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Educators' Perceptions of the Reading Initiative for Student Excellence Professional Development

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Arkadia Johnson-Armour

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2022

Abstract

Educators' Perceptions of the Reading Initiative for Student Excellence

Professional Development

by

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MA, Southern Arkansas University, 2019

BA, Delta State University, 2012

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2022

Abstract

Grade 3–5 students in southeastern Arkansas are reading below grade level despite the efforts of educators. The study explored educator perceptions of the Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (R.I.S.E.) professional development, in which educators learn about Science of Reading (SOR) instructional strategies and how to implement them in the classroom. The conceptual framework used for the study was Bandura's social cognitive theory. Research questions addressed how the R.I.S.E. professional development improved teaching methods to support students' reading achievement in low socioeconomic schools, as well as educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. professional development to support student achievement in low socioeconomic schools. This qualitative bound case study used open-ended questions guided by social cognitive theory to interview educators. Ten educators were purposefully sampled. Interviews were transcribed, member checked, and coded. The following themes were identified: helpful for student accomplishment, there was a lot of material to take in and remember, the capacity to grasp instructional methods, and confidence in using instructional strategies. Results were used to create a professional development to help refresh educators in low socioeconomic elementary schools on the SOR instructional strategies through a 3-day training that gave them practice on how to use the strategies in their classrooms. The results of this study may help teachers of students in Grades 3–5 grasp SOR instructional practices and opportunities for R.I.S.E. professional development, which may influence social change by providing better resources for low socioeconomic schools.

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Dedication

To my husband, Michael Armour, Sr., whose unfailing support and commitment to the family during the time I was engrossed in my PhD studies inspired me to devote the doctoral study to him. With your assistance and the love of God, I was eventually able to get through the darkness thanks to your light. I dedicate this PhD work to Kayli, Michael Jr., and Patience, my three remarkable kids. I did this to demonstrate to you that you should always persevere. I sincerely appreciate God for each of you, especially my parents, Cynthia and Clarence Johnson, Jr., who never let me forget to P.U.S.H. (pray until something happens). I will always be grateful for your compassion, thoughtfulness, and encouraging remarks throughout this process. I adore each and every one of you.

My guardian angels, my aunt Diane, my brother Jawanza, my uncles Clyde and John, my great uncle Leon, my grandfather Roy, and my grandmother Mildred, are all honored in this PhD thesis. If I hadn't been thinking about you, I wouldn't have persevered. I give myself the motivation to finish this adventure every day because I think of you every day. Since I didn't feel proud of my current situation, I constantly wanted you to be. Although I regret that you were unable to witness my success thus far in life, I am ecstatic to think of how happy each of you would be right now. I appreciate you guiding me even though you aren't physically present anymore. The love and warmth given to me through memories surpass all earthly understanding. I love you guys immensely.

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My sincere gratitude to Dr. Paul Kasunich for all of his wise counsel, tolerance, and support while I reached this amazing goal. You were there for me when I wasn't there for myself, even when all I wanted to do was give up and quit. The verse you sent me, Dr. Andrew Alexson, when we first started out on this trip has stayed with me all along. You didn't have to mention the Bible, but I appreciate you doing so because it helped me understand God's love. More than you might imagine, sincerely appreciate both of you.

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Section 1: The Problem

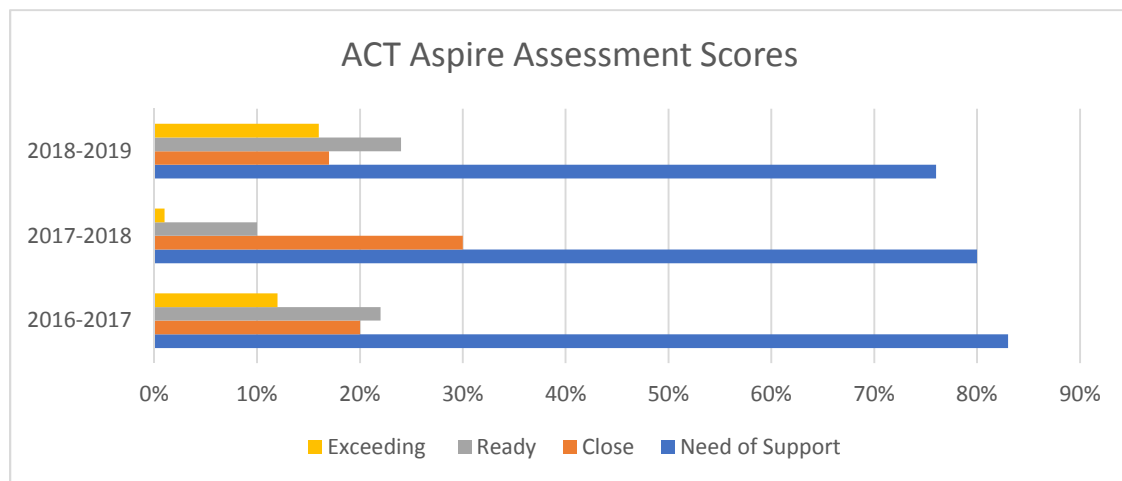
Local Problem

There has been a trend in local elementary schools where students have scored low on reading assessments in Poseidon, Arkansas (pseudonym), where over 85% of the student population was on free or reduced-price lunch (Arkansas Department of Education [ADE], 2022). Some students from low socioeconomic backgrounds enrolled in Title I schools cannot read on grade level or score proficient on state assessments. At other elementary schools with higher socioeconomic status, students tend to score higher on state assessments (ADE, 2022). The gap in students' reading assessment scores has drawn questions about the quality of education that students in lower socioeconomic environments receive.

Data from the ADE School Report Card on the literacy component of the ACT Aspire were used to create Figure 1 (ADE, 2022). Figure 1 shows the average performance for students in Grades 3–5 in the combined schools in ABC Cooperative (Co-op; a pseudonym) in 85% or more of the students received free or reduced-price lunch. In the 2016–2017 school term, more students enrolled in these schools performed in the “need of support” category than in the “exceeding” and “ready” categories combined. Performance in 2017–2018 on the ACT Aspire Summative continued to show more students performing in the “need of support” category, with noticeable growth in the categories of “close,” “ready,” and “exceeding.” In 2018–2019, students improved slightly in those categories, but most of the students still performed in the “need of support” category.

Figure 1

Average Grade 3–5 ACT Summative Literacy Scores for Schools With 85% or Above Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Recipients



Note. Data from ADE (2022).

The standard is that at least 50% of the grade level perform at “ready” or “exceeding” levels on the ACT Aspire Summative. The ADE issued Act 89 of 2021, which suspended school ratings for the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 school years due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Over 50% of students in Grades 3 through 5 at Poseidon Elementary School still did not meet the required benchmark, according to the results. Educators received specialized training in the Science of Reading (SOR) instructional strategies from a cooperative. The SOR instructional strategies are part of a continuous campaign called the Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (R.I.S.E.), adopted in 2017, that the ADE implemented to improve educator reading instruction. The initiative made the R.I.S.E. professional development (PD) mandatory for all educators in Arkansas to attend to either become aware of or able to implement the SOR instructional

strategies in the classroom (ADE, 2022). The R.I.S.E. PD is a 6-day training needed to renew educators' licensure within 2 years. Educators are evaluated after the R.I.S.E. PD by their building SOR evaluator, who will have gone through the training, and cooperative specialists. With every effort put forth by Arkansas and educators to improve reading instruction for all students, there are still students who cannot improve their reading. Helping students to read is the biggest obstacle that most educators face, and research has yet to find a probable solution. The problem studied was educator perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support received after the training to implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic schools.

Rationale

Local elementary schools' performance on the Student Test for Achievement in Reading (STAR) showed that over 65% of students in Grades 3–5 were reading below grade level. Those same elementary schools used the iReady diagnostic assessments, which are given to students at the beginning and the end of the school year to show any student growth in math or reading. Data from those diagnostics helped educators differentiate assignments to help students succeed in those subjects. The iReady diagnostic showed that over 50% of students in Grades 3–5 read below grade level in September 2020, with minimal growth by May 2021. For the 2018–2019 academic year, one of the elementary schools in the Poseidon, Arkansas area implemented improvement plans, according to the school's website, to raise K–5 students' reading proficiency to enhance their capacity to learn in all subjects and raise student scores in math, literacy, and science by offering quality instruction. Still, according to the data, this has not been

achieved. Another local district's goal, according to the school's website, emphasized increasing student achievement in all areas, emphasizing reading, math, and writing on grade level, which has yet to be achieved. With more Poseidon elementary schools performing below the level of "Ready" on state assessments, students being unable to read on grade level, and concerned principals implementing reading interventions and research-based instructional strategies, there is a need to help promote student achievement in reading. Through this qualitative study, I aimed to explore educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support to implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic schools.

Definition of Terms

To understand educators' perceptions of PD and support after R.I.S.E. training to implement the SOR instructional strategies, the following terms were defined to help understand their meanings and significance in the study:

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): "ESSA was signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015. This bipartisan measure reauthorized the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the nation's national educational law, and indicated a longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students. The new law built on key areas of progress in recent years made possible by the efforts of educators, communities, parents, and students across the country." (Power and Goodnough, 2018).

Professional development (PD): "This term may be used in reference to a wide variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning

intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness “(Great Schools Partnership, 2022).

Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (R.I.S.E.): Encourages a reading culture by coordinating a statewide reading campaign with community partners, parents, and educators to establish the importance of reading in homes, schools, and communities (ADE, 2022).

Science of Reading (SOR): SOR refers to the research that reading experts, especially cognitive scientists, have conducted on how people learn to read. This body of knowledge, over 20 years in the making, has helped debunk older methods of reading instruction that were based on tradition and observation, not evidence (SciLearn, 2022).

Social cognitive theory: Social cognitive theory adopts an agentic perspective to human development, adaptation, and change. The theory distinguishes among three modes of agency: personal agency exercised individually, proxy agency in which people secure desired outcomes by influencing others to act on their behalf, and collective agency in which people act in concert to shape their future (Bandura, 2002).

Teacher efficacy: A teacher’s belief in their ability to promote student learning (Dixon et al., 2014).

Significance of Study

The study may contribute to educational resources on PD targeted to student achievement in reading and support educators significantly in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment field. It explored educators' perceptions of the SOR instructional strategies in a Title I school where resources were limited due to socioeconomic status. A

closer look at the data shows that 85% of the students in a high-poverty area score below proficient in reading compared to other schools. The increased number of students with "below level" literacy scores have caused alarm and investigation (Giddens, 2018). In order to properly execute the tactics modeled in these PDs, educators have been required to attend the R.I.S.E. PD course for 2 consecutive years (ADE, 2022).

Students' reading performance in U.S. middle and high schools is one of the most critical problems in education (Baye et al., 2018). Lyon et al. (2001) referred to reading failure as a national public health issue that affected individuals and society. Failure to become literate at the appropriate time in school can have dire consequences for an individual's development, happiness, and employment prospects (Reynolds et al., 2003). Students who are disadvantaged academically or economically or attend schools serving economically disadvantaged populations often lack the personal or fiscal resources that enable literacy engagement (Alexander, 2018). This study explored educators' perceptions of PD and support after R.I.S.E. training to implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic elementary schools to help student achievement in reading.

Research Questions

Educators in Poseidon elementary schools understood the importance of reading for all diverse learners, regardless of whether they are below-grade-level, on-grade-level, or above-grade-level readers. Educators fulfilled district requirements by attending the R.I.S.E. PD to adequately implement the SOR instructional strategies. However, state assessment scores still showed a decline in student achievement in reading. Social

cognitive theory was selected to understand educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support received to help implement the SOR instructional strategies. The theory that helped in understanding educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD was social cognitive theory. The theory indicates that people learn from others and adds their personal or cognitive factors, behavior, and environment as combination factors for learning and behavior (Bandura, 1993). Bandura also pointed out self-efficacy as a crucial area of social cognitive theory. The theory helped in understanding educators' instructional decisions while teaching, actions and learning through PD, and how implementation happens in the classroom.

This theory helped in understanding educators' perceptions of SOR instructional strategies and how effective the state-mandated R.I.S.E. PD and support were to educator buy-in and fostering student achievement. Efficient and effective teaching is required of all educators because it helps the qualitative learning of students (Gupta and Verma, 2021). Helping educators recognize how theories affect how people think about life and learning will ultimately lead to a better understanding of how instructional strategies can lead to more effective and high-quality instruction for all students (Tracey and Morrow, 2017). The project study's primary goal was to explore educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and the support received to help implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic schools. The following research questions were created to address the problem of the study:

RQ1: What are educator perceptions of the R.I.S.E. professional development to help with student achievement in reading in low socioeconomic schools?

RQ2: How has the R.I.S.E. professional development improved teaching strategies to help with student achievement in reading?

Review of Literature

This section begins by defining the phenomena that served as the study's foundation. I explain Bandura's social cognitive theory, how it served as the theoretical foundation for examining educators' opinions of the R.I.S.E. PD, and why this was a scholarly project. Following these descriptions is a critical review of research-based instructional strategies, PD, teacher efficacy, and theories that are relevant to the educational field. Children in primary schools with low socioeconomic levels have challenges and must learn important lessons, which are highlighted. That deficit is the phenomenon that grounded this study: students' inability to read and score on grade level in low socioeconomic elementary schools. The lack of research on the R.I.S.E. PD indicated the need for a scholarly qualitative project study.

Conceptual Framework

Ravitch and Riggan (2016) stated that a conceptual framework is an argument about why a researcher wishes to study matters and why a study is appropriate and rigorous. This study focused on a deficit seen in Poseidon, Arkansas. A conceptual framework accentuated the exploration of factors relating to the phenomenon and created concepts that guided the study's approach (Ravitch and Riggan, 2016). A conceptual framework combines observation with practical information to reach conclusions. The concept that was applied to the phenomenon was the ability of the R.I.S.E. PD to prepare educators to implement SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic elementary

schools to show student achievement in reading. Reading can affect a student's understanding and comprehension of all subjects, whether mathematics, science, or history. Reading difficulties are neurodevelopmental, and those problems do not go away; however, that does not mean that students will not learn or progress in life (Price et al., 2020). With the aid of effective educators and interventions, students who cannot read on grade level still have a chance to build a foundation to help them improve and grow in reading.

Educators are tasked with a variety of PD strategies and methods that may not fit the students they are in charge of instructing. The research-based strategies introduced may be detrimental to student achievement. However, if educators do not have adequate resources or support to put those strategies in place effectively, students will not show growth. The overall goal for any educational entity is to equip students with the skills to succeed. Educators' thoughts on PD programs should be conveyed before they are implemented. This could help keep educators on board and win support for strategies routinely used in the classroom. In this study, I collected data to help address those perceptions to help improve the PD, which may improve the quality of teaching. Educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD may also improve the quality of education to help students grow in their reading ability and improve reading assessment scores. This study may also help identify any challenges and aid in supporting educators to implement and model the strategies with fidelity and help students receive the quality education they deserve despite being enrolled in a Title I school.

The conceptual framework used for the study was Bandura's social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory, also known as social learning theory, was created by Albert Bandura in the 1960s. It changed to social cognitive theory in 1986 and indicates that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment, and behavior (Bandura, 1993). Social cognitive theory also includes how individuals acquire and maintain their behavior. Proponents of social cognitive theory consider a person's past experiences that will influence reinforcement, expectations, and expectancies. Those experiences will shape a person's reactions and why they engage the way they do. Social cognitive theory explains how people regulate their behavior through control and reinforcement to achieve goal-directed behavior that can be maintained over time (Nickerson, 2022). Bandura (1977) emphasized that people's beliefs about their capabilities produce designated performance levels. If people feel successful, they will be successful and will not retreat when faced with difficult situations.

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory indicates that perceptions affect people's ideas and beliefs. Therefore, educators' perceptions about the R.I.S.E. PD were determined through experiences from previous PDs. Bandura's concept of self-perception coincided with the study because the study addressed educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support received after the training to help implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic elementary schools. If perceptions are positive, they will lead to positive cognitive responses, which lead to positive performance by individuals (Bandura, 1993). Through semistructured interviews, I

gathered information that aided in understanding the perceptions of educators on PD that impacted their performance and implementation in the classroom. I analyzed the perceptions of those involved in the process, which were of the utmost importance.

Review of the Broader Problem

This study reflected a deficit in Poseidon elementary schools, where over 50% of students are reading below grade level despite the implementation of the SOR instructional strategies. The objective of conducting a literature review was to examine research specific to the field (Butin, 2010; Roberts, 2010). The literature review reflects a concise and comprehensive investigation of research topics from the past and present that is organized into themes found in the literature, such as socioeconomic status (SES), instructional strategies, phonemic awareness, interventions, teacher efficacy, student motivation, and PD.

The databases and resources used included Walden University, Google Scholar, ERIC, Sage, EBSCO host, Zotero, and ProQuest. The following keywords were included in the literature search: *science of reading strategies, SOR, simple view of reading, struggling readers, marginalized readers, at-risk readers, disadvantaged readers, low-achieving readers, Title I, poor readers, underprivileged, poverty, socioeconomic, simple view of reading, and background of research-based reading theories/strategies*. In addition, peer-reviewed articles, educational books, and other dissertations related to the study's conceptual framework were carefully studied, analyzed, and incorporated into this study. Resources and references older than 5 years at the time of the study were included

to provide a foundation, seminal thinking, and research-based theories of instructional strategies.

Socioeconomic Status

Poverty limits the availability of resources necessary for an adequate education (Thompson, 2020). Students from a background of poverty tend to have poor trajectories throughout their lives. SES at the individual and school level is positively related to literacy achievement in English-speaking countries (Buckingham et al., 2013). The correlation between SES and literacy has been well established in studies since the early 1960s. Researchers have found that school practices vary significantly with school-level SES and identified significant differences in teacher qualification and experience (Parlardy, 2008). SES-related findings suggest that disadvantaged students are more vulnerable to the effect of low-quality schools and question the teacher's effectiveness. Schools in high-poverty neighborhoods tend to employ teachers with less experience and lower levels of education, and they tend to have lower retention rates than those in wealthier areas (Hirn et al., 2018). America's poor and minority students do not do well in most national and international assessments and are more at risk than their counterparts, leading them to be solely dependent on the school and teachers to teach them (Berliner, 2005; Kaye, 2008). Regardless of educators' efforts, the achievement gap has continued to grow, which requires educators' to acquire additional certifications and licensure.

With socioeconomic conditions at the poverty level, a persistently large number of children struggle to read even at a basic level, and they are disproportionately from

socially disadvantaged families (Buckingham et al., 2013). Students who struggle with reading demonstrate even lower levels of self-efficacy than their counterparts who read at or near grade level (Gilson et al., 2018). Students who have problems in reading and writing begin to develop negative feelings toward these subjects because they cannot overcome obstacles throughout their educational journey. Low literacy may have numerous reasons, but developmental dyslexia is probably the most common (Reynolds et al., 2003).

Instructional Strategies

Mondesir and Griffin (2020) stated that literacy is a critical component in students' academic success. Selecting instructional strategies that will help build and develop a literacy-rich environment that will contribute to literacy success for all students is challenging. However, this difficulty is not attributable to a lack of information or a focus on reading as a problem. Albro and Turner (2019) conducted a qualitative study that addressed what the ACT defined as career ready and how students' voices and identities are left out when educators focus more on skills and standards. They designed a unit by listening and implementing rich texts to help purposefully connect reading and writing to their career interests. The students were more engaged and eager to learn the material because of purposefully connecting learning to student interest. Daily planning and adaptable lesson plans allowed educators to incorporate strong literacy skills that matched students' future aspirations. With student-centered approaches, students could be seen as individuals instead of as their skill sets, and students were not categorized into groups. Albro and Turner's article related to my study because of the existing reading

deficits in the local elementary school. If educators use the strategies discussed in the article, they may help boost student achievement in reading.

Baron et al. (2019) conducted a qualitative study to explore how teachers turn to technology to help with instruction and meet the needs of individual learners. The technology for instructional support is often not understood. Baron et al. (2019) discussed the different reader profiles of students in third grade. Even though the results showed significant growth for students who did not suffer from many reading disabilities, those with multiple reader profiles needed additional intervention and direct instruction from the teacher. Technology could help the struggling elementary school because it may allow educators to meet the students are close to scoring on level and may help them better instruct those who need more help.

Chilton and Ehri (2015) demonstrated the central role that schemata play in vocabulary acquisition for reading comprehension of elementary school children through experimentation with six new verbs. One group was provided instruction where the new vocabulary was used in sentences and related to a typical scenario. Another group was given sentences with words that had no connection to everyday life. The results showed that the group that was not provided with connections to the new vocabulary used the existing schema to retain the meanings of the new words. Suraprajit (2019) demonstrated how students could actively apply their schemata of content and reading processes to help build knowledge and achieve reading comprehension.

Ezell et al. (1997) conducted a qualitative study to analyze instructional approaches for teaching reading comprehension through the question/answer relationship

(QAR) strategy. The approaches identified were peer-assisted procedures involving students working in dyads to ask and answer comprehension questions regarding a reading passage. The teacher-assisted technique, which entailed students developing questions on their own before a class discussion that concentrated on posing, evaluating, and responding to students' questions, was the second instructional strategy that was examined. The study found that there would be an increase in reading comprehension; however, there was no significant difference in performance based on the two approaches used. The study identified the QAR strategy to be successful in intervention strategies for Grade 4. The study focused on upper elementary, which helped the educators understand if a fundamental skill was missed the prior year to help explain a student being behind grade level. The QAR strategy can also benefit the elementary school by helping improve student achievement in reading.

Friesen and Haigh (2018) conducted a qualitative study on educating English language learners (ELLs) through strategies and techniques that teachers can use. ELL educators used a cognitive approach to support successful comprehension. Friesen and Haigh aimed to provide educators with a theoretical understanding of how reading comprehension unfolds, enabling them to be strategic when approaching the instruction of reading. Three theories of reading comprehension were identified by Friesen and Haigh (2018): the simple view of reading, the reading rope model, and the construction integration model. Educators give the students the strategies that will help them break down the text and continue to use this strategy on complicated texts as they continue on their educational journey. This article identified a group in elementary school whose

members struggled with reading because of their home language. The strategies discussed in this article, such as comprehension monitoring, read-aloud, experience-text-relationship (ETR), and reciprocal teaching, could be conducive to the improvement of reading scores and promote student achievement.

Gough and Tunmer (1986) argued information about the "simple view of reading" related to educating students with a reading disability. The theory indicates that if educators focus on phonological awareness and other components to help with language comprehension, they can successfully equip students with disabilities to read and comprehend grade-level text. Gough and Tunmer's work was vital to this study as it went deeper into understanding philosophers stance on what was needed to produce student achievement in reading. The simple view of reading foundations is found in the SOR instructional strategies through the justification of a pronounced focus on decoding and word reading in instruction and assessment (Loewus, 2019; Sohn, 2020). Hanford (2018) attributed the low performance of fourth-grade students on the National Assessment of Education Progress to a need for more systematic phonics instruction.

Kelly (2019) explored text difficulty for third-grade bilingual students who read below grade level. The 12 students participated in two groups. One group instructed students to read and discuss the informational text that matched their reading levels. Students in Group 2 were given reading material that was over their abilities. The study listed both negative and positive effects. The first group's interpretations or inferences were more potent with the matched-level text. The second group interpreted a more complicated text more interpretatively or inferentially. Half benefited from matched-level

texts, while half benefited from higher level texts. The results did not show a clear disadvantage with either group's increase in responses. The article showed a problem with students' ability to read and educators who have had issues instructing students to read two grade levels to one grade level behind.

Marzano et al. (2001) provided instructional strategies that had been proven to increase student achievement in school. With research backing these strategies, and case studies proving them to be high yield, it is crucial to implement them in a struggling elementary school. The article helps in understanding the strategies that are research based and proven to work to address the problem with educating students. However, it does not mainly discuss how to use these instructional strategies with students who read below grade level.

Phonemic Awareness

Students need explicit instruction in the components of reading phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension (National Reading Panel [NRP], 2020). The NRP (2020) examined whether phonemic awareness instruction was significantly better than alternative forms of training in helping children acquire phonemic awareness and enabling them to apply this skill in their reading and spelling; the results were positive. With phonics, phoneme awareness, and decoding at the forefront of the components needed for successful readers, these theories present different stances, with the ultimate goal of equipping students with the necessary skills to succeed on their educational journey. Other studies have also analyzed the foundational

components of reading, emphasizing phonemic awareness and decoding as the necessary skills for successful readers.

Archer et al. (2003) conducted a mixed-method study to explore ways to help struggling readers. These reading programs addressed different areas that struggling readers identified with, such as decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Through the constant observation and usage of intervention/reading programs, the authors realized that poor decoders mispronounced affixes and disregarded large portions of letter information. The study further provided information about how as student grade level increases, students will encounter over 10,000 words per year that they have never been introduced to. Getting readers on grade level to comprehend the information presented is imperative. With the research surrounding the type of instruction, such as multi-syllable instruction, flexible strategy instruction, syllable-type instruction, and part-by-part decoding instruction, these strategies could be introduced to the elementary school through PD to help reach struggling readers. The research article introduced three reading programs that could address the needs of the students and help them become grade-level readers and successfully pass the state-mandated assessment for Arkansas.

Asakereh et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative study to focus on the importance of including critical principles in reading abilities. The selections provided information that CP requires educators and students to leave their comfort zone and challenge the unsatisfactory state of affairs. Since the women in Iran hardly had a voice, selecting a female was imperative for them to study the importance of critical teaching reading skills.

The study reiterated the importance of making education more personal to see growth in student achievement in reading.

Fumero and Tibi (2020) targeted Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) and how vital morphological awareness is in bilingual language. Background information shows that with the increase of English learners (ELs) steadily rising, researchers need to find ways to equip ELs with the necessary tools and skills to succeed in schools that do not utilize their home language. They stated that most models of reading do not explicitly include morphology as a component, but it is significant in reading development. Promoting problem-solving instructional strategies for helping students find and analyze word patterns. Educators can use intervention tools and strategies to reach English language learners and other students through activities like the following: word sums, word matrix, and structured word inquiry.

Parenti (2013) addressed the reading of informational text building on Rosenblatt's transactional theory and reader stance in the Common Core Era. Rosenblatt believed that reading was a transaction, a two-way process that involved the reader and text at a particular time under the circumstances. The reader's stance referred to the reading act that a student adopts when tackling new text. Parenti aimed to increase understanding, appreciation, and sensitivity towards struggling readers and children with disabilities. The article's conclusion discussed that informational reading text often requires an efferent stance. However, with well-known strategies used to increase aesthetic stance, there can be an overall enjoyment when reading informational text to 21st-century learners. Schuder (1993) provided information on the problem-solving

response of staff to an at-risk student's low achievement and lack of access to an enriching reading/language arts curriculum. Through Student Achieving and Independent Learning [SALL], teachers were able to help at-risk students achieve original goals to create a rich language arts curriculum through transactional strategies instruction.

Studies of the validity of the simple view of reading for Grades 3-5 have been consistent with research that decoding and language (vocabulary and syntax) factors accounted for 90% of the variance in reading comprehension (Lonigan et al., 2018). These findings showed that teaching children to manipulate phonemes in words was highly effective across all the literacy domains and outcomes; teaching children to manipulate the sounds in language helps them learn to read (NRP, 2020).

Interventions

Bayless et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative study to understand the effects of afterschool programs and reading/literacy achievement. The program focused on low-income youth, mainly African American communities, with purposes such as improving academic performance outcomes and promoting positive development, including delinquency, substance use, and other behavioral health problems. The results showed that the group that received the interventions and resources showed increased student achievement in reading and literacy skills. This literature helped to see the best practice for reading instruction or implementation because neither the current school nor the community offers any 21st-century programs.

Haines et al. (2018) conducted a quantitative study to examine rather the READ 180 program helped general education, below grade-level, Title I pre-adolescent readers

improve. Results of this study showed that below-grade-level readers improved after intervention and attained grade-level status. The below-grade-level student's mean growth between years 1 and 2 after the intervention was greater than that of on-grade-level peers with no intervention. The quantitative study addressed students reading below grade level and an intervention that would show an increase after two years.

Hammerschmidt-Snidarich et al. (2019) examined the efficacy of individualized goal setting on the oral fluency rate of upper elementary students. Multiple baselines indicated positive yet moderate effects of goal setting for some students reading below grade level. The study introduced more strategies for teachers who have the challenge of instructing students who were reading below grade level through interventions that have been proven successful in schools with socio-demographics.

Mariage et al. (2020) conducted this mixed-method study to understand the impact of Tier 2 instruction on struggling readers. The study introduced different strategies that could be utilized in low-performing elementary schools like Poseidon elementary. With intervention becoming a common theme seen across most literature, Tier 2 instruction strategies are imperative for 5th-grade students reading below grade level. The BURN strategy (Box, underline, read, and note), Mark It/Jot It, and CLASS strategy (contribute, listen, accept, support, show) could be best practices to include with the current SOR instructional strategies.

Fumero and Tibi (2020) shared a great depth of information in this article that targeted Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) and how vital morphological awareness is in bilingual language. Background information shows that with the increase of English

learners (ELs) steadily rising, researchers need to find ways to equip ELs with the necessary tools and skills to succeed in schools that do not utilize their home language. They further state that most models of reading do not explicitly include morphology as a component, but it is significant in reading development. The article gave a wealth of information that would be conducive to adding to our practice at the elementary that has scored low in reading for several years. Promoting problem-solving instructional strategies for helping students find and analyze word patterns. Educators can use intervention tools and strategies to reach English language learners and other students: word sums, word matrices, and structured word inquiry.

Ritchey et al. (2017) discussed the Response to Intervention (RTI) model implemented in several schools across the country. Students who are struggling receive increasingly intensive intervention to improve their reading skills. Because it was used through lower elementary for years, such intervention must also occur in upper elementary, for gaps in reading from poor readers to high-level readers are closed. The results showed that explicit instruction, which includes teacher modeling, in reading strategies that can be used before, during, and after the reading is adequate. Small gains in norm-referenced comprehension outcomes were expected. In the project study, students' reading abilities are not up to par and are in dire need of a solution. By understanding the RTI model, we can ensure that the educators and paraprofessionals at the school who perform poorly on reading repeatedly get the proper training to increase their knowledge on reaching struggling readers.

Student Motivation and Teacher Efficacy

Alexander (2018) conducted a qualitative study that reflects the opinions of other authors and himself. He felt that engagement represented student involvement in activities and processes that develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes for comprehending various texts. If the student does not take charge of their learning, no engagement will be observed. They concluded that literacy engagement is a positive force in reading and writing development marked by students' willing participation in activities to increase literacy learning. This article reinstated that if the information is not personified to the student's interests, motivation and engagement will not exist.

Dixon et al. (2014) focused on teacher efficacy to how teachers were willing to differentiate instruction to diverse learners. The study resulted in a higher number of PD hours in differentiated instruction reflected a higher teacher efficacy and higher teacher sense of efficacy beliefs. The study demonstrated how teacher efficacy is essential to dimension implementing instruction regardless of what Grade-level the student is currently on. Even though we focus on below-grade level reader instruction, we must not forget students who are on grade level and require more challenging assignments.

Smith and Miller (2018) discussed how 187 upper elementary students performed below on state assessments where motivation was a component for successful reading. They completed a questionnaire and read reviews so data could be collected to understand the underlying problem. Even though the students performed below grade level on the assessments, a discrepancy occurred between narrative and expository comprehension. The discussion of the data collected showed the need to design

interventions to support overall reading development. Teachers often blame themselves for the inability to reach students who perform lower than the other students. When we consider that the assessments are not designed for students to perform well, we find ways to increase overall performance with informational text. This article provides information about strategies to help students grow and perform better on mandated assessments.

Troyer (2019) examined teacher implementation of an adolescent literacy curriculum designed as an intervention for students reading two years below grade level. They collected data from four experienced teachers in a single school. The data collected found that teacher accounts included adaptations that were different but reflected pre-existing orientation toward literacy. It helps provide tailored PDs that would help with a literacy curriculum's most critical pedagogical features. The study showed a problem with students reading below grade level in that school. It also helps provide critical pedagogical approaches that can help teachers reach students where they are.

Vega et al. (2020) stated that literacy rates vary between socioeconomic groups, and reading gaps are a common feature of the education system. Previous reading research has identified several teaching strategies that impact student learning outcomes. It was shown that groups of young kids with internet access could read complicated texts with little teacher involvement after integrating the usage of complex texts, collaborative learning, and internet access on the reading comprehension scores of 58 fourth graders. The study introduces a factor in instructing students, technology. With the growing use of this tool, teachers must be trained on the proper way to utilize this tool for student achievement in reading. This study provided information about the reading deficit at their

elementary school and how the researchers found a solution with the usage of technology to improve student reading.

Class size reduction and the development of standards for reading and content areas have highlighted the need for and difficulty in obtaining qualified teachers (NRP, 2020). Evidence shows that student outcomes positively correlate with a teacher's years of experience and verbal and intellectual aptitude (NCTQ, 2004). Darling-Hammond (2000) discussed how teacher quality characteristics, such as certification status and degree, are significantly positively correlated with student outcomes. Research suggests that the quality of teacher learning focuses on teacher practices and effectiveness, which have been central to several studies in the learning domain (Goe et al., 2008).

Professional Development

Garcia et al. (2011) conducted a literature review to focus on two instructional approaches to help elementary-age students with reading comprehension in a low-income school. The two approaches were cognitive strategy instruction and responsive engagement instruction. The authors provided information on best practices to help improve classroom instruction through the literature review. The researchers gathered that the most effective way to enhance classroom practice was to be a teacher's professional learning. If you want the teachers to release the responsibility for adequate comprehension, the administrators and curriculum specialists must remove their teachers' responsibility for instruction and curriculum selection. They further explained that PD is the best way to support the teacher in instruction. The study used the article to help understand that some educators cannot successfully instruct because the responsibility

has not been given to them. Once we understand how to meet our educators, each student will reach their true potential.

Paprzycki et al. (2017) wanted to understand the impact of framework-aligned science PD on literacy and mathematics in lower elementary. Understanding how the Framework can improve students' achievement in early literacy, reading, and mathematics may help understand if 5th graders are already reading several grade levels behind, what is missing in the lower grades that would be imperative to build strong readers. Even though the study mainly focused on why science instruction did not occur in lower elementary grade levels, the importance of reading is still evident. When considering the recent emphasis on science instruction for early childhood classrooms, incorporating these skills with reading may help the student's literary lens when referring to subject vocabulary.

PD of educators helps by improving work commitment and innovative work, which improves the quality of education and produces competitive quality human resources (Asiyah et al. (2021). Helping teachers recognize how theories affect how we think about life and learning will ultimately lead to a better understanding of how various models can lead to more effective and high-quality instruction for all students (Tracey and Morrow, 2017).

Implications

Despite research from the different disciplines, such as developmental psychology, cognitive science, education, and linguistics, one question remains: how does a student learn to read and comprehend materials if they are already a grade level

behind (Pearson and Cervetti, 2017)? When we view learning experiences from multiple theoretical perspectives, it may allow educators to consider different explanations in various ways to analyze data and meet the needs of all students, no matter the stage they are in the literacy acquisition continuum (Mondesir and Griffin, 2020). Each year over a million public school students who have reached fourth grade are added to the nation's ranks of nonreaders (NCTQ, 2020). Through all of the past and current literature offered, there is still a need to understand educators' perceptions of PD and support effectiveness after R.I.S.E. training. This study understood educators' perceptions who attended the R.I.S.E. PD to implement the SOR instructional strategies to students enrolled in Poseidon elementary schools. It may help foster student achievement in reading no matter the student's ability.

Summary

Educators must understand and use instructional strategies to meet students' needs and set clear and concise expectations. Research-based practices in literacy instruction can influence historically lower-performing groups, including students of color, students with exceptionalities, and multilingual learners (Mondesir and Griffin, 2020). Technology, such as interventions like iReady, can make reading more engaging and accessible for all students. Using iReady diagnostics shows where the student lacks specific skills to score on grade level. Educators can use this data to drive instruction to reach those students to bring them to the grade level they are expected to be. Ryan and D'agostino (2017) drew attention to Louise Rosenblatt's warning from 80 years ago that teachers were not doing a good job cultivating their students' interest in having a

pleasurable and meaningful experience with reading, which is evident in today's standardized test-driven school environment. If educators cannot keep a student engaged, the learning stops, and student achievement drops.

In Section 1, I described the research problem, rationale from a local and national perspective, the significance of the problem, and the research questions that help guide the overall study. This section also included a comprehensive literature review that addresses the emerging themes relevant to the broader problem of educating students who are reading below grade level and attend low socioeconomic elementary schools. Studies reviewed focused on elementary and early middle-level instructional strategies learned through PDs that could reach students on grade level; but not those who were already reading below grade level. The last part of Section 1 focused on the implications of more research on instructing students who read below grade level. With the aid of the literature review, various project studies could help address this deficit. Data from the semi-structured interviews helped determine the focus and direction of the project study and how it was implemented in Poseidon elementary schools.

Section 2 presents the qualitative study's research design, methodology, proceedings, and findings. Section 3 is the project which was a 3-day PD to help implement the SOR instructional strategies with fidelity to support academic achievement in reading. Creating this PD may help improve educator pedagogy and efficacy, which will lead to helping those students have the necessary foundation and skills to be conducive on their educational journey. Section 4 concludes the study with a narrative reflection of the journey taken to research the literature, conduct the research, analyze the

data, transcribe the data, code the data, develop the project, and implement the project in a low socioeconomic elementary school.

Section 2: Methodology

Research Design and Approach

The qualitative study's research design was a basic bounded case study. This design was chosen because the study involved educators who had completed the R.I.S.E. PD presented by cooperatives in Arkansas. Those included were educators who had completed the 2-year PD and were employed or previously employed at an elementary school at which over 85% of students received free and reduced-price lunch.

Problem and Research Design

The local problem addressed in this qualitative study was that students attending low socioeconomic elementary schools were not scoring at the state benchmark. Instead, they were scoring in the "needs improvement" category. Those elementary schools supported changing reading strategies to the SOR instructional strategies because of the Arkansas R.I.S.E. initiative (ADE, 2022). There was a need to find a solution to help with literacy scores in those elementary schools. As the years progressed, students' inability to read was shown on the Arkansas state assessment, the ACT Aspire. With the 2021 Spring STAR testing data showing students reading below grade level, the educators' perceptions of who attended the R.I.S.E. PD training were of the utmost importance.

To determine which design method to use, I became familiar with quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research design does three main things: (a) conceptualizes reality in terms of variables, (b) measures the variables, and (c) studies relationships between the variables (Punch, 2013). An issue with using quantitative design is the requirement of a large sample size and measurable variables. In order to

comprehend educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD, this research study required a modest sample size and the use of interviews. According to Punch (2013), a qualitative research approach allows the researcher to get a "holistic" understanding of the study's setting, including its logic, structures, and explicit and implicit norms. This project study captured data on educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support after the 2-year training. Qualitative researchers can understand a problem through interviews. This study focused on interpretation rather than quantification; therefore, it was determined that the qualitative research design was the best method to obtain the participants' perceptions.

Description of the Qualitative Case Study

A bounded case study involves using a particular group of people involved with a specific phenomenon during a specific period (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). The project study could be considered a bounded case study because only educators in low socioeconomic elementary schools who had completed the R.I.S.E. training participated. Ten educators from these schools were interviewed. Though the study can be identified as a bounded case study, the research findings may be applied to improve the R.I.S.E. PD training.

Justification for Research Design

Before choosing a bounded case study, I researched all possible qualitative studies. I identified phenomenology, grounded theory, action research, and ethnography, which were all rejected. Phenomenology focuses on the nature of experiences from the point of view of the person who experiences a phenomenon (Connelly, 2010). I focused primarily on educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support received to implement

the SOR instructional strategies in the classroom. Though the grounded theory was familiar to phenomenology, it was rejected because I did not want to use the inductive method to analyze educator perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD to lead to a theory (Charmaz and Belgrave, 2012). However, I wanted to find out how we could improve the R.I.S.E. PD for educators.

Action research requires the researcher to identify a current problem while engaging stakeholders and participants with implementing changes during the research process (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). This design was rejected because I would not be implementing changes but making suggestions to help with the PD, which used the SOR to instruct readers. Furthermore, the aim of this research was to understand educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support to help educators implement the SOR instructional strategies. Another research design, ethnography, involves learning about a particular group of people and understanding their culture, beliefs, and languages (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Because the research questions focused on the R.I.S.E. PD and the support that educators receive to implement the SOR instructional strategies to help students succeed academically, and not on beliefs or cultures, this design was not suitable for this study. A qualitative bound case study was the best option for the study because it would allow me to interview educators to share their perception of the R.I.S.E. PD and support to implement the SOR instructional strategies. By conducting this study, I understood educators' perceptions about the R.I.S.E. PD and support after the training and how it might or might not help educators implement the SOR instructional strategies with fidelity to foster student achievement in reading.

Participants

The participants for this qualitative bound case study were from Poseidon elementary schools. Those participants were educators who attended the R.I.S.E. PD training for 2 consecutive years. Those participants were employed in elementary schools that received Title I funding because of the students' low socioeconomic status.

Criteria for Selecting Participants

Patton (2002) expressed that the logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for a study to be in-depth, information-rich cases from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry. Purposeful sampling enables the selection of the same proportion of participants as they appear in the total population (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). Regarding both statements, purposeful sampling was the best option for selecting participants who met the specific criteria described in this study. Educators completed the mandatory R.I.S.E. PD training for 2 consecutive years to be eligible for participation. Teachers agreed to take part in a semistructured interview that lasted 45 to 60 minutes in order to discuss their opinions of the R.I.S.E. PD and the follow-up support they received to help them implement the SOR teaching methods. Educators from third to fifth grade were interviewed to understand the overall implementation better.

Justification of Number of Participants

Participants in this bounded case study were educators. A set number of participants was selected based on those willing to participate. Researchers have suggested using "information power" to guide an adequate sample size for qualitative

studies. Information power indicates that the more information a sample holds, the lower the number of participants needed (Malterud et al., 2016). Boddy (2016) suggested that a sample size of six to 12 would be adequate to get to the point of redundancy and saturation. I followed the advice of Malterud et al. for the study because it helped analyze the interviews to understand educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support received to implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic classrooms.

Teacher Participants

Ten educators were purposefully selected to participate in this study. There were more than 12 volunteers. Therefore, those names were kept in case someone no longer decided to participate. The educators were asked about their perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PDs and the support received to help implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic classrooms.

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

With Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Walden University granted (see Appendix B), I provided the district and principals with detailed information about the study, procedures, and protections that would be in place to ensure the confidentiality of all participants involved. The administration granted permission and provided a list of educators who had completed the R.I.S.E. PD. This list also included their email addresses and phone numbers to facilitate communication over the course of the study. The educators received an email that indicated the purpose of the study and included a request for participation, participant requirements, informed consent, the confidentiality

process, and my contact information (see Appendix D). After submissions were received, purposeful sampling was done to select 10 educators for the study.

Research–Participant Working Relationship

The introductory email informed all participants about my employment and current position. Each participant knew my familiarity with the R.I.S.E. PD because I, too, had to complete the training. Bogdan and Bilken (2007) expressed the importance of respect when conducting a qualitative study. I started building rapport after selecting the participants and throughout the data collection process. The informed consent showed that each participant understood all that happened (i.e., the process to participate, not participate, or forfeit participation). It also informed the participants of their responsibilities in the research study (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

Protecting Participants' Rights

To ensure confidentiality, all participants received pseudonyms to protect their identity. Participants responded with an email stating “I consent” to participate. The following was part of the consent form for all participants to sign and understand to ensure the avoidance of harm:

- researcher name;
- purpose of consent;
- a description of the purpose of the study and procedures to be followed;
- sample interview question;

- statement indicating that participation was voluntary, without input from administration, and that participants could withdraw from the study at any time;
- the process to secure the confidentiality of the participants;
- the methods to secure the data collected;
- the usage of the research data to explore the perceptions about the current PD;
- instructions on how to participate; and
- IRB approval information.

Safety and confidentiality were of utmost importance and priority in this qualitative study. Interviews were coded and kept in secure storage. The computer was password encrypted and was locked in a vault. All written documents were kept in the safe, too. A procedure for debriefing was implemented to allow participants to ask questions, comment, and ensure that no harm had occurred. All data collected will be protected for 5 years after the completion of the study to protect participants, the schools, the students, and the districts. All stored electronic and written data will be destroyed per Walden University protocol.

Data Collection

Data were collected from participants in the project study which allowed me to collect rich data and increase the trustworthiness of this qualitative study (Glesne, 2011; Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). The method used to collect information was semistructured interviews. This source allowed me to understand educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E.

PD and support received to help with the implementation to foster student achievement in reading.

Description and Justification of Data Collection

The purpose of this qualitative bounded case study was to explore the perceptions of educators of the R.I.S.E. PD and support to implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic elementary schools. There was a need to understand how the R.I.S.E. PD may help educators foster academic achievement for all students regardless of how they score on assessments. The source that provided the data was participant interviews. The interviews allowed an understanding of how the R.I.S.E. PD is valuable for educators and helpful for students to increase student achievement in reading.

Interview Data

Data were collected through interviews. Interviews help with understanding a phenomenon in depth. The interviews lasted 45 minutes to an hour and could have been stopped at any time per the participant's discretion. I remained neutral throughout the interview so the data would not show any biases (Yin, 2014). The semistructured interviews incorporated open-ended questions that allowed the participants to share their perceptions, without steering the responses or thoughts in a specific direction (Creswell, 2012). The questions went through a process to ensure quality, through editing from the reading specialist at Poseidon elementary schools to make them free from any mistakes. Each question focused on the participant's perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support received after training to help implement the classroom's SOR instructional strategies. All

the interviews were audio-recorded, with the participant's consent, and transcribed verbatim (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

Data Collection Instrument and Sources

This section is a basic description of the data source collected through this case study.

Interviews

The questions from the semistructured interviews focused on the educators' perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD. The educators were asked if there were implementation challenges, what their perceptions were of the R.I.S.E. PD, and whether additional resources or support were needed that the cooperative and the school district offered. They were also asked if additional PD was needed to implement the SOR instructional strategies in the classroom to foster student achievement (see Appendix F).

Sufficiency of Data Collection Instrument and Sources

I could grasp the participants' opinions of the R.I.S.E. PD and assistance in implementing the SOR instructional strategies through interview protocols. These perceptions revealed details about the R.I.S.E. team's professional growth, their support, and whether any further resources or assistance were required. The interview data provided answers to the research questions. More volunteers were not utilized because interview data did not become too saturated (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). I could determine from this source whether the R.I.S.E. PD and assistance had assisted them in putting the SOR teaching strategies into practice.

Process of How and When Data Were Generated and Recorded

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), it should take roughly a month to identify willing volunteers, get consent forms signed, and choose a representative sample. After receiving confirmation of all participants' and administrators' consents, data were obtained. Interviews with the participants were semistructured. After scheduling interviews, data collection started.

Interviews

The interviews were scheduled outside of instructional time so as not to conflict with participants' daily schedules in the classroom. Participants emailed "I consent" and set an appropriate time for an interview of 45 minutes to an hour. Each participant read the consent before the interview to be aware of how their identity would remain confidential, and that the interview would be audio-recorded to ensure accuracy in transcription. They knew that I would be the only person aware of the coding system. All documentation and transcriptions were password protected and locked in a vault to help with participant confidentiality (Yin, 2014).

During the interview, I asked broad questions, such as questions concerning the participant's background, where they were raised, their family, and a typical day at work. This helped the participant get comfortable and set the interview's tone. The audio recording began once the comfort level was established. The first set of predetermined questions focused on educator perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD and support received after the training to help with implementation. During the 45-minute to 1-hour interview, I assessed what was heard and observed. Follow-up questions were used to clarify

explanations and ensure that body language interpretation, answers, and emotions were accurate (Yin, 2014). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested using probes, such as hypothetical, ideal situation, and devil's advocate questions, to deepen understanding of the participant's perceptions. Those questions were only asked for clarification and to understand educators' perceptions, which helped add depth to this qualitative study.

Tracking Data From Instruments and Emerging Understandings

The interviews were planned outside of class to avoid interfering with their everyday schedules in the classroom. Participants scheduled a time for a 45- to 1-hour interview by emailing the researcher the words "I consent." Before the interview, the participant read the consent to ensure that they knew how their identity would be kept private, and that the interview would be taped for later transcribing accuracy. They knew I would be the only person aware of the coding system. All documentation and transcriptions were password protected and locked. Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Office helped maintain data from each participant using the pseudonyms assigned from the interview (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Themes found through the literature review were headings placed on the excel spreadsheet, and the problems or compliments of the R.I.S.E. PD were listed. The Microsoft Office document was used to transfer written notes into an electronic format to be password protected and stored. The data from the interviews were monitored continuously and coded, using the codes from the spreadsheet. If additional resources or challenges were identified in the interviews they were added to the spreadsheet. In the comment sections of the excel spreadsheets, reflections were noted

about the data. Malterud et al. (2016) state that saturation, or information power, will be determined when no new strategies or challenges become apparent through the data.

Gaining Access to Participants

Multiple perspectives were required to comprehend the R.I.S.E. PD. The administration provided a list of teachers who met the requirements for the study. The list had the educators' phone numbers and email addresses so that I could contact them about participating in this project study.

Role of the Observer

As a scholarly research observer, I am aware that I am an instrument of the research as the primary collector and analyzer of all data gathered through the interviews (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). I can only be an observer through the approval of Walden University (Appendix B), the school district superintendent, the building supervisor (Appendix C), and permission from participants. My role is not to impose my beliefs or create biases with the data collected (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Because of this, I must be aware of my own biases towards any educator participating in the study. I used bracketing to identify my biases, knowledge, and assumptions and temporarily set them aside so they would not influence the research. (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Patton (2015) stressed the need to identify one's biases so they would not influence the validity of the research study. The following bias was identified that I bring to the study: The SOR instructional strategies can help foster student achievement in reading if implemented with fidelity, with the necessary support after completing the R.I.S.E. PD.

When a greater explanation was required, questions were raised in the interviews to help ensure legitimacy. My verbal or physical language during the interviews did not indicate whether I agreed or disagreed with a participant's remark (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). I used my ability to be non-judgmental, sensitive to the participant's feelings, and respect their opinions and perceptions (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). With those biases and knowledge in mind, it was my responsibility to be transparent and open during the entirety of the data collection process. Bracketing biases, knowledge, and assumptions added credibility to the research and helped ensure that the project study was trustworthy.

Data Analysis

This section explains the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered. According to Creswell (2012), three processes were used: a) using Microsoft Office to organize the data, b) Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet to code the data, and c) identifying the categories, themes, and patterns.

How and When Data Were Analyzed

The data from the interviews were coded to identify potential themes and patterns and to develop a visual description of the data (Creswell, 2012). Each process was done after each interview to discover similar or divergent themes. It helped determine if the research questions were answered throughout the data collection process. When themes and patterns emerged, a thematic code was developed from the data and noted on the spreadsheet with participants' responses (Creswell, 2012).

Table 1*Data Analysis Process*

Data	
Interviews (pseudonym for participants)	
Audio recordings (typed verbatim)	
Confirmation of transcribed data	
Member checking	
Apply codes	Record patterns, themes, or subthemes
Rearrange data	Determine categories
Apply thematic coding	Answer guiding questions
Put in code dictionary	

Each spreadsheet used the heading of the themes for easy navigation and organization purposes. The spreadsheet columns included the general headings of the R.I.S.E. PD sections (6-day training) and participants' perceptions of each. The interview questions were compiled under the general heading so each response could be listed to identify contradictory themes or opinions (Creswell, 2012).

Coding Procedures

Participants' pseudonyms, identification codes, and thematic codes were used in a dictionary to analyze the data. The code dictionary helped add credibility to the study by organizing the codes presented (Stuckey, 2015). The identification codes consisted of numbers and letters from the pseudonym to identify each participant. The identification codes correlated with thematic codes to help identify the themes or patterns that arise from each participant. The thematic codes were color-coded and consisted of sub-codes that helped expand on themes (Stuckey, 2015). The coding focused on the R.I.S.E. PD

and support received to help educators implement the SOR instructional strategies in low socioeconomic elementary schools.

Once data collection and coding were completed, the list showed themes, patterns, and categories that emerged from the data so that it could be used to consolidate into three to five significant perceptions (Stuckey, 2015). The three to five essential topics must be mentioned by the participants in the study to help with validity. Each transcript was reread and recorded to ensure the credibility of the matching codes. The pseudonym was administered at the beginning of the study to help with the confidentiality of each participant.

Evidence of Quality Procedures

Throughout the interview, biases were not exhibited in the participants nor data collected. Each participant was given access to the 1-2-page draft of the results after it was finished, to ensure that my interpretation of their opinions on the R.I.S.E. professional growth and after-training support was accurate. By allowing the participants to read the summary, I performed a member check to determine if any biases influenced the analysis of the draft, which established credibility and trustworthiness (Yin, 2014). The audio recordings of the participant interviews were transcribed verbatim, electronically, and protected with a password-encrypted computer that was locked in a vault (Yin, 2014). The interview notes were also transcribed electronically, and the original documentation was placed and secured in the vault. This helped maintain a chain of evidence, as Yin (2014) suggested. The study's findings may help other elementary

schools implementing the SOR instructional strategies understand the PD, and if the R.I.S.E. training provides the necessary support for educator buy-in.

Discrepant Cases

More participants were requested to take part in the study in case there were any differences or disagreements. Regarding educator perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD, and support received to help implement the SOR instructional strategies in the classroom, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) pointed out the need to be aware of contradictions on purpose and try to find evidence that refutes or challenges the majority of views found in the literature review and interviews. One may have to look at how educators are implementing the instructional strategies and what resources they may lack compared to schools with less than 85% of students on free and reduced lunch. Discrepant cases are included in the analysis to explain why it differs from the participants.

Limitations

Limitations are weaknesses or problems that the researcher becomes aware of during the data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2012). This qualitative study is conducted in elementary schools in the southeastern part of Arkansas. This does not represent all elementary schools that have attended the R.I.S.E. PD training. The first limitation of the study is that through the implementation of the SOR instructional strategies, the education entity went through a pandemic that changed schools from traditional to virtual and blended learning. The second limitation is that it is limited to educators who teach in schools with 85% or more free and reduced lunch recipients and

grades 3rd-5th instructors, which cannot represent other elementary educators who have completed the training and attended the PD.

Data Analysis Results

The objective of the qualitative bound case study was to (a) investigate the opinions of third through fifth-grade teachers on the R.I.S.E. PD and (b) investigate their opinions regarding the SOR teaching methods for students in low socioeconomic schools. To develop an understanding of the educator perceptions from their responses in a semi-structured interview, the conceptual framework of social cognitive theory introduced by Albert Bandura (1986) helps guide the open-ended questions asked by the researcher and answer the following research questions:

- R1: What are educator perceptions of the R.I.S.E. Professional development to help with student achievement in reading in low socioeconomic schools?
- R2: How has the R.I.S.E. Professional development improved teaching strategies to help with student achievement in reading?

This chapter is organized into the following sections: data collection, findings by research questions, quality evidence, and outcomes.

Data Collection

Semistructured interviews with the ten participants were used to gather data. I had to wait for I.R.B. approval before the interviews could be set. Building supervisors had to sign the Research Partner Agreement (Appendix C) before the I.R.B. could approve conducting the interviews. Once this was signed and returned to the I.R.B., consent was given to begin data collection for this project study (Appendix B). Possible participants

received emails including a description of the project study and the consent attached. Instructions on how to participate were included in the email. Emails were sent to fifteen (15) individuals, with ten (10) responding "I consent" to volunteer in the project study. When those emails were retrieved, participants were contacted to schedule their interviews face-to-face, or Zoom were options given so data collection could begin.

The participants chose the time for the interviews. Participants agreed to record their interviews and were informed that their identities would be protected using pseudonyms. Before the interviews were conducted, each participant received a hard copy of the consent to ensure they understood their rights and that participation was strictly voluntary. Before the semistructured interview questions were asked, the researcher asked questions about their educational background better to understand each participant's experience in the classroom. Once the interviewee was comfortable, the interview commenced. The audio recorder was checked to ensure it was working correctly. A paper copy of the interview questions (Appendix F) to make notes on the participant's responses in case more clarification is required after the interview was over. After each interview, the audio was rechecked to ensure the interview was recorded and clear so the interview could be transcribed verbatim and be free from any errors. Once the interviews were completed, I transcribed each interview using Microsoft Word on the day they occurred on a password-protected computer, saved a copy on a flash drive, and stored it in a vault after the completion of the day. Each interview took two days to be fully transcribed, as I was sure to listen to the audio recordings several times to ensure accuracy.

The participants received the audio recording files and a calendar with a time slot for a phone call to discuss the transcription's correctness. At this time, I asked questions about the notes I had written during the interview to help gain clarity and understanding of their answers. This allowed the participants to provide feedback which helped add richness to the perceptions of the participants involved in the study. After completing the member checking with each participant, the emails were deleted from the server, and I was able to begin the coding process. Each interviewee had received a pseudonym, which was now being entered into Microsoft Excel along with an identification code. I began transferring the data on the spreadsheet, with the columns being the participant pseudonym and the rows listing the ten open-ended interview questions. Each participant's response was color-coded to help organize the collected data.

Each participant interview was read and coded one by one. As I began to analyze the transcriptions, patterns began to emerge. The codes were placed in a broad category related to the research questions, which allowed the identification of subcategories and patterns in the third review. Those patterns were then coded and placed in the code dictionary, so I could refer back to them to help answer the research questions. Key phrases were highlighted on the Microsoft Word documents and then transferred to the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, including the participants' pseudonyms. Those phrases were captured and used to enrich the interpretations of the themes, uncovered through the fourth review of the transcribed data. To reinforce bracketing from my notes on the hard copy of the interview questions, I was sure to listen to the participant's words through the audio recording, while analyzing the transcripts as a way to conceptualize the text and

connect it to other parts of the interview. Some codes were related to others, so they were combined to form themes around the data. After the coding process, four themes were found that concerned the educators' perceptions about the R.I.S.E. PD and the SOR instructional strategies for low socioeconomic schools, organized by research questions in the following section.

Results by Research Questions

The data from the interviews are organized by the research questions that were explored to identify emergent themes.

Research Question 1

Research question one asked, “What are educator perceptions of the R.I.S.E. Professional Development to help with student achievement in reading in low socioeconomic schools?” All participants showed great concern that students in the upper elementary Grades 3-5 needed help with reading to be fluent readers and that the R.I.S.E. PD could help students who were several grade levels below. Throughout the interviews, several participants showed incredible frustration on how to incorporate the information provided in this PD after only 6-days of training with the SOR instructional strategies. Some felt it was a lot to digest and implement in such a short time. Most participants learned from their coworkers, to help them understand the SOR instructional strategies and how it was supposed to look in a low socioeconomic classroom. In contrast, others furthered their understanding by researching and finding literature to help understand the material they were tasked with implementing.

The themes organized under research question one were: beneficial and overwhelmed. Words and perceptions of the participants were used to identify those themes and strengthen the credibility of the interpretation in Table 2.

Table 2*Description of Emerging Themes for Research Question 1*

Theme	Description	
Beneficial to student achievement in reading and interventions	Producing good results or helpful effects. (Merriam-Webster, 2022)	
Subcategories and codes	Description	Significant statement examples
Benefit - good - enjoyment - gain - helpful - aid - useful - worthwhile - valuable - of use	Something that produces good or helpful results (Merriam-Webster, 2022)	- benefits novice teachers - the overall training was good - going through the K-2 training benefit my students - help my co-workers with phonics -the cooperative specialists were helpful - transition of these strategies a little easier - teach students phonics and decoding is useful. - strategies were useful for my interventions - the 6-day training was worthwhile - resources received made it worth the time
Theme	Description	
Information was a lot to digest and retain.	To overpower in thought or feeling. (Merriam-Webster, 2022)	
Subcategories and codes	Description	Significant statement examples
c		

<p>Excessive - too much - a lot - extreme - over the top - unreasonable - overload - excess</p>	<p>An amount or degree too great to be reasonable or acceptable (Merriam-Webster, 2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the information shared was a bit excessive - because it was so much information, it felt excessive - it was a lot to take in - professional development was a lot to take in - it was unreasonable amount of information at once - my brain was on overload - it was just too much
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Theme 1: Beneficial to Student Achievement in Reading and Interventions.

Each of the participants expressed how beneficial the R.I.S.E. PD is to help educators be able to instruct students in low socioeconomic schools to show student achievement in reading. Through the interviews, I interpreted that each participant understood what was being expressed through the R.I.S.E. PD, even if some participants felt it was not tailored to students who were reading on grade or above grade level. The overall aspect of the R.I.S.E. PD seemed to benefit the educators employed in low socioeconomic elementary schools to help with student achievement in reading and the ability to provide intensive interventions.

Daisy. Daisy shared her perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD six-day training stating that it was useful to a certain extent. Throughout the interview, Daisy also expressed the importance of being a fluent reader and how it helped her reach students from different grade levels because she was a novice teacher:

I think the R.I.S.E. professional development is a great tool to use in a low socioeconomic classroom if it is implemented with fidelity. It gives teachers the ability to set clear expectations for their students and to model what it is meant to be a fluent reader through phonics, decoding, and phonemic awareness that most of the students in our school lack. They lack the necessary foundation to be fluent readers, and this training helps the teacher be able to help fill in the gaps and give them the skills to help produce students who will eventually become grade-level readers.

Rita. Rita emphasized how helpful the R.I.S.E. PD was for her since it enabled her to connect with challenging pupils who were several grade levels behind: “Without this professional development, teachers would not know if they are teaching it with fidelity so it gives us the help we need to improve our teaching.”

Sienna. In her low socioeconomic elementary school, Sienna thought the R.I.S.E. PD was a significant help to the teachers: “The R.I.S.E. professional development was necessary because, prior, I, I did not feel that teachers in upper grades were equipped to remediate students that had fallen or those that were struggling to read with phonics, particularly phonological awareness.”

Henrietta. Henrietta explained why the R.I.S.E. PD was beneficial for teachers working in low socioeconomic settings, with an emphasis on shifting classroom education away from face-to-face instruction and toward blended learning, virtual learning, and virtual learning:

So umm the R.I.S.E. Professional Development was worthwhile because it broke down words focusing on phonics and the decoding aspects, too. The training to help the teacher umm focus on the word origins and different affixes [pause] helped make a way to help students who were unfamiliar with words or those who have missed being in school due to them choosing the option of virtual learning. Our school was already suffering due to school closure back in 2020, where students missed so much of school that they started with the inability to be on grade level due to losing face-to-face schooling.

Colin. Colin believed that the R.I.S.E. PD was a useful idea for teachers in a low socioeconomic classroom due to the surroundings and climate of the pupils.

Colin expressed his opinions about the general atmosphere among the pupils at this primary school with a poor socioeconomic status:

Ya know most students have to raise themselves, so any tool to help educators reach them was beneficial to the overall school climate. The R.I.S.E. professional development was useful in a school where students are struggling in their studies for so many reasons. The training can be an effective tool to prepare students to become more successful readers.

Raven. Raven was a new teacher who always sought to establish a connection with the parents of her students. Based on the rapport she established with the kids right away, she saw that the R.I.S.E. PD assisted her in her ability to make learning meaningful for the children:

The R.I.S.E. professional development was useful because it helped umm cause it align the state standards to the low socioeconomic elementary school curriculum. It also was needed to help educators have the tools to achieve reading growth in students no matter the grade level they currently were on. It helped me reach students because I have a rapport with all my students, and I try to give them information on what we are doing in the classroom so they can reiterate it at home.

Mandy. When it came to the R.I.S.E. PD, Mandy had conflicting opinions on whether or not a school with a poor socioeconomic status would benefit from it.

Regardless of the grade level at which they were reading, it had flaws that did not fulfill the needs of all the students:

Um the R.I.S.E. Professional Development was beneficial because it was the standard. Those are the skills and strategies that [pause] students are going to need. They will need to know this to continue to excel in umm progress through their grades. Nevertheless, I feel like it does not prepare some because it is not tailored to students in Title I schools or any low development areas. After all, they are not ready for the material right off. I feel that teachers may need something prior to the R.I.S.E. Professional Development to reach most of the students in a Title I school.

Blanche. Blanche has had the chance to teach in primary schools, with less than 60% of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches. She observed a variation in the quality of instruction depending on the financing. Even though she thought it was a fantastic resource to add to the curriculum, she also believed that it overlooked the difference between low and higher socioeconomic schools:

Although I teach fifth grade, I think I need to be trained in the lower ya know grades like Kindergarten through 2nd with the Science of Reading instructional ya know strategies because some students come to me reading on a second and first-grade [pause] level. Having this training would better equip the teacher for students who are several grade levels below and close those gaps.

Dane. Before working at a low socioeconomic school in the United States, Dane had the chance to work in Japan for several years. Dane had mixed thoughts regarding the R.I.S.E. PD, even if he thought it was a valuable resource for some people:

The R.I.S.E. Professional development benefit educators in a low socioeconomic elementary school because it is tailored for those students who are two or three grade levels behind basically. The training gives the teachers the tools to remediate and provide interventions to help bring them to where they are, [stutters] but it does not seem helpful for students who are already reading on grade level or above; it is like forgetting those particular students.

Paige. Compared to the other teachers in her grade level, Paige was a new instructor. She expressed her disinterest in the R.I.S.E. professional growth and reaffirmed Blanche's sentiments by saying the following:

Its [pause] is almost no way to make it fit for students who are on their grade level, and for those who are not, you have ya know to find resources to help them eventually catch up and meet their targeted grade level.[stares off] If I had the R.I.S.E. professional development tailored for Kindergarten through 2nd grade, I would be better equipped to help those below grade level in reading. I would be able to know if I am using it correctly.

Even though the two participants, Blanche and Paige, were stuck in between if the R.I.S.E. PD was beneficial, their responses to why were because they lacked the instructional strategies when it came to instructing students who were several grade levels below. They felt they could not reach those Tier III students due to them not attending the

Kindergarten through 2nd grade tailored PD. Blanche also specifies that the R.I.S.E. PD did not consider how big the gap was from the lower socioeconomic to the higher socioeconomic. Several barriers were seen through her answer, along with Mandy's response. One participant felt that it was worthwhile, primarily since it dealt with bringing students up to grade level, but he felt that it just forgot students who were successful and were reading on grade level or above.

Theme 2: Information Was a Lot to Digest and Retain. Although numerous participants found the training to be overwhelming, the educator's perceptions demonstrated how valuable the R.I.S.E. PD was for the low socioeconomic elementary classroom. The topic that developed from the participant interviews helped to further address the study issue. Teachers must be able to remember the material they are given in order to properly use the SOR instructional practices. As a result, its execution may suffer, which would defeat the goal of raising reading proficiency among students.

Daisy. Daisy appreciated the R.I.S.E. PD's capacity to teach her how to teach pupils who were below grade level, but she found the information to be overwhelming:

Being a novice teacher [pause] and starting with just professional learning communities discussing the Science of Reading instructional strategies and finally attending the R.I.S.E. professional development, it was a lot to take in. The 6-day professional development was a great way to introduce me to the SOR instructional strategies but to be able to understand it enough to implement it in a low [pause] um socioeconomic classroom was a bit overwhelming for me.

Rita. Rita thought the R.I.S.E. PD was crucial to advancing her knowledge in her field, but she had to take it upon herself to absorb a lot of her coworker's knowledge because it was so overwhelming:

Umm my co-worker gave me several books to help me understand how to implement the R.I.S.E. professional development in my classroom [coughs] because the training was excessive. It gave a great wealth of information, but it had taken me a long time to digest what was being asked of me entirely. Even though the six days were enough for the training, annual training or debriefings associated with the R.I.S.E. professional development would be better for me because [pause] I could be refreshed on the Science of Reading instructional strategies.

Sienna. According to Sienna, the R.I.S.E. PD is detrimental to teachers' ability to demonstrate student accomplishment through interventions. Despite attending all of the training designed for K–2nd graders and 3rd–5th graders, Sienna thought that the knowledge would be intricate for any educator to process, especially for new teachers:

I believe that the R.I.S.E. professional development is an excellent in um addition to a low socioeconomic classroom because, at first, there was no training to help educators ya know with remediation of critical [pause] skills like phonological awareness and phonics. The issue comes with a great deal of information and a lot for novice teachers to take in with them just coming into the classroom. I feel that additional training may be needed to help them implement the strategies with

fidelity and refresh the veteran teachers on the Science of Reading instructional strategies and other ways to implement [coughs] them in the classroom.

Henrietta. The R.I.S.E. PD provided the instructors with the tool to help the pupils at a poor socioeconomic elementary school raise their reading scores, but Henrietta was quite overwhelmed by the volume of information shared:

I thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the R.I.S.E. professional development because it gave me information about phonological awareness and phonics that I did not initially have access to. The information we were exposed to during the six-day training overwhelmed me because I did not realize I would have to implement this in my classroom that fall. The specialist covered the materials to the best of their ability, I am sure, but I was not sure if I could retain so much of the information in that short amount of time.

Colin. Although Colin believed that the R.I.S.E. PD was sufficient for understanding the SOR teaching tactics, most teachers could find the training to be overwhelming:

The information was an excellent help for educators in the lower socioeconomic regions, but it was a lot to take in, in that short amount of time. The six days were jammed packed with the foundation of the R.I.S.E. professional development instructional strategies but fully retaining the information within the period was impossible. I believe that a teacher would have to at least three years with the strategies to best support teacher implementation in the classroom.

Raven. It was overwhelming for Raven because she was a newer teacher. However, she thought the number of days for the R.I.S.E. PD was appropriate, and the resources that were given greatly helped with the implementation of the SOR instructional strategies in a low socioeconomic classroom:

Being new in this profession, some vocabulary was a bit hard for me to understand and digest at first. However, it was an overload of information in those six days. Because of that overwhelming feeling I got, I feel we need a biannual training to help implement the strategies so that I am sure that I am doing it correctly so my students will be able to show growth in reading.

Mandy. Mandy firmly believed that the R.I.S.E. PD was a fantastic tool for demonstrating student reading performance. However, at the time, the material offered there was a lot to take in: “I feel that besides the lack of support after the R.I.S.E. training, the information was piled on us and was a lot to digest. It was difficult to figure out where to place it, you know.”

Blanche. Blanche made it clear that she felt a little overwhelmed by the knowledge provided in the R.I.S.E. PD. The usefulness of the information did not, however, alter the amount that was given to her over the course of the six days:

It’s almost like this program is thrown on you all in those six days, and you are entitled to know what to do to put this in our classroom. We are expected to be able to go into our classrooms and implement it right then.

Dane. R.I.S.E. PD, in his opinion, had some positive aspects as well as some shortcomings. His position was more in favor of new instructors joining the field of education:

Those six days are just thrown in; it's like, whoa, what? It's a lot to take in, and it is too much to take in, and it takes a bit of time. Newer teachers would just go through the training may feel worse than I do about it because they are not used to the terminology being used or what is actually expected of them as a teacher just yet. Then to think about the high turnover rate in this profession, it just may need to be revamped.

Paige. The information offered in the R.I.S.E. PD left Paige, a novice teacher, feeling overawed:

The six days of training that you received is just overwhelming, and you need more of it. More time to actually understand what is being taught. More time to digest that information. More time to figure out how to implement this into the classroom. I just need more training on the different areas discussed in R.I.S.E. professional development instead of a general unpacking of all the strategies.

The themes beneficial to student achievement in reading and interventions and information were a lot to digest and retain were the themes that aroused to answer the research question one, along with identifying with Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory. The theory specifies that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic reciprocal interaction of the person's environment and behavior (A. Bandura, 1993); if the educator's perceptions show those themes, then the behavior of the educator will reflect

that on their environment, in this case, the classroom. Therefore, based on the codes for research question one, educators feel that the R.I.S.E. PD is very beneficial to low socioeconomic schools to foster student achievement in reading and provide intensive interventions for below-grade level readers. However, how the training is held can be overwhelming for educators to take in, digest, and implement in such a short time.

Research Question 2

Research question two asked, “How has the R.I.S.E. professional development improved teaching strategies to help with student achievement in reading?” All participants were introduced to the SOR instructional strategies through the R.I.S.E. PD. The state of A.R. hoped to help improve reading instruction for all grade levels through these strategies. This project study focuses on grade 3rd-5th educator perceptions to understand if the quality of their instruction has improved to help with student achievement in reading. Throughout the interviews, participants expressed how grateful they were to be introduced to these strategies because, previously, no PD was readily available for how to instruct students to be able to read or read fluently. Even though most educators relied on their coworkers to understand how to implement the strategies in their classroom, the purpose of the R.I.S.E. PD was understood.

The themes organized under research question two were: the ability to master instructional strategies and confidence in implementing instructional strategies. I used the words and perceptions of participants to identify those themes and strengthen the credibility of the interpretation in Table 3.

Table 3*Description of Emerging Themes for Research Question 2*

Theme	Description	
Ability to master instructional strategies.	Deliver instruction with atomicity to improve student achievement in reading.	
Subcategories with codes	Description	Significant statement examples
Understand - incorporate - execute - apply - enforce - recognize - appreciate	The power of comprehension (Merriam-Webster, 2022)	- if implemented correctly - more training to be sure teachers are applying it correctly - most newer teachers do not understand them - how to incorporate them in the classroom - having a hard time implementing in the classroom
Training - instruction - education - coaching - direction - guidance - professional development - workshops	The act, process, or method of one that trains (Merriam-Webster, 2022)	- attended training about trauma informed teaching in low socioeconomic schools - make the training a little bit longer - professional development that can model a low socioeconomic classroom - the cooperative specialist help guide
Theme	Description	
Confidence in implementing instructional strategies.	The power to produce an effect (Merriam-Webster, 2022)	
Subcategories and C	Description	Significant statement examples

<p>Ability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capability - expertise - resources - competence - skill - proficiency - confident - efficacy 	<p>The quality or state of being able (Merriam-Webster, 2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - observations help them understand - most veteran teacher see these strategies and be like oh, I can do it better - some will have the resources and not know what to do with it - teachers were not equipped to remediate with the kids - if teachers are comfortable in their skills - they would be comfortable teaching it - materials are just not there - they are not confident
<p>Effective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - observations - successful - fidelity - sound - clear - binding - foundation - increased 	<p>Producing or capable of producing a result (Merriam-Webster, 2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bringing more resources - need more oversight so we know that we are doing it effectively - so we need a refresher to be sure we are incorporating this into the classroom with fidelity - some are not observed enough to make it effective - K-2nd are the foundation of these strategies - just observed but never really gave feedback

Theme 3: Ability to Master Instructional Strategies. Each participant described how the R.I.S.E. PD improved their pedagogy. Before this PD, several educators lacked the foundation to give kids the kind of teaching they needed to demonstrate reading proficiency. The SOR made educators aware of Scarborough's Rope, a model of what reading included, strengthening their pedagogy.

Daisy. When Daisy learned about the R.I.S.E. PD and how it could be used to benefit pupils in low socioeconomic schools, she was fascinated:

The Science of Reading instructional strategies help me set clear expectations for students. When I first started teaching, I had no idea how to do interventions or how to instruct students how to read. Even though the information was a lot to

take in within six-days, I grew a lot as a teacher and I am sure that I am able to implement in my classroom to help students show progress.

Rita. Due to her earlier experiences, Rita was anxious to learn whatever she could to support the pupils in elementary schools with low socioeconomic status. She was able to reach kids who were reading below grade level and perform an intervention to demonstrate reading improvement for all of her pupils as a result of attending the R.I.S.E. PD:

The R.I.S.E. professional development allowed me to understand if I was teaching phonics to students because we would get the resources from anywhere without this professional development. However, we might be teaching it the correct way or might not be teaching it correctly. However, we do need to ensure that we receive all the materials needed to teach this with fidelity so the students can have the necessary visual aids needed, too. I also did my research and got help from my coworkers to help increase my skills with students in a low socioeconomic classroom aligned with the Science of Reading instructional strategies. Because of this, I am more confident in providing quality instruction to my students.

Sienna. Even though Sienna had already advanced her education by earning a literacy certification that enabled her to teach pupils, in a low socioeconomic school, she thought that the R.I.S.E. PD was an excellent instrument to support her pedagogy:

Before R.I.S.E. professional development[pause] I do not think teachers in the upper grades were equipped to remediate the fallen kids or those struggling to read with phonics and, in particular, phonemic awareness. Even though I think we

need more training and observations, professional development has given me more knowledge on reaching students in a low socioeconomic school. When I state more training, I think more of a biannual training so that teachers could stay afloat and continue to gain the necessary knowledge to incorporate the strategies with fidelity.

Henrietta. In addition to grade 5, Henrietta also experienced it in grade 3. As a result, she became aware of how the R.I.S.E. PD assisted her in implementing the foundational teaching methods from the SOR, to support her students' reading achievement:

The professional development showed us how to break down the words, like phonological awareness, and help with diagrams and tri-graph to help students have a foundation to build on throughout their educational journey. Without the training, I would not know how to instruct students to read. That has been a vital part missing in our training before the R.I.S.E. professional development. Even though I feel that we may lack the support needed to incorporate this in the classroom effectively, I see an improvement in my overall teaching instruction.

Colin. Colin believed that to help the children in any way he could; he needed to ensure that he was an expert in the SOR teaching methods due to the extreme reading challenges that the students at this low socioeconomic school were experiencing. He also stressed the need for building management to be informed about the abilities so they can support their staff:

Even though teachers need to understand the implementation of the Science of Reading instructional strategies, I feel that building administration should also be aware of this. Having equal knowledge of state-mandated implementation will help the teachers understand if they are implementing the strategies correctly. With only having a short time to understand the Science of Reading instructional strategies, it will take 2 or 3 years or even longer before teachers can teach automaticity; that is only if they want R.I.S.E professional development to succeed. Given this training, it helped me reach students who were several grade [clears throat] levels below, but I do need more training to reach students who are already proficient so they can be the best they can be.

Raven. Raven thought that the SOR instructional strategies had a very positive impact on her Tier I and Tier II students. Because the pupils in the Tier III group were so far behind, she thought she needed additional training to assist with their instruction:

The R.I.S.E. professional development was tremendous in helping my students be successful readers. For the students (Tier I and Tier II) who get it is easier for me to instruct them and guide them throughout the process. However, my students who are two to three grade levels below (Tier III) are so far behind that it is hard for them to grasp the Science of Reading instruction. Therefore, I may need a refresher on how to reach those students, but as of right now, I do not feel that it reaches my Tier III students.

Mandy. Mandy believed that the SOR teaching methods improved her teacher knowledge. However, she believed that due to the divide in the low socioeconomic school, it was not matched to the pupils she taught:

The skills and strategies that we were trained on are something we need to know to help our students be successful readers. But, I feel it is not tailored to students in a Title I school because they are just not ready for the material. It could be because it was just incorporated in 2018, and students who were already out of Kindergarten lack the needed foundation. If I had training in the K-2nd grade R.I.S.E., I would be able to reach those students. My overall knowledge of teaching strategies has increased. I just want to be able to reach all the students no matter what grade level they are.

Blanche. The huge disparity in the socioeconomic concerns of pupils, in Blanche's opinion, was not taken into account by the tactics. However, if she had received training for grades K–2, the SOR instructional methodologies would be more suitable. She may catch up with her behind-the-curve students:

I need training at different levels. Although I teach fifth grade, I think I need to be trained in second and first-grade R.I.S.E. because students who enter my classroom are reading on those grade levels. I also feel that if you had more training in reading prior to R.I.S.E., it would benefit my students more. With more training, I could make connections, especially with having K-2nd on top of the 3rd-5th to engage the students so they could be proficient readers.

Dane. Although Dane thought the R.I.S.E. professional development was a useful tool to support classroom interventions, it did not specifically target kids who were performing above grade level:

The R.I.S.E. professional development provided great tools to incorporate in the classroom for the students who needed the intensive intervention, but I feel uncertain how much phonics 4th grade requires. I feel that retraining would be the best initiative to improve the training because maybe I missed where it helps those students on grade level.

Paige. Due to her inexperience as a teacher and desire to implement the SOR instructional techniques to the best of her ability, Paige had conflicting emotions about the training. She believed that in order to help her kids who were below grade level, she needed a bit of extra training:

It is just hard to make the strategies fit; that has me pulling so many different resources to aid in catching those students up. I need more training to help me incorporate these strategies in the classroom effectively because it was a lot for me to try to soak in when I went through those training.

According to participant replies, R.I.S.E. PD has improved their pedagogy using the SOR teaching techniques to support kids who are significantly behind. Overall, it has helped children below grade level; however, most believe they need a refresher to ensure they are using these tactics effectively. The fact that some participants found the material difficult to process may have contributed to their inability to adjust the lesson to kids in

the Tier III category, or to fit it into their grade level for students on grade level.

Pedagogy is crucial when it comes to providing all pupils with high-quality teaching.

Theme 4: Confidence in Implementing Instructional Strategies. Even if the educator's pedagogy developed, this did not alter whether they were at ease or could apply this method consistently. The R.I.S.E. PD may have provided them with the skills needed to support student performance. However, if the teacher lacks the confidence to do so, it undermines the PD's main goal of raising reading proficiency among children.

Daisy. Although Daisy thought that the problem could be observed with other educators' confidence in herself, she was confident in her abilities to execute the SOR instructional practices in the classroom. As Daisy said:

Veteran teachers may see these strategies and be like, ummm oh well I can do it better, and do not use them quite as much. [pause] They don't make it so helpful for you, and there is no sit down afterward to tell you how you did. It would be great if they could record you teaching the lesson and sit down and tell you umm if you are doing this correctly, which would help us be more confident in our abilities as a teacher. Teachers are just left on their own and are not sure if they fully understand them.

Rita. Rita believed that while she might use the SOR teaching tactics in her class, they were only introduced in grades K–2. The upper grades were left to fill in the gaps for the weaker pupils if they did not successfully assimilate it or teach it:

If the materials are provided to the K through second, teachers would be able to implement appropriately teaching the foundation err skills. I think they are

teaching it but lack the confidence and materials to do it effectively. No foundation [pause], no mastery. If the teachers knew how to teach the skills to the students, we would not have a problem with student mastery. I also feel that the administration should consider teachers and not force them to teach something they are uncomfortable with. As for me, it took me a long time to understand how students process letters and sounds, so now that I finally understand this, I give credit to R.I.S.E. and the resources go together. Furthering my learning on this and how to incorporate it with students with dyslexia, I am more confident in my ability to reach the students.

Sienna. Although some instructors were still uneasy with these tactics, Sienna believed that the SOR teaching strategies allowed them a chance to remediate pupils that they did not initially have. She believed that the teachers would acquire these techniques more effectively and use them consistently if there was greater teacher buy-in and the expectations were clear:

Some teachers are not comfortable with teaching things they are not sure of. Some backgrounds are why they cannot implement the Science of Reading instructional strategies in a low socioeconomic school. They feel it is unnecessary to use these skills because I can teach kids how to read like I was taught back then. The R.I.S.E. professional development was not explained well enough to inform teachers that this would be the norm. This is what you are expected to do; if this were discussed, more teachers would have bought into it initially and tried to learn the content to the best of their ability.

Henrietta. Henrietta requested further education in the SOR teaching methods since she was unsure of his proficiency. She planned to learn more about how to use such tactics in a classroom with students from low socioeconomic backgrounds through the training:

The support needed to be confident in using the Science of Reading instructional strategies would have to be more professional development because I feel that there is something that I could have implemented a little better when I go back umm and reflect. If someone could model it for me and show me how it is supposed to go, then I would be confident in my ability to instruct students in my classroom. I feel that having more one-on-one support would help many of our teachers here at this school.

Colin. Colin was more concerned about the requirement for training in SOR teaching practices for the building administration to assist teachers in their comprehension and increase their performance as instructors:

The classroom observer, the building administrator, must be holistic and should focus on the teacher's strength so they will be more motivated to improve rather than looking for something that will put them down. Allowing teachers to model and demonstrate how to teach the Science of Reading as a professional development training with an open forum could help teachers collaborate and hear other ideas so that teachers can improve and be confident in their instruction to help with student achievement in reading.

Raven. Raven emphasized the need to quickly understand how to use the SOR instructional tactics to engage her Tier III children. Although she is comfortable teaching the other pupils, extra training for Tier III would help her to faithfully put the techniques into practice:

My Tier III students are left so far behind, and I am just afraid I cannot reach to bring them where they need to be. The other students get it, and it makes me comfortable in my abilities but not reaching all of my students is a problem for me. Maybe a refresher on those strategies and more K-2nd skills would help me be able to deliver the instruction to my students to help show student achievement in reading.

Mandy. Mandy felt confident using the techniques in the classroom. Due to the accomplishment disparity that was evident in her classroom's test results, she just did not know how to reach pupils who were so far behind:

All the information presented to us almost made it difficult to figure out where to place specific strategies for far behind students. Also, if everybody was on board [pause] and one accord, I believe we could do better with the Science of Reading instructional strategies than we have done thus far. If we could review those strategies so we can see the action of it besides someone talking and discussing them in front of us, all teachers would be comfortable implementing these strategies in the classroom.

Blanche. Due to the accomplishment difference in the neighborhood primary school, Blanche displayed steadfast drive in regard to the R.I.S.E. PD. She would be

more able to connect with all of her kids, regardless of the grade level they tested on if she received further training in the K–2nd SOR:

Attending PDs prior to the R.I.S.E. concerning vocabulary with an emphasis on phonics has helped me grasp the concept of Science of Reading instructional strategies that have helped me be a little confident in the delivery to my students. I feel that if they allowed teachers to be part of their discussion, they would be talking about when it comes to what is needed for student achievement. Whatever solution that we find is not a size-fit thing. More umm observations would inform them of what is needed would also be beneficial.

Dane. Because of his prior training in literacy, Dane felt confident in his ability to coach kids to demonstrate reading proficiency, even if he saw the SOR as a tool for intense remediation for below-grade level readers. His primary concern is that the techniques might need to be changed because of the significant teacher turnover:

I feel that the training was catered to teachers in grades K through 2nd and, of course, upper-grade levels if the students are below grade level. I feel that a way to improve would be to retrain teachers so that they could refresh their memories of some of the strategies. You know, it's a high turnover for teachers, a three-year [coughs] average, so someone is probably a first-year teacher. If it were not for my coworker, I would have also made mistakes. It took me two to three years to fully understand it.

Paige. To successfully educate her students, Paige believed she needed further training. She felt confident in her ability to connect with pupils who were already reading

on grade level, while students who were two to three grade levels below grade level need more in-depth training:

Umm I need more training in the different categories in the Science of Reading um instructional strategies. I do not feel like I can reach those students to the best of ya know my abilities because I am not comfortable with using something that I have not fully mastered. It would have been a better implementation if I had been more observed and received timely feedback that would have instructed me on if I was doing this correctly.

The themes of ability to master instructional strategies and confidence in implementing instructional strategies were the themes that answered research question two, along with identifying with the social cognitive theory. The theory discusses a person's past experiences that influence reinforcement, expectations, and expectancies (A. Bandura, 1993). Some educators had prior experiences that set their expectations on what the SOR instructional strategies should look like if implemented to their students with fidelity. Some of the educators were newer and did not have past experiences with students in low socioeconomic classrooms, which could have affected the delivery of their instruction. The social cognitive theory also emphasizes people's belief about their capabilities to produce designated performance levels. If they feel successful, they would be successful; if not, they would retreat when faced with difficult situations (A. Bandura, 1993).

Some educators' perceptions of the amount of knowledge they possess or their own performance are poor, which is evident in the lessons they provide to their pupils.

Due to the teachers' lack of assurance and familiarity with what they are teaching, students won't make any progress or demonstrate any success. The incorporation of the SOR instructional techniques made available through the R.I.S.E. PD, according to the findings of study question two, has enhanced educators' teaching strategies to support student progress. However, extra training would be helpful to boost teachers' confidence and understanding of the SOR teaching methods, enabling them to offer instruction to their pupils in a low socioeconomic classroom more effectively.

Discrepant Cases

A discrepant case is a methodological strategy for proving validity (Hanson, 2017). During my analysis and reflection, I identified variations within themes that allowed me to highlight the diversity of views among teachers of students in Grades 3-5 regarding the R.I.S.E. PD and the SOR instructional strategies they are expected to implement faithfully. After careful analysis of the data, no discrepant cases were found in the study.

Evidence of Quality

Each interview's data was carefully examined to investigate each participant's perspectives. I read, typed, and coded each document to create follow-up questions before member-checking was scheduled. Based on the study questions, those queries were utilized to investigate each educator's remarks. The interval between the interviews and member verification boosted the data's reliability since it gave the educators time to consider their interviews and classroom experiences (Birt et al., 2016). Giving them the

chance to comment on my interview notes afterward offered them the chance to elaborate on my interpretations, helping to enrich the data gathered.

By highlighting these differences within and among the cases, the transferability of the findings to future studies and the development of PDs to help support educator quality are enhanced. All the interviews I had with the participants were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and reanalyzed by myself, so no one else could tamper with the data presented and recorded. I made a conscious effort to sound confident throughout each interview and was sure my body language did not sway the participant's answers. Bracketing was also used to check personal biases to help allow more credibility to the data collected. After the first interview, the recording was reviewed and I noted the times I was hesitant or had to restate questions to the participant. Doing this allowed me to improve the subsequent interviews. To further improve the data's dependability, each recording was checked with the completed transcript and any mistake was corrected. Each participant had the opportunity to review the transcript before further coding, to check its accuracy and respond to questions concerning my thoughts and interpretations of each participant's replies (Birt et al., 2016). The codes I used to assist me in checking my interpretations with each participant and provide follow-up questions to explain their previous replies were constantly compared to the notes.

Each file was identified by the date the data were gathered and the participant's pseudonym. After completing member checking, I continued to evaluate the data and started to code it. As I did so, I began to see developing patterns that helped construct the themes discovered to address the research questions. Throughout the procedure, all of the

data were secured and password-protected. Data no longer needed, such as interview hard copies and flash drives, were stored safely in a vault.

Summary

Educators view PD in low socioeconomic primary schools as a means of enhancing their pedagogy and efficacy, which will enable better instruction for kids in their classroom to demonstrate accomplishment. The biggest worry for most educators is the lack of support and training to properly execute the SOR teaching practices with fidelity in low socioeconomic primary schools. Each educator appreciates the R.I.S.E. PD, but they also want to be heard regarding any new laws or procedures that must be implemented to guarantee kids receive a high-quality education.

Even though PD is supposed to help pupils read fluently, if educators are given too much material in six days they will be unable to retain it and effectively educate students. Low socioeconomic schools must consider several factors, such as whether the curriculum is tailored to those students, whether the educational gap is understood, whether all materials are easily accessible in these districts, and whether the teachers are comfortable delivering this kind of instruction to their students in a limited amount of time (Goodman, 2017). According to my understanding, it is evident that the educators met their requirements and that student accomplishment can only be demonstrated if high-quality education is customized to the demands of the pupils in that low socioeconomic setting.

Project Deliverable

This qualitative case study aimed to investigate and explore educator perceptions of the R.I.S.E. PD program for pupils in low socioeconomic primary schools. I spoke with educators in charge of applying the SOR teaching methods in the schools. Researchers have recommended that instructors' viewpoints and issues with the process should be addressed while adopting new tactics and rules (Barrio and Combes, 2015). This study found that student reading achievement decreased due to a loss of integrity in using the SOR instructional techniques. To comprehend the issue and offer workable remedies, it was necessary to gather information on educators' opinions on the R.I.S.E. PD and how useful the SOR teaching tactics were in demonstrating student reading performance.

The research analysis clarified the need for specialized PD for teachers and children in low socioeconomic environments on the SOR instructional components. PD might enhance the educator's self-efficacy in putting the SOR teaching techniques into practice. Additionally, PD would give new and seasoned instructors the assistance required to apply SOR techniques and effectively enhance student progress in reading. I outlined and defended the professional growth that resulted from the study's findings in Section 3. I also established a PD plan, finished a literature study, and presented project implications. In Section 3, I also considered the information acquired and how the study may impact local social development.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

PD enables educators to build on their existing knowledge and identify ways to enhance their methods to increase student accomplishment. This alters instructors' perspectives and teaching strategies. According to research, changing teaching methods requires time for educators to reflect on the results of their activities (Martin et al., 2019). To support student accomplishment, educators must advance their profession by learning how to adapt their teaching strategies to pupils with low socioeconomic status in primary schools. By understanding educators' perspectives on SOR instructional techniques, it may be possible to enable them to meet the various requirements of their students, provide perspectives on how to implement the SOR instructional strategies, and create a model for instructing other educators in their methods (Cavenish et al., 2019).

Through this qualitative study, I aimed to investigate how primary educators felt about R.I.S.E. PD. A PD training was created based on the emergent themes once the data were examined. I will offer PD training at the research school. In order to appropriately execute SOR teaching practices, educators will benefit from the PD training in comprehending the importance of the study results. According to recent research, management and cooperation specialists have learned that PD enables teachers to address the needs of their pupils regardless of their socioeconomic status. My review of the research revealed how educators, particularly those in primary schools with low socioeconomic status, need assistance to increase their comfort, confidence, and capacity to meet the needs of their pupils.

Educators at the school will have a new opportunity to think about how the four themes and ideas will affect how they execute the SOR instructional techniques by participating in PD. Throughout the academic year, PD opportunities will be available to educators, giving them the ability to keep learning about and using the SOR's teaching methods.

Rationale

The findings of the qualitative bound case study discussed in Section 2 provided the knowledge required to design instructive PD programs. The study's results gave insight into educators' assistance in successfully putting the SOR teaching tactics into practice. The study's findings also helped in spotting practice gaps in socioeconomic factors. The information acquired made it easier to create new materials to support the use of the SOR instructional techniques and dispel any misunderstandings or preconceived notions about them.

Review of the Literature

Detailed research on the subject relevant to my project is presented in this section. I go through the framework, which included social learning theory, educator competency, and perspectives on continuous PD that guided the project's development. The literature review also includes a thorough analysis of recent peer-reviewed publications that contain articles on SOR and current research on professional learning communities and the SOR instructional methodologies. I did literature research and accessed peer-reviewed papers and publications through Walden University Library's electronic databases and academic texts.

The keywords used were *professional development analysis, individualized instruction, teacher buy-in, consensus, differentiation, continuous professional development, teacher competence, student achievement, and teaching methodologies.*

ERIC, Taylor and Francis, ProQuest Central, Sage, Google Scholar, and Academic Search Premier were the EBSCO host databases searched for publications relevant to this project. My search focused on literature published in the last 5 years relevant to the project using a Boolean search. To ensure that the literature supported the project, I reviewed it and included it in this study.

Continuing Professional Development

The dynamic process of continuing PD synchronizes instructors' internal and exterior behaviors (Yang, 2021). Teachers who are persistently motivated to reflect on their professional practice and continue to professionalize themselves for their students' academic performance may engage in PD (Fauth et al., 2019). Teachers are more likely to pursue professional and personal improvement when engaging in various types of ongoing PD. The Desimone structure aids in comprehending the significance of professional growth. It strongly emphasizes the fundamental components of PD, including topic concentration, active learning, coherence, length, and group engagement, all of which can build teacher competency, alter curriculum, and improve student learning (Vo et al., 2020). Additionally, prior research demonstrates that when instructors actively participate in PD activities, supporting their independent motivation might be a key component (Power and Goodnough, 2018). Given how many educators are new to the profession, PD focused on their teaching strategies and student involvement is the

only way for them to succeed. According to various studies, the program's lack of success may be due to group-based continuous PD's failure to meet each participant's particular needs (Clark et al., 2017). Reading instruction and the acquisition of reading comprehension skills can be seen as essential learning activities that students engage in throughout the academic year (Torppa et al., 2019).

There are large resources spent year on teacher PD, and one study focused on how one-on-one PD aids upper elementary school instructors in improving their competence and impacting everyday reading teaching practice (Clark et al., 2017). Lack of context-specific knowledge of teaching techniques and effective methods of helping teachers in their PD are challenges in achieving needed changes (Kim et al., 2018; Wolf et al., 2018). This finding adds to the expanding corpus of research on the consistent fall in kids' motivation to read in elementary and secondary education (Torppa et al., 2019). The most significant increase in teaching effectiveness was shown in programs that allowed instructors to use their newly acquired knowledge and abilities under professional direction.

Teacher Competence

Lack of academic accomplishment on the part of kids might be a sign of low instructor ability. Educators must have various skills to deliver high-quality education, including pedagogical, personal, social, and professional abilities. In the classroom teaching and learning process, educators' pedagogical competence is crucial (Hamdu et al., 2018; Michel, 2018). There is ample evidence to suggest that primary school instructors frequently experience teaching anxiety and lack of preparation (Power and

Goodnough, 2018). Therefore, take a step back and view teachers as learners to properly grasp how to best support teachers (Kim et al., 2019). According to research, an instructor's ability to successfully give high-quality education that promotes student learning depends on various cognitive and personality traits (Pit-ten et al., 2018). Thus, according to studies, instructors must be knowledgeable in the subjects they are teaching to foster an increase in student accomplishment (Hudson et al., 2021).

Given these challenges, professional teacher development must be viewed as a crucial method for enhancing teachers' understanding of subject matter and pedagogy and, therefore, the success of student learning (Power and Goodnough, 2018). The successful implementation of inclusive practice rests mostly on teachers, although political agendas may now prioritize the equity of educational institutions (Pit-ten et al., 2018). Educators' pedagogical topic understanding favorably influences student achievement. Educators can incorporate assessment into focused, effective, and efficient learning if they employ essential literacy assessment (Susan and Glenn, 2019). Teacher training programs are essential to motivate and assist educators in their work (Hayati et al., 2019).

Teacher Buy-In

Educators must be willing to implement a program faithfully for it to be successful. For any site-based program or instructional technique to be successful, teacher buy-in is essential. PD is said to be more successful when teachers are on board with it (Sims and Woods, 2018). Educators must understand what is being presented and support taking part in it for PD to have buy-in from them. Because the teacher chose to

attend to advance professionally, it can be considered more of a voluntary PD if they sign up for it themselves. However, in another study, Sims and Woods (2021) advised requiring individuals to participate in PD because they comprehend its relevance and are made aware of its goals and benefits.

Obtaining teacher support is a further hurdle that must be added to a program's implementation process. To engage students and have the competency to provide education with integrity, educators want administrators to pay attention to what they have to say and personalize PD to meet those requirements. According to Sims and Woods (2021), PD that is persistent, is collaborative, has teacher buy-in, is subject specific, draws on outside knowledge, and is practice based is more likely to increase student achievement. To advance professionally, educators must engage in PD. However, if the leaders of an educational entity do not completely agree with the principles of a PD and the PD is not meaningful, it might not be accepted by those educators who are leading the charge to close achievement gaps so that children can succeed in their academic endeavors.

Science of Reading Instructional Strategies

The key to promoting effective reading instruction based on the SOR is to provide elementary (i.e., Grades K–5) teachers with solid subject and methodological skills (Hudson et al., 2021). Experts in the field need to focus more on how to communicate and translate the SOR in ways that support practitioners and the students they work with, according to Seidenberg et al. (2020), who asserted that "theories of reading have become more complex and less intuitive as the field has progressed" (as cited in Duke and

Cartwright, 2021, p. S119). The ideas and foundation of the SOR are immediately apparent when one considers reading from a straightforward perspective. While some researchers disagree that it is ineffective, others have argued that the simple view of reading may have been the model for the SOR only because no other model was immediately available to present an accurate picture of the components needed to create fluent readers. After all, it provides illustration of the requirements for successful reading (Hoover and Tunmer, 2021). If instructors concentrate on the fundamentals of reading teaching using their understanding of the SOR, students' reading performance may improve. The four cornerstones of SOR teaching are phonological, phonemic, phonic, and morphological awareness.

To completely comprehend reading development, according to Hoover and Tunmer (2022), it is necessary to have models that specify the cognitive processes taking place inside the decoding and linguistic comprehension components of the simple view. A model of the mechanisms behind reading achievement must address the two distinct skills of word recognition and language comprehension, given the existing level of reading knowledge (Hoover and Tunmer, 2022). Teachers, literacy specialists, instructional coaches, speech and language pathologists, and others who work with U.S. reading education must update and improve their initial and ongoing PD in light of recent advances in the understanding of reading and the primary factors that contribute to reading (Duke and Cartwright, 2021).

Project Description

The content of the PD sessions was chosen based on analysis of the participant interviews. For Grade 3–5 educators responsible for using the SOR teaching practices in the classroom, this PD will be conducted during routine PD sessions. Over 3 days, PD seminars will be held. The PD program will provide teachers with the tools needed to regularly use SOR instructional tactics. Through differentiation of instruction, clear expectations for every student, and aid in bridging achievement gaps between students in Tiers I and III, the PD program may build a strategy for providing SOR instructional practices. I created PowerPoint presentations to enable each participant to access them at any time throughout the training year and follow along (Appendix A). To grab everyone's attention and prepare them for the 3 days of PD training, the PD training begins with an icebreaker that will enable each educator to learn more about what they already know about the SOR.

Once the training is complete, teachers will be put into teams according to their grade level to work together on implementing procedures in a low socioeconomic classroom (Krutka and Carpenter, 2016). The training will start with tactics designed specifically for teachers of Grades K–2. These techniques will provide teachers of kids in Grades 3-5 the knowledge and expertise they need to assist pupils who are two to three grade levels behind. The next day, training to learn how to implement the SOR teaching techniques used in Grades K–2 with the tactics used in Grades 3–5 will begin. The second day will be more practical, with each grade level learning various methods to apply the SOR teaching tactics in the classroom, such as close reading, syllable division,

running word practice sessions, creating a decodable book, and so on. Teachers will be able to discuss with their grade level how to use this in the classroom. After the rotations, teachers in all grade levels can share what they learned and how they believe they can use it to improve student progress in the classroom. Educators will conduct a debriefing on all the material presented during the training on the last training day. Then, as a group, the teachers will watch a mock video lesson with an instructor incorporating the SOR instructional strategies in the classroom.

Following the video, teachers from each grade level will work together to determine if the instructor taught the lesson correctly and reteach it to the class. They will encounter interruptions from a student, an uninterested student, and pupils who do not grasp the content while reteaching this subject. To complete this section, they will need to modify the lesson to address all of those demands that they encounter every day. After using the new techniques with their students, teachers will report to their peers how it affected the children's reading achievement (Trust et al., 2016). After the PD course, input will be exchanged and discussed in monthly professional learning communities. Educators will have the chance to modify implementation in light of research on teaching techniques employed with pupils. According to Trust et al. (2016), educators often incorporate the knowledge shared during collaborative sessions into their normal teaching techniques to concentrate on the knowledge. This will provide the teachers with more experience and the ability to collaborate with their colleagues, which will help them while they simultaneously improve their efficacy and pedagogy. Participants will be given exit slips each day to gauge their level of comprehension and the success of their

PD. If each educator absorbs the ideas and tactics provided and applies them faithfully, the lesson study for the project could be effective.

Supports and Needed Resources

The assistance of the school's building officials is necessary to put the PD initiative into action. If we adhere to the district's guidelines for earning professional learning credits, we will be free to provide each participant with a certain number of PD hours as a reward. Lead teachers for each grade will be requested to join and encourage discussion to assist in distinguishing the SOR teaching practices for all kids, to increase teacher buy-in. Teachers will be more willing to take ownership of modifying the curriculum to match the requirements of their pupils if they are aware of the importance of raising reading proficiency among students. Both participants and I will need to have access to the internet and laptop computers. For the project's PowerPoint presentation, PD handouts, exit tickets, the cafeteria, and the Smart Board projection screen will be used.

Potential Barriers

Involvement of educators might present a challenge to the project's success. Each educator must be available for all three PD days for this initiative to succeed. Despite the significance of the training, educators who previously participated in SOR instructional methods training felt overloaded with knowledge and indicated that children who were above or on grade level would be hesitant to enroll. For the initiative to be effective, it is necessary to implement the 3-day PD, educator training to assist instructors in

understanding SOR teaching techniques, and SOR-tailored collaboration through professional learning communities throughout the year.

Potential Solutions to Barriers

School administration, educators, and I work together to overcome participation barriers. The school administration may assist in establishing a timetable that would allow instructors to participate in PD activities. By giving them the opportunity, the teachers could demonstrate how crucial it is for pupils to demonstrate reading achievement. In order to address educators' concerns that PD has not adequately addressed their kids' needs, and as a result, they feel unable to differentiate teaching in a low socioeconomic classroom, the educator and school administration might work together. The PD program will enhance instructors' knowledge of SOR teaching techniques and consistency in using the strategies to address the needs of all children. Whatever the form, PD must consider educators' requirements.

Proposal for Implementation and Timeline

The training sessions will be implemented at the research location during the 2022–2023 academic year. The PD course will be given to teachers in grades 3rd through 5th in August. During orientation, findings will be presented to the building administrators and PD participants to support the project's presentation. After being accepted, I will work with the building management and the teachers to plan the PD. Education personnel will receive a copy of the PowerPoint presentation (Appendix A). The technology will receive the request and be prepared so that it may be used in August, 2022. It will take about 5-7 hours to complete each training session. An evaluation will

be administered before the first session to ensure the students comprehend the teaching methods used in the SOR. The educators will be handed an exit slip after each PD course. A post-assessment form and a questions-and-answers session will be held following the third day of training to address any problems or worries.

Roles and Responsibilities of Researcher and Others

As the researcher, I must properly implement PD and support instructors as required. I must inform the administration and educators of training dates and venues. The educators must remain engaged and open to fresh approaches to putting the SOR teaching techniques into practice throughout their PD. They must actively participate in the classes but also put the new abilities into practice for the greatest outcomes. The PD courses are supported and promoted by school administrators and leaders.

Project Evaluation

This project has a formative assessment strategy. After each training session, each educator taking part in the PD program will get an exit slip with four open-ended questions to complete. They may aid future PD training on SOR techniques by providing formative feedback by responding to the questions. Additionally, it will allow teachers to provide feedback and take charge of their education to make PD successful, allowing for positive transformation, student learning outcomes, and guiding future practices (Merchie et al., 2018). PD training may increase instructors' awareness of using SOR instructional practices. The educator participants will be able to mention any problems or difficulties that might need to be addressed in subsequent training on the departure slips. Informal assessments will be employed in addition to formative evaluations to learn more about

the efficacy of PD. Through the depth of involvement and evaluation of information gained through group projects, informal evaluations will enable me to see how engaged each educator participant is.

Project Implications

Local Community

The research conducted for this project study can potentially affect local educators and students in ways that benefit society. This study focuses on low socioeconomic elementary schools with a significant educational gap in practices with implementing the SOR instructional strategies. The R.I.S.E. PD initiative to increase student achievement in reading may be one way to realize the social change. The results of this study may help teachers of students in Grades 3-5 better grasp SOR instructional practices and opportunities for R.I.S.E. PD, which might influence social change by providing greater resources for low socioeconomic schools. To close educational gaps, SOR PD shows teachers how to implement the SOR instructional techniques more consistently and satisfy the various requirements of the students.

Professional learning communities, coaching, and PD courses strongly emphasize teamwork, differentiated instruction, data analysis, research-based teaching practices, and intense interventions. By offering training to improve pedagogy in applying the SOR methodologies and boosting the efficacy of the educators engaged, this project study may satisfy the demands of the educators. This project research can also consider the requirements of all children, which could represent societal change through potential increases in reading proficiency. As a result of better education, students' results on state

exams will rise, and teachers' effectiveness and capacity to faithfully follow SOR instructional practices in low socioeconomic settings will also improve.

Larger Context

This project research has the potential to be implemented in the local districts' and neighboring districts' wider contexts. Many school districts can benefit from this study to improve educators' understanding of implementing the SOR instructional strategies for low socioeconomic elementary students with fidelity. The state of Arkansas mandated that all educators implement the SOR strategies through participation in the R.I.S.E. PD. High-quality and reliable PD for educators benefit students' learning and academic performance (Capraro et al., 2016). This project was developed in response to the results of the research study. However, this three-day PD course can apply anywhere and may be used in primary schools with comparable difficulties.

Conclusion

The project was briefly summarized in Section 3. The project's PD goals were to give educators more opportunities to use and comprehend SOR instructional tactics and deepen their knowledge of them. Allowing educators to participate may help them develop their pedagogy and effectiveness in better applying the tactics in their classroom. The 3-day PD sessions meet the learning requirements of the educators to help them progress academically and become a member of a professional learning community since the project is based on the research study's findings. This portion also included a study of the literature to support the project's genre. Following the evaluation, a list of the project

requirements, probable obstacles, and suggested solutions was created. The project's deadline and the researcher's and stakeholders' roles and duties were also specified.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

Project Strengths

The principal objective of continuous PD seminars was providing educators a much-needed refresher. It also enabled me to provide them with clear guidelines for applying the SOR teaching methodologies faithfully to fulfill the requirements of all types of learners. Semistructured interviews with educators at the study site provided the information that I needed for my research. No matter the students' reading level, those instructors are in charge of putting the SOR teaching tactics into practice and adapting them to suit their requirements. All of the educators who were reached either worked with students in low socioeconomic elementary schools or had in the past. The 10 educators' shared traits and distinctive characteristics assisted with the emergence of themes from the data and influenced their self-efficacy, competence, and pedagogy. All educators participated in the project study's result, regardless of their level of faith in the R.I.S.E. PD. Nevertheless, the information from the private interviews was used to create continuous professional growth.

Project Limitations

This initiative has a limitation because it depends on the involvement of educators and their reflection on the PD activities in which they participated. A crucial part of any PD is helping educators gain confidence in their capacity to instruct and connect with students in elementary schools serving low socioeconomic populations. This confidence is boosted by self-reflection, ongoing support, and educators' perceptions of their

practice. Consider the possibility that teachers do not think that the PD is useful or a tool to help kids improve their reading. In such a situation, they will not find the sessions useful and will not use the techniques or methods in their classrooms, which renders teaching strategies worthless. PD workshops will not improve teacher pedagogy or affect student outcomes in this situation. Because the school may already have defined PD in other planned areas, the study's limitations might include issues integrating the SOR teaching practices consistently in the classroom and continued PD in the training program.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

Based on the literature analysis and research findings, a 3-day PD on the SOR instructional strategies was created to train educators. Training workshops for PD are the most popular approach for teachers to learn new information and techniques (Gilson et al., 2017). Debriefings on the SOR instructional strategies, conducted twice a year throughout the year, may also help educators with their pedagogy regarding the strategies that they are responsible for implementing because, during the interviews, some participants showed signs of being underprepared. Consequently, the 3-day continuous PD training sessions may rationally address the project study school's highlighted issues and concerns.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

In addition to leading me to the development of numerous new abilities, Walden University helped me to better understand what it means to be a scholar-practitioner. My doctoral degree path has been difficult and exhausting. It has forced me to push past

boundaries I nearly did not think I could overcome. I have gotten better at writing and conducting research, and it means a lot to me to state that my pedagogy has grown. I chose to attend Walden because I believed that low socioeconomic schools had an issue. I observed instructors striving confidently to reach the many grade levels in one classroom while the students benefited from their educational tactics. My main motivation for earning a doctorate was my desire to close the educational gap. All of the talents that I have gained from Walden have motivated me to work hard to enhance student learning and support instructors who have lost confidence in their capabilities. The importance of why instructors need to be able to execute the SOR teaching techniques faithfully in their classrooms is first demonstrated, in my opinion, by my study on these tactics.

Second, the PD initiative helped me improve as a scholar-practitioner, parent, and educator. I improved my pedagogy by highlighting a number of research-based teaching practices that may be applied in the classroom. I improved my capacity to be a scholar-practitioner by being familiar with the various research approaches. Knowing this, I could apply what I had learned in class by finding efficient ways to respond to the research questions. This project enabled me to comprehend the steps involved in planning, carrying out, reviewing, and even fixing problems to have a comprehensive picture of the greater issue. Third, I learned how to adhere to ethical standards throughout the research to guarantee that no subjects were hurt during the project study and that data were kept private. Because my doctoral chair was available to me whenever I phoned with questions, I was able to persevere and complete the work. My second chair, the university

research reviewer, and the IRB committee were there to ensure that I performed the best job possible.

Project Development

As a doctoral candidate in Walden University's Doctor of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment program, I performed research on an issue that still influences teaching methods in my state. I intended to undertake research that would influence the teaching strategies employed and enhance the facilities at the project study school and other elementary schools in the district. This project was created in response to the need among educators to comprehend the SOR teaching techniques and to find a reliable method for putting them into practice in an elementary school with a low socioeconomic status. My motivation to develop a project that could be used in the school to aid teachers and enhance their pedagogy and efficacy, help improve teaching, and boost student accomplishment in reading was sparked by this project study on students' failure to read on grade level. My research can assist educators in comprehending the benefits of consistently adopting the SOR teaching practices, to reduce the educational gap between our schools and those with higher socioeconomic statuses. Once the research for the project study was finished, I thought about how to design a project that would meet the needs and worries of the participants on the R.I.S.E. PD and the SOR instructional techniques. Data gathering, processing, and analyzing the interview results served as the project's foundation.

Teachers felt that the R.I.S.E. training was helpful but did not sufficiently address their learning requirements or the needs of the children they were teaching. The project

was created in response to the project study's conclusions. To address teachers' concerns about the SOR instructional strategies, and to help them develop their pedagogy with these strategies, I developed PD. This will help teachers be as effective as possible when implementing these strategies with their students. In order to boost reading performance, I also wanted to provide teachers with ways to fulfill the diverse academic demands of their students. The problems and difficulties that teachers across the nation faced while attempting to teach pupils to read fluently were investigated in peer-reviewed publications. Using this study, I supported teachers of students in the third through fifth grades as they addressed obstacles to using the SOR teaching practices. Using this information, I was also able to provide instructors with helpful PD lessons that covered the following:

- increasing educators' understanding of the SOR instructional strategies
- providing educators with more opportunities to engage in research-based strategies for low-socioeconomic-status students
- clarifying how to implement these strategies for students who are more than two grade levels behind through intensive interventions

After the training, a formative assessment and exit slip with four open-ended questions were created.

Leadership and Change

My education and training at Walden University have prepared me to lead and advocate for social change. The educational system requires change, and educators are more likely to be aware of the requirements for assisting students in achieving future

professional success. Students will have the ability to succeed with the aid of administration and stakeholders who assist educators in every phase of improving teaching quality. Continuing my education has helped me comprehend change processes and how to initiate them. The educational landscape may change if instructors are motivated to accept the challenge of reaching students where they are. Because educators have always desired support, school leaders are responsible for influencing that support while considering teachers' interests and sympathizing with their worries. By carrying out this project study, I have been able to help educators in local primary schools comprehend the SOR teaching methodologies and provide them the tools they need to reach all kids regardless of their reading proficiency.

Reflections on Importance of the Work

Upon reflection, I can see how important it was for participants to share their opinions about the R.I.S.E. PD and the SOR teaching practices in this qualitative bound case project research. I set out to discover the best answer after learning about the problems and worries that the teachers were having with putting the instructional tactics into practice. Attending PD training events enables instructors and building administrators to share ideas and work together to implement initiatives and discuss best practices. Through PD, educators may increase their understanding of and gain self-assurance in their ability to teach the SOR instructional practices in a low socioeconomic primary classroom. Meaningful PD can help instructors improve teaching methods, which can raise reading achievement among students. Students' knowledge and test results in all academic topics will grow as their reading proficiency increases.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The project study's ability to result in constructive social change can benefit educators and students. The PD offered by this initiative may help in implementing the SOR teaching practices, which is one possible societal change. The ability to learn new skills that successfully assist with implementation and delivery that can increase student success is crucial for boosting educators' effectiveness. Teachers must also get PD training on research-based approaches and best practices that may be used in the classroom (Castillo et al., 2018). The information and abilities required to successfully execute the SOR teaching techniques may be provided to educators by allowing evidence-based practices. The study's participants reported severe concerns about correctly differentiating teaching for diverse pupils while employing SOR instructional tactics with children two grade levels below expectations. According to the project research findings, even though the R.I.S.E. PD was helpful, the training for teachers of students in Grades 3- 5 only provided them with the knowledge and abilities to assist students in those grade levels with reading, not to assist children reading below those levels. As a result, the training fell short of educators' expectations and their requirements in terms of learning.

This PD project will help educators at the study site improve their pedagogy for teaching the SOR instructional techniques and raise their efficacy in successfully and faithfully implementing those instructional strategies. Additionally, it may raise engagement and academic achievement among students. This study's findings may also influence PD possibilities for educators in the present district and nearby low

socioeconomic school districts. The PD sessions' topics are universal and might be handled in various settings. After the PD has been put into practice, more research may be done to determine how beneficial the PD is in the eyes of the educators. More investigations will be needed to see if the teachers faithfully applied the SOR teaching tactics in the classroom and whether their effectiveness was enhanced due to the PD training. In the future, quantitative data will be necessary to gauge student progress and determine how well the PD helped primary pupils from poor socioeconomic backgrounds close achievement disparities. Due to improved pedagogy and efficacy, this study will favor educators' practices at the project study school and community. It will demonstrate to leaders at the education entity how to precisely handle the demands of educators while including revisions, more research, and more strategies.

Conclusion

By interviewing 10 elementary teachers about their opinions of the RISE PD at nearby elementary schools, I used a qualitative approach to investigate the issue and determine the resources, supports, and additional training needed to implement the SOR instructional strategies with fidelity in low socioeconomic schools in order to demonstrate student achievement in reading. As a consequence of the interviews, PD was created to give teachers the additional training and support they needed to use the SOR instructional practices. The study's findings were analyzed, and it became clear that further professional training was required in differentiating SOR techniques to assist children from poor socioeconomic backgrounds. Consequently, the PD project goals were established to satisfy the requirements of the primary school teachers in the

neighborhood. The project's objective is to enhance teacher pedagogy for the SOR instructional strategies used in Grades K–2, while also expanding the application of the SOR instructional strategies to all students regardless of reading grade level, to aid in their implementation and raise students' reading achievement. The leaders at the educational entity in this project research found it helpful to comprehend the effects of the SOR instructional techniques on teacher pedagogy, teacher effectiveness, student achievement, and societal change.

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Appendix A: The Project

The slideshow presentation (Appendix A) for all three training sessions of Science of Reading: Closing Achievement Gaps for Low Socioeconomic Elementary Students can be viewed by holding the ctrl + click to follow the link: [Closing the Achievement Gap in Low Socioeconomic Schools.pptx](#)

Science of Reading Instructional Strategies

Closing the achievement gap in
low socioeconomic elementary
schools.

[Presented by Arkadia Armour](#)

Agenda Day 1

8:00-8:30	Welcome, PD Learning Objectives, and Educator Survey
8:30-9:00	Icebreaker
9:00-10:00	Science of Reading Overview/ Purpose/ Benefits
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-11:30	Science of Reading Strategies used in K-2nd
11:30-12:30	Lunch on Your Own
12:30-1:45	Science of Reading Strategies used in K-2nd
1:45-2:00	Grade Level Reflections
2:00-2:15	Break
2:15-3:15	Think—Pair—Share
3:15-3:30	Review/Closure Exit Slip

Agenda Day 2

8:00-8:30	Welcome and PD Learning Objectives for the Day
8:30-9:00	Review of K-2 nd Strategies
9:00-10:00	Ways to Incorporate Strategies (Rotation 1)
10:00-10:30	Break
10:30-11:30	Reflection and Review of Scenarios
11:30-12:30	Lunch on Your Own
12:30-1:30	Ways to Incorporate Strategies (Rotation 2)
1:30-2:00	Reflection and Review of Scenarios
2:00-2:15	Break
2:15-3:15	Bringing the strategies together
3:15-3:30	Review/Closure Exit Slip

Agenda Day 3

8:00-8:30	Welcome and PD Learning Objectives for the Day
8:30-9:00	Review of Day 1 and Day 2
9:00-10:15	Mock of Instructional Strategies
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-11:30	Review of Lesson taught in Mock Lesson
11:30-12:30	Lunch on Your Own
12:30-1:30	Re-teaching Methods
1:30-2:00	Reflections of Re-taught Lesson
2:00-2:15	Break
2:15-3:15	Ways to Implement in the Classroom
3:15-3:30	Review/Closure Exit Slip

Educator Prior Knowledge Survey

Please circle one of the numbers listed below. 0-confident, 3 –unsure, and 5- very confident

How would you rate your knowledge on the Science of Reading instructional strategies?

0 1 2 3 4 5

How comfortable are you with delivering these strategies to all of your students no matter the grade level?

0 1 2 3 4 5

How would you rate your understanding to implement intensive interventions to students?

0 1 2 3 4 5

How would you rate your ability to model your learning to your colleagues?

0 1 2 3 4 5

Exit Slip

- What did you learn today?
- What could have been done better today?
- What was an a-ha moment you had today?
- Do you still have any concerns about the Science of Reading instructional strategies that need to be addressed in the next training?

Appendix B: Institutional Review Board Approval

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your application for the study entitled, "Educator's Perception of the R.I.S.E. Professional Development," Walden University has approved BOTH your doctoral study proposal and your application to the Institutional Review Board. As such, you are approved by Walden University to conduct research.

Your approval # is 05-19-22-0565169. You will need to reference this number in your dissertation and in any future funding or publication submissions. Also attached to this e-mail is the IRB approved consent form. Please note, if this is already in an on-line format, you will need to update that consent document to include the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Your IRB approval expires on May 18, 2023 (or when your student status ends, whichever occurs first). One month before this expiration date, you will be sent a Continuing Review Form, which must be submitted if you wish to collect data beyond the approval expiration date.

Congratulations!

Elyse Abernathy
Research Ethics Support Specialist
Research Ethics, Compliance, and Partnerships

Leilani Gjellstad
IRB Chair, Walden University

Appendix C: Partner Research Agreement

RESEARCH AGREEMENT between the _____ and ARKADIA ARMOUR to complete project study on the project entitled *Educator's Perceptions of the R.I.S.E. Professional Development*.

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties agree as follows:

1. STATEMENT OF WORK: The district agrees to use its best reasonable efforts to provide a list of possible participants to include in the project study listed above.
2. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: The research shall be conducted/supervised by ARKADIA ARMOUR.
3. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: The research shall be conducted during the 2022 school term.
4. PROTECTION OF INSTITUTION: The researcher will use pseudonyms and masking to protect the district and stakeholders so their identities can be protected.
5. CONDUCTION OF INTERVIEWS: The researcher will conduct the interviews of educators after instructional time and after workday.
6. DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOLS: The researcher will have data protected on a password encrypted computer that will be locked in a vault at their residence. Only the researcher will be aware of coding procedures, passwords, and any security associated with the data collected.
7. MEMBER CHECKING: The researcher will allow the participants to read over the data analysis and results to be sure that all information is accurate.
8. PUBLICATIONS AND COPYRIGHTS: At the completion of the study, findings found through the interviews from employees will be published and found on the Walden Dissertation website.

On this day, _____, of _____, 2022. We agree to the terms and conditions set forth in this RESEARCH AGREEMENT between _____ and ARKADIA ARMOUR.

BUILDING SUPERVISOR

RESEARCHER

Appendix D: Email to Solicit Participation

My name is Arkadia Armour, and I am a media specialist in a small district in the Poseidon Region of the United States. I am a doctoral student at Walden University, and I would like to invite you to participate in my study.

My research study is entitled *Educators Perceptions of the R.I.S.E. Professional Development*. I will conduct the semi-structured interview one-on-one either through the following methods: face to face or Zoom. The interviews will last forty-five minutes to an hour. Following the interview, I will contact you to discuss the transcription and any clarification that may be needed, which will last approximately 20 to 30 minutes. The total amount of time that I am asking you to provide is an hour and 30 minutes. If you want more information about participating in this study or have any questions, comments, or concerns, please email me or contact me at the address and number listed below.

Finally, please understand that your participation in this study is voluntary, and all information will be strictly confidential. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms to maintain privacy and confidentiality. The school district will not receive, nor will they ask for any information concerning the identity of any participant.

Sincerely,

Arkadia Armour

Project Study Participants Needed!

Educator's Perceptions of the R.I.S.E. Professional Development

Purpose:

The study will explore educators' perception of the R.I.S.E. Professional development and support to implement the Science of Reading instructional strategies in low socioeconomic schools.

Participation Involves:



- Reading of an Invitation.
- Filling out a consent form.
- Semi-structured Interview (45 to an hour)
- Review of Transcription (20 to 30 minutes)

You May Qualify If You :

- Are a licensed educator
- Instruct students in grades 3rd-5th
- Received the R.I.S.E. Professional Development at a Cooperative.
- Employed in a low-socio-economic school that receives Title I funding.

If you are interested in participating in this study or have any questions, please email Arkadia Armour at

[Redacted email address]

Appendix F: Interview Questions

1. Do you feel the R.I.S.E. professional development training effective for low socio economic schools? Why or why not.	
2. What kinds of support do you think you may need to successfully implement the Science of Reading instructional strategies in the classroom?	
3. How much professional development have you engaged in related to teaching students to read?	
4. Is the support after the R.I.S.E. training effective with helping with the implementation of the Science of Reading instructional strategies in the classroom? Why or why not.	
5. What type of professional development or training did you receive prior to attending the R.I.S.E. professional development training?	
6. Have you attempted to increase your knowledge of teaching students in a low socioeconomic school? Please explain.	
7. What are successful methods or activities currently being used in your classroom to teach students to read?	

8. What suggestions do you have to make R.I.S.E. training successful for both the teachers and the students?	
9. What suggestions do you have for improving the R.I.S.E. professional development in the future?	
10. Do you have anything you would like to add?	