive that barriers exist for inclusive classes in their university.

- There is significant difference in welcoming mode of students with special education needs by university teachers on the basis of their age-groups.

- Teachers are ready to get orientation and training to welcoming students with special education needs in their university.

Methodology

Quantitative approach was exploited in this study. To collect data, questionnaire technique was used. A total of 114 teachers working in University, Sargodha was conveniently chosen to participate in this study. Data collected through questionnaire were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). In a nutshell, this study comprising quantitative approach reflects upon why teachers accept and do not accept students with disabilities in Universities in Pakistan. What exclusionary barriers exist in the ways? What support and what changes needed for teachers that they can accept all students including students with impairments. Quantitative analyses of this study also test either significant differences exist or not among teachers' responses belong to different faculties of University. These teachers' responses are related to acceptance of students with disabilities, advantages of accepting students with disabilities, exclusionary barriers and need for their orientation to welcome students with disabilities in University.

Sample and sampling. Teachers of a university located in urban area of Punjab make the population of the study. These teachers were selected from four faculties and 13 departments of the university in Sargodha, Pakistan. This population is selected because inclusion means to include students with disabilities in such departments where students without disabilities study. It is therefore decided to collect from the teachers who teach in these 13 different departments because ultimately these are the teachers who welcome students with disabilities in general classes. Convenient ssampling technique was used for this study. A total of 114 teachers from these faculties and departments working under these faculties were selected on available basis from the same university.

Development of instrument and its reliability. On the basis of the theoretical framework and the situation existing in Pakistan regarding universities and teachers different hypotheses were developed. Keeping in view these hypotheses, a questionnaire was developed that consisted of six components. Questions in each component represent a unique factor. For example, questions related to acceptance of students with disabilities in Universities, Benefit of welcoming such students, barriers coming on their way, and orientation courses and readiness of universities teachers to do them. First component is related to demographic information. The statements from 14 to 19 are related to acceptance of students with disabilities in universities. The statements from 20 to 24 are concerned to its benefits. The statements from 25 to 30 are related to barriers coming on the way and from 31 to 36 related to orientation courses and readiness of university teachers. The Cronbach's Alpha is found to be 0.769 showing the instrument developed is reliable.

Analysis

Teachers welcome students with disabilities in an odd ways. It means that most of the teachers do not accept these students. The data analyzed in the following sections provide useful information about the teachers of University.

First section deals with demographics included in the study. Four faculties have been selected to collect data from the university. The faculty of arts and law, faculty of social and behavioral sciences, faculty of oriental languages, and faculty of business and commerce were selected on convenient basis. A total of 114 teachers have been selected on available basis from 13 departments in the faculties. Forty three teachers were selected from faculty of arts and law, 50 from faculty of social and behavioural sciences, four from faculty of oriental languages, and 17 from faculty of business and commerce. The teachers selected were disproportionate in numbers as researchers couldn't be able to collected data due to limitation existing in the readiness of teachers to fill in the questionnaires. Here, the data collected show that among total teachers selected from university, 106 were male teachers and only 8 were female teachers. Across different age groups, 42 teachers were between age 23-35 year, 64 were between 36-50 year and only 4 teachers were between 51-65 year. The data show that 42 teachers have masters, 52 MPhil and 20 have PhD degrees. The total experiences that teachers have vary i.e., 80 teachers have experience between 1-10 year, 26 between 11-20 year, 4 between 21-30 year, and 4 teachers have experience between 31 year or above. Similarly, their research experience also varies. For example, 56 have 1-5 year of research experience, 32 have between 6-10 year, 5 between 11-15 year, and 4 have research experience of 16 year or above. Data collected show that teachers who have administrative experience in university also vary. Forty nine teachers have administrative experience between 1-5 year, 13 between 6-10 year, 4 between 11-15 year of administrative experience in their service. Similarly, 67 teachers have experience to teach students with disabilities in general classes and 47 don't have such experience.

Second section follows reflects teachers' mode of accepting students with disabilities in general classes conducted in university. The data analysis shows that 66% of university teachers are open in seeing students with physical disabilities only in classes where they can teach. Only 24% teachers think that hearing impaired students can be taught with students without hearing loss in higher education classes. Twenty seven percent teachers think that visual impaired students can be taught with students without visual impairment in higher education classes. Twenty seven percent teachers think that visual impaired students can be taught with students without visual impairment in higher education classes. Twenty percent teachers think that mentally retarded students can be taught with students without mental retardation in university. Twenty percent teachers think that mentally retarded students can be taught with students without mental retardation in university. The data show that 59% teachers think that students who cannot follow instruction can be taught with students who follow instructions in classes in university.

Third section follows reflects teachers' welcoming mode in connection with benefits of including students with disabilities in University. Students with and without disability can develop friendship in the same class? Seventy nine percent teachers think that yes it could be beneficial for both. Students with disability do not affect performance of students without disability in the same class? Fifty percent teachers think that yes there would not be any difference in the performance of students without disability due to the present of students with disability. Can students with disability also equally perform well with students without disability? Only 36% teachers think that students with disability also equally perform well with students without disability. Students with disability can be protected from stigma by delivering moral lessons in class? Sixty seven percent teachers think that yes they can be protected from stigma in this way.

Fourth section follows deals with the barriers that teachers will be facing in adopting welcoming mode for students with disabilities in the university. Only 15% teachers think there are not enough facilities available to teach students with and without disability. Similarly, 42% teachers think that current curriculum cannot help to organize activities for students with and without disability in general class. Moreover, 72% teachers think that current assessment system cannot help to evaluate performance of students with disability.

The data analyzed show that 68% teachers think that attitude of teachers, parents and people is also a barrier for including students with disability in classes.

Fifth section follows is relevant to orientation courses and readiness of university teachers to welcome students with disabilities in university. Eighty nine percent teachers of university are willing to attend training courses to teach students with & without disability in same class. Ninety three percent university teachers are willing to learn relevant methods to teach students with disability. Eighty nine percent university teachers are willing to learn relevant methods to assess students with disability in the same class with their counterpart without disability. Eighty nine percent university teachers will consult special educators to discuss problems of students with disability in my class if environment of inclusion exists. Ninety seven percent teachers are willing to cooperate with colleagues & administrators to facilitate students with disability in their department at university.

Further analyses by applying ANOVA show that there is significant difference in the welcoming mode of students with special education needs on the basis of teachers' age (F = 11.051, Sig. = .000). Post hoc multiple comparison shows that on including students with disabilities in general classes, significant difference exists in the welcoming mode of students with special education needs by teachers of university whose age-group falls between 23-35 years and between 36-50 year (Mean Diff. = -4.84226[*], Sig. = .000). Similarly, significant difference exists in the welcoming mode of students with special education needs by teachers of university whose age-group falls between 23-35 year and between 51-55 year (Mean Diff. = 6.09524[*,] Sig. = .030).

Findings

- Do teachers accept and include students with disabilities in their classes in University? Teachers' mode of welcoming students with disabilities in general classes conducted in university is disappointing. It is found that teachers are not open enough to welcome them. For example, a minority think that hearing impaired students can be taught with students without hearing loss in higher education classes in university. Similarly a minority think that visual impaired students can be taught with students without visual impairment in higher education classes.

- Teachers think that including students with disabilities in their classes is beneficial for all students? It is found that here also a minority of teachers are positive towards welcoming them by thinking students with disabilities can also equally perform well with students without disability and these students can be protected from stigma.

- Do teachers perceive that barriers exist for inclusive classes in their university ? It is found that teachers will be facing barriers in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment while adopting welcoming mode for students with disabilities in the university. For example, a majority thinks that current assessment system cannot help to evaluate performance of students with disability.

- Are university teachers ready to get orientation and training to welcoming students with special education needs in their classes? The question gets amazing response. It is found that majority teachers of university are willing to attend training courses to teach students with & without disability in their general classes. Moreover, teachers are willing to cooperate with colleagues & administrators to facilitate students with disability in their department at university.

- It is found that there is significant difference in welcoming mode of students with special education needs by university teachers on the basis of various age-groups.

Conclusions

The study concludes that teachers' mode of welcoming students with disabilities in general classes in university is derisory. University teachers are not open enough to welcome students with disabilities along with their counterpart without disabilities. In pros and cons way, tteachers opined that welcoming all students with and without disabilities in university may equally beneficial. When thinking about welcoming all students teachers perceive manifold barriers coming in the way of doing

so, for example, in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. On contrary, there are bright signs of readiness to get orientation and training to say them welcoming in university. The study suggest that there should be awareness and training programme for university teachers to widen their way of thinking towards students' with disabilities potential as well as support and changes are needed to create welcoming environment in universities.

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Inclusion of Learners with Severe Disabilities: Is it possible?

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Children with severe disabilities are usually excluded from the education system because they are presumed inability to learn. According to Stainback and Stainback (1996) in Childcare (2015) , expectations from them have been lower. These learners may be restricted to hospital teaching and home based care (MoE: 1996, Blatt, 1981). These studies were supported by Ferguson (2008) who questioned the ability to learn by children with severe disabilities. However, the current perspectives support the notion that all people can learn. This suggests that learners with severe disabilities should not be deprived of their right to learn (EFA). In this paper, learners with severe disabilities are those with profound or multiple disabilities such as deaf blind, physical, health and emotional disorders, autistic and down syndrome. In many countries, these children are not enrolled in school on the basis of their severe disability.

Many nations asserted to the Education for All (EFA) by 2015 but their nations still exclude children with severe disabilities from the education system. The Curriculum Development Centre (2013) says learners with severe disabilities who cannot benefit from inclusive education will have an alternative curriculum, and be sent to special education units and schools. Though many countries have this policy guideline, it is questionable whether really learners in such institutions are really those with autistic or Down syndrome. The learners in special education schools appear to be those with mild to moderate cases. Learners in special education schools are mainly grouped together according to the nature of their disabilities and not their levels of disability. Hence those with visual hearing impairments are sent to one school. It is argued that learners with severe disabilities should be educated from their homes (MoE: 1996). In Zambia, some organisations like Bauleni Special Education have programmes on home based care. However, due to financial limitations, the institutions activities are usually limited to the nearby communities. This implies that the children do not receive adequate educational support. It also suggests that the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) of various states are not being shared equitably.

The failure to give attention to learners with special education needs suggest that their families are subjected to untold hardships. According to Nongola (2015), parents with children with disabilities suffer a double tragedy, they have lower expectations from their child and by staying at home nursing their disabled child, have less time for economic ventures.

The Ministry of General Education (1996) says it is the responsibility of governments to educate its entire people. However, for children who do not attend school, governments does not spend much on them. For those who go to school, they are built schools and their teachers are salaried. The researcher feels it is the role of governments to take care of all school going age children.

The governments have professionals in all sectors, hence, all the children needed to be taken to them. In Osaka, Japan, chair bound children do attend regular schools (Nongola: 2015).

Special education has moved from a perspective of care and support to education and development. Scholars therefore needed to be preoccupied on finding strategies for teaching them. The question should not be whether learners with severe disabilities can learn, but *what should we do to make them learn?*

In Osaka prefectural, Japan, the philosophy of 'learning together' has made it possible for learners with and without disabilities to be learning together. This provides wider experiences for achievement of all. According to Kauffman (1978), the growing trend towards more integration of people with disabilities is' normalisation', that is, the expectations of the education system for both the students with disabilities should be as much like those without.

Experience has demonstrated that learners with severe disabilities can learn. In many nations, some persons who were thought were not going to manage to dress, feed or do gardening are now able to do so successfully.

Experts have developed many strategies for helping children with disabilities. School health and feeding programmes for helping orphans and vulnerable children in many countries have greatly improved participation by learners, including learners with disabilities to reach their full potential (MoE (b): 2015).

The Ministry of Education (1996) argues that exceptional children adapt more easily to living in the normal community the earlier they begin to do so. They further argued that their segregation in special schools tends to create negative expectation of their ability to learn. Professionals need wider consultation during assessment and placement.

In my conclusion, for governments to be able to include learners with severe disabilities, they should have school health programmes, need to employ care givers, and recruit medical doctors to be working in school and adhere to the use of individualised education plans. Schools need Care givers and facilitated employment.

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Measuring Preferences for Visual-Spatial Learning

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The Visual-Spatial Learning Questionnaire (VSLQ) was developed to measure preferences for visual-spatial learning in secondary school students. A reliable and valid comprehensive instrument would allow secondary school teachers to effectively cater for the individual learning needs of students with a preference for this learning style. Prior to this study there was only one instrument available – Silverman's (2000) Visual-Spatial Identifier (VSI) – to measure visual-spatial learning in the primary school student community.

Preferences for Visual-Spatial Learning in the Educational Context

Students who display preferences for visual-spatial learning require appropriate teaching strategies. This is because the traditional educational system focuses primarily on using verbal and writing based teaching strategies rather than teaching strategies using images, pictures, colours, and maps to organise and communicate ideas. A preference for visual-spatial learning is not the same as visual-spatial ability. Visual-spatial ability is the ability to mentally manipulate two-dimensional and three-dimensional figures. Visual-spatial learning is a preference for the way an individual learns to organise and communicate ideas and concepts (Silverman, 2005). A preference for visual-spatial learning is identified through instruments that measure a respondent's motivation rather than his/her ability.

Those students who demonstrate a preference for visual-spatial learning struggle within the classroom and are expected to learn despite their teachers using strategies and activities that often make learning difficult, if not impossible. Matching learning and teaching strategies leads to high quality learning and high task scores (Dunn & Dunn, 1993). Hattie's (2008) research has shown that matching style of learning and teaching methods has an $ES = .41$. Many gifted and talented students as well as students with ASD demonstrate a preference for visual-spatial learning. Those students who display visual-spatial preferences require individual teaching strategies to promote educational success. When the individual needs of students are not catered for there is a high probability that the student might become disengaged.

Methodology and Results

During Study 1 an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to remove redundant items and identify the factors underlying the 70-item instrument. As a result of the EFA, the instrument was reduced from 70 items to 15. Reducing the number of items removed extraneous underlying factors that did not measure preferences for visual-spatial learning and made the questionnaire more useful for classroom teachers. Completing 70 items is also a significant time imposition. Four factors emerged in analysis: disorganisation, spatial awareness, object-visualisation, and spatial-visualisation. Six items loaded onto the factor of disorganisation, five onto spatial awareness, two onto object-visualisation, and two loaded onto spatial visualisation. The EFA also began the process of providing evidence that the VSLQ has internal reliability and construct validity ($KMO = .60$, BTS = .00).

During Study 2 a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted on the 15-item version of the VSLQ. A re-examination of the Study 1 data suggested that the 4 underlying factors should be merged to form 2 factors - disorganisation and spatial awareness. Object-visualisation, spatial awareness, and spatial-visualisation have interrelated characteristics and were grouped together under the heading of spatial awareness. The CFA further reduced the instrument to 8-items and provided evidence of its internal consistency ($NC = 2.64$ [$X^2 = 52.98/ df = 20$], $p < .001$, $RMSEA = 0.05$, $CFI = .91$, $TLI = .84$, $NFI = .86$, $IFI = .91$). During Study 3, the results of the VSLQ were compared against

the results of two other instruments: Silverman's (2000) VSI, and Newton and Bristoll's (2009) Spatial Ability Test. Correlations between the underlying factors on the three instruments provided evidence of the convergent validity of the VSLQ.

Discussion

The results of the three studies demonstrated that the VSLQ has both reliability and construct validity. As such, classroom teachers in secondary schools who use the instrument can trust that a student identified as having a preference for visual-spatial learning will most likely achieve success if visual-spatial teaching methods are used within the classroom. By identifying students' individual learning needs, teachers can use teaching strategies that will hopefully lead to educational success.

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Using Critical Thinking in the Profession to Address the Whole Child

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Nosich (2012) describes critical thinking as reflective, authentic and reasonable. Furthermore, critical thinking involves asking questions, reasoning out the answers to those questions, and believing in the results. Paul and Elder (2009) identify eight elements of thought that include (1) thinking for a purpose, (2) asking questions, (3) using information, (4) applying concepts, (5) drawing inferences and conclusions, (6) identifying assumptions, (7) anticipating implications and consequences, and (8) recognizing points of view.   Another essential feature of critical thinking involves standards.   Based on the Foundation for Critical Thinking model (http://www.criticalthinking.org/), the universal intellectual standards that are applied to these elements of thought of critical thinking in order to develop intellectual traits include clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, logic, significance, and fairness.

Pre-service Teachers use of Critical Thinking (CT) Approach

Candidates are asked to clearly articulate a rationale for their professional development plan that is thoughtful, insightful and includes specific comments to a) why professional development is important to them as a preservice teacher, b) what impact this will have on their continued education, and c) how it will benefit students in an inclusive classroom. Candidates are also expected to identify areas of strength and needs using the CT model, in other words, ones that are thoughtful, insightful and includes relevant and justifiable strengths and weaknesses. In-depth and relevant PDP objectives that are measurable and include specific data collection procedures and activities/resources needed to address identified weaknesses are included as part of the professional development plan.

Social validity

When the pre-service candidates shared their professional development plans with their mentor teachers, many of the teachers recognized the positive effect of having a PDP. The teachers also viewed the PDP as a workable format. The inclusion plans were found to be aligned with teacher goals, that is, supportive of the child with disabilities and the family in the inclusive setting.

Conclusions

Pre-service teachers were able to demonstrate depth of thought and critical analysis as indicated in their PDP and inclusion plans. The ability to clearly analyze the purpose and compare and contrast multiple points of view (self and others) were clearly evident. Furthermore, candidates clearly and accurately described effective and relevant strategies that support and enhance instructional experiences and interactions for students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

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