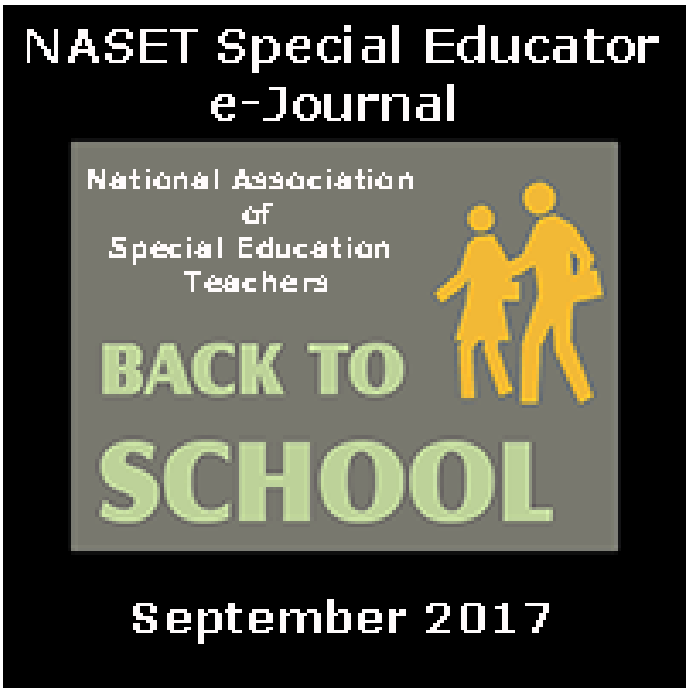

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Social and Emotional Development: Breaking the Cycle of Learned Helplessness

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Abstract

Education entities have the power and influence to emphasize student-teacher networks and establish optimistic and healthy relationships between family, peers, and the community. In elementary school, behavioral incidents are categorized as the greatest determinants of poor academic achievement, criminal behavior, and later episodes of violence. Studies of inquiry have demonstrated that primary social interactions and the quality of these exchanges offer the foundation for forthcoming developmental milestones. School systems are recognizing that active and ongoing communication, social engagement, rapport building, and teamwork are critical to a student's social and emotional welfare. The support of education stakeholders has stimulated the growth and advancement of school-based social-emotional (SEL) programs.

Introduction

The social and emotional development of school-aged children is paramount to their ability to build interpersonal relationships and thrive in education institutions. Children and adolescents desperately need social and emotional stimulation and early experiences to positively normalize emotional regulation. Education entities have the power and influence to emphasize student-teacher networks and establish optimistic and healthy relationships between family, peers, and the community. Power figures, in school districts and state and federal departments of education, place far more weight on academic achievement (Berger, Alcalay, Torretti, & Milicic, 2011). As a result, these curricula emphases limit opportunities to develop social and emotional competencies. This limits a child's ability to grow, engage in complex, social interactions, and achieve social support. Consequently, educators and lawmakers have become more preoccupied with social and emotional problems (i.e. school violence, symptoms of depression and anxiety, and poor motivation) between students versus the holistic depiction of fostering healthy development and learning experiences. Recently, research studies have confirmed a close connection between academic achievement and social and emotional characteristics. These aforementioned linkages enhance healthy human development and intellectual functioning.

More commonly, school social workers are the main defense for intercepting a student's academic environment, expression of oneself, and managing adversarial emotions (Anyon, Nicotera, & Veeh, 2016). In reality, all education stakeholders are accountable for administering behavioral interventions to deter disorderly and inattentive behaviors. Students, that display these behaviors, have a higher predisposition for academic and psychosocial problems escalating across their lifetime. Their bodies crave nurturing from responsible parents, family members, caregivers, administrators, faculty, and staff that elevate their social and emotional welfare. In elementary school, behavioral incidents are categorized as the greatest determinants of poor academic achievement, criminal behavior, and later episodes of violence. In addition, low-income, minority children and adolescents are classified more as exhibiting behavioral problems and receive less support to avert aversive behaviors.

These challenges restrict children and adolescents from having a sense of security, heighten stress levels, and damage their perception of the world. In the broader framework of reoccurring racial and class inequalities, in educational achievement, there is a need for early interventions among underprivileged youth. Newly developing research adheres to the positive outcomes of demonstrating compassion, displaying comfort, and modeling constructive relationships. For this reason, the research purposes that school and teacher driven interventions are among the greatest methods for refining student behavioral outcomes.

Relationship Boundaries and Underprivileged School-aged Children

Educators are becoming increasingly knowledgeable of the perspective relationships amongst academic achievement, social-emotional competencies, and social support in elementary school-aged children (Elias & Haynes, 2008). The mere existence of the relations promotes affection, consideration, expression, respect, academic success, and motivation and support. Studies of inquiry have demonstrated that primary social interactions and the quality of these exchanges offer the foundation for forthcoming developmental milestones. Children and adolescents are more productive with positive social interactions and emotional proficiencies. Hence, these interactions and proficiencies builds strong families and school and community involvement. Students need the support of education stakeholders to healthy and positive relationships and academic success. Empathy, trust, and care are the drivers for accomplishing social and emotional development.

As students grow and mature and enroll into kindergarten through twelve school settings, teachers become even more essential to streamlining or obstructing the school transition process. The most cutting edge research has drawn attention to the role of emotion recognition and regulation and associated social-emotional abilities (in effective social relations). These skillsets can be indispensable targets for interventions directed towards promoting positive communication and supporting academic achievement. In education and psychology, there is a shared belief (among academic researchers) that is considerably important to interpret theoretically based strategies into classroom instructional practice (Lemberger, Brigman, Webb, & Moore, 2012). Although there is a solid hypothetical rationale for having assurance in these theories, empirical support across different populations is progressively evolving (Elias & Haynes, 2008). There are restrictions on the effects of these relationships for school-aged children in low-income, urban societies. From an environmental viewpoint, children's academic results are strongly impacted by their neighborhoods, family lifestyles, schools attended, and readily available resources for individual and school use.

Social Emotional Learning Standards

Students need opportunities to productively and constructively identify dilemmas, analyze conditions, resolve conflicts, evaluate circumstances, reflect on actions and behaviors, and own moral responsibilities. Subsequently, the fundamental role of social emotional factors has been ever more accepted in educational policy and practice (McKown, Russo-Ponsaran, Allen, Johnson, & Warren-Khot, 2016). For instance, a rising amount of states have espoused elementary and secondary social emotional learning standards. Similarly, a number of individuals have debated the linkage between social emotional factors and academic results. This is partly due to the natural social environments of schools and the course of learning is innately communal. School systems are recognizing that active and ongoing communication, social engagement, rapport building, and teamwork are critical to a student's social and emotional welfare. Well-built structures that social emotional factors intensify a student's readiness to learn and participate with their age group. As a result, the aforesaid factors support academic results. Thus, social skills impact interpersonal support from fellow students and teachers (advancing academic proficiencies).

Risk Factors and Social and Emotional Burdens

The negative impact of social and emotional development can hinder hale, hearty, and satisfying relationships with diverse children and adults. Therefore, social and emotional competencies such as, attention, behavioral and emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and social skills are crucial for academic achievement (McCormick, Cappella, O'Connor, & McClowry, 2015). Due to the far reaching effects of social and emotional competencies, there is increasing government and consumer support for teaching these competencies during the onset of elementary school. The support of education stakeholders has stimulated the growth and advancement of school-based social-emotional (SEL) programs. These programs are intended to develop social emotional skills and academic progress. Instructional practices should focus more on effective and explicit communication, active listening, cooperation and collaboration, and productively negotiating conflicts. Just recently, a bilateral group of policymakers announced the Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act to the 113th Congress (which multiplied the availability of research-based programs that teach students social-emotional competencies). Within the research, it would be paramount to explore the correlation of school engagement, decreases in mental health symptomology, and gains in academic achievement (Berg & Aber, 2015).

Over the course of many years, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) scholars have postulated that SEL, in the class setting, is an unquestionable aspect of academic and behavioral achievement for students (Dominguez & LaGue, 2013). The most successful schools depend on social and emotional skills as a cohesive component of teaching methods. As these schools comprehend the adverse effects of poor attachment amongst parents, caregivers, teachers, and students. Additionally, these shortcomings may develop into attitudes of learned helplessness. With that in mind, it is critical for social and emotional skills to prepare students in their early education endeavors and later life experiences. There has been a growing interest, of education advocates, in initiating SEL programs in low-income urban locations (where there are higher occurrence rates of students starting school with poorer levels of social-emotional and academic proficiencies alongside their more privileged peers) (McCormick, Cappella, O'Connor, &McClowry, 2015).

The many hereditary and biological factors, facing these students, offers more exposure to trauma, death, injuries, diseases, illness, abuse and neglect, and mental health problems. With the above stated risk factors, students need SEL programs to build resilience and healthy lifestyles. School-aged children, that effectively develop core social-emotional skills, such as self-control, self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making, are more capable of successfully navigating the shift to elementary school. An exceptional interpersonal school climate, categorized by support, order, and fair-mindedness is a major indicator of healthier school functioning and child adjustment ((Berg & Aber, 2015). This includes school community members feeling secure, valued and appreciated, and inspired. In school settings, it is vital to note that a child's feelings of belonging, acceptance, security, and livelihood are particularly essential for maintaining his or her academic needs.

Social-emotional Competencies and Future Student Accomplishments

One of the most highly rated predictors, of student academic achievement and welfare, is social-emotional competency (Ashdown & Bernard, 2012). It is the fundamental basis of a student's future accomplishments. Children and adolescents need outlets for expressing their interactions with peers and adults and regulating their emotions. Through effective modeling, students develop a positive self-esteem and self-concept and self-control. Additionally, the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) have described five central social and emotional skills that are essential grounds for a child's welfare. These include self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, rapport-building skills, and accountable decision-making skills. These aforesaid skills are a major influence on a student's whole well-being. Upon entry into school, students need self-assurance, an ability to form positive relationships with classmates and adults, attentiveness and perseverance with thought-provoking tasks, skillsets to effectively express emotions, follow instructions, and remain focused, and problem solving skills for social problems.

Teacher-Student Relationships and Emotional, Behavioral, and Cognitive Development

A number of investigators have confirmed that teacher and student relationships are predictive of a comprehensive and extensive developmental outcomes (Murray, Kosty, & Hauser-McLean, 2016). The aforementioned relationship seems to be affiliated with a wide range of outcomes, such as emotional, behavioral, and cognitive development. Moreover, teacher and student relationships are vital for every student. These relationships could be most advantageous for children and adolescents in poverty-stricken environments and exposed to sociodemographic risk factors. Teachers have the capacity to shape cognitive learning and development. Their roles are crucial in helping children and adolescents process their ability to hear, understand, and recall key information for interpersonal and academic success. More importantly, the teacher-student can shield adverse effects and increase social and supportive outcomes. Academic success and school and district accountability have led up to investigating teacher and student relationships from various viewpoints. As a result, more transparency and specificity is required for the following: understanding the relative significance of each perception and its probability of facilitating the progression and positioning of relationship-focused interventions (by emphasizing critical components of each perception).

Social and Emotional Development and African American Academic Achievement

From primary to secondary grade levels, there have been inadequate opportunities for underprivileged, inner-city, African American students, at risk of school failure, to discuss academic achievement (Williams & Portman, 2014). Their voices speak volumes to long-term implications of school success and failure, drive and commitment, and coping with doubts and uncertainties. On the contrary, there are countless studies capturing the opinions of parents, educators, and school officials. It is important to capture the thoughts and opinions of schools' most precious commodities. Students can address the obstacles that weigh heavily on learning and social and emotional development. Up to date, only a small number of researchers have gained the viewpoints, of African American students, on overcoming adversity and excelling in content areas. Students are gatekeepers of exceptional knowledge and provide insight into the individual, social, cultural, and background factors impacting their academic achievement. Their perspectives on instructional practices and classroom and school-wide management practices are essential to academic growth and achievement. With that in mind, school counselor and various other educational stakeholders (i.e. parents, teachers, school officials, and community members) can discover avenues for generating, transforming, and eliminating current school policies, programs, and services and supporting student resilience and academic achievement.

New Government Regulations for Social and Emotional Development

In spite of increasing evidence that supports the association between social and emotional learning and college and career success, there are a lack of measures to implement education policies (Mays, 2016). The newly enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the most updated revision of the No Child Left Behind, has the ability to make successful transitions. It is highly recognized that ESSA provides a first-hand passage for promoting the entire child. Furthermore, it references the significance of integrating social and emotional learning in school systems. Hence, there is key opportunity for school districts to change the education landscape and guarantee that social and emotional learning is incorporated into schools across the country.

Once more, the recently government mandated ESSA encompasses social-emotional learning (Ferguson, 2016). Notably, ESSA does not utilize the social-emotional learning terminology. Instead, the new ruling permits states and local school districts the opportunity to outline student achievement more extensively. Particularly, ESSA declares that "nonacademic" factors can be applied in accountability. That would comprise indicators for student engagement, school climate, and security.

The new regulations enthuse school systems to create school environments that increase students' successful learning skills (essential for school preparedness and academic achievement). Additionally, ESSA endorses activities that support the health and well-being of every student (i.e. promoting nonviolent, drug-free, and supportive environments). The goal is to avert bullying and harassment and develop instructional practices for rapport building, such as effective dialogue. Moreover, it is essential to offer mentoring and school counseling, to each student, and execute schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS).

There are numerous opportunities for ESSA to foster social and emotional learning (Mays, 2016). As it relates to state accountability systems, the specific language describing and evaluating student success is granted to state departments of education and local school districts. By law, states and school districts must integrate one measure of school quality and academic success indicator in their accountability systems. These school quality and student success measures may comprise school climate, student engagement, and security. The inclusion of these non-academic factors, in accountability systems, are a crucial mechanism for increasing the connection amongst children and adolescent's physical and emotional health and academic achievement.

In terms of school improvement, ESSA mandates the inclusion of central stakeholders (Mays, 2016). This includes, but are not limited to specialized instructional support staff in the development of state department of education and school district improvement plans. With the implementation of these plans, students at high risk of poor academic outcomes will be supported. States and schools are obligated to address school climate and security and the students' mental and behavioral well-being. In reference to professional development, the previous passage of No Child Left Behind reported that professional development funding was only utilized to support academic content areas. With ESSA, professional development subsidies can be used for essential opportunities promoting the following: knowledge and skillsets advancing social and emotional learning for administrators, faculty, and staff. Training may encompass connecting faculty and staff with treatment options and intervention services to aid at-risk children impacted by trauma.

As funding for safe and healthy students raises critical importance, the new law, ESSA, permits subsidies for programming to positively impact the safety, security, and mental, emotional, and physical welfare of all students (Mays, 2016). To have access to these subsidies, school districts must complete a comprehensive needs assessment once every three years. This builds further awareness of students' needs within their environments. Title IV funding may be accessible to school districts promoting social and emotional learning. First, there has to be a clear indication for the aforementioned need. Additionally, ESSA overtly outlines that Title IV money can be utilized for nurturing health, supportive, and drug-free school environments (where the focus centers on academic success, enhancing pedagogical practices for developing rapport-building skills (i.e. communication), offering mentoring programs and school counseling services to every child and adolescent, and initiating school-wide PBIS). These supports are imperative to students across the United States. Likewise, school systems acquire additional aid, and students improve their social and emotional welfare. Every student should have access to positive and healthy educational opportunities. Alongside academics, it is the whole child that needs support. ESSA allows a multitude of partnerships amongst schools, students and families, and communities to support the successful implementation of social and emotional learning.

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The Effectiveness of the Inclusion Model on Students with High Incidence Disabilities Based on Academic Achievement

By Angela Hilbert

Abstract

This article examines research on the provision of special education services through the inclusion model and the achievement of students with high incidence disabilities. McLeskey and Waldron (2011) stated that current research supports the "reconsidering (of) full inclusion" for students with high incidence disabilities. More schools have adopted this model for special education. The project focused on a meta-analysis of current research on the topic. With opposing views found on the subject, a more extensive study was needed to determine if the inclusion model can ensure academic achievement in students with high incidence disabilities.

Introduction

Educating students with disabilities in an inclusive setting has been in practice for several years now. Least restrictive environment was originally required in 1975 by the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act continued this mandate. The term inclusion is defined as serving students with disabilities in the general education classroom with appropriate in-class support from special education staff. The Council of Exceptional Children has endorsed the practice of inclusion. Numerous studies about achievement and attitudes concerning the inclusive setting have been conducted.

Attitudes on Inclusion Model

Attitudes about the inclusion model were important because an attitude can affect the implementation of the model in the school. If teachers saw positive results and had positive opinions about the model, then implementation was smoother. For educators and administrators to see positive results in the model, academic achievement must improve for students.

Educating students with disabilities in an inclusive setting has been in practice for several years. The least restrictive environment required in the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* that was originally mandated in 1975 by the *Education for All Handicapped Children Act*. The term inclusion was defined as serving students with disabilities in the general education classroom with appropriate in-class support from special education staff. The Council of Exceptional Children endorsed the practice of inclusion. From numerous studies about achievement and attitudes concerning the inclusive setting have been conducted.

Science, social studies, and the related arts have been common classes that provided the inclusive setting for students with moderate/severe disabilities. But there have been a limited number of studies on acquisition of science content for students with these disabilities (Jimenez, Browder, Spooner, & Dibiase, 2012). In 2011, Jimenez, Browder, Spooner, and Dibiase found 17 studies of science education inclusive practices; however, 14 of those studies met the criteria for evidence-based practice for teaching content to students with moderate to severe disabilities.

Those studies showed that embedded instruction was effective with students with disabilities in teaching science vocabulary and concepts (Jimenez, Browder, Spooner, & Dibiase, 2012).

For the past fifty years, many studies have focused on the public's attitudes toward people with intellectual disabilities. There have been consistent findings that children and youth hold negative attitudes toward their peers with Intellectual Disabilities (Siperstein, Parker, Bardon, & Widaman, 2007). Siperstein, Parker, Bardon, and Widaman (2007) also stated that children without intellectual disabilities socially rejected or neglected students with intellectual disabilities. The reasons for these negative attitudes were complex. Students with intellectual disabilities were perceived as less social or academically capable and these perceptions may have accounted for the negative attitudes among students without disabilities.

Best Practices of Inclusion Model

The main goal of any educational program was to help students maximize their performance. This was also true for students with disabilities. The great debate is in which environment was the best: inclusion or pullout programs. As the debate continues, students needed to be taught with researched based practices no matter which environment they are taught. The importance of effective teaching in inclusion was that all educators needed to diversify their goals, assessments, and instruction to accommodate and meet wide range of developmental and educational needs of students (Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatri, & Algozine, 2012). Regular education teachers needed to be prepared to teach students with disabilities placed in their classroom. The most effective way to teach students with disabilities in an inclusive setting was to collaborate and consult with the special education teacher. Obaikor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatri & Algozine (2012) stated that this collaboration can facilitate a successful inclusion experience for students with disabilities. There were five evidenced based co-teaching models in which collaboration can occur which are: 1) one teach, one assist; 2) station teaching; 3) parallel teaching; 4) alternative teaching; and 5) team teaching.

1. One Teach and One Assist: In this model one teacher provides the instruction for all students and the other teacher provides assistance.

2. Station Teaching: This model requires of students to be broken into three separate small groups. Two groups work with a teacher while one group works independently.

3. Parallel Teaching: This model requires teachers to plan lessons together then split the students into two groups to provide the same lesson within the smaller group within the same classroom.

4. Alternative Teaching: This model allows one teacher to teach and the other to pre-teach and re-teach students who need additional support.

5. Team Teaching: This model involves both teachers providing the instruction together to students in the same classroom.

No matter which model was used all service providers must provide differentiated instruction. Key concepts must be clarified and all students must be engaged in learning in the inclusive classroom as well as high expectations for academic success for all students. Inclusion required qualitative and quantitative efforts by the entire school community which included teacher, school leaders and parents (Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatri, & Algozine, 2012).

Throughout the United States, Response to Intervention has gained popularity as an approach to identify students with learning disabilities but RTI offers regular education teachers a framework for problem solving in the classroom (Musti-Rao, Hawkins, & Tan, 2011). RTI emphasized ongoing progress monitoring so that decisions could be made about intervention so that the child can succeed in academics. The RTI model also emphasized evidence-based instructional strategies. Musti-Rao, Hawkins, & Tan (2011) stated that school-based consultation was a way for teachers to implement evidence-based instruction. When teachers worked closely with consultants to implement evidenced-based instruction, student in inclusion showed growth.

School-based consultation has also been implemented in Singapore. The process of problem-solving consultation has five stages, which are: 1) Relationship Building, 2) Problem Identification, 3) Problem Analysis, 4) Program Implementation, and 5) Program Evaluation (Musti-Rao, Hawkins, & Tan, 2011). The problem-solving model helped students with disabilities succeed academic in the regular classroom.

When implementing inclusion in a school setting, training was a key for successful implementation. Kilanowski-Press, Foote, & Rinaldo (2010) stated that the following factor influence inclusion success: 1) The qualifications and strengths of the teachers, 2) The role of the special educator related to the content instruction, 3) The professional development experiences teachers have had in understanding and applying inclusive special education models, and 4) The time available for planning and consultation.

Quality and effective professional development was needed on the topic of inclusive education, especially for special education teachers. Professional development must be coherent and must align with all the teachers' goals and needs, as well as state standards and accountability (Leko & Brownell, 2009). The state standards provided direction that helped both the regular education and special education teachers know where they were headed when working with students. Professional development must also help special and regular education teacher understand the key concepts of classroom instruction to help students with disabilities meet Adequate Yearly Progress on state assessments (Leko & Brownell, 2009). Effective professional development focused on collaboration and examining student data, which was a best practice in the inclusive setting.

Effects of Inclusion Model on Academic Achievement

One of the main factors of the inclusion model was the ability to increase the academic achievement in students with high incidence disabilities (HID). If the process improved the outcomes of the students then the benefits of the program were innumerable. However, Harrington (1997) stated that these outcomes were not beneficial or acceptable. "After a year in the inclusionary classroom, 39% of the students with LD lost ground with respect to the students without disabilities". The paper sited other studies where the findings were more optimistic. Many students saw no difference in their academic progress based on the setting rather inclusionary or in a resource room. The study stated "that the evidence suggests that the setting does not have a significant impact on academic achievement of students with or without LD".

In a meta-analysis by McLeskey and Waldron (2011) examined over 342 articles and studies on inclusion model and academic achievement. The review focused on the ability of inclusionary instruction to achieve proficient testing score for students with HID. The review targeted eight investigations looking at achievement and inclusion classrooms. The review found, from the first four investigations that examined the group achievement, regular education students have higher achievement than students with disabilities. The first investigation by Bear and Proctor examined a co-teaching atmosphere where a special education and general education teacher team-taught. The study found that after one year the "general education students made significantly more academic progress in reading and math than did students with mild disabilities" (11).

Again Deno and colleagues found the same results in the investigation. "Analyses comparing students with disabilities and low achieving students across the 8 schools revealed that students with disabilities made significantly less progress than the low achieving students on the BASS in both reading and math"(12). The third investigation based on the work of J.R. Jenkins and colleagues found higher achievement in regular education students than the students with disabilities in reading when using the BASS test. When using the Metropolitan Achievement Test, "student progress in reading did not differ significantly" (12). The final group investigation found that students progressed similarly in reading but general education students made more progress in math than students with disabilities. Having reviewed eight different studies, the researchers found that "about two-thirds of students with LD do not have their needs met in full inclusion programs"(McLeskey & Waldron, 2011). Students with HID tend to fall further and further behind their peers in inclusive settings when a specialized instruction was needed to meet their needs. The study stated that full inclusion could not work for all students with HID. When a targeted small group instruction was grouped with inclusive settings, students can make gains and sometimes "catch up with peers"(21).

Barriers and Problems Faced with Inclusion Model

McCarty (2006) noted complications related to the researched factors on the benefits and disadvantages of inclusion becoming confused due to the improper use of terminology as related to inclusion. Despite that the practice of inclusion dominated the educational landscape there was a lack of clarity in the way that inclusion should be practiced. In 2004 (96%) of students with disabilities were being included in general education settings and (52.1%) of these students spent (79%) of the day in general education classroom as reported by the U.S. Department of Education (2009). Some of the literature suggested that inclusion was about quality of learning and participation rather than a common place for all to learn. Glazzard (2011) conducted a study that examined the perspectives of teachers and teaching assistants on the barriers to effective inclusion in a primary school in northern England. He interviewed the teachers and teaching assistants to identify the clear themes that they thought were barriers to inclusion. Those common themes as barriers to inclusion were attitudinal barriers, one-to-one support, teamwork, academic standards, location, parental resistance, training, and resources. Glazzard (2011) stated that the key barrier to inclusion was student with disabilities participation in the inclusive classroom and academic achievement. He also stated the policy changes were necessary to break down the barriers and that teachers need to embrace in alternative pedagogies.

Conclusion

Mandated by legislation through the requirement of the least restrictive environment, inclusion has evolved as the norm in public school districts. Noted by Lamport and colleagues (2012) the most common model for inclusion was co-teaching. Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatri, & Algozine (2012) stated the co-teaching model including the general educator collaborating and consulting with the special education teacher was most effective on achievement of students with high incidence disabilities. With the transition from No Child Left Behind to Every Student Succeeds Act it is going to be interesting the direction of how students with disabilities are taught by the inclusion model in the general classroom.

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A Review of Reinforcement Preference Assessments

By Rossana Hahn

Abstract

The following literature review focuses on the relevance of identifying the most effective reinforcements as mechanisms to reduce undesirable behaviors. (Fisher, Piaza, Bowman, Hagopian, Owens, & Slevin, 1992; Groskreutz, Groskreutz, & Higbee, 2011; Northup, George, Jones, Broussard, & Vollmer, 1996; Vladescu, & Kodak, 2010). According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), approximately 8.3 million children (14.5%) aged 4–17 years have parents who've talked with a health care provider or school staff about the child's emotional or behavioral difficulties (CDC, 2015). The goal of this literature review is to increase the knowledge on this subject while providing empirical evidence and various approaches. This literature review included four articles that provided relevant information related to reinforcements and they are the following:

1. Response competition and stimulus preferences in the treatment of automatically reinforced behavior: a comparison.
2. A review of recent studies on differential reinforcement during skill acquisition in early intervention.
3. A comparison of reinforcer assessment methods: the utility of verbal and pictorial choice procedures.
4. A comparison of two approaches for identifying reinforcers for persons with severe and profound disabilities.
5. The articles mentioned above were carefully selected from two reliable search engines ERIC and PsycINFO.

Relevance of Reinforcements

Reinforcements are a valuable tool when they are effectively applied. They are implemented to increase compliance and reduce undesired behaviors. Determining the appropriate reinforcement is essential and requires an analysis of the individual's preferences. Recently, the accuracy of assessments in this area had improved though research. However, identifying the preferred reinforcement could be challenging (Groskreutz et al., 2011; Northup et al., 1996; Vladescu, & Kodak, 2010). Many times, individuals with developmental disabilities do not have the mechanisms to express their preferences and direct observation is not effective. Preference assessments are essential for reinforcement implementation and to maximize results. (Groskreutz et al., 2011; Northup, et al., 1996).

Preference Assessments

Stimuli Choice Format, Competing Items, Stimulus assessments and Schedules

Northup et al., (1996) suggested that it was more effective to present various stimuli to the individual instead of just one. Their research had the purpose of analyzing the value of a verbal stimulus-choice in the process of identifying reinforcers. Similarly, the previously mentioned research Fisher et al. (1992) pointed out that more than one stimuli should be presented to the individual. Their research attempted to identify preferences on reinforcements and to compare high preference stimuli to low preference stimuli (Fisher et al., 1992; Northup et al., 1996). Groskreuts et al., (2011), in their research proposed a relationship between a "high- preference and high-competition" stimuli and their connection to

immediate reinforced behavior. The last article reviewed proposed a research based on different schedules and different quality of reinforcements. The purpose of the different schedules research is to identify the most effective one (Vladescu and Kodak, 2010).

Method and Measures

Northup et al., (1996) used reinforcements for their study that were selected by the participants through a survey consisting of verbal-stimuli assessment and pictures. The participants consisted of 4 kids diagnosed with ADHD. The researchers used a token coupon system. The children were presented with a coding worksheet and they received a reinforcement after finishing the task. The students could stop the task at any point. The researcher would conclude the study if the student stop for 2 minutes. The results of the Northup study suggested that verbal and pictorial surveys are more reliable to determine reinforcement preferences. They also proposed that simple surveys should be used to recognize reinforcement categories but not to determine low and high-preferences.

Fisher et al., (1992) presented stimuli to the individual and he/she would choose one. The stimuli must be attractive to the individual, for that purpose a previous survey was necessary like the one proposed in the Northup et al., (1996) study. The study had 4 participants. The researchers presented two stimuli to the students and the students were expected to choose one of the stimuli in 5 seconds, then the remaining stimulus was removed. If the students did not choose any of the stimuli the researchers offered them a different combination of stimuli. The student had to choose the reinforcement at least 80% to be considered a high preference stimuli. The results suggested that a high ranked reinforcement is more effective than the lower ranked one.

Differently, from the previous studies, the Groskreutz et al., (2011) study had only one individual as a participant. Steve, a 4-year-old boy with autism was selected for the research and he was also part of a vocal stereotypy assessment. The research performed a preference assessment and recorded Steve's reaction to the reinforcement. For the competing item assessment, the research recorded Steve's vocal stereotypy when the stimulus was presented. Thirty second schedules were used. The results suggested that High-competition items reduced the undesired behavior.

Vladescu & Kodak (2010) similarly to Groskreutz et al., (2011) used schedules for their study. Independent and prompted responses were recorded and the variation in the schedule consisted of a 5 second delay. Three children with intellectual disabilities were evaluated. The results of the research proposed that schedules of reinforcement that promote independent responses also increase skill acquisition.

Flaws/Measures Limitations

The main flaw in the four articles reviewed is their weaknesses in sampling. None of the studies had more than 4 participants. Regardless of the reason behind why they used a small sample, it does reduce the reliability in their results. The competition and preference assessment, previously mentioned in this literature review, used only one participant for the study. The results of the study provided a methodology for further studies but it cannot be taken as conclusive results (Groskreutz et al., 2011). The study on differential reinforcement used only 4 individuals. Additionally, the conditions for the study were very structured and did not reflect day to day procedures (Vladescu & Kodak, 2010). Fisher et al., (1992) stated that the results of their research are highly reliable but they are not effective to identify individual preferences. Northup et al., (1996) mentioned that the results of their study are consistent with previous researches. However, the study had limitations when identifying the reinforcer. Northup et al., (1996) pointed out that further studies are necessary to identify the efficacy of their approach.

Conclusions

Reinforcements are a valuable tool for improving behaviors when they are correctly implemented. Student's performance and academic progress can be significantly enhanced by the effective use of reinforcements. Reinforcement preference assessments are an essential tool to identify the most appropriate stimulus. Students with developmental disabilities may have difficulty expressing their preferences and that fact adds relevance to the reinforcement preference assessments. The articles reviewed agreed on the effectiveness of reinforcements and offered different methodologies for identification and implementation.

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About the Author

My name is Rossana Hahn, I am originally from Peru. I work as a special education teacher at Palm Cove Elementary School in Broward County. I am currently working towards my Master of Science in Special Education at Florida International University. Working in special education has been the most rewarding experience for me. I truly enjoy researching and reading about new findings in the field.

A Call to the Trenches

By Christi Abramsky

Abstract

Tired of being asked, "Why do you work with *those kids*?" I attempt to answer the question and call out to my fellow teachers to join me in teaching students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders, hoping to reverse the considerable shortage of teachers in this field.

"I saw my momma bruised once. It was the day before my birthday party. I woke up and she was laying on the couch. She was bloody and bruised on her face. I tried to wake her up, but she didn't wake up. I thought she was dead. I made cereal. I waited. I put on my shoes and went outside."

"Why do you work with those kids?" "Don't you get tired of getting hit?" "Don't you get tired of getting hurt?"

The children I work with have been through so much trauma. Like the gazelle who runs from all lions at equal speed– even if it is not necessarily the lion who killed their mate, these kids see all adults as the enemy. Kindness toward them is often met with suspicion. A trustworthy adult is as strange to them as a vegetarian lion would be to the gazelle. Their doubt often leads these students to push adults away. And, these particular children have often had a great deal of practice attempting to get adults to show their true colors.

Sadly, most of these children have experienced significant childhood trauma before they enter school. Some began experiencing trauma before they were born: from the obvious, maternal ingestion of drugs– to the less obvious, maternal lack of nourishment, exposure to high levels of stress related hormones, or in-utero chronic illness. The unfortunate trauma often continues throughout their early years in the form of neglect, physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuse.

When these children enter the school system, they already have a reluctance to trust adults. The trauma they have experienced frequently shows in their ability to process and their behavior. Many times, these kids are already showing the behavioral difficulties which will eventually lead them to a classroom like mine. It is not unusual for them to exhibit the physical characteristics of their difficult life– unkempt, unclean, and smelling of lacking hygiene. Not surprisingly, these students are seldom the teacher's favorite. Even in Kindergarten, they are often removed from classrooms regularly and sent to the office repeatedly.

How many times has a student been removed from their class for long periods of time before their grades are affected? How many different teachers have removed them from their classrooms? How long does it take to collect enough data to get these students tested for special education? How many lessons do these students miss before being assigned to a behavior classroom? How many adults have proven these students were right to not trust them?

By the time these students become a part of a classroom like mine, they are filled with mistrust and anger. They throw furniture, spew venomous words, and hit and kick the adults who want to help them. They do not believe in anything or anyone. If they start to feel kindly toward an adult, they lash out three times harder– angry at themselves for the slip. They hit harder and spew louder, to prove to themselves adults can't be trusted. A child secretly hoping this adult won't quit on them and prove them right.

The strongest bonds I have ever witnessed are between men who fought in war together. Those who literally or figuratively have been "in the trenches" side-by-side. It isn't simply being together for long periods of time that leads to this bond, or these strong relationships would be seen in many other groups.

This bond is created by being together during horrible times and coming out of it together– not likely unscathed, but together.

"Why do I work with *those kids*?"

I work with *those kids* because sometimes, if you can stay alive through the war and come out of the trenches, in the exhaustion after the fight a child will notice a discoloration on your arm, let down his armor, and tell you about a terrifying moment when he saw his mom bruised and thought she was dead.

And, yes, I sometimes get tired of being hit and hurt. But every bruise is worth it if I can begin to restore faith in humanity for a child who has had their faith stripped. Every bruise has value if it helps undo the damage which has been done to a child.

According to the American Association for Employment in Education's, *Educator Supply and Demand Report 2015-16*, of the 59 education fields evaluated, Emotional/Behavioral Disorders Special Education (EBD SpEd) was one of 11 fields reported as having considerable shortage. EBD SpEd has more shortage than any math or science teaching field. Only Severe/Profound Disabilities Special Education has a greater shortage.

My fellow teachers, if you don't feel fulfilled in your classrooms, if you aren't sure you are changing lives the way you hoped, and if you think a bruise might be worth it, please come join me in the trenches. *Those kids* need us. *Those kids* deserve us. *Those kids* deserve a chance.

Resources

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Social Experiences of Deaf Students at the University of Education, Winneba

By Alexander M Oppong, Ph.D.

Joyce Adu, MPhil

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Abstract

This phenomenological study explored the social experiences of deaf students at the University of Education, Winneba (UEW). Fourteen deaf students were purposively sampled from a population of 36 students. Data were gathered through a semi-structured interview. Data were coded and analyzed using themes emerged from the interview. Results of the study indicated that participants had varied social experiences. Whereas some preferred being at the same place with their hearing colleagues, others saw that as a waste of time. This study recommended that at social gathering, the university should make available sign language interpreter so that students who are deaf can benefit from such meetings.

Introduction

A category of students with special needs that have access to tertiary inclusive education in Ghana are the Deaf. At the tertiary level, students who are Deaf share all social amenities including Halls of Residence, lecture halls, one-on-one and group interactions with their hearing colleagues, teaching and non-teaching staff. The present study was conducted with students who are Deaf at the University of Education, Winneba because it is the only tertiary institution that practices inclusion extensively for qualified students who are Deaf. The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) has quiet a large number of qualified students who are Deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) reading various programs with their hearing counterparts. The University provides support services in the forms of sign language interpreting, note-taking, resource teaching, tutoring, and counselling to all students who are DHH and whose major mode of communication is Sign Language. The practice of inclusion is a recent development at the tertiary level in Ghana (Fobi, & Oppong, 2015). Students learn better in inclusive setting when they have peace of mind and socialize effectively among themselves, and the environment in the institution.

The problem is that no study has been conducted to explore the social experiences of DHH students in a tertiary institution in Ghana (Fobi, & Oppong, 2015; Oppong, Fobi, & Fobi, 2016). Some studies have been conducted on the social experiences of deaf students. For example, Magongwa (2008) and Bell (2013) conducted a study on social experiences of deaf students in a tertiary institution in South Africa, and found that the students had different social experiences when they enrolled to study with their hearing peers. Mantey (2011) conducted a study on the experiences of post-lingual students who are deaf in a Basic level in Ghana and found that deaf students did not have positive experiences when they learned with their hearing colleagues. Nikolaraizi, and Hadjikakou (2006) studied the educational experiences of deaf students in Greece and found that whether or not deaf students are placed in inclusive or segregated settings, their experiences remain the same. Schick, Skalicky, Edwards, Kushalnagar, Topolski, and Patrick (2013) explored the experiences of deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) youth on school placement and perceived quality of life in the United States of America and found that the students' experiences were not different across inclusive and segregated schools. Nevertheless, Schick, et al. (2013) did not consider the experiences of the students placed in a tertiary institution.

In this study, the term "Deaf" was used to refer to individual students who have been medically, clinically, and educationally assessed and confirmed to be incapable of perceiving oral sounds naturally through their auditory mechanism. Such individuals see themselves as cultural minority and as such depend heavily on sign language for socialization and all other academic and cultural activities.

"Social Experiences" in this study refers to the individual personal feelings about interactions between students and lecturers, between students who DHH and their hearing colleagues, and interactions among students at the Halls of Residence and social gatherings such as matriculations and congregations.

Having transitioned from special Secondary school for Deaf to an inclusive educational institute in Ghana, it would be interesting to explore the social experiences of students who are Deaf in order to provide useful empirical information for that inclusive tertiary institution. The present study explored fourteen deaf students' social experiences in an inclusive tertiary institution. The research question that guided the study was: What social experiences do deaf students go through in the tertiary level? Findings of the study would make known the social experiences of students who are deaf.

Social Experiences of Students who are Deaf at the Tertiary Level

Experiences at Social Gathering

Over the past decade, students who are deaf have struggled with the development of social skills (Stinson, & Antia, 2014). Many of the skills needed to interact successfully with their hearing peers are language based, which is an area of deficit inherent in the disability of deafness. Students who are deaf have fewer natural opportunities for meaningful conversational interaction and as a result, are less likely to acquire the full range of pragmatic skills needed for successful communication (Fobi, & Oppong, 2015; Ling, 1989; Oppong, & Fobi, 2016). Pragmatic skills include listening with the ears and imitating with voice. Pragmatics of language and the way languages are used to get things accomplished are essential in communication (Easterbrooks & Baker, 2002). Easterbrooks and Baker further indicated: "Language occupies a central role in social learning (p.38)" and therefore impacts a person's ability to learn social skills needed to communicate successfully. Deafness impacts language and communication development, which can "dramatically alter" social skills acquisition (Brackett, 1997).

Historically, the literature has documented considerable difficulties in the area of social development for students with hearing loss (Bell, 2013). In 1986, Loeb and Sargiani reported that school-aged deaf students in public schools demonstrated lower scores on measures of perceived self-confidence in the areas of peer popularity, ease of making friends, and the ability to have positive peer interactions than did hearing students in the same schools. In a review of six studies of self-esteem in deaf and hard of hearing students in mainstream classrooms, Ita and Friedman (1999) found that, majority of the students at the Basic level reported difficulties with peer relationships, and social interactions in general (Nicholas & Geers, 2006).

In a review of 33 studies, Kluwin, Stinson, and Colarossi (2002) noted that deaf and hard of hearing students in public schools often failed to establish meaningful, and close relationships with their hearing peers. As a result, many students reported feelings of isolation and loneliness in school. They concluded that students in mainstream programs may not fully enjoy their relationships with peers, in particular, with hearing peers. In an effort to evaluate deaf students ability to employ the pragmatic skills required for effective face-to-face interaction, Jeanes, Nienhuys, and Rickards (2000) found that profoundly deaf children had difficulty using appropriate, productive pragmatic behaviors when requesting clarification, and when responding to requests for clarification. Jeanes et al. posited that the reduced quality, and quantity of interactional experience for deaf students may be one reason for this difficulty. The authors further explained that fewer opportunities for these behaviors to be modeled by competent communicators, as well as fewer opportunities for the child to practice the behaviors in meaningful settings.

In a study on social skills intervention program in Spain, Suarez (2000) stated four significant improvements: (1) improvement in assertive behavior in deaf students' school life: (2) increased emotional adjustment, (3) improved social adjustment, and (4) improvement in self-image.

Suarez asserted that the deaf students became better adjusted when greater attention was given to social-emotional aspects of the students' development. Suarez indicated that sometimes deaf students are placed in challenging educational environments, in which they must try to learn and integrate socially. Students who enter the mainstream from oral deaf schools make transition from individualized instruction in a small group setting (often only 4 or 5 students in a classroom) to a large classroom that may present a difficult experience for them in an acoustic environment. Rather than continuing to receive individualized instruction specifically tailored to meet their learning style and needs. The students must adapt to the material that is presented to them, and the way in which it is presented. Additionally, most regular education teachers have little or no experience working with deaf students and do not receive the information and support they need to adequately meet their needs in the classroom (Luckner, 1991).

Stinson and Antia (2014) stated that the desired outcome of an inclusive classroom is a student who is well integrated both academically, and socially. They suggest that teachers need to examine carefully the degree to which classroom practices are modified to accommodate the deaf students, as well as the kinds of classroom practices that optimize the student's academic, and social integration. Many regular educators do not have enough experience in working with students who are deaf. They also have inadequate information about the needed accommodations and how to implement them to create an effective teaching, and learning environment for these students (Luckner, 1991). The ultimate goal of many families when placing their deaf students in an inclusive education programme is to provide them with the opportunity to achieve an academic level similar to their hearing peers through the mainstream public education system. In order to make the most of this opportunity, teachers need to be cognizant of the social and emotional development of these students prior to their leaving the inclusive school setting.

Matchett (2013) examined the first year experiences of black students who are deaf at a predominately white hearing college in America. Their study focused on Black students who are deaf experiences and highlights strategies that facilitate student persistence in college. Matchett study was a qualitative phenomenological research which used a triangulated method of data collection to enhance credibility and gain participant trust. It included demographic surveys and in-depth interviews supplemented by field notes. After data analysis, findings were identified based on Tinto's student integration theory (1993). Their findings indicated that despite increasing enrollment of college Black students who are deaf, graduation rates had not improved. Three major themes were identified. They were: (1) Peer Connectedness, which participants considered the most important factor in Black deaf student retention; (2) Defining Black (3) Deaf Identity, which considered the unique challenges Black deaf students face in defining their own identities; and Strategies that Support Black Deaf Students in College, which identified skills some Black deaf students use to navigate academic and social challenges. The current study did not focus only on the first year experiences of students who are deaf but their entire social experiences during their stay in a university campus. The presents study employed only semi-structured interview to collect data on the social experiences of deaf students in a public tertiary institution in Ghana.

Social experiences can be a crucial factor in promoting or inhibiting access for deaf students. Shevlin and Rose (2003) commented that deaf students were subjects of ridicule and laughter especially because of their deficit in speech and language. They were perceived to be undeserving and unacceptable to the majority of the public who did not understand them. Cook-Sather (2004) noted that the issues of culture, tradition and social interaction between persons with disabilities and their non-disabled members of the community have been embedded in generation. This has led to prejudice among regular students who learn with persons with disabilities. Their difficulties, according to Derrington and Kendall (2004) are that deaf students experience hostile attitudes and are called names, and some of them stay away from their hearing peers. Often deaf students are bullied, shunned, and treated by their hearing peers as undeserving of love care and support and for fear of being contaminated with the disability (Kenny, McNeela, & Sheliv, 2004). Kenny et al. noted that bullying is rife in schools which are said to be practicing inclusion. Students with disabilities are left out of a lot of activities that socialize students. The students with disabilities are often isolated from their regular peers, Kenny et al. added. Increased participation and success in education for students with hearing impairment improve their social inclusion and give them positive social experiences (Barnes & Mercer, 2003).

Positive social experiences for students who are deaf means the removal of prejudice and discrimination that they have to deal with (Gray, 2002). Gray further stated that students with deafness experience social problems at school for reasons related to their impairment. Of those who have experienced problems at school, many felt that their social lives have been affected greatly. Reasons included teachers' and peers' inability to sign, and socialize with them. Gray added that deaf students often feel rejected and isolated in the inclusive schools. Peer socialization deaf students received from hearing students were not significant.

They were rejected because of the speech and language deficits. In a sociometric study conducted in the UK by Riddell, Tinklin and Wilson (2004), it was observed that students with deafness at the secondary level in an inclusive setting suggested that their acceptance by their peers was not good enough on account of their communication difficulties. Cook-Sather (2004) identified four common attitudes towards students with deafness. Cook-Sather noted that the students are shown pity because they are seen as helpless, unhappy, and tragic figures. These attitudes interfere with the ability of students who are deaf to learn and practice the social skills that lead to effective interpersonal relationships.

Johnson (2014) explored how deaf students interact with mainstream postsecondary environment in the United States of America. Purposeful sampling was used to gather data from 19 individuals who attended postsecondary institutions not designed specifically for d/Deaf students. The participants were enrolled in an urban community college district in the southwestern U.S. and were receiving accommodations from their campus accessibility office. Data were collected through 30-60 minute semi-structured interviews in American Sign Language or spoken English. Findings of the study provided insight on participants' reasons for enrolling in college, their perception of academic rigor as compared to high school, and familial support during their college experience. Participants reported financial difficulty, despite their utilization of the state's tuition waiver program for students with hearing loss. The need for communication access, and especially the quality and quantity of sign language interpreters featured prominently in participants' responses. Participants also expressed a desire for more interaction between students with hearing loss and the general college population. Finally, participants shared their perceptions of the campus accessibility office and the individuals within it, campus administrative support, and their experiences with teachers and classmates. The current study is different from Johnson's study because Johnson did not explore the social experiences in the university. The current study will fill that gap.

Experiences at Halls of Residence

Scheib and Mitchell (2008) stated that some of the reasons why there is a low social participation rate among students with disabilities are: lack of information about accommodations for those with disabilities, and learning access issues, a wheelchair user would be concerned about accessibility to various rooms the Hall of residence. In addition, deaf students may have medical issues which because of communication difficulty may not be able to inform their roommates. The university and staff need more awareness and training in finding resources to assist in designing accessible programs that would aid deaf students in their Halls of residence. Emery (2008) indicated that accommodating deaf students can be successful planner's factor in things that would make the students comfortable. Emery further stated that when such programmes are in place, hearing student would be more sensitive to the needs of deaf students. Like minorities, deaf students may have anxieties about discrimination towards them in their Halls of residence (Ablaeva, 2012; Kutsche, 2012).

Social Experiences with University Staff

Lang, Biser, Mousley, Orlando, and Porter (2004) studied the experiences of deaf students with regards to university staff. They found significant differences between the perceptions of mainstream university lecturers and deaf students regarding the accommodation of deaf and hard of hearing students in the classroom. Lang et al., further explained that the difference between the students and lecturers might be explained partly due to the lecturers' little or no training with regard to the communication needs of deaf learners.

Tugli, Zungu, Ramakuela, Goon, and Anyanwu (2013) explored and described the perceived challenges of the staff of the Disability Unit at the University of Venda. A quantitative approach using semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from two participants who served in the unit. The work and physical environment were assessed. Though all the participants had disability related training coupled with 5-27 years' working experience in a disability environment, they indicated that they were overwhelmed with work pressure. In addition, the participants reported the institution being grossly understaffed. Disability prevalence in the study setting was 2% of the total student population. Most of the disability categories served included 34% (physically disabled) and 22% (partially sighted).

Some of the challenges expressed by the participants included appalling sanitation conditions, poor and un-adapted facilities, and harsh physical environment. These results indicate that staffs at the Disability Unit at the University of Venda are overworked as a result of inadequate resources, shortage of staff and poor support systems. There is an urgent need for increased staff complement and support services. Tugli et al. (2013) indicated that for students with disabilities in tertiary educational institutions, lack of necessary support services can render them socially and academically excluded and overly dependent.

Communication Experiences on Attitude of Lecturers and Hearing Colleagues

Research has shown that communication experiences of students with hearing loss are not comparable to their hearing peers (Murphy, & Newlon, 1987). Deaf students in the university experience feelings of separation and isolation from hearing peers (Foster & Brown, 1989). These students tend to socialize with other deaf students as much as possible (Foster & Decaro, 1991). Foster and Decaro further explained that the issue of learning and writing exams in English Language, the pressure on students in writing notes and communication, the difficulties associated with speech-reading, and the necessity of utilizing an interpreter, all contribute to the lack of interaction between deaf and hearing students.

Although the provision of services is a key feature in the education of deaf students, yet having Ghanaian Sign Language (GSL) interpreters do not guarantee the students' successful inclusion into mainstream classes (Fobi, & Oppong, 2015). For example, a deaf student may have difficulty adjusting to a GSL interpreter in lecture halls after years of being without this support at school for the Deaf. Considering experiences of students who are deaf in the university, the World Federation of the Deaf expresses a serious difference regarding implementation of inclusive education for students. The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) holds that "the least restrictive environment for a Deaf learner … is the most enabling environment for that learner" (World Federation of the Deaf, 2007, p. iii).

Bisol, Valentini, Simioni and Zanchin (2010) explored the experiences of deaf students who attended bilingual schools and identify with the deaf culture in Portugal. They used three young women and two young men, between 21 and 27 years old, who had been enrolled in undergraduate courses for at least three semesters. The work consisted in semi-structured, individual interviews, conducted by a deaf female scholarship-holder and recorded on video; these interviews were later translated into Portuguese and analyzed for their content. The results highlighted how challenging it is to adapt to a world of people who, for the most part, have normal hearing, the difficulties of moving between Sign Language and Portuguese, the need to maintain identity points of reference that are valued by those who hear normally, as well as the importance of reorganizing teaching strategies and evaluating the involvement of the Brazilian Sign Language interpreter. The gap in Bisol et al. (2010) study to be filled by the current study is that, Bisol et al. concentrated only on the academic experiences but did not focus on social experiences.

Cawthorn and Cole (2010) indicated that a national survey at Australis of all colleges with at least one student with a disability, the following rates of accommodations were reported: 88% offered extended time, 77% offered tutors, 69% offered note takers, 62% had class registration assistance available, 55% offered text on tape, 58% had adaptive technology, and 45% made sign language interpreters available. These researchers also found that as many as 25% of students with disabilities find accommodations offered by their college ineffective. Students most often felt that accommodations were based on the definition of a disability rather than practical accommodations individualized to a student's specific needs. Because the purpose of accommodations is to ensure equal access "it is important to remember that modifications should not be made based on generalizations regarding categories of disability, but should be made on a case-by case basis" (Section 504 Compliance Handbook, 1999, Section 9, pg. 64). Little efficacy data are available that detail the types of supports most effective and their impact on student success overall in postsecondary settings (Cawthorn & Cole, 2010; Lindstrom, 2007; Mellard & Kurth, 2006; NCSET, 2004). Most menus of general accommodations were created some time ago and deserve review for effectiveness—research.

Khan (1991) stressed that in order for deaf students to experience success at the tertiary level, intensive, ongoing collaboration and information sharing and encouragement must exist among the teachers, interpreters and students. Cawthorn and Cole (2010) indicated that deaf students face unique challenges in their efforts to communicated and succeed in a university. Unlike their hearing peers, deaf students particularly rely on support services such as interpreters and note-takers to assist them in communication.

The deaf students believe the mainstream universities do not provide sufficiently inclusive and accessible environment that embrace the perspectives of all students because of communication problems (Cawthorn & Cole).

Salter, Pearson, and Swanwick (2015) investigated teaching assistants' (TA) perspectives of deaf students' learning experiences within mainstream secondary schools. Six TAs were recruited to the Data Group and four to the Reference Group; both were engaged in a three stage iterative, qualitative research process comprising focus group meetings and individual interviews. A third group, the Reference Group, consisted of seven deaf students; five mainstream teachers and three teachers of the deaf who provided validation of the Data Group TAs' working context through individual interviews. Consideration was given to how the TAs talked about learning and the challenges they perceived the deaf students encountered in the classroom. The TAs described a range of issues related to deaf students' knowledge acquisition, skills and mental state along with environmental factors they perceived impacted on the students' learning experiences. The findings indicated that deaf students may be engaged in a significant amount of accommodative learning in classrooms designed to support assimilative learning. The TAs identified that their own presence in the classroom impacts on the nature of the social situation and potentially creates a barrier between the deaf student and the mainstream teacher. They considered that mainstream teachers' lack of understanding regarding the impact of deafness significantly affected the students' learning experiences. They also indicated that the manner in which members of the classroom environment responded to the deaf student may be problematic. Suggestions are made for future investigations and a new model for the deployment of TAs to support deaf students is proposed. The gap in Salter et al.'s study is that the study was conducted at the secondary school level and the current study was conducted at the tertiary level. This current study is different from Salter et al. because the current study will explore from students who are deaf their social experiences in a university. The current study did not include teaching assistants.

Dorziat (1999) stated that students who are deaf generally enter the university with little knowledge of the world, due to the communication restrictions that are to be found in their own families, in those cases where the parents can hear. So, the tendency is to direct learning to that which is applicable in day-to-day life, aiming to provide a reasonable level of understanding of happenings and the development of social and professional skills. Many institutions lay more emphasis on socialization than on formal knowledge acquisition and the development of critical thinking (Virole, 2005). As regards the structure of universities that admit students who are deaf, it is necessary to evaluate whether hearing teachers have sufficient competence in Sign Language and if deaf students effectively participate in the daily life of the institutions (Lacerda, 1998).

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a phenomenological design because the participants described their lived social in a tertiary institution in Ghana. Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, and Razavieh (2010) explained that phenomenological studies are meant to explore participants' perspective and experiences of a phenomenon. Fourteen participants who had more than one year learning experience in the university were purposively sampled out of a population of 36. Participants who had severe to profound bilateral hearing loss were purposively sampled for the study. Only students whose preferred mode of communication was Ghanaian Sign Language (GSL) were purposively sampled for the study.

Instrument for Data Collection

A semi-structured interview guide was used to gather data for the study. The guide was sub-divided into four parts namely: (1) experiences at social gathering, (2) experiences at Halls of residence, (3) experiences with the university staff, and (4) communication experiences on attitude of lecturers and hearing.

Procedures for Data Collection

The researchers sought permission from heads of the various Departments whose students participated in the study with an introductory letter from the Department of Special Education. The purpose of the study was explained to potential participants. The researchers gave a two day training on how to administer the interview to two Sign Language interpreters who were assigned to the deaf students in the respective Departments. The two Sign Language interpreters were chosen because they were the permanent interpreters for the participants. The two interpreters were full time male interpreters. The two trained interpreters' ages were 28years and 26years and had their Bachelor's degree in Special Education (Education of the Hearing impaired) from the University of Education, Winneba. The two Sign Language interpreters were tasked by the researchers to use one week for the interview at the students' convenient time in the presence of the researchers. The researchers were present at the interview session to check whether or not the interpreters interpreted question items as they were stated in the interview guide. Participants were asked to give their consent granting permission to participate in the study. Each participant was interviewed individually at a negotiated time. Each interview session was videoed by a photographer with a Samsung Galaxy Note 3 phone. Participants were interviewed at a quiet place in a lecture hall where there were no obstructions. The participants were given the opportunity to express their feelings without any pressure on them. Each Sign Language interpreter was tasked to transcribe the video-taped Ghanaian Sign Language (GSL) interview data into written GSL in Microsoft Word. Data were translated verbatim from written GSL to scripts in grammatically correct English Language. After the transcriptions, the two trained interpreters and the researchers met to cross check each of the transcriptions to ensure they depicted what was said in the interview. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes to one hour. The researchers were fairly proficient in GSL. Having the interview conducted with a Sign Language interpreter who was familiar with the signs of the respondents facilitated communication during the interview and that no information was lost because the participants were more familiar with their interpreters.

Ethical Considerations

In any type of research that is conducted with human subjects, ethical concerns related to participants' safety are of the utmost importance. To ensure that participants' health, safety, respect, and fidelity were upheld, the researchers discussed with the participants voluntarily in the study without any form of coercion. To guarantee their confidentiality, the researchers did not ask students to provide data that revealed personal identification. The rights of respondents at every stage of this study were treated with utmost care. The researchers informed participants regarding who would have access to the information in the study and explained the purpose of each person having the information.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of data two trained interpreters read the interviews from the videotapes and transcribed them in written English Language. The researchers developed codes with the emerging themes from the transcriptions. Expressions of the participants were used for the analysis.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Social Experiences of Students who are Deaf at the University Level

Participants' social experiences in the university helped to meet their psychological needs for safety, love and belongingness. It involves experiences on the interactions with each other at the social gatherings, Halls of residence, staff of the university, and their communication experiences on attitudes of hearing colleagues and lecturers. The students' way of thinking, feeling and behaviour can make them socially accepted by their peers. Regarding students' social experiences in the university, the following sub-themes were explored, namely experiences at Halls of residence, experiences at social gathering, and experiences with university staff.

Experiences at Social Gathering

Responses from the participants suggested that some of them (deaf) saw social gatherings as an avenue to mingle with their hearing colleagues and learn their way of doing things. They thought that since there was no Sign Language interpreters available at such places, they saw it as a waste of time and did not take any interest in being at such gatherings. In their report, five respondents stated:

> *Being in a group meeting with my hearing course mates makes me feel down hearted because, they don't inform me what they discuss or their contributions to the work. I feel that they will make fun of the language I use, if I am being too friendly toward them. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 1).*
>
> *It is always okay to be at social gathering with other students. It makes me feel that I am included in both curriculum and co-curriculum activities of this institution. It brings a sense of belongingness. (Expression of Post-lingual student 3).*
>
> *I interact with my hearing peers because they advise us on how to keep good socialization with them. I always interact with my hearing colleagues who know Sign Language. (Expression of Post-lingual student 7).*
>
> *I feel boring at students' gathering in the university because of the absence of Sign Language interpreter so sometimes I go back to my room and sleep. I think hearing people socializing with the deaf destroys the deaf so always exclude myself. (Expression of Post-lingual student 11).*
>
> *Most often I don't join student's gathering because I think hearing students will not pay attention to us deaf. (Expression of Post-lingual student 13).*

However, most of the students with deafness expressed their discomfort about being around hearing students. They indicated that the hearing students made them feel isolated because of communication gap. Sometimes, even the few hearing students who could sign did not give the students with deafness the opportunity to express themselves since the hearing students believe the Deaf have nothing to offer. In their account, the students with deafness intimated:

> *Yes, I have felt isolated among my hearing peers because they wouldn't let me contribute to issues they discuss which I am also a member. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 1).*

I often feel excluded and isolated when I am among hearing students. This is because I am not able to participate in what is being discussed so I often stand aside." (Expression of Post-lingual student 2).

To get different information from hearing peers through group discussion, sometime, I feel isolated with hearing students. (Expression of Post-lingual student 3).

I always interact with my hearing colleagues who know Sign language. Yes, I have felt isolated because of communication problem. (Expression of Post-lingual student 5).

Yes I feel isolated among hearing students because their signing level is low so I become quiet when am with them because communicating with hearing students is a problem for me. (Expression of Post-lingual student 6).

Concerning interactions among the students with deafness, most of the students did not have any problem communicating with their colleagues in Sign Language. However, the few post-lingual students expressed that it was difficult for them to understand their colleagues when they sign to them. These accounts were recorded as:

When interacting with my deaf colleagues, I do not face any challenges in the signs they use because I understand them all. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 1).

I also face challenges when communicating in Sign Language with my deaf colleagues because they are very fast in signing the concepts. Also, it is because I am now learning the Sign Language. (Expression of Post-lingual student 2).

No, I do not face any challenge in signing with deaf colleagues because they all know Sign Language as well as understand my culture better. (Expression of Post-lingual student 5).

Yes I understand my deaf friends clearly because their signing is same as mine, we all have the same culture so socialization is easy. (Expression of Post-lingual student 8).

I don't always understand my deaf colleagues because some became deaf late and don't know most of the signs so they have to sign slowly before I can understand. (Expression of Post-lingual student 9).

Yes I face challenges in the sign they use because I don't understand most of them. (Expression of Post-lingual student 13).

We use Ghanaian Sign Language so I understand all of them. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 14).

Experiences at Halls of Residence

Participants' experiences in their Halls of residence were explored under sub-themes. Subthemes included all the experiences the students had concerning their quest for accommodation, and their stay in the same room with hearing colleagues. Concerning how participants got access to their Halls of residence, it was evidently clear that, it was easy for them to get access. Four students remarked that:

Deaf students are assisted in gaining accommodation on campus. (Expression from student 3).

I get accommodation through the help of the coordinator for Resource Center for Students with Special Needs. (Expression of Post-lingual student 5).

Interpreters always ask me on WhatsApp if I am interested in staying on campus. They secure accommodation for us. (Expression of Post-lingual student 9).

My Hall of residence is friendly one, it seems like everyone is free to have access to anything in the Hall so it is not restricted. I paid my accommodation fees on time so it was easy for me to have access to the Hall. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 1).

A few respondents also indicated that they enjoyed being in the same room with their hearing students. They stressed that the hearing students were accommodative and did not pose any challenge to them in the room. Four respondents said:

I know it is normal being in the same room with other hearing students because they will assist me in times of an emergency because they are aware I am a deaf student. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 1).

I feel that being in the same room with hearing students is a good thing it helps me to live a normal life. However, one problem is communication. (Expression of Post-lingual student 4).

I feel normal when I am in the same room with my hearing colleagues. (Expression of Post-lingual student 5).

I have no problem staying in the same room with hearing people because we are all friends so they don't disturb me but respect me. (Expression of Post-lingual student 11).

Two out of 14 respondents however, did not like the idea of being in the same room with their colleague hearing students. They indicated that the hearing students gossiped about them and did not see them as coequals. They stressed their disquiet by indicating:

It is difficult to be in the same room with hearing students. Sometimes my roommate will send the room key to lecture or even home when am out to the wash room which makes me suffer and very uncomfortable. (Expression of Post-lingual student 8).

Sometime it is very challenging to be in the same room with the hearing students because when a deaf friend comes to visit you, the hearing students make fun of you and like cheating deaf people on their food and other things and that brings problem to me. (Expression of student 14).

Experiences with University Staff

Participants were also given the opportunity to express their experiences with the university teaching and non-teaching staff. The students gave mixed expressions since different students had different encounters with the staff. Five of the students responded:

The university staff are mostly friendly towards us, the deaf students. They take time when communicating with us instead of rushing. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 1).

When I had a problem with my portal, I went to my department to reset my portal. I went to my department for registration even though the deadline had

passed, the staff helped me without any complain. (Expression of Post-lingual student 2).

With my experience with the university staff, last time I went to the department to check on my student's portal. I told the lady there but she sacked me and asked for my ID card. The lady refused to write for me thinking deaf can't write so she was making gestures to tell me but still I did not understood so I left. (Expression of Post-lingual student 7).

In my department the staff are good but I don't know that of other departments. (Expression of Post-lingual student 13).

Some staff are calm, some are not. For example, I had a problem with my result so I went to north campus but I couldn't communicate with the man at MIS so he was angry and asked me to bring interpreter which is not fine because am deaf. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 14).

Communication Experiences on Attitudes of Hearing Colleagues and Lecturers

Communication which is the process of exchanging information between two or more people has become an issue of concern among students who are deaf. At the University of Education, Winneba, it is supposed that once students who are deaf have been provided with Sign Language interpreters, then their communication needs have be solved. This sub-theme explored from the students how they felt about communication in the university. The students indicated:

One other major challenge I encountered was with group work. In the first place, I had difficulty figuring out the group I belonged to. Most of the time, I did not know the time the group was meeting, and even when I took part, I could not effectively communicate with the hearing students. I sometimes felt that assignment should be given on individual basis. (Expression of Post-lingual student 3).

One of my challenges as a deaf student at this university is communication with both lecturers and colleagues. Initially, it was very difficult to communicate even with other deaf students because I did not know Sign Language when I started UEW. Consequently, during 1st year, 1st year, I felt completely excluded and isolated. I did not know or understand what lecturers were talking about since the only support service we had then was Sign Language interpreters. At that time, I attended lectures only to know the topics that the lecturer covered so that I could read on my own. I sometimes felt that there was no need to attend lectures since I could not understand. I depended heavily on the course books. (Expression of Post-lingual student 5).

Another group of students also shared their communication needs. They indicated how their inability to communicate with their hearing colleagues and lecturers made them feel isolated. They stated that sometimes their hearing colleagues made mockery at them because of their language. They intimated:

Communication problem among hearing students as well as lecturers who do not know Sign Language really worry me. I am isolated in socialization when I join hearing students because I cannot communicate with them. (Expression of Post-lingual student 8).

In this university, the interpreters are not skillful so when I sign to them sometimes they don't understand and they do not communicate my messages to the lecturers and my hearing colleagues. For the lecturers, only one of them can sign and that is the Sign Language lecturer. (Expression of Post-lingual student 11).

The few post-lingual students also shared their experiences concerning their communication needs as students. They indicated:

> *Sometimes I have problem with my voice because I am hard of hearing and can speak little so most often I write. Most of the lecturers can't sign so they write. Only those in education for the hearing impaired can sign and even that most of the hearing people don't show respect to us deaf, they make fun of the Sign Language and I become angry and warn them. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 1).*
>
> *One thing I don't feel comfortable is that some lecturers think I can talk so when I ask a question they insist that I talk which I don't like because not all the words I can say loud and clear that is why I prefer signing. (Expression of Pre-lingual student 14).*

However, from the minority's perspective, there was no problems for them in the University. They made this evident when they stated:

> "*For me I have no challenge at all in the university because I do what I need to do to pass my exams.*" (*Expression of Post-lingual of student 2)*

Discussion of Findings

Research Question: What Social Experiences do Deaf Students go through at the University Level?

The research question was purposed to explore the social experiences of students who are deaf at the university. Findings of the study as indicated in the analysis revealed that gaining accommodations at their halls of residence was easy since preference was given to students with special needs. Majority of participants indicated that being in the same room with hearing student was okay for them since their colleagues hearing students did not pose any challenge to them in their rooms. They stated that the hearing students were accommodative. However, some of the students with deafness did not like the idea of being in the same room with their colleague hearing students since they felt that the hearing students conversed about them and did not see them as coequals.

Responses from participants suggested that whereas some students saw social gatherings as an avenue to mingle with their hearing colleagues and learn their ways of doing things, others saw such meetings as such. Some participants however expressed their disquiet about being around hearing students. They indicated that the hearing students made them feel isolated because of communication gap. Sometimes, even the few hearing students who could sign did not give the students with deafness the opportunity to express themselves since the hearing students believed the Deaf have nothing to offer, so they preferred being in the midst of their colleagues deaf students than the hearing. However, the few post-lingually deaf students expressed that it was difficult for them to understand their colleague students who were deaf when they signed to them. Also, the students gave mixed expressions since different students had different encounter with the staff.

Finding on participants' social experiences support studies by Fobi and Oppong (2015), Ling (1989) and Oppong & Fobi (2016) who found that students who are deaf have fewer natural opportunities for meaningful conversational interaction and, as a result, are less likely to acquire the full range of pragmatic skills needed for successful communication in an inclusive setting. Suarez (2000) found that when students who are deaf are found in the same setting with their hearing colleagues, then was necessary for them to have social skills intervention programme. Suarez added that a social skills intervention program resulted in significant improvement of assertive behavior in students who are deaf school life, as well as increased emotional adjustment, social adjustment, and self-image as observed by the students' teachers.

Suarez stressed that the students became better adjusted when greater attention was given to social-emotional aspects of the students' development.

Shevlin and Rose (2003) comment that persons with disabilities including the students with hearing impairment were subjects of ridicule and laughter especially because of their deficit in speech and language. Positive social experiences for students with hearing impairment means the removal of prejudice and discrimination that they have to deal with. Riddell et al. (2004) observed that students with hearing impairment in an inclusive setting suggested that their acceptance by their peers were not good enough on account of their communication difficulties. Foster and Brown (1988) study revealed other factors which attracted Deaf and hard of hearing students to the RIT as the availability of support services such as sign language interpreters and note-takers. The study found that, although the students were integrated in a hearing classroom, they still felt isolated.

Responses from participants indicated that generally students with deafness had a lot of experiences on communication at the lecture halls. They indicated that their problems were compounded more especially when Sign Language interpreters were absent. The respondents indicated how they felt left out when their interpreters were absent. They stressed that they were not informed about pertinent issues such a change in venue and time of some lectures when their interpreters were absent. The post-lingual students intimated that when they attended lectures, they were compelled by lecturers to use their voices because they could talk. The participants stated the practices of some of the lecturers made them feel very uncomfortable at the university. Other hearing students and lecturers were also found to make mockery at the students with deafness. These findings are supported by Murphy and Newlon (1987), Foster and Brown (1989), Cawthorn and Cole (2010), Salter et al. (2015), Sampaio and Santos (2002), and Foster, Long, and Snell (1999) who found in their studies that students with deafness feel lonelier with their colleague hearing students in the university. Foster and Brown added that in the university, students with deafness experience feelings of separation and isolation from hearing peers. Cawthorn and Cole (2010) indicated that deaf students face unique challenges in their efforts to succeed in the university setting. Cawthorn and Cole explained that these challenges make most of them feel uncomfortable and become more glued to their colleague deaf students. Salter et al. found that in the mainstream setting, teachers' lack of understanding regarding the impact of deafness significantly affected the students' learning experiences. Sampaio and Santos indicated that for deaf students to assimilate new information and knowledge they have to overcome the shortcomings of their pre-tertiary experience, such as language deficiencies, inadequate study conditions, a lack of logic skills, problems with reading comprehension and difficulty in producing text. Foster et al. (1999) also found that many teachers do not bother to make the adaptations that favor deaf students and attribute the students' success or failure to support services.

Conclusion

Socially, it was necessary for the university to provide services which do not promote discrimination of students who are deaf. Future research need to be conducted in order to verify the present findings by taking into considerations the recommendations which have been made.

Recommendations

This study recommended that at social gathering, the university should make available Sign Language interpreter so that students who are deaf can benefit from such meetings. The university should make available resources that can help students who are deaf to learn.

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Specialized Professional Development for the Success of Co-Teachers in an Inclusive Classroom

By Sarah Grady

Abstract

Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) require an increase in inclusive education for students with special education needs in the least restrictive environment (LRE); therefore, the co-teaching instructional delivery model is used to comply with the federal mandates. Co-teaching is defined as an instructional delivery model where a regular and special education teacher share responsibility for teaching some or all of the students assigned to a general education classroom. The purpose of this literature review is to investigate if specialized professional development for co-teachers was beneficial.

Specialized Professional Development for Co-Teachers

Collaborative teaching (co-teaching) is defined as an educational approach in which general and special educators work in a co-active fashion, jointly teaching students who are academically and behaviorally diverse (Shaffer & Thomas-Brown, 2015, p. 118). Co-teaching is a widely implemented instructional strategy that possesses unique challenges to teachers; there is evidence that Specialized Professional Development (SPD) for co-teachers shows an increase of teacher's commitment to the core beliefs of co-teaching. The research studies that were reviewed for this literature review includes: Professional Development Experiences in Co-Teaching: Associations with Teacher Confidence, Interests, and Attitudes; Piloting a Co-Teaching Model for Mathematics Teacher Preparations: Learning to Teach Together; Enhancing Teacher Competency through Co-Teaching, Embedded Professional Development; and How to Build an Effective Co-teaching Relationship between Teachers. The search engine used was ERIC. The key concepts that will be discussed are inclusion is the law, specialized professional development trainings, and co-teaching strategies. Within the concept of specialized professional development trainings, two current studies will also be referenced.

Inclusion is the Law

Today, the general education classroom is integrated with general education students and students with disabilities; both of which have varying abilities academically, behaviorally and socially. Therefore, co-teaching has become a popular approach to special education service provisions as two teachers work together to support diverse students in regards to their least restrictive environment (LRE) listed in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). With the passing of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the inclusion of students with disabilities accessing the general education curriculum within the general education classroom has risen tremendously. According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2012), students with disabilities are included in the general education classroom at least 80% of the school day (Shaffer & Thomas-Brown, 2015, p. 117).

Specialized Professional Development Trainings

Teachers with more frequent in-service opportunities for co-teaching were more confident in their co-teaching practice and demonstrated higher levels of interest and more positive attitudes about co-teaching than did those teachers with less frequent in-service opportunities (Pancsofar & Petroff, 2013, p. 83). SPD for co-teachers has recently evolved to meet the needs of students with disabilities who are mainstreamed into a general education classroom.

Two studies have transformed the way we prepare our co-teachers for the 21st century classroom by creating SPD, which included progress monitoring and specific feedback of the co-teachers who participated in the study. A teacher preparedness program out of California State University Fullerton has piloted a co-teaching training utilizing their recent graduates to co-teach for a year with a master teacher. Beginning teachers are leaving the field of education less than five years in, therefore, CSU saw this as a way for recent graduates to gain experience with a seasoned teacher their first year in the classroom. Teachers participated in weekly trainings that supported co-teaching strategies, the necessity of clear and open communication, accompanied by opportunities to practice communication skills through role playing; and strategies for building positive relationships between co-teachers (Yopp, Ellis, Bonsangue, Duarte & Meza, 2014, p. 96-97). Upon completion of the training, a co-teaching survey was given to the participants who ranked which strategy was the most and least successful. The Team Strategy was ranked the most successful by more than 43% of both the master and beginning teachers. The One Teach/One Assist ranked next with more than 38% of the participants votes.

The inclusion of children with disabilities within the general education classroom and the training and preparedness of the general education teachers has led to a new theory called the Co-Teaching Professional Development (CoPD) approach (Shaffer & Thomas-Brown, 2015, p. 117 & Thomas-Brown & Sepetys, 2011). In this study, the new model combines co-teaching with required and embedded professional development. The structure of the CoPD is based on teachers continuously reflecting daily upon their practices with their co-teachers. CoPD calls this, *debriefing* by both co-teachers at the end of the school day and immediately seeking professional development and support that meets their needs. SPD for the general education and special education teachers is a key part of the CoPD approach. The general education teachers are required to take part in additional special education teacher trainings and the special education teacher participates in content area trainings. Often times, the training has been reversed, the CoPD model shows that heightened knowledge in each other's areas of specialization streamlines the curriculum and communication within the classroom. Both the CoPD model and the CSU co-teaching training required that teachers learn to work together effectively and efficiently by supporting each other's personal development.

Co-Teaching Strategies

Typically, in an inclusive classroom, the special educator serves as the assistant by providing individualized support to specific students during a lesson and the general educator is the lead teacher; this is the most highly used strategy called the One Teach One Assist Model. Most co- teachers admit that they have not been properly trained to use the other strategies such as alternative teaching, parallel teaching, station teaching and team teaching. Alternative teaching divides the students into groups allowing the general education teacher to teach the main group of students, while the special education teacher works with smaller groups (Shaffer & Thomas-Brown, 2015). Parallel teaching occurs when teachers jointly plan to teach the same lesson and divide the class into two equal heterogeneous students. The co-teachers provide the same content to approximately half the class. Station teaching operates as 'centers' in the classroom. Typically, students rotate as a group between 3 stations; 2 which are teacher-led and one is for independent work. Team teaching is described as two teachers delivering the same lesson, jointly, to an entire class of students with and without disabilities. As seen with the teachers at CSU, upon completion of SPD, the teachers ranked the Team co-teaching strategy as the most successful. All of the studies reviewed discussed the importance of proper implementation through SPD of these co-teaching strategies; alternative teaching, parallel teaching, station teaching and team teaching.

The Bottom Line: Students

Professional development of general education and special education teachers is vital to the success of students with disabilities (Shaffer & Thomas-Brown, 2015). With SPD, teachers have found that co-teaching can be an effective teaching model that enriched the learning opportunities for their students in an inclusive classroom.

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About the Author

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The Pros and Cons of Inclusive Environments for Students with Special Needs

By Amy Marie Combs

What are "inclusive" classrooms? Dixon (2005) defines them as classrooms where all students are included, regardless of abilities or disabilities. "This inclusion is not just a physical inclusion, that is, students sharing the same physical space, but also a mindset" (Dixon 2005:35).

Inclusion is made up of the following components: 1) students receive their education in their home school; 2) placement is based on the concept of natural proportions; 3) there is learning/teaching restructuring so that supports are created for special education in the general education setting; and 4) placements are grade- and age- appropriate (Savich 2008).

The development of inclusion programs came about as a response to schools failing to comply with PL 94-142, the Education of the Handicapped Act of 1975. It has since been renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEAS). Before PL-142 children with mental and physical disabilities were educated separately from non-labeled children. Advocates for special needs children fought for change as they felt that separate was not necessarily equal (Brown 1997).

Since the adaptation of inclusion models in classrooms around the world there has been a significant amount of research published related to the benefits of this approach. This literature review will focus first on the how inclusive classrooms can be a better place to prepare students to live in a diverse society. It will then review information regarding how team teaching can benefit both the students and the teachers.

However, there is also noteworthy information available related to the disadvantages associated with inclusion. This review will discuss the prevalence of bullying among special education students in inclusion settings. It will then review how inexperienced and unqualified teachers can fail to provide appropriate services in their classrooms.

Review of Literature

Preparation for a Diverse Society

Inclusion gives students the opportunity to interact in a more natural and realistic environment (Brown 1997). When special education students are segregated into separate classes they miss out on many of the experiences and activities of typical peers their age. Their peers in regular education classrooms also miss out on the experience of working with people with disabilities. Working with people of different ability levels is part of preparing students for life in a diverse society (Dixon 2005).

Team Teaching

Regular education teachers are not alone in the inclusion process. They have a lot of flexibility with their instruction because of the assistance of co-teachers and other professionals involved with the child. Members of the team share responsibility and learn from each other to create appropriate learning experiences. It gives regular teachers the chance to work with disabled children and ESE teachers the opportunity to work with non-labeled students (Brown 1997).

Bullying

One of the biggest disadvantages of inclusion classes is that students with disabilities sometimes feel that they do not belong (Dixon 2005). Research published by Hartley, Bauman, Nixon, and Davis (2015) reflects that special education students are bullied more often than general education students. In this study, 13,177 students, grades 5-12, were surveyed. The results showed that students that receive ESE services reported more physical and emotional bullying than those in the general education population. The overall results also showed that male students and teachers/staff members were more likely to bully students with disabilities than their female counterparts. There are a couple of possible explanations for this result. The study recommends that authors of future research analyze this trend (Hartley et al., 2015).

Inexperienced/Unqualified Teachers

A major criticism of inclusion is that some general education teachers are not experienced or qualified enough to teach students with disabilities (Savich 2008). Shapiro, Miller, Sawka, Gardill, and Handler (1999) conducted an experiment in which targeted EBD students were added into a general education setting that they had not previously been. The teams involved received 2.5 days of training in intervention strategies and 6-8 weeks of on-site consultation (Shapiro et al.,1999). "Overall, the results of the project underscored the importance of consultation services as a staff development strategy for enhancing the effective inclusion of students with EBD in general education classrooms" (Shapiro 1999, p.91-92). The districts provided a wide range of excuses as to why the strategies learned had not been put into place effectively (Shapiro 1999).

In conclusion, there are pros and cons regarding inclusion for special education students. It can benefit students with disabilities if it is implemented correctly by qualified educators and staff. This of course cannot be guaranteed at any school and is difficult to quantify. There may be negative effects for special education students if they are placed with an inexperienced and/or unqualified teacher or in a setting where they may be exposed to bullying.

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About the Author

Amy Marie Combs is a Special Education teacher at Victory Ridge Academy in Lake Wales, FL. She has been teaching Intensive Reading and Special Education classes at a variety of grade levels for the past 10 years. She is currently taking graduate classes at Florida International University in the field of Special Education and Autism. She has an 11-year old son named, Rhett.

SPECIAL EDUCATION LEGAL ALERT

Perry A. Zirkel

This latest monthly legal alert summarizes two recent officially published federal court decisions that illustrate a wide range of continuing and emerging issues under the IDEA and Section 504/ADA, including accessible instructional materials, state laws restricting seclusion/restraints, and state education agency (SEA) liability. The format follows the usual format of a two-column table, with highlights (on the left) and general practical implications (on the right). For automatic e-mailing of future legal alerts, sign up at perryzirkel.com; this website also provides free downloads of various related articles, including those specific to (a) seclusion/restraints; (b) Sec. 504/ADA developments; and (c) SEA liability.

In *I.Z.M. v. Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan School District* (2017), the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals concerned the IEP of a ninth grader with severe visual impairments that included the "use [of] Braille for all classroom assignments and instruction." In affirming the successive hearing officer and district court rulings in favor of the district, the Eighth Circuit rejected the parents' claims that (a) the IDEA regulation specific to accessibility of instructional materials required strict compliance; (b) the related state law for blind persons' literacy and education established an absolute obligation; and (c) Section 504 and, especially, the ADA created a heightened standard for effective communications.	
For the IDEA claim, the Eighth Circuit relied on the "all reasonable steps" language of the applicable regulation (§ 300.172[b][4]) to conclude that, rather than strict compliance, the substantive standard was the reasonable calculation for progress per *Endrew F.* and prior pertinent FAPE case law.	This relatively high and published precedent, although not binding beyond the 7 Midwestern states in the Eighth Circuit, illustrated the less than rigorous application of the IDEA legislation and regulations. Yet, as a matter of prophylactic best practice, strict substantive standards are worthwhile as a professional norm.
For the state law claim, the Eighth Circuit similarly interpreted the operative language of "sufficient to enable" as aligning with the reasonable-under-the-circumstances substantive standard of *Endrew F.* rather than an absolute obligation to attain a specified level of progress.	Although the parents were similarly not successful with the state law argument, the decision illustrated that (a) such corollary laws are incorporated in the IDEA, while typically not having their own independent right of action and, per the May 2017 Legal Alert, and (b) *Endrew F.* does not usually have a game-changing effect.
For the Sec. 504/ADA claim, the Eighth Circuit side-stepped the issue of a heightened standard, concluding that the parents had failed to establish bad faith or gross misjudgment, which prior Eighth Circuit case law required for Sec. 504/ADA claims.	Although some circuits use a different liability standard for Sec. 504/ADA claims, such as deliberate indifference, this ruling shows the tempering effect of the generally heightened hurdle under this alternative statutory framework (with limited exceptions, as the case on the next page illustrates).

***I.L v. Knox County School District* (20170 was the culmination of a continuing dispute between the parent of a child with Down syndrome, who contended that her child needed mainstreaming with 20 minutes of separate special education, and the district, which insisted that for this child the "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) in the "least restrictive environment" (LRE) consisted of 4 hours of such separate, specialized instruction. At one point, the parent sought relief via the SEA's state complaint procedures (CP) process, but the SEA notified her that CP only addressed procedural issues, not substantive FAPE and/or LRE. At another point, after exhausting more positive alternatives based on an FBA-BIP without success within the stay-put IEP of 20 minutes of special education, the district started using gym mat "fencing" for 4 hours in 4 days as a cool-down procedure when the child became dangerously out-of-control. At a due process hearing, the parent lost on the FAPE/LRE issue under the IDEA but won on the gym-mat fencing issue under the related state seclusion/restraint law. The parent then filed suit, adding IDEA and Section 504/ADA claims against the state education agency (SEA) as an additional defendant.**

For the claims against the school district, the federal court in Tennessee upheld the hearing officer's rulings under the IDEA and the related state seclusion/restraint law. For the IDEA, the court used a reasonableness approach for the parent's LRE, procedural FAPE, and—including *Endrew F.*—substantive FAPE claims. For the state law, the court interpreted the "fencing" measure as amounting to seclusion (or isolation), not restraint or time-out, and ruled that the district violated the applicable parent-notification, minimum space, and frequency/duration requirements for seclusion.	Subject to your own careful review of this court's detailed decision, the two key "take-aways" for these rulings appear to be: (a) the IDEA outcome will depend on not only the individual facts but also the good-faith efforts and the expert testimony of the district's personnel, and (b) corollary state laws, here for seclusion and restraint, require careful, perhaps even more rigorous attention in the IEP process. After all of this adjudicative adversariness, the child ended up with the district's proposed IEP and 4 hours of compensatory education, though attorneys' fees remain to be resolved.
• For the parent's IDEA claim against the SEA, the court concluded that (a) the exhaustion requirement, which requires resorting to an IDEA due process hearing before seeking judicial relief, did not apply because SEAs "were not meant to be parties to due-process hearings," but (b) the IDEA does not provide a right to sue for interference with the CP process, and the parent failed to establish a district-wide failure under either the IDEA FAPE/LRE obligation or the state seclusion/restraint law. • The court similarly rejected the parent's Sec. 504/ADA claim against the SEA, which was based on the gym-mat fencing. Although not requiring deliberate indifference, the court based its rejection on the underlying lack of showing systemic failure to implement the state seclusion/restraint law at the district level.	For the IDEA, the court rejected the parent's systemic focus based on outcomes, concluding instead that FAPE and LRE present a "balancing act" that yields a "efforts-based standard based on reasonableness." For Sec. 504/ADA, the court did not follow the general judicial toward requiring a heightened standard, such as deliberate indifference, although ultimately ruling in favor of the SEA. Nevertheless, these claims and rulings illustrated the increasing trend of suing SEAs in addition or as an alternative to LEAs. For an overview of this line of court cases, see the following 2016 *West's Education Law Reporter* article, which is available as a download, at perryzirkel.com: "State Education Agencies as defendants under the IDEA and Related Federal Laws: A Compilation of the Court Decisions."

Buzz from the Hub

To access all links from this edition of Buzz from the Hub, visit:

http://www.parentcenterhub.org/buzz-june2017-issue2/

http://www.parentcenterhub.org/buzz-july2017-issue1/

Disability Resources You Can Share with Families

Early Signs of Autism Spectrum Disorders Video Tutorial | *Also available in Spanish!*
To improve recognition of the early signs of ASD among pediatricians, parents, and early intervention providers, the Kennedy Krieger Institute has developed this free 9-minute video tutorial on ASD behavioral signs in one-year-olds. The tutorial includes six video clips comparing toddlers who show no signs of ASD to toddlers who show early signs of ASD. Each video is presented with a voice-over explaining whether the specific behaviors exhibited by the child are signs of ASD or not.

Updated at CPIR | Rare Disorders Fact Sheet
Connect families with information in English and Spanish about rare genetic and other disorders.

What You Need to Know: Information and Support for Parents of Children with Kidney Disease
This article is written by a parent of a new baby who had an "incurable kidney disease" that would "require her to have a kidney transplant early in her life." The article discusses the impact of kidney disease; gives the parent's perspective on the tears, hurdles, and joy involved in parenting a child with kidney disease; and closes with organizations to connect with and other recommended resources.

Educational Advocates: A Guide for Parents
Navigating the special education system can be challenging. CADRE's new resource provides families interested in hiring an advocate with questions to consider and highlights additional resources available to families.

Minding Your State's Business

There is so much going on right now in each of our states: State plans for implementing ESSA, State Determination Letters from OSEP, discussions and decision making that affect our children, especially those with disabilities. Keeping up with all the action is critical, but it's challenging. Here are some resources we hope will help.

State Websites/Plans on ESSA | Find yours!
The Council of Chief State School Officer (CCSSO) offers a list of state ESSA websites/ESSA plans. See what your state is up to, what has already been proposed, and what's next.

Implementing IDEA: How's Your State Doing?
The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released its State Determination Letters for 2017. Find out if your state meets requirements for implementing Parts B and C of IDEA, needs assistance, or needs intervention.

Directory of State Early Learning Contacts | June 2017
Are early learning initiatives on your priority list? Find out the many contact people for your state's initiatives and plans for early learning programs from birth to the 3rd grade-Part C, Title 1, home visiting, and more. From Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO).

Check State Plans
Have a look at these analyses identifying best practices in 17 state accountability plans submitted in April and May 2017 to the U.S. Department of Education. CheckStatePlans.org provides indepth information on how these plans advance educational opportunities in innovative ways for all students, and where some fall short.

Of Special Note from the Department of Education

The Buzz isn't long enough to cover all that's happening at the U.S. Department of Education or OSEP, but here's a heads-up about two items of particular note.

Technical Changes to IDEA-Final Regulations Released
On June 30, 2017, the Department published final regulations under Parts B and C of IDEA. These final regulations make conforming changes needed to implement amendments made to IDEA by ESSA. Want to know what's been changed? Have a look at **OSEP's summary chart**.

ESSA Consolidated State Plan FAQs
ESSA provides states with flexibility in how it will implement the law. Each state must submit a consolidated state plan, which the Department then reviews; this process is underway. This FAQ (released June 16th) explains the review process, who is involved, and what the Department's responsibilities are with respect to providing states with feedback and suggestions and making determinations as to whether a state's plan has met ESSA requirements.

Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET

Full Time Special Education Teacher

Maricopa, AZ

Job Category: Full Time Special Education Teacher

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

Duties of this job include, but are not limited to:

- Meets and instructs assigned students at designated locations and specific times.
- Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and appropriate to the maturity and interests of the students.
- Encourages students to set and maintain standards of classroom behavior.
- Guides the learning process toward the achievement of curriculum goals and--in harmony with the goals--establishes clear objectives for all lessons, units, projects and the like. Communicates these objectives to students.
- Employs a variety of instructional techniques and instructional media; consistent with the physical limitations of the provided location and the needs and capabilities of the individuals involved.
- Strives to implement, by instruction and action, the district's philosophy of education and instructional goals and objectives.
- Assesses the accomplishments of students on a regular basis and provides progress reports as required.
- Recognizes and evaluates the learning and other disabilities of students on a regular basis; seeks the assistance or referral of district specialists as required.
- Maintains accurate, complete, and correct records as required by law, district policy, and administrative regulation.
- Makes provision for being available to students and parents for education-related purposes outside the instructional day when required or requested to do so under reasonable terms.
- Performs other necessary duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

- Bachelors degree in education
- Current Arizona Teaching Certificate
- Must be highly-qualified in subject area
- Arizona Department of Public Safety Fingerprint Clearance Card

Benefits:

Base Salary
Starting salaries $38,000.00+ DOE
Tuition reimbursement
Training in Spalding Language Arts
Training in Saxon Math
Health savings account, employer contribution
6% school 401K match
School subsidized insurance contribution
Please Note: We do not participate in the Arizona State Retirement System

Apply online:

https://www.applitrack.com/legacytraditional/onlineapp/

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Chief Program Officer

St. Louis, MO

Job Category: Non-Profit Program Management

Description:

• **FORWARD OUR MISSION** (*Executive Leadership*): Serve as a key member of the Executive Team and partner closely with the Executive Director and CEO to further mission-specific and core competency goals. Interface with the Board of Directors in matters related to program operations. Participate in strategic planning and provide guidance necessary to assist the organization in setting vision, determining direction and implementing strategy.

• **LEAD AN INNOVATIVE TEAM** (*Team Management*): Provide oversight for a team of employees and directly manage our Program Director. Direct the full lifecycle of staff development including recruitment, hiring, training, managing, motivating, and terminating as appropriate. Provide supervision and ongoing guidance to our Program Director. Develop a culture that promotes employee engagement, teamwork and accountability, and, coach and enable program staff to effectively and productively interact with other departments.

• **ENSURE EXCEPTIONAL PROGRAMMING** (*Program Development & Delivery*): Provide leadership and vision for the creation, design, promotion, delivery, and quality of Variety's programs and services. Collaborate with Variety's Des Lee Endowed Professor and engage independent consultants as necessary to identify gaps in service and to resolve unmet programming needs.

• **STEWARD OUR ASSETS** (*Fiscal Responsibility*): Oversee the development and execution of all program budgets with profit and loss accountability. Ensure programs meet the objectives of Variety's strategic plan. Make recommendations to ensure effective and efficient service delivery processes for current activities and activities related to projected growth.

• **MEASURE OUR SUCCESS** (*Outcome-Based Impact & Quality*): Develop and implement program assessments that measure and validate established outcomes and goals for children with disabilities in core competency areas, including skill development, self-esteem, socialization and independence. Develop continuous improvement initiatives to identify program strengths, challenges, and, ROI based on measurable impact and revenue deployed. Ensure all operations are carried out in compliance with the

organization's policies and procedures, including applicable regulations and standards. Develop policies and procedures to assure compliance.

• **ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITIES** (*Community Relations*): Proactively seek opportunities to participate in committees, workgroups and task forces that will enhance our reputation and expand our recognition in the communities in which we serve to further our reputation as a leader in empowering children with disabilities. Advocate for our children by informing community groups, congregations, and others about Variety's services and how we foster core competencies for children.

• **SERVE OUR CONSTITUENTS** (*Client Care & Service*): The Chief Program Officer will believe in the organization's mission and that quality client service is of top priority. Respect for the clients, employees, Board members, and all other constituents, coupled with professional and ethical behavior is expected at all times.

Requirements:

- Minimum of 10+ years of experience in a social service, healthcare, and/or clinical environment, including a minimum of 5+ years senior management experience.
- In-depth knowledge, clinical foundation, and/or prior administrative experience in therapeutic recreation and education is strongly desired.
- Non-profit experience (working within or voluntary leadership) and familiarity in supporting a Board of Directors a plus.
- Familiarity with 3rd party insurance reimbursement systems and/or prior hospital experience also strongly desired.
- 4-year degree is required – graduate degree in business and/or related field is strongly preferred (M.B.A., M.Ed, M.S., M.S.W., or M.A.).

Contact:

Please apply at: http://www.csiapply.com.
With questions you can confidentially email application@csi-mail.com.

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Private Teacher

Lincoln Park, IL

Job Category: Full-time private teacher with travel

Description:

Family based in Lincoln Park, IL seeks a Private Teacher to co-develop, manage, and implement the education plan/home school program for an elite student athlete who is entering high school next year. Must have a four-year degree, with a special education or learning disability certification; advanced degree in special education strongly preferred. Experience with individualized education plans (IEPs) and at least two years of classroom teaching experience is required.

This position includes the opportunity to travel and an interest in sports is a plus! The family is willing to hire the right person immediately for a full-time role to perform tutoring until the 2018-19 school year. This is a full-time position with compensation of $90,000 to $110,000 offered, depending on experience, with benefits. Local candidates are preferred. For consideration, please apply for position #410 at www.mahlermatch.com for consideration. Qualified applicants will be contacted.

Requirements:

Local candidates are preferred.

Benefits:

This is a full-time position with compensation of $90,000 to $110,000 offered, depending on experience, with benefits.

Contact:

Apply for position #410 at - http://www.mahlermatch.com

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Special Education Teacher

Chicago, IL

Job Category: Teacher

Be Noble. Teach Special Education at Noble.

Noble is Chicago's highest-performing and largest network of public charter high schools. Our 18 campuses currently serve over 12,000 students, of whom 98% are minority, 87% are low-income, and 82% are first-generation college goers. We believe our people are the most valuable asset in preparing our students for success in college. For that reason, we are looking for the best talent in education.

We believe that all students have the right to an excellent education; our Special Education teachers are crucial in ensuring all of our diverse learners have success in academics and in life. Special Education teachers analyze data, create and implement behavior management programs, communicate with parents/guardians, collaborate with other teachers, and develop IEP goals and objectives that address students of all ability levels. Additionally, Noble Special Education teachers deliver curriculum that ensures the growth of our diverse learners with rigor that prepares them for post-secondary success. Noble proudly has 86% of our special education students admitted to a four-year university.

Requirements:

- Illinois Special Education License (LBS1) required – please apply if you're special education-certified in a different state and/or have a definitive timeline for your certification in Illinois.
- A results-oriented history of personal achievement
- A belief that all students can succeed in high school, college, and life
- A data-driven mindset
- The discipline to self-reflect and the hunger to continuously improve
- Bachelor's degree

- Eligibility to work in the United States

Benefits:

- **Strong School Culture:** We have structures in place that enable you to teach 99% of your class period. You have autonomy to teach what you want to teach. We trust you to do what is best for students. If you ask for support, you will receive it. The work is exceptionally challenging, but it is also the most rewarding.

- **Meaningful Relationships:** Our people genuinely care for and enjoy working with each other. We focus on building strong, meaningful relationships with every student and family. Everyone works with the shared mission of getting students ready for college.

- **High Expectations:** Expectations are consistent for every adult and student in the building. From ensuring we have working copiers to responding to all emails you send, we are obsessed with following through on the basics that every teacher deserves.

Contact:

careers@noblenetwork.org
Website: http://noblenetwork.org/
To Apply: http://jobs.jobvite.com/noblenetwork/job/oozL5fwx

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Special Education Teacher - LEAD Public Schools

Nashville, Tennessee

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

Description

Special Education (SPED) teachers are champions for the cause of equality within the school and make sure that their students' needs are being met. Our ideal SPED teacher is passionate about supporting our students with IEPs, loves working with students who need the most support, is flexible, is coachable, and wants to grow as a teacher.

The LEAD Environment

Our SPED teachers work relentlessly with their teammates to ensure that all of their students not only are receiving additional support to enhance their learning and understanding of classroom material, but also meet the established Tennessee standards by the end of the year. This incredible work is done through coaching and support from administration, implementing regular feedback, collaboration with colleagues, data analysis, and working to make sure that students who come in below grade level rise above the challenges they face.

Requirements

Above all else, we look for teachers with the belief that all students, regardless of background and current ability, can succeed in high school, college, and life. In addition, we seek individuals with a data-driven mindset, willing to reflect and continuously improve their practice through observations, coaching, and feedback. These beliefs must be coupled with current certification or ability to be certified for the 2017-18 school year in Tennessee (required) (SPED K-12 certification in mild/moderate or comprehensive).

Benefits

In addition to a competitive salary and full benefits, we offer a relocation stipend and the opportunity to improve your practice through coaching and support.

Contact

If interested, apply online at: https://www.applitrack.com/leadacademy/onlineapp/default.aspx?Category=Middle+School+Teaching

If you're curious about LEAD and want to learn more, please direct all questions to Krista Oleson at krista.oleson@leadpublicschools.org.

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Regional Special Education Teacher

Denver, CO

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

Essential Duties & Responsibilities:

- Create, review and implement Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students.
- Effectively progress monitor student achievement and gather evidence in order to deliver individualized instruction and supports that are aligned to students' goals.
- Plan and teach at least one section of reading, math, or English Language Development intervention, and/or plan and teach one section of PE (teacher's choice, i.e. yoga, crossfit, weightlifting etc.).
- Lead an advisory that assists in planning and supporting school-wide events including Morning Meetings and off-campus learning opportunities.
- Collaborate with general education teachers, school leaders, curriculum specialists and the special education team to ensure that instruction is always meeting the needs of all learners.
- Use network-aligned unit and interim assessments to track student growth.
- Analyze student assessment data and use it to determine next steps.
- Assist with necessary school-wide systems to ensure a successful school day including (but not limited to) supervisory duties on a rotating basis in the morning, during lunch and after school.
- Chaperone community service learning projects, college campus visits and local trips with students.
- Complete and submit all necessary paperwork in a timely and professional manner.

- Attend and participate in all staff meetings and professional development.
- Maintain a positive, safe and organized learning environment for all students.
- Learn and utilize Restorative Justice practices in the classroom.
- Communicate regularly and often with families (by phone, email and/or home visits) to both solicit their input and share student social/emotional and academic progress.
- Actively participate in all teams including grade-level, content, and other teams designated by the leadership at STRIVE Prep - RISE.
- Provide fair, accurate, and constructive feedback to students on their progress.
- Update gradebooks on a weekly basis.
- Participate in summer Culture Academy in June 2017 for a stipend, and attend STRIVE Prep's Summer Training Institute in July 2017, as well as other professional development throughout the school year.
- Additional duties as assigned.

Our Aspiring Teachers:

- Consciously choose to teach and transform the lives of high school scholars every day as a founding teacher at a growing school.
- Proudly hold a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree (required) and a license to teach Special Education in Colorado, or be able to:
    - Add a Special Education Endorsement to a current Colorado Teacher License; OR
    - Transfer a Special Education license from another state; OR
    - Enroll in an alternative licensure program to obtain a Special Education license.
- Read more about the available pathways to becoming a Qualified Special Education Teacher.
- Understand, appreciate and can pull from experience teaching in an urban setting (strongly preferred).
- Speak Spanish or have experience working with bilingual students (strongly preferred).

What we Offer our Teachers:

- Ongoing coaching and professional development.
- 100 minutes of structured planning time built into the school day to plan the highest quality lessons.
- A laptop and access to classrooms equipped with Smartboards and document cameras.
- Competitive compensation package and annual performance based raises.
- Participation in the Colorado PERA retirement program including a PERA 401k contribution option.
- Funding of 100% of individual medical benefits and a wide range of insurance plans.
- Additional stipends available for participation in athletic and extracurricular programs.

Contact:

Contact Rachel Medlock - Recruitment Manager at rmedlock@striveprep.org for more information

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SPED Teacher, Grades K-5

Description: Our public charter school is looking for a Special Education Teacher to join our team of dedicated educators in Yuma, AZ. Are you passionate about helping all students reach their potential? Do you love working in a...

Job Category: Special Education Teacher, Grades K-5

Description:

Our public charter school is looking for a Special Education Teacher to join our team of dedicated educators in Yuma, AZ. Are you passionate about helping all students reach their potential? Do you love working in a bright, active, positive environment? Are you interested in joining a team devoted to helping all children succeed? If so, we want to hear from you. We have received praise for our implementation of the inclusion model for special education, and we take our commitment to our students seriously.

Teacher will:

- Create and execute individual education plans for each of the students in your care
- Communicate with other staff and family members about each student's progress and struggles
- Prepare detailed lesson plans and submit them to administrators for approval
- Participate in IEP (individual education plan) meetings as scheduled
- Use individualized reinforcement techniques to keep each student on the path toward greatness
- Invite family members to participate in each student's educational progress
- Create and distribute progress reports quarterly
- Confer with admin over disciplinary and behavioral issues with students
- Create a safe, productive classroom environment

Requirements:

- Degree in Special Education required
- Experience working with multiple disabilities, including autism spectrum, ADD and ADHD, learning disabilities, developmental delays and abuse/neglect issues
- Ability to obtain a Level 1 Fingerprint Clearance Card
- Positive, compassionate personality
- Excellent communication and teaching skills
- Confident in utilizing technology

Benefits:

Salary dependent on experience. Full benefits included.

Contact:

Debra Weigel, Principal
Desert View Academy
3777 W 16th Street
Yuma, Az 85364
dweigel@desertviewschools.com

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Early Childhood Special Educator

Lakenheath, UK

Job Category: Early Intervention

Description:

Sterling Medical has an opening for an Early Childhood Special Educator to work with children of American military families stationed at Lakenheath AFB, UK. Position works in a home-based early intervention program, providing services to infants and toddlers of American military families stationed overseas.

Requirements:

Requirements include a Master's degree in Special Education, US citizenship, a minimum of two years experience within the last five years working with developmentally delayed children in the 0, 1 & 2-year age population in a home-based early intervention capacity, and a current state teaching license/certification to teach in this capacity.

Benefits:

- Generous paid time off
- Relocation
- Competitive tax-advantaged compensation provided

Contact:

Lynn Romer
Email: LynnR@magnummedicaloverseas.com
Telephone: 800-852-5678 x.156
Fax: 513-984-4909

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Director of Autism Education

Danville, VA

Job Category: Director

Description:

Building Blocks Center for Children with Autism is an accredited private school for children age 2 to 14 with a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder. ***Building Blocks*** was established in 2004 as a division of the Center for Pediatric Therapies. Our school is licensed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and accredited by the Virginia Association of Independent Special Education Facilities (VAISEF).

The Director of Education leads and manages the ***Building Blocks*** program and staff of professional educators and behavior technicians. The Director of Education is responsible for the ongoing daily operations of the program in accordance with the VDOE and VAISEF. The Director of Education is responsible for setting the strategic direction for the program in accordance with current best practices in the field of autism education.

The Director of Education is 234 day contract employee. This position reports to the Executive Director of the Center for Pediatric Therapies.

Requirements:

The qualified candidate must hold a Masters Degree either in Special Education or in Administration/Supervision. The qualified candidate should have experience supervising other educators and staff. The qualified candidate should have experience with children with autism and be knowledgeable in the field of applied behavior analysis.

Benefits:

Paid time off, health insurance, vision insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, continuing education, professional development

Contact:

Please email your resume and cover letter to Kristen Barker, Executive Director, at kbarker@centerforpediatrictherapies.com

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PENNSYLVANIA CERTIFIED TEACHERS

Philadelphia, PA

Job Category: Medical

Description:

Pennsylvania certified teachers are needed in NE and Fernrock sections of Philadelphia for extended year (year-round) early intervention program serving pre-school children.

A Pennsylvania Certified Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is needed in our "oral", self-contained NE Philadelphia classroom and as an itinerant teacher to students in their homes and community placement. Itinerant responsibilities for the Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing include providing primary consultation to the community education team and family regarding education strategies to promote the student's success. The Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing also gives instruction related to assistive technology to enhance hearing capabilities and work collaboratively with the education audiologist and other related services.
Pennsylvania Certified teachers in Special Education or Early Childhood Education are needed in our NE and Fernrock classrooms.

All teachers are responsible for following curriculum, developing lesson plans, coordinating all activities of the para-educator, leading, guiding, supervising, and stimulating the children in indoor and outdoor activities, being part of the IEP team, implementing goals, data collection, and progress monitoring.

Requirements:

The Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing must have Pennsylvania certification as a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, experience working with young children, a background in the areas of early childhood and early intervention, experience in multiple approaches for providing speech training, and is open minded to various communication approaches.

Certified Teachers must have Pennsylvania certification in Early Childhood Education or Special Education or Elementary or qualify for a Pennsylvania Certificate of Competency and experience with young children.

All teachers must have a commitment to inclusive practices and have an ability to involve families in the educational process. Bi-lingual skills are a plus.

Benefits:

An excellent benefit package which includes health insurance, life insurance, vested pension in three years, paid sick, personal, and holiday leave, and 4 weeks vacation are offered. We are easily accessible to public transportation and convenient free parking.

A highly competitive salary for the Teacher of Deaf and Hard of Hearing will be offered to the right candidate.

Salary for certified teacher is $37,011.

Many opportunities for continued education (Act. 48) are available.

EOE

Send resumes to ellen.braun@neccbh.org

PI98875983

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Special Education Specialist

Multiple Locations

Description:

The primary responsibility of the Special Education Specialist is to provide instruction and other related services to Special Education students. The Special Education Specialist will also facilitate diagnostic assessment including administration, scoring and interpretation. Will review and revise IEP's as needed. Will support instruction in reading, math, and written language for students, tutor individual and small groups of students, administer and score academic testing, write individualized education plans and support other academic programs as needed. The Special Education Specialist will work under the leadership of the Program Specialist and the Director of Special Education. This position will be available to provide direct instruction to students 6 hours a day.

Essential Functions include, but are not limited to the following:*

- Provide instruction to students with special needs and identified learning disabilities in a special education program.
- Tutor individual and small groups of students, reinforcing language and reading concepts.
- Administer and score individual and group tests.
- Schedule IEP meetings, coordinating schedules with parents, general education teacher(s), administrator, and all appropriate special education staff.
- Conduct IEP meetings.
- Communicate and coordinate special needs evaluation and testing with speech teacher, psychologist, and other service providers.
- Communicate with parents regarding individual student progress and conduct.
- Maintain progress records and record progress toward IEP goals.
- Record progress within the independent study program.
- Perform other duties in support of the Special Education Specialist program.
- Support other academic programs offered within the independent study program.
- Various openings in Burbank region, San Gabriel region, Victor Valley region, Inland Empire region, San Bernardino region, and San Juan region.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

- Special Education Specialist Certificate or ability to obtain Mild/Moderate Certificate.
- Ability to teach students of grades K-12.
- Ability to work with children of all ages.
- Ability to understand, adopt, and support the independent study program, concepts and their philosophies.
- Ability to organize and present ideas effectively in oral and written form.
- Ability to make skillful decisions.
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.
- Ability to operate a PC computer, word processor, copier, FAX, and other office machines.

Education and Experience:

- BA/BS Degree
- Valid California Teaching Credential in Special Education (Mild/Moderate)

Contact:

Nehia Hearn
Human Resources Assistant
Direct: 626) 204-2552 Fax: 626) 685-9316
nhearn@ofy.org

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Acknowledgements

Portions of this month's ***NASET's Special Educator e-Journal*** were excerpted from:

- Center for Parent Information and Resources
- Committee on Education and the Workforce
- FirstGov.gov-The Official U.S. Government Web Portal
- Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals (JAASEP)
- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
- National Institute of Health
- National Organization on Disability
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Education-The Achiever
- U.S. Department of Education-The Education Innovator
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- U.S. Office of Special Education

The **National Association of Special Education Teachers** (NASET) thanks all of the above for the information provided for this edition of the Special Educator e-Journal

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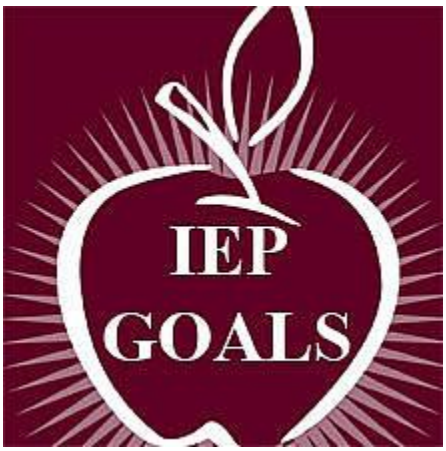
NASET Application for iPad and iPhone



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