

Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
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Walden University

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Abstract

Jamaican College Administrators' Perceptions of Providing Accommodations for

Students with Disabilities

by

Tracey Ann Anderson

MA, Temple University, 2016

BS, Western Carolina University, 2009

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

November 2023

Abstract

The problem that was explored in this study was that many students with learning disabilities are enrolled in Jamaican teachers' colleges but were not provided with accommodations. The purpose of the study was to determine the perceived and barriers that Jamaican college administrators experience in facilitating the accommodation of students with disabilities. The conceptual framework for this study was social exclusion theory, which helped analyze the insufficiencies in integrating persons with disabilities. The research questions addressed Jamaican college administrators' perceptions of barriers in providing accommodations for students with learning disabilities. A basic qualitative design was used for this study. Data were collected via face-to-face semistructured interviews with 10 college administrators. Data were analyzed using open and axial coding and thematic analysis. The findings revealed that although administrators facilitate students with learning disabilities through reduced class sizes, examination modification, and monitoring structures, barriers exist that limit their ability to meet their needs adequately. This study may contribute to social change as the findings will help Jamaican college administrators reflect on current practices to facilitate students with learning disabilities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my sons, Jaydon, Johari, and Javoi.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank God, my heavenly father, who has given me the strength and fortitude to complete this study. To my chair Dr. Hoffman and second chair Dr. Ross, for the speed with which reviews were completed, and meticulous and detailed guidance.

This study was completed during one of the lowest moments in my life. I endured much pain and trauma but was victorious with God's help and expert guidance from Dr. Hoffman and Dr. Ross.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The number of Jamaican students with disabilities attending higher education has increased (Dangoisse et al., 2020; Porter, 2018; Morris, 2018; Veitch et al., 2018; Yusof et al., 2020). Despite this growth, students with disabilities in higher education are not provided equitable learning opportunities (Becht, 2020; Morris, 2018; Parsons et al., 2021; Porter 2018). Although laws advocate for the accommodation of students with disabilities, such as the Jamaican Disabilities Act (2014), they still experience various disabling learning environments while accessing higher educational opportunities (Armstrong et al., 2015; Blackman et al., 2017; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Yusof et al., 2020). The inequities faced by students with disabilities in Jamaica mirrors the global trend (Armstrong et al., 2015; Blackman et al., 2017; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Morris, 2018). This problem has led to significant rates of program incompleteness among students with disabilities enrolled in universities (17.5%; Public Expenditure Review of the Education Sector in Jamaica, 2021). Impediments include a lack of inclusive learning environments, social competence, inadequate computer and assistive technologies, staff training, and minimal government funding (García-González et al., 2020; Li & Carroll, 2020; Moriña & Biagiotti, 2021; Newman et al., 2020). Other obstacles that contribute to students with disabilities dropping out of tertiary education comprise inadequate educational provisions such as curricula and learning materials, academic personnel, and school infrastructure (UNESCO, 2020).

University and college administrators are critical for establishing a quality educational environment for students with disabilities (DeMatthews et al., 2021;

Óskarsdóttir et al., 2020; Yusof et al., 2020). These administrators are responsible for establishing their institutions' culture, ethos, and general expectations (Billingsley et al., 2019; Adams & Tan, 2020; DeMatthews et al., 2020). But college administrators lack the prerequisite training to accommodate students with disabilities (DeMatthews et al., 2020; Pregot, 2021). Institutional governance is important in sustainable practices that support inclusion (Barrett, 2020). This lack of expertise in facilitating inclusive environments may impede fostering accommodation that meets the needs of students with disabilities (Bateman et al., 2017; DeMatthews et al., 2021; Partington, 2019). In providing accommodation, academic leaders must promote and align institutional policies that provide equitable experiences for all students (Barnett, 2020; Bateman et al., 2017; Billingsley et al., 2019). Although higher education administrators indicate positive perceptions toward students with disabilities, this may not translate to inclusive practices that accommodate student diversity (Aquino, 2020).

This study can impact social change, as the results will allow college administrators to critically assess their current practices and, where applicable, modify and formulate new and equitable strategies to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. This chapter provides the guiding elements that will inform the further development of the study. In Chapter 1 of this study, I describe the study's background, followed by a discussion of the problem. The subsequent sections are the purpose statement, research questions, and conceptual framework. This chapter also consists of the nature of the study, definitions of key terms, assumptions, limitations, scope, delimitations, and significance.

Background

The mission of the Jamaican education system is “providing quality care and education in an innovative, inclusive and enabling environment, thereby creating socially conscious and productive Jamaicans” (Vision 2030 Jamaican National Development Plan, 2016, p. 3). This mission is in unison with the call in the literature to accommodate persons with learning disabilities (Corrêa et al., 2019; Svendby, 2020; Zhang et al., 2018). However, there are reported dissatisfaction among college students with learning disabilities in the Caribbean concerning their challenges in accessing higher educational opportunities (Blackman et al., 2017; Becht, 2020; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Ehlinger & Ropers, 2020; Morris, 2018; Scott, 2020).

Though varying practices have been implemented across institutions to facilitate positive educational and social outcomes for students with learning disabilities (Hlatywayo & Mapolisa, 2020; Morris et al., 2018 Mpu & Adu, 2021; Muskhanova et al., 2020), a significant gap exists in the equitable provisions for the accommodation of students with disabilities. The Jamaican government’s pace in publishing the Special Education Needs Policy has contributed to inconsistent accommodation for students with learning disabilities in higher education (Porter, 2020). Further, despite the laws outlined in the Jamaican Disabilities Act (2014), teachers colleges across the island operate with the flexibility of determining the measures instituted to meet students’ needs with learning disabilities (Porter, 2020). Jamaica currently operates without standardized policies that outline guidelines for students with learning disabilities (Armstrong et al., 2005; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Morris, 2018). Students must submit a request for

the services in writing at the beginning of each semester and provide a medical report as evidence of the expressed need (Teachers' Colleges of Jamaica, 2021). The accommodation services include readers, large print, special tutoring with conditions, scribes, special facilities for in-course tests and examinations, housing, and assistance registering at Jamaica Council for Persons with Disability. However, there is an absence of disability offices and wheelchair-accessible spaces at the colleges, which indicates the validity of the measures implemented to facilitate students with learning disabilities (Armstrong et al., 2005; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Morris, 2018).

Many colleges fail to invest in research-based practices that can help advance diversity and inclusion (Armstrong et al., 2015; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Morris, 2022; Mpu et al., 2021; Newman et al., 2020). Thus, they lack the institutional commitment to promoting student body diversity and inclusion on campus (Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Meletiadou, 2022; Morris, 2018). A literature review reveals that within the last decade, there have been calls for increased equity, diversity, and inclusion to be at the core of the mission of colleges and universities (Klarsfeld et al., 2019; Morris, 2018; Stephenson et al., 2020; Tamtik & Guenter, 2019). The Ministry of Education aims to provide quality care and education in an inclusive and enabling environment (Ministry of Education, Youth & Information, 2022). However, a review of Jamaican colleges' mission statements revealed that only a few aligned with this inclusive education goal. Inclusiveness is needed to achieve the goals of sustainable development by 2030. There are identical challenges within higher education institutions nationally and internationally

in implementing equitable inclusion policies to facilitate students' diverse learner needs through accommodation strategies (Scott, 2020).

Despite this issue with equity and accommodations, there is little empirical knowledge about the challenges impeding college administrators from implementing the necessary measures to facilitate students with disabilities. Although administrators display moderately positive attitudes towards students with disabilities in higher education, there is a need for policy reforms and training for staff to facilitate students with learning disabilities in higher education (Emmers et al., 2020). An assessment of college faculty's perspectives about teaching students with disabilities affirmed that although most faculty accommodated students with disabilities, some felt that this accommodation was limited (Asiri, 2020; Becker & Palladino, 2016). College administrators have expressed positive perceptions about inclusion and providing accommodations for meeting the needs of students with disabilities (DeMatthews et al., 2020; Hlatywayo & Mapolisa, 2020; Pregot, 2021).

Problem Statement

The problem explored in this study is that Jamaican college students with learning disabilities are not provided with accommodations via equitable learning opportunities (Armstrong et al., 2005; Becht, 2020; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Dangoisse et al., 2020; Moriña & Biagiotti, 2021; Morris, 2018; Newman et al., 2020; Parsons et al., 2021; Veitch et al., 2018). This has caused high attrition rates for students with disabilities who have enrolled in colleges (Armstrong et al., 2015; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Morris, 2018; Stephenson et al., 2020). They are frequently unable to complete their course of

studies due to a lack of inclusive learning environments, inadequate computer and assistive technologies, staff training, and minimal government funding (García-González et al., 2020; Li & Carroll, 2020; Moriña & Biagiotti, 2021; Newman et al., 2020; Smith-Henry, 2018). Students with disabilities also experience inadequate educational accommodation such as curricula and learning materials, academic personnel, and school infrastructure (Morris, 2018; The Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica, 2004; UNESCO, 2020). There is no Disability or Inclusion Offices across the colleges (Brissett, 2019; Carby et al., 2018; Morris, 2018; Smith-Henry, 2018). The academic underachievement of these at-risk students will bar them from higher educational opportunities, and those who manage to access higher education will encounter systemic inequalities (Morris, 2019; Porter, 2020; Smith-Henry, 2018). Higher education is a crucial pathway for social mobility in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean (Morris, 2018; Stephenson et al., 2020). Thus, this gap in accommodation in college opportunities for those with learning disabilities has contributed to restricted social mobility (Armstrong et al., 2015; Carrington-Blaidies et al., 2017; Morris, 2022; Porter, 2020).

Despite the global initiative toward providing inclusive education since the development of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994), institutional practices vary in meeting the needs of students with disabilities at the college level (García-González, 2020). International organizations developed the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action in 1994 to further the objectives of inclusive education at the college level (Magnússon, 2019). The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs launched its Envision Disability 2030 in 2016 to raise

awareness for persons with disabilities, which included a sustainable development goal for quality education for those with disabilities (Desa, 2016). The policy dictates that by 2030 all individuals at the tertiary levels should be afforded equitable access to physical support and resources needed to ensure positive academic outcomes (Desa, 2016). The Jamaican Government, in alignment with the United Nations, drafted its Vision 2030 policy document; a part of this vision speaks to making the necessary accommodations for persons with disabilities (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2010). Jamaica is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the rights of individuals with disabilities.

Additionally, some legislation outlines the protection for persons with disabilities (Dragoo, 2019). The Jamaican Disabilities Act stipulates that persons with disabilities should enjoy full privileges and equitable educational opportunities (The Disabilities Act, No. 13, 2014). Despite the legislation in parliament in October 2014, the Act's mandates and the colleges' practices are yet to be aligned. Globally, evidence confirms that students with disabilities experience exclusion from higher education despite the laws that protect them (Ansary, & Moreira, 2020; Ehlinger & Ropers, 2020).

Despite the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE) that certifies teachers being guided by the Jamaican Disabilities Act (2014), there are inadequacies in the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Jamaica (Carby et al., 2018; Morris, 2018). Implementing inclusive education in higher education has challenges such as teacher efficacy, lack of resources, lack of training and professional development, and poor classroom climate (Moriña, 2017). Teacher and administrative perspectives have resulted in adverse outcomes for students with disabilities (García-González, Gómez-Calcerrada, Solera

Hernández & Ríos-Aguilar, 2021; Lopez-Gavira, Moraña & Morgado, 2021). However, there is limited literature on administrators' perspectives on accommodation for students with disabilities in higher education (Corrêa et al., 2019; Svendby, 2020; Zhang et al., 2018). It is critical to address barriers to accommodation for students with disabilities to function in the global educational context (Ehlinger & Ropers, 2020; Toutain, 2019). Administrators should provide leadership at all higher education levels. Administrators' perceptions of inclusion are critical in ensuring fundamental mandates and equitable access to educational provisions (Adserias et al., 2017).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the perceived barriers administrators experience in accommodating students with learning disabilities. I explored 10 Jamaican college administrators' perceptions of accommodating students with learning disabilities. This study is important because higher education is a pathway for social mobility for graduates with disability in Jamaica. Despite the Jamaican Disabilities Act (2014), inadequate educational accommodations are still terminating these students' tenure at tertiary institutions, such as curricula and learning materials, academic personnel, and school infrastructure (UNESCO, 2020). The Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica (2004) highlighted that most students with disabilities are mainstreamed without adequate learning support, resulting in underachievement from as early as their high school years. In the Teachers' Colleges of Jamaica, there are no Disability Offices across colleges, highlighting the validity of the measures implemented to facilitate students with learning disabilities (Brissett, 2019; Morris, 2018; Morris, 2022;

Porter, 2020). Likewise, research indicates that although administrators perceive students with disabilities positively, their practices and accommodations are inconsistent in facilitating their learning needs (Aquino, 2020). But most of the research on inclusive education takes on a global perspective (Abera, 2020; Paz-Maldonado, 2019). Therefore, it was important that research was conducted within the Caribbean at the teacher-training institutions to explore the gap in practice, fill this gap in the literature about practice, and add to the existing literature. This study provides information that can guide administrators in planning to facilitate the accommodation for students with learning disabilities.

Research Questions

Research questions reflect the specificity of the research purpose. The following research questions guided this study:

Research Question 1: How do Jamaican college administrators provide accommodations for students with learning disabilities?

Research Question 2: What do Jamaican college administrators perceive as barriers to providing accommodations for students with learning disabilities?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the tenets of the social exclusion theory (Lenoir, 1974). Social exclusion theory is used to critically analyze the insufficiencies in access to social rights and the minimal participation and integration of persons with disabilities (Friedman et al., 2004). Social exclusion impacts self-esteem, meaningful existence, belongingness, and control among persons with disabilities

(Freedman et al., 2016; Xu & Jin, 2020). Social exclusion theory provides valuable insight into higher education inclusion and how administrative perceptions impact inclusive practices. Social exclusion theory fosters an understanding of inclusive practices and challenges with inclusion (Friedman et al., 2004). The social exclusion of persons with disabilities influenced the Salamanca and UNESCO principles and their call for inclusive education (Gili Freedman et al., 2016; UNESCO, 2001). Hence, probing inclusion in higher education and examining administrators' perceptions can be appropriately viewed through the social exclusion theoretical lens as it involves advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative design is used for conducting an in-depth probe of an issue (Maxfield and Babbie, 2017; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A basic qualitative design was used for this study to explore Jamaican college administrators' perceptions of the challenges and opportunities in facilitating the accommodation of students with disabilities. I selected a qualitative design because qualitative methods help researchers generate meaning about an issue through human experiences and perspectives (Burkholder et al., 2016). Similarly, a qualitative study enables a researcher to probe a problem while incorporating participants' multiple perceptions (Creswell & Clark, 2017). I interviewed 10 Jamaican college administrators using semistructured interview questions to determine their perceptions of including students with disabilities. This sample size enabled me to explore the reasons Jamaican college administrators attribute to their efforts to facilitate the accommodation and perceived opportunities and barriers in providing

accommodation for students with disabilities while incorporating participants' multiple perceptions.

I used the thematic approach of data analysis to identify, analyze and report patterns known as themes within the data collected. Data were analyzed with coding and thematic analyses (Glaser, & Strauss, 1967; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I performed open coding and axial coding to organize data. I then conducted selective coding on the axial coded categories. The core categories derived from the selective coding process represents the major themes or assertions that answered the research questions. I formulated conclusions from the themes derived from the data analysis process.

Definitions

The definitions of key terms are directly aligned with the nature and context of the study. The terms provide an overview of linked concepts that guide this research. The definitions will enhance clarity while providing in-depth understanding and contextual background to this study.

Accommodations: Accommodations are described as the modifications to a physical environment, academic services, course arrangement services, teaching equipment, and general institutional support for individuals with disabilities (Assemadi, 2020; Fernández-Gómez et al., 2020; Johnstone & Edwards, 2020; Parsons et al., 2021).

Disabilities: Disabilities comprise a large group of people with at least one dysfunction, including vision, movement, thinking, remembering, learning, communicating, hearing, mental health, and social relationships (Havercamp et al., 2021).

Diversity: Diversity describes a population where people within protected classes (gender, race, class, abilities, sexuality, age, faith, age) are represented (Scott, 2020).

Inclusion: Inclusion in higher education involves attempts to facilitate students with disabilities from various races, gender, and different identities (Hays & Mallon, 2021).

Inclusive education: Inclusive education applies to the proper educational support given to students with disabilities according to their individual needs (Katıtaş & Coşkun, 2020).

Inclusive higher education: Inclusive higher education provides quality and equitable educational opportunities for all students while aligning practices that lead to full participation (Armstrong et al., 2005; Moriña, 2017; Zhang et al., 2018).

Inclusive practice: Inclusive practice is an approach to pedagogy that uses personalized support that caters to the diverse needs of students with disabilities (Kozleski, 2020).

Learning disability: This is a dysfunction in which individuals experience cognitive processing deficits with information processing, which culminate in academic underachievement in the areas of writing, reading, memorizing, understanding course material, and testing (Hansen & Dawson, 2020; Zeng et al., 2018).

Assumptions

Assumptions can be considered beliefs that the researcher may have at the start of the project but cannot be proven (Simona and Goes, 2013). This study contains three assumptions. The first assumption was that the study participants would answer questions

honestly. It is not uncommon for respondents to give socially desirable responses to make themselves or the organization seem better than they are (Vésteinsdóttir, 2022).

Participants must provide accurate perceptions of inclusion and about providing accommodations for students with disabilities to maintain the data's validity and, by extension, the integrity of the study. The second assumption was that college administrators without formal training in special education and students with disabilities may have varied perceptions about inclusion. The third assumption was that all prospective interviewees would have sound knowledge of inclusive education and a good sense of general approaches to accommodating students with special needs.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study was limited to 10 colleges in Jamaica. To avoid homogeneity in the population, I selected colleges from rural and urban contexts as sample members. Since Jamaica became a signatory to the Salamanca Statement in 1994, there has been a growing movement to lay a more equitable foundation in the education system. I chose this topic to understand the perceptions of college administrators in accommodating students with learning disabilities and how these perceptions influence their approach to accommodating them. The participants selected for this study were spread across all three counties—Cornwall, Middlesex, and Surrey—in Jamaica and focused on the views of college administrators. The participants were selected through purposeful sampling. The findings were limited to the specified sample and may not be transferable to other contexts.

Limitations

Several limitations may be encountered while completing this study. Highlighting possible limitations can help readers determine the extent to which the information may be generalizable (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). First, this study was confined to 10 college administrators, which may have affected my ability to achieve data saturation. Data saturation is achieved when no new information emerges as the respondents are interviewed (Creswell, 2014). It is not a guarantee that I attained data saturation after interviewing 10 administrators. Although the basic qualitative approach findings will not necessarily be generalizable to other contexts, they allowed me to garner critical insights into the topic.

Second, it may be challenging to make a clear separation between my role as a middle manager at one of the local colleges and my role as a researcher. However, I deliberately maintained reflexivity and created distance from the data collection process (Ravitch and Carl, 2016). Additionally, I was accountable to peer researchers and supervisors by sharing the study's findings and gaining feedback. To increase the trustworthiness of the data, I conducted member-checking by asking participants in the study to check the accuracy of the research findings (Birt et al., 2016; Burkholder et al., 2016).

Significance

An investigation of Jamaican college administrators' perceptions of providing accommodations for students with disabilities is timely and relevant. This study will generate knowledge that may eliminate the gap in administrative practices on this issue.

The results of this study can provide administrators with strategies to reduce inequities in offering accommodation for students with disabilities. College administrators can assess current practices and, where applicable, modify and formulate new policies to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities based on the findings from this study.

There is also limited research on the issue. Future researchers, especially in the Caribbean context, will be able to utilize the information provided to inform best practices. Most of the literature on students, teachers, administrators, and parents' perceptions of accommodations for students with disabilities is from a global perspective with a minimal representation of the Caribbean context (De Matthews, 2020; Helena et al., 2018; Rekaaa et al., 2019).

This research may influence social change if adopted by other stakeholders such as School Boards and the Ministry of Education to create inclusive learning environments. This move may culminate in greater empowerment of students with learning disabilities. Students with learning disabilities can acquire social mobility while maximizing their potential thus positively contribute to social change. The Ministry of education and boards of management may use the findings to formulate strategies to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Summary

The large number of students enrolled in colleges and universities with learning disabilities without accommodation via equitable learning opportunities compared with their non-disabled peers has been a cause for concern. This inequity has caused high

attrition rates for students with disabilities who have enrolled in higher education institutions in Jamaica. This gap in accommodation in college opportunities has contributed to diminished social mobility for Jamaican students with disabilities. Despite legislation, the inconsistency in accommodation for students with disabilities in higher education persists. This study was conducted to explore the perceptions of 10 Jamaican college administrators on how they accommodate students with learning disabilities. Semistructured interviews were used to determine the perceived opportunities and barriers Jamaican administrators experience in facilitating students with learning disabilities. The results of this study may help college administrators and education stakeholders promote and align strategies that provide equitable learning opportunities for students with disabilities. The literature review in Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive view of college administrators' perceptions to ascertain how they facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities while outlining possible barriers to providing an inclusive college environment.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The problem explored in this study was that college students with learning disabilities are not provided with accommodation via equitable learning opportunities compared with their non-disabled peers. The experience of students in higher education with learning disabilities has been a concern (Dangoisse et al., 2020; Veitch et al., 2018; Yusof et al., 2020), as the provision of equitable learning opportunities has been slow (Becht, 2020; Parsons et al., 2021). Although Jamaican laws advocate the right to accommodate students with disabilities, such as accessing higher educational opportunities, the learning environments are disabling (Armstrong et al., 2005; Brissett, 2019; Carrington-Blaidies et al., 2017; The Disabilities Act, 2014). Without adequate learning support and educational provisions for students with disabilities (García-González et al., 2020; Li & Carroll, 2020; Moríña & Biagiotti, 2021; Newman et al., 2020; The Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica, 2004; UNESCO, 2020), these students experience a high dropout rate, frequent inability to complete their course of studies, and being barred from higher education opportunities (Porter, 2020). Jamaican senior educators have registered dissatisfaction with the lack of academic and social services to meet the needs of college students with learning disabilities (Wilson-Scott, 2018). Thus, the study's purpose was to ascertain the perceived opportunities and barriers administrators experience in facilitating the accommodation of students with disabilities. I explored what Jamaican college administrators perceived needs to be done in their schools to assist students with learning disabilities.

Higher education students with disabilities face numerous challenges that create barriers to equitable access to education in Jamaica and elsewhere (Becht, 2020; Newman et al., 2020; Parsons et al., 2021; Yusof et al., 2020). To this end, college administrations are responsible for providing quality education for students with learning disabilities (DeMatthews et al., 2021; Yusof et al., 2020; Óskarsdóttir et al., 2020). However, accommodation for students with learning disabilities must be standardized at the policy level so that the varying needs of students are met (Hlatywayo & Mapolisa, 2020; Mpu & Adu, 2021; Muskhanova et al., 2020). Teachers' colleges across the island operate with the flexibility of determining the measures to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities, resulting in accommodation inconsistency (Porter, 2020). It is vital that all colleges in Jamaica operate under the same umbrella as it relates to the gaps in equitable provision of accommodation can be identified, measured, and addressed effectively (García-González et al., 2020; Li & Carroll, 2020; Moriña & Biagiotti, 2021; Newman et al., 2020).

This chapter will discuss the central bodies of literature informing this study centered on the social exclusion theory. The chapter continues with a description of the literature search strategy and an overview of the conceptual framework. This literature review will examine college administrators' perceptions of supporting students with learning disabilities. Also, the literature will explore the evolution of inclusive practices in higher education, barriers and opportunities of inclusion, administration perception of inclusion, COVID-19 impacts on inclusion, access to support services and accommodations, and the future of inclusion in higher education.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search included a review of scholarly peer-reviewed articles, journals, and books. The selection process began with a review of citations found in secondary studies from the Walden University database, google scholar, ERIC, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, Crossref, and SAGE Publications. I used the following key terms for the search: *inclusive education, inclusive higher education, disabilities, accommodations, perceptions of inclusion, and barriers to inclusion*. In addition, I screened titles found through a comprehensive database search. I examined bibliographies from studies located for potentially valuable data. I also included studies found in multiple sources. I excluded secondary studies or studies that did not report primary research findings for faculty or administrators. I limited the literature search to peer-reviewed articles published mainly between 2018 and 2021. I also selected research that utilized a qualitative design in which the participants were educators. Approximately 150 peer-reviewed articles were marked, downloaded, and saved in a labeled folder. I aimed for saturation by ensuring that all current scholarly literature related to the topic was exhausted. Of the 150 articles, 51 were excluded from the literature review, leaving 99 viable articles. I excluded these articles because those studies' purposes did not align with my current study. The data did not include applicable information addressing the constructs related to the phenomenon under study.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework I selected for this study is the social exclusion theory, which provides critical insight into the inadequacies in access to social rights and the

integration of individuals with disabilities (Byrne, 2005; Freedman et al., 2016; Xu & Jin, 2020). Social exclusion threatens human qualities, including self-esteem, meaningful existence, belongingness, and control (Freedman et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017; Stewart et al., 2017). Social exclusion culminates in the imposition of limitations and external barriers that oppress the social and emotional well-being of individuals with disabilities (Mobility & Johnson, 2021). Social exclusion is associated with adverse behavioral and psychosocial implications (Lee et al., 2017; Tobia et al., 2017; Sjøstad et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020). Social exclusion reduces happiness and increases mental and physical stress rates on individuals with disabilities (Sjøstad et al., 2020). Individuals may feel rejection, which can cause low self-esteem and subsequent changes in behaviors (Lee et al., 2017; Tobia et al., 2017; Sjøstad et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020). The social exclusion model of disability reinforces oppression and discrimination (Degener, 2017). Social exclusion helps to understand the inequities individuals experience related to reduced participation, integration, and limited access and recognition (Taket et al., 2009).

Higher educational institutions are critical in addressing social exclusion by ensuring that the necessary accommodations and resources are put in place to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Lipka et al., 2019; Moriña et al., 2020). Social exclusion as a conceptual framework justifies the social factors that play a significant role in prejudice, oppression, and exclusion of persons with disabilities (Bobat et al., 2020; Degener, 2017; Jenkins & Webster, 2020; Kauffman et al., 2017; Oliver & Barnes, 2010; Stumbo et al., 2011). This model describes persons with disabilities as being excluded and the need for advocacy to create barrier-free access in society while maintaining their

fundamental rights (Kauffman et al., 2017, 2011; Jenkins & Webster, 2020; Mosia & Phasha, 2020). This framework outlines the negative implications and inequities in accessing quality education as students with disabilities may be subjected to predetermined institutional standards despite their differences. Persons with disabilities are disenfranchised and restricted from equitable educational participation (Newman et al., 2020; Vincent & Chiwandire, 2019). Social exclusion perpetuates as persons with disabilities are less likely to demand equitable conditions aligned to their education and participatory rights. Social exclusion theory has been applied across multiple contexts and has adversely impacted students with disabilities. Reports reveal that socially excluded students have more difficulty understanding sensitive concepts taught at the university level (Pownall et al., 2020).

The application of this theory helped provide an understanding of the various contexts of social exclusion concerning students with disabilities and how it impacts the social, emotional, and cultural contexts of individuals with disabilities. This framework supported the analysis of data, as the tenets of social exclusion theory provide an in-depth understanding of the issue. I was also able to match participants responses to the various aspects of the framework to make meaning of the finding's applicability to the Jamaican context.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

The Concept of Inclusive Higher Education and the Jamaican Context

Today's workforce requires everyone with diverse skills and abilities to work together. Conceptually, higher education is an instrument for social change and a vehicle

for upward mobility (Chankselian et al., 2021). Inclusive higher education is a continuum of structures and services that meet the needs of all students, particularly those with special needs (UNESCO, 1994). Although inclusion has been accepted internationally as an approach to education, its definition is varied and inconclusive. The definition depends on systems, individuals, organizational structure, the scope of service delivery options, and funding initiatives involved in the endeavor (Buli-Holmberg et al., 2022; Krischler et al., 2019; Lüddeckens, 2021; Migliarini et al., 2019).

Throughout its history, Jamaican society underwent a series of transformations in values reflected in its education system. Amidst the current global societal diversity, economic change, and competition, various higher education institutions have instituted accommodation strategies to assist minority groups such as students with learning disabilities (Los Santos et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2021; Yusof et al., 2020).

Accommodations are adjustments in pedagogy or evaluation practices that mitigate the influence of students' learning disabilities on their interaction with the material (Ketterlin-Geller et al., 2015). However, a 2004 review of the Jamaican education system indicated that students with special needs were not being identified and provided with accommodation (Task Force on Educational Reform Jamaica, 2004). A referral, identification, and transformation program for the education system emerged to improve the provision for special education students in the system (Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information, 2022). This transformation is the mandate of a Special Education Policy, which emphasizes inclusion for children with special needs (Policy on Special Education, 2022). Despite higher education systems' adherence to the Jamaica

Disabilities Act (2014), students with learning disabilities transition and success require them to navigate the learning environment. Jamaican students with disabilities must provide medical documentation to the college administration and request specific accommodations in writing at the beginning of the semester (Morris, 2018). This process aligns with higher education systems globally (Chiu et al., 2019; Grimes et al., 2019; Lindsay et al., 2018; Smith et al., 202; Bunbury, 2020).

Globally, the literature reveals that students with learning disabilities constitute the largest minority groups or students at-risk (Barnett, 2020; Theobald et al., 2019; Jucevičienė et al., 2018). These graduates include a significant source of talent and capture a large share of future employability skills (Bryne, 2022; Kauppila et al., 2021). The United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities was adopted in 2006 and saw most countries worldwide as a signatory (Cui et al., 2019; UNESCO, 2017). The UN implemented sustainable development goals outlining how to meet the needs of people with disabilities (UNESCO, 2017). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal Number 4 focuses on the right to education and stipulates persons with disabilities should be afforded equitable, inclusive, and quality education while providing lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2017). Due to the laws and statutes that underpin the rights of persons with disabilities, the global community must provide inclusive higher education commensurate with international standards (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021; Lord & Stein, 2018; UNESCO, 2017). Higher education institutions have become disability inclusive as they adhere to international systems and frameworks (Bunbury, 2020; Thompson, 2020).

Higher education provides students with disabilities with the necessary skills and academic outcomes for an inclusive workforce, a more robust economy, and stronger communities (Cui et al., 2019). But college and university campuses struggle to make the necessary provisions to cater to students with disabilities. Historically, research has revealed that although students with disabilities attend colleges and universities, the existing programs segregate them from their nondisabled peers (Hoge & Hoge, 2019; Lord & Stein, 2018). Students with disabilities lag in their academic pursuits while nondisabled peers experience improved life outcomes (Fornauf, 2020).

Learning Disabilities Defined

The concepts and ideas used to define learning disabilities usually stem from experts' viewpoints in education, psychology, medical, and sociopolitics (Ketterlin-Geller & Ellis, 2020). Despite the myriad of constructs inherent in the definitions of learning disabilities, most perceptions and conceptualizations germinate through first-hand experience communing with students with learning disabilities through to adulthood (Panicker & Chelliah, 2016). Although the perceptions of learning disabilities may contain technical inaccuracies, their nature offers essential insights into the effects of learning disabilities throughout the lifespan (Petretto, & Masala, 2017). Nine essential elements distinguish learning disabilities (Smith et al., 2016). These include determinants of underachievement, central nervous system dysfunction, process involvement, spoken language barriers, and academic problems (Sorrenti et al., 2019). Disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual with a record of having such impairment (Petretto & Masala, 2017). Learning

disability is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations (Visser et al., 2020). Therefore, for this study, a learning disability is defined as a neurological disorder that causes difficulty in organizing, remembering, and expressing information and affects abilities such as reading, writing, mathematics, reasoning, listening, and speaking (Petretto & Masala, 2017). However, the definition of learning disabilities has rarely solicited the views of administrators who constitute a significant segment of the population who shape the minds of students who live with the label of disabled. This study captures these responses from a sample of successful higher education professionals.

Higher Education Administrators' Perception of the Opportunities and Barriers to Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Although inclusion is a practical approach, there are perceived challenges and barriers to providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities (García-González, 2020; Hill, 2020; Yusof, 2020; Valle-Flórez, 2021). In developing countries such as Jamaica, moving from legislation to implementation has experienced challenges and barriers (Armstrong et al., 2005; Brissett, 2019; Morris, 2018). Legislation on providing inclusive education and practices in Jamaica is in its infancy (Petretto & Masala, 2017). Inclusive higher education has evolved over the years, but despite the apparent evolution, persons with disabilities face individual and societal challenges and barriers (Mobily & Johnson, 2021; Zorina, 2018). Students with disabilities experience

multiple barriers when accessing college or tertiary education (Anderson et al., 2018; Skuratovskaya, 2020). These barriers include learning environments, learning resources, faculty attitudes, inconsistent policies, and the impending COVID-19 pandemic (Bartz, 2020; Bualar, 2018; Cui et al., 2019; Moriña & Perera, 2020).

Academic faculty attitude and willingness to accommodate students with disabilities create the educational and psychosocial ambiance required to maximize student potential (Alhaznawi, 2021). Faculty unwillingness to accommodate students with disabilities could pose additional challenges as faculty plays a dominant role in delivering the curriculum and developing systems to support knowledge acquisition (Lipka et al., 2020; Moriña, 2017; Zhang et al., 2018). Poor faculty attitude is one of the significant barriers to implementing accommodations (Carballo, 2021; Renfors, 2021; Yssel et al., 2016). Faculty attitude toward students with disabilities and their willingness to provide the necessary accommodations have significantly impacted student academic outcomes and overall higher education experiences (Lipka et al., 2019; Phasha & Mosia, 2017). Additionally, further research has shown that negative attitudes toward students with disabilities can result in low academic performance and increased dropout rates (Gallego et al., 2021; García-González, 2021; Li & Carroll, 2020) Moriña et al., 2018). Studies also report that lecturers are reluctant to change their teaching methodology to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Carballo et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2018). Moreover, based on the nature of the disability, some lecturers lack sensitivity to the students' needs, resulting in intimidation and rejection (Hsiao et al., 2019; Lombardi & Lalor, 2017). Recent studies highlighted that faculty members do not consistently

demonstrate positive attitudes towards students with disabilities (Barida et al., 2020; Emmers et al., 2020; Lopez-Gavira et al., 2021; Stentiford & Koutsouris, 2020; Yusof et al., 2020).

A sense of belonging is an essential element that characterizes inclusive education (Björnsdóttir, 2017; Lloyd et al., 2021; Meehan & Howells, 2019; Mobily & Dieser, 2018). Students with disabilities must feel a sense of belonging within the learning community to maximize individual potential (Mobily & Dieser, 2018). However, higher education institutions have failed to ensure that students with disabilities have a sense of belonging (Mobily & Dieser, 2018; Veidemane et al., 2021). This failed effort has negatively impacted academic and social outcomes, and students with disabilities continue to lag behind their non-disabled peers (Lloyd et al., 2021).

University lecturers are critical for successfully implementing inclusive educational practices that meet the needs of students with disabilities (Genç & Koçdar, 2020; Kantor & Proekt, 2021). Despite this, students with disabilities are denied pedagogical support by faculty and other members of staff (Bunbury, 2020; Griful-Freixenet et al., 2017; Ispambetova, 2018; Moriña & Perera, 2020). Lecturers are often unsure of their roles and responsibilities in providing the necessary academic attention to students with disabilities (Duhan & Devarakonda, 2018; Moriña & Perera, 2020; Yssel et al., 2016). Lecturers report feeling unprepared to deliver the curriculum to students in an inclusive setting (Anderson et al., 2018; Kurth et al., 2021). In some cases, university lecturers are unaware of pertinent information about students, resulting in inadequate planning to facilitate the diverse needs of students (Hewett et al., 2020; Moriña & Perera,

2020). The academic faculty's beliefs about students with disabilities have psychological implications for educational and social outcomes (Anderson et al., 2018; Kantor & Proekt, 2019; Kisbu-Sakarya & Doenyas, 2021; Low et al., 2020). A lecturer's negative belief and attitude towards inclusion may negatively impact students with disabilities (Low et al., 2020; Metsala & Harkins, 2020; Reina et al., 2019).

Accommodations for Inclusive Higher Education

Students with disabilities in higher education report multiple barriers faced compared to their non-disabled peers when accessing accommodations during college and university (Cui et al., 2019; Diaz-Vega et al., 2020; Ehlinger & Ropers, 2020; Mamboleo et al., 2020; Rosenberg-Adler, & Weintraub, 2020). In higher education, students with disabilities are responsible for disclosing their disabilities and requesting accommodations (Toutain, 2019). Research indicates that many of these students with disabilities lack self-advocacy skills to request accommodations and ask for other support when needed effectively (Brendli et al., 2021). The author further notes that students with disabilities refrain from disclosing their disabilities for fear of being classified as incompetent (Brendli et al., 2021). Students report discomfort and disrespectful treatment after disclosing their disability (Ehlinger & Ropers, 2020).

Further qualitative research has provided valuable insight into students with disabilities' challenges in higher education (García-González et al., 2021; Griful-Freixenet et al., 2017; Sharma et al., 2019; Toutain, 2019). The challenges outlined by the authors are lack of enforcement of inclusive policies, institutional barriers, insufficient administration/faculty knowledge, and discriminatory practices (Aquino, 2020; García-

González et al., 2021; Griful-Freixenet et al., 2017; Sharma et al., 2019; Toutain, 2019).

Despite the legal guarantees to protect students with disabilities, research highlights findings of educational systems' barriers and limited accommodations to meet their individual needs (Moriña, 2017). An increasing body of literature highlights students' experiences in higher education and the accommodations to meet their needs (Weis & Beauchemin, 2020).

Higher education institutions fail to provide accommodations proportional to the needs of students with disabilities enrolled in academic programs (Burnbury, 2020; Carrington-Blaides et al., 2017; Weis & Beauchemin, 2020). Students with disabilities reported inconsistent access to university campus resources and general hindrance to accommodations due to lengthy disclosure policies (Smith et al., 2019; Toutain, 2019). A literature review by Toutain (2019) revealed that many academic provisions for accommodating students with disabilities are challenging to implement due to faculty refusals. Also, the accommodation was not functional or helpful due to implementation challenges (Smith et al., 2019; Toutain, 2019). The general stigmatization of students with disabilities in higher education may impede the student from accessing accommodation and available support (Akin & Huang, 2019; Aquino & Bittinger, 2019). Institutional practices are at the forefront of the discussion, and Mamboleo et al. (2020) argue that the lack of developed inclusive practices and interventions in higher education institutions negatively impacts the academic outcomes of students with disabilities. Everett and Oswald (2018) add that one of the significant challenges higher education institutions face is the ability of school administrators and faculty to develop an awareness that

translates into accessible and inclusive practice in their classrooms. Also, the lack of necessary knowledge of accommodations and needs of students with disabilities, their willingness to offer these accommodations, and general disability etiquette have impacted successful accommodation implementation (Mamboleo et al.,2020).

Students with disabilities in higher education who receive academic accommodation have performed favorably on assessments compared to their non-disabled peers (Lewandowski et al., 2021; Weis & Beauchemin, 2020). Also, students with disabilities who use accommodations have more success than those who do not access the institutional provisions. Although institutions frequently made academic accommodations, they disregarded accommodations with a sensory or social focus (Brown, 2017). Research indicates that school administrators who build inclusive support cultures for students with disabilities are more likely to reap positive academic and social rewards (Brown, 2017).

Challenges Higher Education Administrators face with Accommodation of Students with Learning Disabilities

In the current global education system, school administrators face challenges in providing accommodations and support for students with disabilities (Poon-McBrayer, 2017; Romanuck Murphy, 2018; Wieczorek & Manard, 2018). In developing inclusive school systems, school administrators expressed concern about their ability to meet students' varying needs as they grapple with limited resources (Subba et al., 2019; Vincent & Chiwandire, 2019). In a study conducted, Roberts et al. (2017) reported administrators' views that they did not feel knowledgeable and competent to meet the

instructional needs of students with disabilities. The author noted that administrators argue that institutionalizing inclusive policies has slowed some institutions' start. Administrators rely on the governing educational body to chart the way forward to ensure that all students access higher education with the necessary support to meet their needs (Sharma et al., 2019). Although some institutions in higher education provide support for students with disabilities, the literature reveals that the majority of institutions across the globe find it challenging as there is a lack of basic facilities, learning resources, and professional development opportunities for the teaching and support staff (Lopez et al., 2021; Singal et al., 2019). In addition, for developing countries, the development of legislation to chart how the provision of accommodation for students with learning disabilities is fragmented and in its infancy stage of development. Thus, there is a lack of consistency in providing accommodation strategies employed in the institutions to cater to students with learning disabilities.

Also, the selection and preparation of college administrators are brought into focus as studies reveal that school administrators don't need to have special education training to operate as leaders for their institutions (Adams & Tan, 2020; Barakat et al., 2019; Billingsley et al., 2018; DeMatthews et al., 2020; Esposito et al., 2019; Romanuck Murphy et al., 2018). As a result, school leaders may fail to adequately prepare to facilitate and provide critical support for students with disabilities and the lecturers that work alongside them. Apart from regular professional development and leadership training, college administrators may not necessarily be engaged in specialized programs to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of students with disabilities (Esposito

et al., 2019). College administrators explain that they have sometimes created a variety of accommodations for students with disabilities to participate in classroom activities and access programs and services (Bunbury et al., 2020; Langørgen et al., 2020; Hewitt et al., 2017). However, these preparations and programs have adopted various models and, in some cases, developed their models of practice to support the needs of students with disabilities. College administrators assert that they try to create enabling conditions for students with disabilities.

Administrators are at the helm of leadership. They are responsible for creating inclusive school cultures with high expectations for all students (De Matthews et al., 2020; Faas et al., 2018; Wise et al., 2020). How administrators perceive inclusion is vital to determine the measures and accommodations implemented to facilitate instruction for students with disabilities (Bartz, 2020; Gilson et al., 2019; Wise et al., 2020). To create inclusive school communities, school administrators must understand the varied needs that exist in their institutions; however, research indicates that they often lack the prerequisite skills, competencies, and training to facilitate inclusive systems (Billingsley et al., 2018, Collins et al., 2019; Poon-McBrayer, 2017; Romanuck Murphy, 2018; Wieczorek & Manard, 2018). The roles administrators play in developing and implementing programs are due to increased pressures of the act's legal mandates, which advocate and outline the rights of persons with disabilities (Burnbury, 2020; De Bruin, 2019). Bateman et al. (2017) noted that school administrators do not fully comprehend the components of governing laws, processes, and fundamental attributes of special education. The author explains that school administrators fail to make the necessary

provisions and accommodations to facilitate students' needs (Bateman et al., 2017). In a report, the National Council for Disability (2014) revealed that when administrators create visions and expectations for students with disabilities, it resonates with the teaching staff, who readily make modifications to facilitate students' individual needs.

University administrators explain the idea of inclusive education as inclusion that bears the name only, but there remain gaps in the development of practices and systems (Bateman et al., 2017; Stepanova et al., 2018; Subba et al., 2019). Administrators in higher education state that they can provide support and services to an extent, but the budgetary allocations and holistic planning are not respected (Helena Martins et al., 2018; Sánchez et al., 2019; Vincent & Chiwandire, 2019; Yusof et al., 2020). There are legal ramifications stipulated by the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which has caused institutional changes in many countries regardless of their developmental level (Lorion, 2019). Any violation of the UNCRPD treaty guarantees legal protection against discrimination and outlines judicial measures for the ill-treatment of persons with disabilities (Buchner et al., 2021). Article 13 in the UNCRPD on access to justice validates the need for persons with disabilities to receive appropriate accommodations comparable to their non-disabled peers. Complicating the discourse are the legal ambiguities relating to the concept of independence in article 33(2), which may cause multiple interpretations and varied institutional practices globally (Buchner et al., 2021).

As a signatory to the UNCRPD, Jamaica must follow its legal mandates. However, these legal statutes rarely translate into equitable practices for students with

disabilities across Jamaica's teachers' colleges. Bateman et al. (2017) continue the discussion by highlighting college administrators' multiple constraints in providing social and academic support for students with disabilities. School administrators recognize the needs of students with disabilities and posit the need for flexibility in the curriculum to accommodate students based on their individual needs (Lipka et al., 2019; Schulze & Boscardin, 2018). Administrators in higher education also explained the importance of having staff trained to deliver the curriculum and those not qualified to engage in professional development (Billingsley et al., 2020; DeMatthews et al., 2020). School administrators perceive a greater need for the acceptance of students with disabilities on a societal level which may translate to a seamless transition to the workforce and a better inclusive environment (Esposito et al., 2019; Subba et al., 2019). The perception of students with disabilities is that they are feigning their conditions and are less academically endowed (Akin & Huang, 2018). This negative perception is disturbing in the context of institutions that aim to advance the inclusion of students with disabilities. This perception is also among higher education students, who perceive these students as less sociable and academically capable (Akin & Huang, 2018).

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic is an emerging source of concern that will create a new normal for inclusive higher education (Aristovnik et al., 2020; Bao, 2020). The pandemic has presented an enormous challenge to education systems and has changed how colleges and universities operate (Sheppard- Jones et al., 2021; Toquero, 2020). Higher education institutions have had to adjust their daily operations given a short time. Many governments, including the Government of Jamaica, have ordered the

physical school's immediate closure, forcing students to operate remotely using online educational platforms. Due to the abrupt closure of schools, lecturers had little time to make adequate preparations to switch from offering a face-to-face curriculum to all-out online instruction. Recent studies indicate that students with disabilities are disadvantaged by the COVID-19 pandemic and may experience adverse outcomes than those without disabilities (Brendli et al., 2021; Corsi et al., 2021; Sheppard- Jones et al., 2021; Toquero, 2020). COVID-19 has negatively impacted the lives of students with disabilities as most students could not complete their curriculum and assessments. The multiple adjustments caused students with disabilities to lose focus and resulted in high dropout and diminished academic progress compared to their non-disabled peers (Sheppard- Jones et al., 2021). College students with disabilities expressed issues and challenges such as anxiety, boredom, lack of computer skills, frustration, and financial constraints, which impeded their ability to function academically amid the pandemic (Aristovnik et al., 2020).

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, students with disabilities in higher education have been a topic of interest. There remains a gap in the provisions to ensure meeting their diverse needs (Aristovnik et al., 2020; Bao, 2020; Corsi et al., 2021). In addition, higher education institutions lack the digital and physical learning infrastructure that supports the diverse conditions presented by learners (De Klerk et al., 2021).

Gunawardane and Fernando (2020) conducted a recent study to examine the capability of higher education institutions to accommodate the educational needs of students with disabilities. The researchers found that the rapid shift from face-to-face instruction to an

online modality resulted in digital isolation and excluded students with disabilities from accessing their curriculum (Gunawardane and Fernando, 2020). In addition, Havens (2020) explains the vulnerability of higher education systems worldwide in providing accommodations for students with disabilities. To this end, school administrators report that transitioning to online learning is a complex undertaking. UNESCO (2020) substantiates this report by highlighting that the transition to online learning is difficult even in the best circumstances. Ali (2019) states that higher education lecturers fail to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) during lectures and tutorials. The integration of ICT allows for a more learner-controlled environment, resulting in the university lecturer providing minimal scaffolding, which may impede the academic and social outcomes for students with disabilities (Geng et al., 2019). Although many universities have acquired ICT tools, educational software, and learning applications, there remains a gap in the training for staff and students to manipulate this infrastructure to achieve meaningful educational outcomes (Ali, 2020; Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). Toquero (2020) highlighted that one of the significant challenges with online teaching and learning is that it raises equity concerns. The equity challenge is also underscored by Meleo-Erwin et al. (2021), Paranal III (2021), and Sheppard-Jones et al. (2021), as the authors outlined the challenges with providing accessible instruction and information to all students, but especially for students with disabilities during the pandemic. The equity challenges highlighted as the inability to provide disability services and instructing in a virtual environment aligned to the varied needs of students with disabilities (Meleo-Erwin et al., 2021; Paranal III, 2021; Sheppard-Jones et al., 2021;

Smith, 2020 & Toquero 2020). The disproportionate access to the internet and appropriate technology devices among students with disabilities were some inequities reported (Kaden, 2020; Sullivan et al., 2020).

Educational leadership provided by school administrators during the pandemic is critical to the academic outcomes of students with disabilities. The ability of school administrators to provide the resources and mobilize teaching staff to bridge the digital divide and meet the needs of students with disabilities is a global challenge (Yokus, 2022). The pandemic's rapid changes have made administrators' roles more complex (Harris, 2020; Marshall et al., 2020; Varela & Fedynich, 2020). School administrators must adopt a more flexible part and make quick decisions to manage their institutions while catering to the needs of staff and students (Yokus, 2022). Leadership during the pandemic is a topical issue that has seen multiple current pieces of research conducted to ascertain insights into the phenomenon (Akbari & Pratomo, 2021; Chisholm-Burns, Brandon & Spivey, 2021; de Moura, 2020; Dumulescu & Mutiu, 2021; Fernandez & Shaw, 2020; Fleming & Millar, 2019; Francisco & Nuqui, 2020; Strack et al., 2021). Lawton-Misra and Pretorius (2021) explain that a pandemic makes leading inclusive schools difficult but provides equal opportunity to unearth creative and uncommon skills that can facilitate the execution of an institutional mission and overarching vision.

Student Perceptions of Inclusive Education and the Challenges they Encounter

Several studies have explored the perceptions of students with disabilities about their learning experiences in higher education institutions (Collins et al., 2019; Wilkens et al., 2021). Students with disabilities perceive numerous challenges in accessing

university and academic campus life (Collins et al., 2019). Students who access higher education institutions have no guarantee of completion as they navigate myriad challenges (Bradshaw, 2020). Some of the challenges outlined in studies ranged from access to technology, learning, personal, bureaucratic, institutional, architectural, and social barriers (Collins et al., 2019; García-González et al., 2021; Wilkens et al., 2021). Students perceive that those barriers do not allow equity among students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers (Aguirre et al., 2021). Students with disabilities who access higher education likened the barriers and inequities they face to a feeling of abandonment. Despite the legislation that seeks to safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities, students with disabilities face numerous challenges that impede their efforts in accessing and completing higher education (Cui et al., 2019). University students believe that complete inclusion and acceptance of diversity are critical measures to grant equal and equitable opportunities for students with disabilities (García-González et al., 2021).

Many students with disabilities in higher education express that they are under-challenged, overwhelmed, and dissatisfied (Bracken & Novak, 2019; Sanchez et al., 2018). The curriculum and assessment practices students which special needs engage in does not challenge them compared to their non-special needs counterparts. This practice has served to fuel further discrimination against special needs students in higher education institutions. Students with disabilities in higher education institutions highlight the stigma experienced at these institutions. Akin and Huang (2019) highlight a common misconception about disability stigma in higher education institutions and argue that

students with disabilities experience negative social interactions brought on by negative faculty perceptions.

Summary and Conclusions

The large volume of the literature shows that higher education institutions face challenges in making the necessary provisions for students with learning disabilities. The literature also indicates that existing traditional educational programs segregate them from opportunities gained by their non-disabled peers. Although legislation safeguards the rights of persons with disabilities, they face gaps in accommodation while accessing and completing higher education. Also, there is a scarcity of empirical research on effective and efficient ways higher education administrators assist students with learning disabilities to transition efficiently to college environments. The COVID-19 pandemic has made leading inclusive schools difficult as college administrators contend with the rapid change caused by the pandemic. To address the differences in accommodations, the perceptions of college administrations will provide valuable insight into the opportunities and barriers to facilitating inclusive learning environments. This study will provide higher education administrators with equitable strategies for accommodating students with learning disabilities. Chapter three of this study will present the research design and rationale, the role of the researcher, participant selection, instrumentation, data collection and analysis procedures, trustworthiness, and ethical procedures.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to determine the perceived opportunities and barriers administrators experience in facilitating the accommodation of students with disabilities. I explored what Jamaican college administrators perceive as the opportunities and barriers for accommodating students with disabilities and perceptions of how to better serve these students. This chapter provides details of the research design and methodological procedures used in this study. The chapter comprises the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, trustworthiness, and ethical practices.

Research Design and Rationale

In this study I explored administrators' perceptions of the opportunities and barriers for accommodating students with learning disabilities. According to the literature, in most cases, students are not provided with accommodation via equitable learning opportunities (Becht, 2020; Parsons et al., 2021). Because higher education is a pathway for social mobility in Jamaica (Morris, 2018), it is necessary for those diagnosed with learning disabilities to access college education (Morris, 2018). I used the following research questions to guide the research process:

- Research Question 1: How do Jamaican college administrators provide accommodation for students with learning disabilities?
- Research Question 2: What do Jamaican college administrators perceive as barriers to providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

I employed a basic qualitative research design. Qualitative research is a method for exploring and comprehending the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem, which can involve inductive or deductive methods (Creswell, 2013). I adopted an inductive approach to data collection and analysis. I specifically used basic qualitative method because a qualitative exploration aligned with exploring what college administrators perceive as opportunities and barriers to providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities. A qualitative approach captures an account from the participants' viewpoint, focusing on their perceptions to understand their experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Merriam, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). This design allowed me to investigate the meaning of participants' responses to interview questions (Creswell, 2013). Open-ended questions were used to explore the topic in-depth and other probing questions based on the answers received. This research involved collecting, analyzing, and interpreting comprehensive narrative and audio data to gain insights into the issue (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). In doing so, it did not only help me to understand this issue at a deeper level of consciousness, but it also simultaneously assisted me in transforming at a personal level; I reflected critically to understand social practices (Qutoshi, 2018).

There are multiple approaches to qualitative research design, which include ethnography, case study, phenomenology, and grounded theory. Ethnography involves the exploration of cultures through participants' immersion in an environment (Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Ryan et al., 2019). Ethnography relies on field study and immersion of the researcher to collect data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Since the focus of this study was

administrators' perceptions of accommodating students with disabilities, a field study was not required, making ethnography inappropriate for this study. Case study research involves a detailed analysis of a particular event or individual to capture and describe an in-depth understanding (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A case study design relies on multiple data sources for evidence and has a defined space and time frame (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). In this study, I relied primarily on semistructured interviews as the data source; thus, a case study does not align with the study.

Phenomenological research involves understanding a phenomenon through individuals' lived experiences over an extended period. Due to time constraints with this study, a phenomenological design was not suitable. A qualitative grounded theory was also not suited for this study as the investigation was not aimed toward theory development. Grounded theory involves a systematic approach to research geared toward theory development (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

After carefully examining the features that characterize the other qualitative research designs, it became evident that a basic qualitative design was most appropriate for this study because it represents a coherent approach to analyzing administrators' perceptions of providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities. Since the data from this study did not require statistical computation or be quantified, a quantitative approach was deemed inappropriate.

Role of the Researcher

At the time of this study, I was an employee at one of the colleges for 12 years. I served as a special education lecturer for 5 years. I then assumed an administrative role as

placement officer and dean of women. Throughout my employment at this college, I have forged relationships with employees and college administrators across the eight regulated and other self-governed teachers' colleges.

In this basic qualitative study, I played the role of an interviewer. I conducted face-to-face, semistructured interviews with 10 college administrators. I collected and analyzed data to answer the research questions. The supervisory positions I previously held as teaching practicum internship coordinator and dean of women have no direct relation to college administrators and their roles. I have no direct influence on college administrators' perceptions about the topic under investigation, minimizing potential bias. To guard against bias in the data collection process, I refrained from presenting my personal views and report only the information the participants convey.

Methodology

Participant Selection

I used the purposeful sampling strategy to select the participants for this study. Purposeful sampling was employed in this study because it involves selecting participants based on their specific knowledge of the issue under investigation and their ability to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2017; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A criterion to include participants in the study required a minimum of 3 years of college administrative experience.

I invited participants in writing from 10 teachers' colleges to participate in the study. The email detailed the study's purpose, nature, and commitment to ethical principles. I invited the participants to participate in a 45–60 minute face-to-face

interview. I then conducted follow-up telephone calls to ensure that participants received the email.

Instrumentation

The sole instrument that was utilized in this study was the interview protocol (see Appendix A). I used semistructured interviews to collect in-depth, individualized, and accurate data on Jamaican college administrators' perceptions of accommodating students with learning disabilities. Open-ended questions are vital when conducting in-depth qualitative interviews (Maxfield & Babbie, 2017). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed using Microsoft Word application software.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I sent a letter to the Ministry of Education (MOE) tertiary unit requesting permission to conduct research at the 10 colleges. The letter detailed the study's purpose. After receiving permission from the MOE and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Walden University (approval no. 03-31-23-0979958), I emailed the 10 college administrators requesting their participation in the research process. I also attached the permission letter received from the TCJ and information about the purpose of my study and ensure the upholding of ethical principles.

After participants provided consent, I asked them to select available dates and times convenient for conducting the interviews. I emailed the interview format, terms of confidentiality, and time for the interview. I informed the participants that their participation in the study was voluntary, and they could withdraw from the research process whenever necessary without penalty. Permission was further sought to audio

record the interviews, and I explained to participants that they could decline to answer any question. The interview site was in the administrator's office or conference room to ensure privacy. I informed participants that their identity and responses to interview questions would be confidential. To further protect the identity of participants, I did not include the name of teachers' colleges and college administrators in the study. I provided participants with compensation of a \$15 gift card for their participation in the study.

Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative data analysis is the non-numeric representation of data captured in interviews, audio recordings, or text to derive meaning from a study's findings (Maxfield & Babbie, 2017). This analysis is the act of forging order, structure, and sense to the large volume of collected qualitative data (Saldana, 2016). The data analysis process involved reviewing the data systematically to identify codes, axial codes, and finally ascertain themes that summarize the data (Glaser, & Strauss, 1967; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I familiarized myself with the interview transcripts by thoroughly reviewing them. I prepared the data for coding and analysis.

I coded the data by underlining, marking, labeling, or highlighting important terms and phrases. The data were open coded to identify the most commonly expressed terms presented by the participants (Salanda, 2016). I used the process of axial coding to categorize the initial codes into groups. I analyzed axial codes to reveal emergent themes.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is one of the terms used to describe validity in qualitative research (Connely, 2016). The components used to assess trustworthiness in qualitative

research are credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Burkholder et al., 2016; Rose & Johnson, 2020). Audit trails and reflexive journals are critical in maintaining internal validity in qualitative research. An audit trail is a strategic process used by researchers to detail the steps taken in a study and outline vivid descriptions of the data collection and analysis process, which establish confirmability (Burkholder et al., 2016; Rose & Johnson, 2020). I used a reflexive journal during the data collection and analysis to outline the processes in the study and assess my feelings throughout the data collection and analysis process (McGrath, 2021; Meyer & Willis, 2019). Reflexive journaling helped me with critical self-assessment to recognize and mitigate personal bias, assumptions, and beliefs (Burkholder et al., 2016; McGrath, 2021; Meyer & Willis, 2019).

Credibility

Credibility is critical to a qualitative design (Creswell, 2017; Maxfield & Babbie, 2017). To ensure credibility in this study, I used member checking. Member checking involves the researcher sharing the main themes of the study with participants for any potential feedback from the participants (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I emailed participants the results from the study. The participants were then given 2 weeks to provide feedback regarding the main themes from the study.

Transferability

Transferability refers to how qualitative research applies to similar contexts or individuals in another setting and is similar to the concept of external validity in qualitative methods (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To promote transferability, I provided thick

descriptions that included information about the study context and participants (Stahl & King, 2020). In qualitative research, a thick description offers detailed information on a particular topic and its extent of exploration in a specific context (Frankfort-Nachmias, & Leon-Guerrero, 2018; Stahl & King, 2020). Thus, it might be possible to relate the findings of this study to similar contexts or participants.

Dependability

Dependability in qualitative research means that the data collection methods, analysis, and reporting findings are consistent throughout the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). An audit trail describes the researcher's steps in conducting a study (Amankwaa, 2016). To ensure dependability, I used audit trails to explain the data collection process, how categories were derived, and decision-making strategies during the research process in the form of a written description. I conducted audit trails during the interview process: personal notes, and a detailed account of all activities, such as participant selection, meetings with participants, and any other information deemed pertinent to the study.

Confirmability

In qualitative inquiry, confirmability refers to the steps taken by the researcher to demonstrate that the findings are solely from the data collection and not assumptions (Amankwaa, 2016; Connelly, 2016). I used a reflexive journal throughout the data collection process to ensure confirmability. A reflexive journal allowed me to examine preconceptions, values, and beliefs and how these affect the research decisions in all phases of her research (Karagiozis, 2018). I was self-aware of the roles in collecting,

interpreting, and analyzing data (Anney, 2017). I documented my role in the research process and any issues that arise during the data collection phase.

Ethical Procedures

Research ethics is critical in ensuring due process during the treatment of human participants, data collection, and analysis of findings. These ethical principles include voluntary informed consent and a right to withdraw (Burkholder et al., 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Approval was sought from the IRB of Walden University before collecting data. I treated the participants fairly, informing them via email about the study's objectives and how their voluntary participation is vital to the research process.

Pseudonyms were used throughout the study to safeguard participants' privacy. I ensured transparency by informing participants that information will be kept confidential and reported in a manner that will not disclose or highlight any administrator or college. The names of participants or any identifying information associated with the data collected will be concealed.

I followed the IRB approval process and ensured that the data collected from face-to-face or online interviews are stored securely on a computer and protected by a password. Data will be kept for 5 years and then deleted based on university requirements. After that, I will shred hard copies and delete data stored electronically.

Summary

This chapter presented the research design and rationale, the role of the researcher, methodology, trustworthiness, and ethical procedures. I used a basic qualitative research design to examine the perceptions of Jamaican college administrators

about the opportunities and barriers surrounding the accommodation of students with learning disabilities. I used a purposeful sampling technique to select and interview 10 participants in the study. All the participants were Jamaican teachers' college administrators. I collected data using semistructured interviews. Data analysis involved coding procedures and thematic analysis. The chapter culminated in a discussion of ethical procedures, emphasizing the treatment of participants, institutional permissions, data collection, and a description of data storage. Chapter 4 will present the study's settings, data collection, analysis, and results.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative research was to determine the perceived opportunities and barriers administrators experience in accommodating students with learning disabilities. The research questions to identify differences that may ensue while accommodating students with learning disabilities included how Jamaican college administrators provide accommodations and what they perceived as barriers to providing accommodations. College administrators can use the results of this study to evaluate their current practices to facilitate students with learning disabilities.

This chapter will include descriptions of the settings, data collection, and data analysis. I will also explain how I will coding procedures and thematic analysis to analyze data. This chapter also includes evidence of trustworthiness which involves credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. The chapter concludes with a summary focused on responses to research questions.

Setting

The setting for this study comprised 10 teachers' colleges located in Jamaica's rural and urban areas. Each college has three administrators: a principal, a vice principal of academics, and a vice principal of ancillary staff. Eight colleges selected are government-funded, and two are privately operated. The minimum years of experience for each administrator were 5 years. All colleges operate without a disability office but utilize the Ministry of Education's disabilities policy to guide their operations.

Demographics

I asked the 10 participants 5 demographic questions to determine age, gender, years of service, qualification, special education training, and area of specialization (see Table 1). The length of time served by all participants at their institution ranged from a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 30 years. The highest level of qualification communicated by four participants were a doctoral degree. Only two of the participants had training in special education. Of the 10 participants, eight reported that the only training in special education was delivered in graduate courses and through professional development initiatives. The areas of specialization stated by participants were educational leadership, curriculum studies, curriculum development, marketing, musicology, theology, science, and special education.

Table 1

Demographic Data for Participants

Participant	Age Group	Gender	# of Years of Experience	Special Education Training	Highest Level of Education	Specialization
P1	41-50	Female	19	No	Masters	Curriculum Development
P2	Over 60	Female	26	No	EdD	Educational Leadership
P3	41-50	Female	30	Yes	Masters	Curriculum Studies
P4	41- 50	Female	21	No	Masters	Museology
P5	51-60	Female	22	No	Masters	Science
P6	51-60	Male	19	No	PhD	Theology
P7	51-60	Male	7	No	EdD	Educational Leadership
P8	51-60	Male	8	No	PhD	Marketing
P9	51-60	Female	30	No	PhD	Leadership and Management
P10	31-40	Female	5	Yes	Masters	Special Education

Data Collection

Participants

I emailed the participants invitations seeking their participation in the study. The email detailed the purpose of the study and the criteria for which participants are selected. I also included the consent form from the IRB, which outlined the procedures for minimal risk, work-related interviews. I made follow-up contact with the participants via email and telephone calls to schedule interview dates and times.

I collected data from 10 college administrators with at least 5 years of experience for this study. On March 31, 2023, I was approved by Walden University's IRB to collect and analyze data from work-related interviews of professionals as per the terms of the consent form in the interview manual. I collected data the following week through face-to-face semistructured interviews with 10 Jamaican college administrators. I interviewed all participants using face-to-face semi-structured interviews between April 10–28, 2023. Interviews lasted approximately 20-30 minutes. The interviews were conducted primarily in the college administrators' offices. I facilitated Microsoft Teams Video conferencing for a participant who were overseas. I assured participants of their anonymity and confidentiality at the start of each interview. I used my secure iPhone to digitally record each interview. Immediately after the interview, I emailed the recording to my password-protected email for safekeeping.

The interviews were transcribed manually and stored in a secure folder on my computer and my email. While transcribing the recordings, I replayed the interviews and

cross-checked the written information to ensure the report is done verbatim. I then performed member checking by emailing the main themes to participants for review. The participants responded and confirmed the accuracy of the information represented in the transcripts. The data presented responses from the college administrators' perceptions of how students with disabilities are accommodated and the barriers faced when accommodating students with learning disabilities.

There were no variations in the data collection plan established in Chapter 3. However, I had to make an adjustment to the participant pool as one college administrator opted out due to circumstances beyond their control. That participant was replaced with another college administrator who met the minimum criteria for the interview.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the data using coding and thematic analyses guided by the principles of (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). I manually transcribed data from the semistructured interviews. I also listened to and reviewed audio recordings, which helped provide accurate data analysis. The data analysis steps were guided by the qualitative analysis procedures outlined by Creswell and Guetterman (2019). I organized the transcripts by interview dates and participants' pseudonyms.

Step 1

I familiarized myself with the interview transcripts by thoroughly reviewing them. I transcribed the data by listening to the audio files. I then engaged in member checking

by sharing the main themes of the study with participants for feedback. After the participants confirmed the data accuracy, I prepared the data for coding and analysis.

Step 2

I performed open coding by systematically reviewing the data. I coded the data by identifying the most commonly expressed terms presented by the participants. I then highlighted the important terms and phrases. I continued this process until the data sets were saturated. I used Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel applications to cross-check and accurately highlight and sort the most expressed terms and phrases.

Step 3

In this data analysis phase, I used the process of axial coding to categorize the initial codes into groups. I carefully reviewed and established connections between the initial codes and placed them under similar groups. I then analyzed the axial codes to reveal emergent themes.

Step 4

In the final analysis phase, I conducted selective coding on the axial coded categories. During selective coding, I evaluated the categories derived in the initial and axial coding processes for emerging themes. The core categories derived from the selective coding process represent the major themes that answer my research questions. I then formulated conclusions from the themes derived in this data analysis process.

For example, in answering RQ 1, one of the themes generated was the provision of monitoring structures. I concluded from this theme that proper structures must be implemented to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. The major themes

generated from RQ 2 are limited trained special education staff members, inadequate technology to facilitate learning disabilities and the absence of government funding. From these themes, I concluded that Jamaican college administrators have limited resources to address the needs of students with learning disabilities.

There were three discrepancies evidenced in the responses of P3, P8, and P7, where continuous reference was made to students with physical disabilities, although not the focus of the study. Additionally, P8 could not provide current information to answer the research questions as no student was enrolled at the time with a learning disability. P8 spoke to past experiences of accommodating students with learning disabilities.

Results

I organized the results in this section based on the themes and subthemes generated from the data analysis. I asked participants 12 questions to determine how students with learning disabilities are accommodated within their institution and the barriers faced in accommodating students with disabilities. The responses are presented below in the seven themes generated from the data.

Table 2

Research Questions and Themes

Research Questions	Themes
RQ1: How do Jamaican college administrators provide accommodations for students with learning disabilities?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduced classroom sizes to meet students' learning needs 2. Modification of the examination process to accommodate students with learning disabilities 3. Provision of monitoring structures to ensure students overall well being 4. Professional development workshops for staff members

RQ2: What do Jamaican college administrators perceive as barriers to providing accommodations for students with learning disabilities?

5. Limited trained special education staff members to meet students' needs
 6. Inadequate technology to facilitate students with learning disabilities.
 7. Absence of government funding to secure resources
-

Research Question 1: How do Jamaican College Administrators Provide Accommodations for Students With Learning Disabilities?

Theme 1: Reduced Classroom Sizes to Meet Students' Learning Needs

College administrators expressed that over the years, they have constructed additional lecture rooms to facilitate smaller class sizes for students with learning disabilities. They indicated that no budgetary allotment is made by the Ministry of Education to accommodate the needs of students with learning disabilities and any other disabilities in general. This, they expressed, has limited the institutions' ability to adequately meet the needs of students with learning disabilities and the challenges they face in outsourcing funds for building improvement. For example, P6 stated: "we try our best as an institution to continuously improve our physical infrastructure to ensure these students are afforded equitable learning opportunities".

The participants highlighted that the smaller class sizes have aided lecturers in providing a more one-on-one targeted approach to teaching students with learning disabilities. P2 highlighted: "in treating students with dyscalculia, our mathematics lecturers provide a one-on-one intervention with students so that privacy is maintained." P3, P9, and P1 explained that students with learning disabilities perform better when exposed to smaller classroom arrangements than in general classroom settings. According

to P2, a typical class size is 25 students to one lecturer, making it difficult for students with learning challenges. P2 continued: “we have to create pull-out sessions to facilitate students with learning challenges as they get lost in the whole group setting.” Participants agreed that implementing smaller classroom sizes has helped students with learning disabilities meet learning standards and improved their coursework and exam grades.

Theme 2: Modification of the Examination Process to Accommodate Students with Learning Disabilities

Students with learning disabilities are required to participate in the same examinations done by their non-disabled peers. However, modifications are facilitated by the colleges to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. When asked, “How do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college, 80% of the participants reported a modification to the examination process. P4 confirmed that extra time is allotted to students; in some cases, the student is removed to a private room to sit the examination. P1 also confirmed and highlighted that “during examinations, we allow for additional time or any other accommodation as is required at the time”.

The participants stated that in some instances, the font of the examination paper is modified to a larger font, but this must be communicated to the JBTE for its approval. P4 explained: “during examinations we have had to increase the font size of the paper.” The participant added: “the request is made to the JBTE who sends us the approval to make the change.” P1, P2, P4, and P6 explained that over the years they have had students who required help in reading and during examinations, an invigilator is assigned to read for

the student. According to P6: “We place him or her in a room and we had persons reading to them.” The participants stated this was done under close supervision to uphold the examination rules and standards.

Theme 3: Provision of Monitoring Structures to Ensure Students Overall Well-Being

Participants reported that students with learning disabilities are monitored similarly to their non-disabled peers. All the participants stated that the students are monitored by the student services unit, guidance counselor, and nurse. P4 confirmed that “the Student Services Unit, social worker, guidance counseling unit, student support managers (lecturers) and student support officers (administrative) are used to monitor and make reference the students with learning disabilities through their tenure at our institution.” P4 also indicated that the college nurse plays a critical role in arranging transportation for students’ doctor’s appointments. P3 stated that: “the college nurse and the assistant deans would inquire and do a follow-up on the progress of the students.”

Other participants had varying strategies outside of the monitoring provided by the student services, guidance counselor, and special education unit. For example, P9 stated: “for learning disabilities, the different departments have identified some students within their department and put together an intervention plan to help them through their program.” P1 also explained: “From time to time, lecturers would provide an update as to how the students are progressing academically, if they are identified issues, then those are addressed on a case-by-case basis.” P5 also added: “our institution has a social worker who is also integral in ensuring that students specialized learning needs are met.” P10 detailed: “Normally what happens is that every 5 weeks I do my check to see how the

grades and the assignments are going.” The participant explained that lecturers are required to report on any student who is performing below expectations so that the necessary interventions and support may be given to meet specific needs. In addition, P10 stated that students sometimes get sessions to come and work with her. In relating to cases of autistic students with learning disabilities P1, P2, and P4 reported instances where the students require counseling and additional therapy sessions. P2 and P5 expressed that the guidance counselor facilitates these counseling sessions as students with learning disabilities also present with socialization and emotional challenges. The guidance counsellor provides basic counselling and makes referrals for cases outside of their training.

Theme 4: Professional Development Workshops for Staff Members

Jamaica college administrators also provide accommodation for students with learning disabilities through staff professional development workshops. Participants reported that the professional development sessions are geared at sensitizing the staff about students with learning disabilities and exploring strategies to meet learning needs. According to P5, conducting professional development workshops “gives the students and their lecturers prior knowledge on what can be done and how to deal with a person suffering from disabilities”. P2 added that “through our professional development workshops, lecturers are exposed to new strategies for dealing with students with disabilities”.

P6 and P7 expressed that professional development seminars for staff are facilitated by the special education department, where the team addresses issues relating

to students with learning and other disabilities. P9 also confirmed that the institution has 2 special education specialists who acts as resource persons when there is need for training. P4 explained that the college recently made plans, to have an individual from the United Kingdom with expertise in Special Education. The participant explained: “the individual will visit the institution to provide training to our academic staff, student services unit, and Early childhood Department.” P10 added: “before the starting of the semester, we normally source a presenter to do a sensitization session with the staff.” P3 deviated from the general views expressed and highlighted that although professional development has helped the staff gain the skills to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities, there is a need for more training and support for staff members to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities.

Research Question 2: What do Jamaican College Administrators Perceive as Barriers to Providing Accommodations for Students With Learning Disabilities?

Theme 5: Limited Trained Special Education Staff Members to Meet Students’ Needs

All participants shared that there are limited trained special education personnel employed to the institution to meet the diverse needs of students with learning disabilities. According to P1: “the barriers we have encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities are physical and human resources.” P10 articulated that: “a few lecturers put up a little resistance as it appears to be a little burdensome to assist the students with learning disabilities at times.” P9 emphasized: “the major barrier we have encountered would be the lack of identification and intervention personnel on campus.” P4 added: “we don’t have trained personnel who are

able to identify special needs on the go.” P5 also articulated that not having persons who are trained to provide persons with learning disabilities is a challenge. In addition, P5 stated that it is difficult when persons without special education training lack knowledge about learning disabilities. The participant revealed that with increased knowledge, greater appreciation and fairness will be shown to students with disabilities. P3 confirmed the critical need to have someone on staff who is trained and has expertise in special education.

Theme 6: Inadequate Technology to Facilitate Students with Learning Disabilities

The issue of inadequacies in technological resources was also mentioned by P1, P2, P3 and P7. P3 noted that additional support is required to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities. The participant added: “speech, language, and communication software are costly.” P3 stated: “we would like the Ministry to subsidize cost of some of these software in the colleges.” Other participants spoke about the help institutions require to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. For example, P3 emphasized: “We would like the Ministry to assist us also with the construction of a computer laboratory on the ground floor of the campus. Also, a center with all the different support things that all the students enrolled with disabilities can access easily.” P7 articulated: “Our institution needs assistive technologies for example writing ,and speech software and other learning applications, to better assist students with learning disabilities.” P3 concluded: “I think the Ministry needs to invest in the applications or software to assist persons with learning disabilities.”

Theme 7: Absence of Government Funding to Secure Resources

All participants shared that the absence of government funding continued to be a barrier in providing the necessary accommodation to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. The participants all confirmed that the Ministry of Education does not provide funding to aid students with disabilities. As evidenced in the responses of P2 and P5 the absence of funding creates challenges in providing an inclusive college experience for students with learning disabilities. P2 stated: “financial resources are another barrier to give the additional support, for example, if we have a large population with students with learning disability, we would have to employ persons to assist these students. Therefore, in a larger population the funding for that would not be available because the government does not provide the financing for situations like those.” P5 also agrees in a statement that: “We require Governmental support to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.” P3 also added: “the Ministry wants inclusiveness but does not provide support for an inclusive college experience.” P2 stated: “there is no item on our budget that provides for students with learning disabilities. Nevertheless, because of our vision and motto, we make every effort to ensure our students are supported as best as we possibly can.” P10 explained that to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities, the government must sign an agreement to construct a special education department on our campus. The absence of government funding has negatively impacted on the institutions’ ability to adequately meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. There was a common plea from all participants for the government to increase their efforts in providing monetary allotment aligned to students’ needs.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is a term used to describe the validity of findings (Connely, 2016). There were several components used in this qualitative study to establish trustworthiness. The components used in this study to assess trustworthiness were credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

Credibility

I used member checking to ensure credibility in this study (Creswell, 2017; Maxfield & Babbie, 2017). Member checking involves the researcher sharing the main themes of the study with participants for any potential feedback from the participants (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I emailed participants the results from transcribed data. The participants were given 2 weeks to provide feedback regarding the accuracy of the main themes. The participants confirmed that the data were accurate.

Transferability

To promote transferability in this study, I provided thick descriptions that included information about the study's context and participants. In qualitative research, a thick description offers detailed information on a particular topic and its extent of exploration in a specific context (Frankfort-Nachmias, & Leon-Guerrero, 2018; Stahl & King, 2020). Thus, I provided thick descriptions of the findings and substantiated the data with evidence from direct participant quotes. By providing information about the context and participants, it may be possible to relate the findings of this study to similar contexts or participants.

Dependability

Dependability in qualitative research is critical in ensuring that the data collection methods, analysis, and reporting findings are consistent throughout the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To ensure dependability, I used audit trails to describe my steps in conducting this study. I used audit trails to explain the data collection process, how categories were derived, and decision-making strategies in the form of a written description during the research process. I also used audit trails during the interview process as I made personal notes. I recorded a detailed account of all activities, such as participant selection, meetings with participants, and any other information deemed pertinent to the study.

Confirmability

To ensure confirmability in this study I used a reflexive journal throughout the data collection process. I used a reflexive journal to outline the processes in the study and assess my feelings throughout the data collection and analysis process. A reflexive journal allowed me to examine preconceptions, values, and beliefs and how these affect the research decisions in all phases of my research. I was aware of my roles in collecting, interpreting, and analyzing data. I documented my role in the research process and the data collection phase.

Summary

This qualitative study generated eight themes from data collected via face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Member-checking was conducted following interviews to ensure the accuracy of data. The information presented in Chapter 4 includes the setting,

data collection and analysis, results, and evidence of trustworthiness. Chapter 5 will provide an interpretation of the findings, study limitations, recommendations, implications, and conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this basic qualitative research was to determine the perceptions of Jamaican college administrators on how students with disabilities are accommodated and the barriers to accommodation. Ten college administrators from rural and urban Jamaica participated in face-to-face semistructured interviews. Participants were required to have at least 5 years of experience as an administrator at the tertiary level. The study was conducted to ascertain how Jamaican college administrators provide accommodations for students with learning disabilities and the barriers to providing accommodations. From the data collected, eight themes were identified. Member-checking was conducted following interviews to ensure the accuracy of transcribed data.

The results of this study were organized based on the research questions and the eight themes identified. For RQ 1, participants expressed that students with learning disabilities are accommodated via reduced classroom sizes, modification of the examination process, provision of monitoring structures, and professional development workshops. In addressing RQ 2 the participants shared that the barriers faced in accommodating students with disabilities were limited trained special education staff members, inadequate technologies to facilitate learning disabilities, and the absence of government funding. Chapter 5 of this study will include interpretations of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, and implications. The chapter culminates with a conclusion that captures the key elements of the study.

Interpretation of the Findings

The research questions for this study were developed to determine how Jamaican college administrators facilitated students with learning disabilities and the barriers experienced. The following themes emerged from the data analysis:

1. Reduced classroom sizes to meet students' learning needs
2. Modification of the examination process to accommodate students with learning disabilities
3. Provision of monitoring structures to ensure students' overall wellbeing
4. Professional development workshops for staff members
5. Limited trained special education staff members to meet students' needs
6. Inadequate technology to facilitate students with learning disabilities
7. Absence of government funding to secure resources

The research questions and the generated themes allowed me to understand how Jamaican college administrators facilitate students with learning disabilities and the barriers experienced.

The findings were analyzed based on the research questions and the aligned themes as well as the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework of this study was social exclusion theory (Lenoir, 1974). Lenoir (1974) argued that there are insufficiencies in the participation and integration of persons with disabilities. This theory has helped me to acquire valuable insight into higher education inclusion and how administrators' perceptions impact inclusive practices.

College administrators revealed reduced classroom sizes to be one of the most significant adjustments in accommodating students with learning disabilities. The larger class sizes challenged students with learning disabilities, who were unnoticed by college tutors as expressed by participants. Administrators revealed that successful academic accommodation for students with learning disabilities involved using small physical classroom spaces to meet learning needs. College administrators have constructed additional lecture rooms to facilitate smaller class sizes for students with learning disabilities. Constructing additional lecture rooms benefits students' overall comprehension of concepts during the learning process (Lipka et al., 2019). Students with learning disabilities excel when classroom environments are modified to facilitate small-group interactions. The participants highlighted that the smaller class sizes had aided lecturers in providing a more one-on-one targeted approach to teaching students with learning disabilities. With smaller class sizes, lecturers could allocate more time to address specific needs and provide individualized support for students with learning disabilities. Additionally, lecturers could provide greater observation and monitoring to promptly detect and address students' challenges. One participant explained that with smaller class sizes, lecturers could enhance communication and collaboration in understanding the needs of students and generating support to provide appropriate accommodations.

Participants also expressed that the lack of government funding has limited the institutions' ability to adequately meet the needs of students with learning disabilities and the challenges they face in outsourcing funds for building improvement. Governments

must recognize the importance of funding for equitable learning opportunities (Morris, 2021). The participants agreed that government constraints pose numerous challenges that restrict the development and implementation of physical infrastructure and tailored resources for students with learning disabilities. Limited funding has contributed to increased class sizes, making it difficult for educators to provide individualized attention for maximum student support (Yusof et al., 2020).

Eighty percent of participants facilitated modifications to the examination process. Additional time was allotted to students with learning disabilities to provide equitable opportunities to demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and abilities. In some cases, students were removed from the general examination room to a more private setting under the close supervision of a supervisor. The condition under which examinations are conducted may be stressful, especially for students with learning disabilities. Therefore, modifying the examination process can assist in reducing anxiety while creating a more conducive environment where students can think and apply their content knowledge (Lipka et al., 2019). Another important finding was that before the examinations, the exam paper is sent via soft copy to individual colleges to facilitate the modification of font sizes. Participants also explained that in some instances, additional personnel are employed to read for students who may have dyslexia. Participants revealed that these modifications removed any possible barrier, and students are not hampered by specific challenges such as reading speed and the ability to process information within a restricted time frame. In addition, this process provides a more accurate and fair evaluation of students' skills and competencies. Modifying the

examination process promotes equity and inclusivity in education. All participants agreed that students with learning disabilities require customized support to demonstrate their knowledge. One participant mentioned that modification of examinations should be done with thorough consideration aligned with the student's needs while preserving the integrity of the examinations.

Monitoring systems are vital in ensuring that the challenges associated with learning disabilities are identified, and the necessary supports aligned to various needs implemented (Stephenson & Persadie, 2022). Participants confirmed that in building quality educational systems, policies and procedures must align to address the needs of learners. The responses gleaned from participants highlighted that monitoring students with learning disabilities is facilitated by the student services unit, social worker, guidance counselor, and tutors. Monitoring systems were evidenced in the discourse as vital to encourage collaboration among staff members as they share information to navigate the academic route for specific student needs. The participants also indicated that regular inquiries and follow-ups helped maintain the progress monitoring of the students.

Other participants had varying strategies outside of the monitoring provided by the student services, guidance counselor, nurse, and special education unit. In some instances, the participants explained that heads of various departments and the assistant principal provide targeted interventions for students with learning disabilities. Heads of departments are critical in mobilizing teams to develop successful teaching strategies while maximizing resources to meet students' needs. The heads of departments also

modified the curriculum and facilitated counseling sessions as part of students' emotional and holistic development. A modified curriculum creates an enhanced learning experience as students are more likely to actively participate in the learning process (De Matthews et al., 2021). Also, individual learning challenges were addressed with these modifications to facilitate students' academic progress.

A part of the monitoring system involved collaboration with the guidance counselor and nurse in facilitating counseling sessions and making referrals to qualified professionals. Counseling is pivotal in promoting students' emotional well-being and positive academic outcomes. Participants recounted that some students with learning disabilities present emotional and social challenges. Therefore, counselors can create comprehensive individualized support plans for their academic growth and social development (Moriña & Biagiotti, 2022). Also, the Ministry of Education and boards of management efforts were expressed as paramount for maintaining academic progress while supporting social and emotional development.

Professional development workshops play a significant role in ensuring that faculty members hone the necessary skills and competencies to support students with learning disabilities effectively (Billingsley et al., 2020). Jamaican college administrators reported that professional development has been instrumental in exploring strategies to meet learning needs. Professional development affords staff members an increased in-depth understanding of learning disabilities (Billingsley et al., 2020). In addition, staff members can learn what characterizes a learning disability to better support and advocate for their learning needs. Most participants agreed that after targeted professional

development workshops, they could better meet the needs of students with learning disabilities.

One of the most instrumental ways to expose lecturers to new strategies for meeting the needs of students with learning disabilities is through professional development workshops. De Matthews et al. (2020) articulated that professional development workshops introduce evidence-based instructional strategies that promote inclusive learning environments. Participants highlighted that professional development seminars also create opportunities for collaboration by developing learning communities. These learning communities are crucial for educators to exchange ideas and best practices while learning together how to create programs that support the needs of students with learning disabilities. One participant confirmed that professional development has helped expose the staff to emerging trends in supporting students with learning disabilities.

It is paramount for trained professionals to conduct professional development seminars to provide expert knowledge to effectively facilitate students with learning disabilities. Participants highlighted that the special education department organizes most of the workshops conducted by their institution. According to Craig et al. (2022), special educators can guide the range of accommodations available for addressing students' needs. Although most participants agreed that professional development has helped in providing training and ongoing support, one participant argued the need for additional training and comprehensive support systems to meet the demands of students with learning disabilities.

The two main barriers expressed by all participants were limited trained special education staff members and inadequate technology to facilitate learning disabilities. Participants stated that limited human resources posed a significant challenge and were sometimes burdensome to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. DeMatthews et al. (2020) agree that students may not receive tailored support and assistance to meet curriculum requirements without trained support personnel. Participants felt that students who fail to receive support may result in possible academic failure. The participants stated that the primary barrier was the lack of identification and intervention personnel on campus. The absence of personnel to facilitate intervention can lead to emotional challenges in students with learning disabilities (Mobily & Johnson, 2021). In some cases, students experience frustration and become depressed when they face academic challenges and are not given academic guidance aligned to their needs. Participants argued that not having trained personnel to identify people with learning disabilities can make students unable to meet their academic demands. Participants felt that trained personnel possess the skills to help students navigate their educational environment.

Limited trained special education staff members may impede students in acquiring skills needed for specific careers (DeMatthews et al., 2020). One participant stated that persons without special education training make it difficult to facilitate the needs of students with learning disabilities. All participants believed that with increased knowledge, students with learning disabilities would experience greater appreciation. Trained special education staff at the college level is critical for students with learning

disabilities to maximize their potential while functioning effectively in an inclusive learning environment (Lipka et al., 2019).

Participants revealed that the inadequacies pose significant challenges in accessing and using related technological support for persons with learning disabilities. Participants noted that inadequate technological resources impede their ability to effectively engage students during the teaching and learning process. Participants confirmed the need for specialized software that could benefit students in speech, language, and communication. Specialized software enables a personalized learning experience for students with learning disabilities. Specialized software includes features that help students stay organized and on target with their academic goals. Some examples of these software includes Claro, Evernote, Grammarly and Kurzweil 3000. Participants argued that communication software is costly and that the institution's inability to access funds to secure this software is challenging. One participant explained that specialized software can be expensive in maintenance, training, licenses, and updates. Therefore, institutions with limited budgets experience difficulty acquiring and sustaining this technology. Some participants highlighted the institutions' need for help to facilitate students' needs. Others stated that the Ministry of Education could assist institutions with constructing computer labs and learning spaces so that students with learning disabilities can have equal access to resources compared to their non-disabled peers.

The use of assistive technologies such as writing and speech software was communicated by one participant as necessary to assist students better. Assistive technologies provide support and accommodation for students with learning disabilities.

Also, assistive technology provides various mobile applications designed to support students in improving focus, attention, and memory. Institutions can assess the specific needs of students with learning disabilities to identify appropriate technologies to enhance learning outcomes.

All participants echoed the absence of government funding as one of the significant barriers to providing the necessary accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Newman et al. (2020) found that government funding is critical in delivering essential services for support and accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Also, government funding provides for establishing and maintaining disability support services in higher education. The participants confirmed that the Ministry of Education does not provide funding to support the needs of students with learning disabilities. The participants reported that the absence of funding limits students' academic success. Without government funding, institutions cannot procure the requisite resources and personnel aligned with students' needs.

The absence of government funding affects the ability of the institution to employ additional staff specifically trained to support students with learning disabilities (García-González et al., 2020). Participants reported that because the institution's budget did not cater to students with learning disabilities, the staff generally employed measures to provide an inclusive college experience. One participant highlighted the irony of the Ministry of Education's initiative to promote inclusiveness but failure to provide budgetary allocation to secure resources that contribute to creating inclusive learning environments.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations were encountered while completing this study. Researchers must highlight possible limitations to help readers understand the research context and how the findings can be generalized (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Firstly, this study was confined to 10 college administrators, which may have affected my ability to achieve data saturation. It was not a guarantee that I attained data saturation after interviewing 10 administrators. Based on the conversations with participants, it is likely that they were selective in disclosing information about their institution. Creswell and Gutterman (2019) affirmed that qualitative interviews may influence conversations so that interviewees give answers they believe the researcher wants to hear.

Secondly, in making a clear separation between my role as a middle manager at one of the local colleges and my role as a researcher, I engaged in member checks and adhered to the interview protocol. I conducted member checks by asking participants to check the accuracy of the emergent themes. Another benefit to member checks is that it increased the trustworthiness of the data. I also deliberately maintained reflexivity and created distance from the data collection process. Additionally, I maintained accountability to peer researchers and supervisors by sharing the study's findings and gaining feedback.

Recommendations

Based on the data analysis, and current findings, I recommend that additional research be conducted to widen the scope of this study. First, the study was limited to 10 college administrators from mostly teacher colleges. A study can be extended to include

more participants, including university administrators and from other types of colleges, which may capture a broader range of perspectives and experiences. Including a substantial number of participants makes it more likely for the researcher to reach data saturation, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the topic of investigation.

It is also recommended that more investigation is conducted in colleges to understand lecturers' perceptions of providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities. The barriers to providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities can be explored from the lecturers' point of view as they are directly involved in providing instructions to meet students' needs. Focusing on the barriers and understanding lecturers' perceptions may provide valuable data that could contribute to improved tertiary structures that facilitate the diverse needs of students with learning disabilities.

An expansion of the study's scope and having a maximum number of participants in qualitative research can enhance the richness and diversity of the data. It may also increase data saturation and transferability of findings to allow for in-depth probing and understanding of the issue under investigation.

Implications

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to determine the perceived barriers that Jamaican college administrators experience in facilitating the accommodation of students with learning disabilities. The 2 research questions guiding this study allowed me to generate data that can contribute to the existing literature on college administrators' perceptions of barriers in facilitating students with learning disabilities. The findings of

this study revealed how college administrators facilitated the needs of students with learning disabilities and the barriers they experienced.

This study's contribution to social change may be realized in the findings of the study. Based on the implications from the results of this study, the information can inform future practices of administrators on how to mitigate the barriers regarding resources, technology, professional development, and government funding. The findings can also bridge the gap in accommodation as college administrators can reflect on their current practices and make necessary modifications to facilitate students with learning disabilities. Another contribution to social change is that policymakers can better understand college administrators' challenges and develop strategies to address these challenges. Ideally, this study may encourage administrators to engage in conversations and partner with other stakeholders to create inclusive educational environments.

Conclusion

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to determine the perceived barriers that Jamaican college administrators experience in facilitating the accommodation of students with learning disabilities. The results of the study revealed current administrative practices and the barriers they encounter in accommodating students with learning disabilities. An in-depth analysis of the findings revealed that limited staff training, absence of government funding, and inadequate technology were the main barriers to facilitating the needs of students with learning disabilities.

The problem in this basic qualitative research is that college students with learning disabilities are not provided with accommodation via equitable learning

opportunities compared with their non-disabled peers. Instead, college administrators face multiple barriers to providing accommodation aligned with their needs. In understanding the problem, the study revealed that there is no government budgetary allotment for students with learning disabilities across the colleges, making it challenging for administrators to provide for their needs. The findings revealed that although administrators facilitate students with learning disabilities through reduced class sizes, examination modification, and monitoring structures, barriers exist that limit their ability to meet their needs adequately.

The nature of this basic qualitative study was based on the methods aligned to a qualitative framework that involved an in-depth probe of the problem while incorporating participants' multiple perceptions of administrative barriers to accommodating students with learning disabilities. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews allowed me to understand the barriers college administrators face and accommodations for students with disabilities. This study will impact positive social change as the findings will raise awareness about administrators' current practices and School Boards along with the Ministry of Education can use the information to create inclusive learning environments. Also, students with learning disabilities can be provided with accommodations to meet their individual learning needs.

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Appendix A: Demographic Questions

In which age group do you belong?

21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 over 60

Gender

Male female

How long have you been serving at this institution?

What is your highest level of qualification?

Do you have any training in Special Education? yes no

What is your area of specialization?

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Research Question 1: What do Jamaican college administrators perceive as barriers to providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

- Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities within your college?
- What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with disabilities?
- After a student is identified with a disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?
- What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?
- Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution?
- How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?
- What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Research Question 2: What do Jamaican college administrators perceive needs to be done in their schools to assist students with learning disabilities?

- What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?
- What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with disabilities?
- What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?
- Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Appendix C: Interview Transcripts

Type of Interview: Individual Interview**Date:** April 12, 2023**Time:** 11: 24 am**Interviewer:** Tracey Ann Anderson**Interviewee:** P1**Quantity:** 12 Open Ended Questions**Duration:** 20 Minutes**Location:** College administrator's Office**Demographics**

In which age group do you belong? 41-50

Gender: Female

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for nineteen (19) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is Masters in Education

Do you have any training in Special Education? No**What is your area of specialization?**

My area of specialization is Curriculum Development

Interview Questions**Interviewer:** Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P1: First step that we have taken is that we reached out to the Salvation Army to garner resources to help in areas where we have specific needs. We are now working on aah improving the number of access spaces at the institution as we have increased the number of ramps that were at the institution. We also work with the Student Union group in educating them on how we should treat and accommodate individuals who are physically challenged as well as those with learning disabilities. With the passing of the act, we had students who studied the Special Needs Course doing presentations to the community to inform others about the importance of that act. We had accommodated a student with Attention-deficit / hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and we relied on the diagnosis from the student's doctor as to how to treat her in the classroom and during tests or examinations. Academic, Administrative staff, Guidance counsellor and campus minister were informed and guided as to how to deal with a student with special needs.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P1: So we rely on the student's medical report and information from the academic and administrative staff.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P1: When a student is identified with a disability, we ensure that their classes are on the ground floor. For examinations, they are placed in a room with the college nurse. The student with attention deficit disorder, the lecturers allow for frequent breaks aahm and I also during examinations we allow for additional time or any other accommodations as is required at the time. We really don't have any set policy on the books to deal with students with learning disabilities but as the disability arise our team puts in the necessary structures to see how best we can help and accommodate these students.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

The nature of student disabilities that we facilitate in our institution are visually impairment, physically challenged, and persons with Attention-deficit / hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P1: Students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at our institution through their lecturers, guidance counsellor and administrative staff. These are the only monitoring systems that we have available right now as we do not have an office and resource personnel to directly deal with students with disabilities. Many times our hands are tied but we try our best as a team to ensure that no one is left behind because of their disability.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P1: We haven't had that experience, but we are looking into more current means of accommodation, in terms of teaching resources and even how they are taught by their lecturers.

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P1: We don't have any targeted or formal training across the board, but we have the course special needs on our curriculum. From time to time, lecturers would provide an update as to how the students are progressing academically, if they are identified issues, then those are addressed on a case-by-case basis we have the facilitator share the information from that course, this is when they are sent out to attend training workshops on special needs. One such event that our facilitators attend and participated in the yearly

Special Needs Conference held at Church Teachers' College Mandeville and upon their return they are charged to share ideas or suggestion to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities in a faculty meeting or a special session.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P1: At this time, we don't have any on record in terms of disability.

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P1: The barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities would be the resources to provide greater accessibility of the facility such as our library and our registry that are on the upper floor hence placing a challenge for the physically challenged persons. For people who are visually impaired like wise the same and so a team would have to come to the ground floor to assist them. Also, resources in terms of making our facilitators ofay or in line with what is required at this time.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P1: The barriers we have encountered when providing accommodation for students with disabilities are physical resources and human resources.

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P1: The support that we receive to help to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities is professional development training from the Ministry of education to build awareness of the fact that people are different, and we must live together in an inclusive environment as best as possible.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P1: The additional support that we require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities is ongoing training of the mindset of persons to keep it at the forefront because the paradigm that people hold as true, impact the practices that people follow. If the staff and the student(s) don't feel welcomed it may be a barrier and this will hinder people with a disability who are talented and have a promise and potential from meeting their own self-actualization. Training also helps us not to shut out a percentage of our population as we will be able to accommodate and make modifications to welcome people with special needs into tertiary institutions.

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 11, 2023

Time: 9 AM

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P2

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 20 Minutes

Location: College administrator's Office

In which age group do you belong?

over 60

Gender

female

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for twenty-six (26) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is Doctorate in Leadership

Do you have any training in Special Education? No

What is your area of specialization?

Interview Questions

Interviewer: Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P2: We do not have a significant population of students with disabilities. Over the years, in any given academic year, the most significant level of disability that we have experienced might have been visual. In the case of a visual impaired student, what we did in terms of his attendance at classes and since significant level of reading were required, efforts were made by the institution to help to accommodate him with a braille machine and a computer that allows him to access his reading materials. For his examinations, we actually asked for a Quality Assurance Provider to ensure that his print was larger than normal, and he was accommodated separately in a room where if there was any need for additional reading, he had a reader for his exam.

In terms of physical disability, the facilities at this time do not give access to many locations but the student remains in a classroom where he/ she has ease of access to that space.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P2: There is no formal system in place, usually the student with the disability is the one that approaches the administrator to say that he/ she have this particular need and how can he/ she be assisted.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P2: After a student is identified with a disability, whatever steps need to be taken, if it's accommodation through access to lectures then we provide the necessary access to the classroom and ensure that the population is aware of the need. In terms of providing access to examinations we ensure that whatever facilitation is necessary is done as we do common exams across the colleges and so the submission of a specific request to the providers of the examinations. The college does not have a wide range of persons with disability, but the college is always open to accepting and facilitating, dealing with the cases as the demand comes. In treating students with dyscalculia, our mathematics lecturers provide a one-on-one intervention with students so that privacy is maintained. We have to create pull-out sessions to facilitate students with learning challenges as they get lost in the whole group setting. Some of our students also present with socialization and emotional challenges.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

The nature of student disabilities that we facilitate in our institution is mostly physical and also learning disabilities.

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P2: The level of monitoring would come through their lecturers or if the student is a residential student through their wardens. From time to time, lecturers would provide an update as to how the students are progressing academically, if they are identified issues, then those are addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P2: No experience because this institution did not have that kind of exposure and the ones that we had identified those would have been catered for.

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P2: Through our Professional Development Workshops, lecturers are exposed to new strategies for dealing with students with disabilities. I would say it is mostly through their experiences and through additional support and training provided through workshops.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P2: We haven't had any such experience but if there was an instance, we would have to provide additional technology support for the student (s) or maybe the student (s) would be invited on the campus to access the internet and other facilities.

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P2: Some barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities could be that the plant (campus) is so old which existed prior to the era when focus and attention was given to persons with physical disability. Financial resources are another barrier to give the additional support, for example, if we have a large population with students with physical disability, we would have to employ persons to assist these students so therefore in a larger population the funding for that would not be available because the government does not provide the financing for situations like those.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P2: Financial and the physical plant would have been the barriers when providing accommodation for students with disabilities.

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P2: There is no item on our budget that provides for that but because of our vision and motto of our college “to nurture through love and wisdom.” The love component of our motto would require that we make every effort that our students are supported as best as we possibly can.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P2: Human resources in the form of guidance counselling, where a student may require a greater level of individual attention. This would then translate into funds and maybe modification of our plant to provide access to such persons.

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 12, 2023

Time: 11: 24 am

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P3

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 30 Minutes

Location: College administrator’s Office

In which age group do you belong?

41-50

Gender

Female

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for thirty (30) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is Masters

Do you have any training in Special Education? No

What is your area of specialization? My area of specialization is Curriculum Studies

Interview Questions

Interviewer :Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P3: We have had a student with mobility challenge and for that student we ensure that all classes are held on the ground floor. Ramps were constructed to all the bathrooms and areas on the campus to facilitate smooth movement of that student on the campus. In addition, on appeal was made to take care of the students, this was done by pairing other students to assist these students along the way as we don't have all the facilities for these students with disabilities. With the Visually Impaired, we arranged for those students to have extra lessons. For examinations, we ensure these students had the extra time that they needed.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P3: Usually, the lecturer would identify a student with disability and refer them to the guidance counsellor or the nurse. Another measure would be receiving information about their issue(s) from the student themselves, also with the assistance of student's medical report other things are revealed about the student's medical condition.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P3: After a student is identified with a disability we make the necessary accommodation that are available to meet their needs as best as we can, such as the construction of ramps around the campus for ease of access , ensure all classes for that student(s) are kept on the ground floor also provide the extra time for examinations.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

P3: The nature of student disabilities that we facilitate in our institution is blind, autistic and wheelchair bound.

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their

tenure at your institution.

P3: We don't have a formal structure to monitor these students, but from time to time the guidance counsellor, the college nurse and the Assistant Deans would inquire and do a follow-up on the progress of the student(s).

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P3: We haven't had a lot of students enrolled with disabilities but the few that were enrolled we tried our best to accommodate them. For example, we paid for the additional Mathematics tutoring of the legally blind student. Also we inform the examination officer that we have these students on campus and placed a request so we could accommodate them as best as we possibly can.

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P3: The training that staff members receive to facilitate the needs of the students with disabilities would be whatever is included in their curriculum. Also, we attend workshops that we were invited to by different organizations teams, we normally send the guidance counsellor and the different head of departments to attend these training workshops as they interact with the student(s) mostly. Overall, I think we have inadequate training and support for staff members to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P3: During the Pandemic it did as these students are really dependent on us for face-to-face interaction so operating online have further handicapped them, hence we were not able to assist them effectively, but during that time the guidance counsellor had the task communicate and follow-up with them.

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P3: I would say physical resources are the barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities as the Ministry wants inclusiveness but does not provide support for inclusiveness. I think the Ministry need to invest in the applications or software to assist persons with disabilities. In addition, human resources are another barrier, for example having someone on staff who is trained and has the expertise in Special education.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P3: The barriers that we have encountered when providing accommodation for students

with disabilities are the lacking of Physical and Human Resources.

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P3: We do not receive any help to facilitate the needs of the students with disabilities as whatever we receive is for the general population.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P3: An additional support that we require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities are speech, Language, and communication software that we could benefit from as these are costly. We would like the ministry to subsidize some of these software in the colleges. We would like the ministry to assist us also with the construction of a computer laboratory on the ground floor of the campus also a center with all the different support things that all the students enrolled with disabilities can access easily

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 12, 2023

Time: 9:00 AM

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P4

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 20 Minutes

Location: College administrator's Office

In which age group do you belong?

41-50

Gender

Female

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for twenty-one (21) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is Masters in Museology

Do you have any training in Special Education? No

What is your area of specialization? My area of specialization is Museology

Interview Questions

Interviewer: Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P4: We have constructed numerous ramps on the campus for the classroom settings but haven't made any modification for the dorms. We currently looking in retrofitting especially the male hall of residence to cater for students with special needs.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P4: We currently have a social worker, the guidance counselling unit and sometimes the Early Childhood make references to the students.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P4: We try to accommodate them as best as possible as the requests are made by the student. During examinations we have had to increase the font size of the paper. The request is made to the JBTE who sends us the approval to make the change.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

P4: The nature of student disabilities that we facilitate in our institution are dwarfism, learning disabilities, autism and physical disability.

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P4: The Student Services Unit, social worker, guidancelling unit, student support managers (lecturers) and student support officers (administrative) are used to monitor and make reference the students with disabilities through their tenure at our institution. Also, the college nurse plays a critical role as sometimes the nurse takes them to their doctors' appointments.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P4: The parents of the student(s) in many instances will notify us are if we are the ones who identify the disability and we would refer them to an outreach group from the United States that comes to Hopewell, St. Elizabeth in Jamaica yearly. They normally communicated the services that are being offered for that particular year for example, eye testing and then we would refer student(s) to get their eyes tested.

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P4: This will be addressed soon as there is a person coming from the with expertise in Special Education will be visiting us to give some training to our academic staff, student services unit and Early childhood Department, in identifying special needs issues and conducting seminars and workshops with parents who has child or children with disability. This is for the inclusion of the community so this would be a community outreach.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P4: After COVID-19 pandemic we had more students making more demands. People are more willing to identify students with a learning deficit at our institution during this time too. This was a new part in our Strategic plan to identify the students with learning deficits.

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P4: The barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities are our physical resources as our plant is very old and sometimes when we are retrofitting it's almost like we are building. The next barrier is human resources as we don't have trained personnel who are able to identify special needs on the go.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P4: The barriers that we encountered when providing accommodation for students with disabilities are the lack of Physical Resources and Human resources.

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P4: We don't receive any support to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P4: The additional support that we require to adequately meet the needs of the students with disabilities is trained personnel who can identify and work with these students, facilities, and awareness from trainers.

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 13, 2023

Time: 10:15 AM

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P5

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 20 Minutes

Location: College administrator's Office

In which age group do you belong?

51-60

Gender

Female

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for twenty-two (22) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is Masters

Do you have any training in Special Education? No

What is your area of specialization? My area of specialization is Science

Interviewer: Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P5: Currently, we have no student with disabilities within our college. However, in the past we have had students with learning challenges

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P5: So we rely on the student's medical report and information from the academic and administrative staff. In relation to the measures employed by our institution to identify students with disabilities we do physical tests to make sure that the person are able bodied and that they can participate fully in all our physical activities.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P5: Our institution has a social worker who is integral in ensuring that students specialized learning needs are met.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

P5: We have had students with reading and comprehension challenges also quite a number of our students have emotional challenges.

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P5: Our students are usually monitored by the students' services department. Also, the guidance counsellor plays a critical role in their monitoring.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P5: The guidance counselling unit does outside referrals for any additional support.

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P5: We currently provide a course on students suffering from disabilities in terms of teaching and learning experience. This gives the students and their lecturers prior knowledge on what can be done and how to deal with a person suffering from disabilities. We conduct professional development workshops that gives the students and their lecturers prior knowledge on what can be done and how to deal with a person suffering from disabilities.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P5: Not Applicable

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P5: One barrier in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities is the lack of modified facilities, There is not enough ramps constructed on campus to accommodate a wheelchair bound student (s). In addition, for persons who are wheelchair bound, they are not a lot of training in terms of adapted sports for them, hence they can't engage in the sports activity. For example, for a physically disabled person who wants to shoot a basketball in the hoop, an elevated platform could be constructed, so that person could run the wheelchair on it then the person could shoot from that position. Another barrier is not having persons who are trained to provide these services for persons who are suffering from disabilities require. Educational barrier is another barrier in relation to persons understanding the meaning and appreciating the fact that persons who suffer from disabilities that they are normal human beings and should be treated accordingly.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P5: Not Applicable

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P5: We have not received any support to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P5: We require Governmental support to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities. A wider base of educational information being given in relation to persons suffering from disabilities. A next support would be that the teaching and learning being mandatory amongst colleges, not just the course but it is included in the teaching and learning process.in terms of accommodation for these persons.

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 12, 2023

Time: 1 PM

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P6

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 25 Minutes

Location: College administrator's Office

In which age group do you belong?

51-60

Gender

Male

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for nineteen (19) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is Masters Degree in Mathematics and PhD in Theology

Do you have any training in Special Education? No

What is your area of specialization? My area of specialization is Mathematics

Interview Questions

Interviewer: Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P6: We don't have any such students enrolled at the moment but in the past we had two students with disabilities these were hearing and visual impairments. We had persons walk with these students to class and write for these students. For exams we had to increase the font of the exam, request would be made to Joint Board of Teacher Education to send us the exam in soft copy so we could increase the font of the exam for that particular student(s). We would place him / her in a room by himself/ herself and we had persons reading to them.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P6: The measure employed by our institution to identify students with disabilities is the use of the medical questionnaire that each student completes for the college nurse.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P6: There is no set accommodation to meet the needs of a student with a disability at our institution but once they are enrolled and we identify them we try to make adjustments to accommodate them.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

P6: The nature of student disabilities that we facilitate in our institution is Physical and learning disabilities.

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P6: There is no set monitoring at our institution for students with disabilities, but we assign them less credits per semester. Also the guidance counsellor and student services department helps in meeting any special needs they have.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P6: the guidance counsellor usually makes any referrals to address any additional needs they might have.

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P6: The training that staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities is by workshop held by the Head of the Special Education Department.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P6: We didn't have any students with disabilities enrolled within that period.

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P6: The lack of ramps throughout the plant would have been a barrier in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P6: The barriers we have encountered when providing accommodation for students with disabilities are physical resources.

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P6: We don't receive support to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P6: The construction of classrooms build to meet specific needs of a student with disabilities would be the additional support that we require. Also, instruments used by students with hearing impairments would be an additional support that we require as these instruments could be retrofitted in the classrooms for ease of access to lessons for students with that specific disability. Trained staff members would be another support that we require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 19, 2023

Time: 9:00 AM

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P7

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 20 Minutes

Location: College administrator's Office

In which age group do you belong?

51-60

Gender

Male

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for seven (7) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is Doctorate in Educational Leadership

Do you have any training in Special Education? yes no

What is your area of specialization? My area of specialization is Educational Leadership

Interview Questions

Interviewer: Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P7: The cohort of learning disabilities that we cater to is not well researched and is not known about. We may find from time to time that lecturers complain about particular students. Testing in Jamaica does not cater a lot for college students' age group, it is mainly the lower age group. So it is a matter of using one's experience as a lecturer or a special educator that one would know that these are symptoms. In cases where people are not performing for one reason or another which could include learning disabilities, we try to cater for them by giving them extra time or extensions to submit their assignments. We do not have a formal system set up to facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within our college.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P7: We capture the information in a joined net than picking out person(s) one by one, this is done by the lecturers who would have look at the performances and abnormalities then we cater for the general needs of students. Without testing and to come to the empirical data to say these persons have this disability then it is difficult for us to target it.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P7: We have a reading and writing lab at our institution that helps students with reading and writing difficulties. Though it is not geared for any particular problem, it is for any general program that may include them.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

P7: This was not mentioned

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P7: The Head of Departments and the Deans monitor all students throughout their tenure at our institution. Whatever the need may arise we try to assist them.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P7: This was not mentioned

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P7: We do Professional development training with staff and some of that includes special education programmes. The CARE center staff sometimes are used to assist us in these professional development training. We also have a Special Education Department and those lecturers work along side the other lecturers in helping to solve some of the issues with the students with disabilities.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P7: This was not mentioned

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P7: The barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with learning disabilities would be is that we don not have a national or regional testing for students over the age of eighteen (18) years, and because of that the data is not there for us to use and to say to target. This is because the college age group is either close to an adult or an adult and it is left up to the student to get tested.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P7: The barriers we have encountered when providing accommodation for students with disabilities are physical resources and human resources.

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P7: The support that we receive to help to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities is for our CARE center, which is for testing the age group below eighteen (18) years of age.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P7: The additional support that we require to adequately meet the needs of students with learning disabilities is construction of more resource centers that are set up in a way not to stigmatize anyone because usually it is manifested in these areas. A next support that we require is that we develop of an adult test kit and with the permission of the person we could check to see if you were diagnose of any such thing and encourage intervention. Our institution needs assistive technologies for example writing ,and speech software and other learning applications, to better assist students with learning disabilities.

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 20, 2023

Time: 9:30 AM

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P8

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 20 Minutes

Location: College administrator's Office

In which age group do you belong?

51-60

Gender

Male

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for eight (8) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is PhD in Marketing

Do you have any training in Special Education? No

What is your area of specialization? My area of specialization is Marketing

Interview Questions

Interviewer: Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P8: Not Applicable for learning disabilities but for Physical disabilities the construction ramps on the campus and we provide bus services transport the ones with physical disabilities.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P8: Our guidance counsellors and lecturers are the ones who identify the students with learning disabilities.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P8: The lecturers would have identified the students with disability and we would have accommodated them their needs for example during examinations, they are given a extra time.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

P8: The nature of student disabilities that we facilitate in our institution is mostly physical.

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P8: Students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at our institution through the deans, guidance counsellor, college nurse and the Student Services

department.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P8: We haven't had that experience.

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P8: There hasn't been a lot, I don't recall.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P8: No

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P8: The barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities are the lack of resources.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P8: The barriers we have encountered when providing accommodation for students with disabilities are physical resources and human resources.

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P8:

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P8: The additional support that we require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 20, 2023

Time: 1:00 PM

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P9

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 20 Minutes

Location: College administrator's Office

In which age group do you belong?

51-60

Gender

Female

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for thirty (30) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is PhD in Leadership and Management

Do you have any training in Special Education? No

What is your area of specialization? My area of specialization is Leadership and Management

Interview Questions

Interviewer: Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P9: The obvious one is the physical and so we had made some adjustment to the physical space to accommodate physically disabled, with the construction of a bathroom on the male hall of residence, also construction of ramps to the cafeteria and classroom spaces on the campus. Over the years we have accommodated blind (visually impaired) students. We also assisted them with the use of the braille machines and for exams etc. For learning disabilities, the different departments have identified some students within their department and put together an intervention plan to help them through their programmes. One measure we employed by our institution to identify students with learning disabilities is through counselling sessions. In fact, we have had to get external intervention for one or two persons over the past ten years.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P9: Right now, we don't have a formal program of identifying students with learning disabilities. However, where the lecturers identify their challenges, then refer them to the guidance counsellor (inhouse) who sometimes refer them to external persons, so we outsource to get additional help for these students.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P9: The department led by its department head creates a program to monitor and additional help to scaffold them to where they need to be in order to complete their programme.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

P9: The nature of student disabilities that we facilitate in our institution are visually impairment, physically challenged and learning disabilities in Mathematics and Language arts.

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P9: Students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at our institution through the department in which they operate., So their academic advisors assist in this process. If during academic advising the challenges are identified then the refer them someone who can treat with the student(s) in a professional way.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P9: Not Applicable

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P9: Well generally, staff members are not given training except that they are asked that as soon as they identify challenges they refer them to someone who can determine whether the person needs help. We have two special Education at our college that we use as resource persons when there is need for training.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P9: The learning disability is probably the most prominent one that was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For classes online we had to facilitate the physically challenged students longer than we had to for the other students.

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P9: The barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities would be the lack of physical resources for ease of access. Our institution is old and so there is no infrastructure to accommodate things such as elevators and escalators for persons with disabilities. Another barrier would be the lack of identification and intervention personnel on the campus.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P9: The barriers we have encountered when providing accommodation for students with disabilities are physical resources and human resources.

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P9: We don't receive any support to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities. Whatever adjustments that we had to do to the building we had to find the funds to do that.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P9: The additional support that we require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities is an organization or center for identifying and treating students' disabilities at the Tertiary level. As currently there are only intervention programs or facilities for the Primary level up to 17 but not for tertiary level students with disabilities.

Type of Interview: Individual Interview

Date: April 26, 2023

Time: 9:00 AM

Interviewer: Tracey Ann Anderson

Interviewee: P10

Quantity: 12 Open Ended Questions

Duration: 30 Minutes

Location: College administrator's Office

In which age group do you belong?

31-40

Gender

Female

How long have you been serving at this institution?

I have been serving at this institution for five (5) years.

What is your highest level of qualification?

My highest level of qualification is PhD.

Do you have any training in Special Education? Yes

What is your area of specialization? Special Education

Interview Questions

Interviewer: Describe in steps how do you facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within your college.

P10: The first step that we use to facilitate the inclusion of students with learning disabilities within our college is to provide a form when the students or applying to our

institution for them to indicate whether or not they have an exceptionality. We choose to use the word exceptionalities because when we use words such as special needs or disabilities, students tend to not answer the question. Step 2: After the students indicate that they have any exceptionality, they then meet with me (principal) or sometimes they ask me to sit in on the interview process.

Step 3: So based on the observation or any diagnosis that I have, I would read the report and from then I would look to see how long ago the report was done. If it was done under five years, then we would request that that the student(s) done another Psycho Education Evaluation if it is for autism or anything that has to be done by a clinical psychologist. However, if it is for academic assessment at the college. We normally do the assessment with the (RAT) - Range Achievement Test or (TOWEL) – Test of Written Language.

Step 4: I would send out a general letter to faculty informing them of the student (s) that has an exceptionality(es) then I would highlight what exceptionality is and then I would give them tips and ways to move forward with the student (s). I would also express that these students may need extra time after the class so I would ask them to be patient with them as well. We normally meet every three weeks to find out the progress of the student (s). So, I would develop an (IPP)- Individualized Personal Plan for the student. The student(s) also meets with me (principal) once a week depending on the severity of their condition to check if they are experiencing any challenges, if they need extensions to complete assignments etc.

Step 5: By the third week, if we realized that there is a challenge with the note taking and that they are not keeping up with the theory, that is when we would reach out to the student's parent(s) and ask them if they able to get a professional to come in go with the student for the theory classes.

Interviewer: What are the measures employed by your institution to identify students with learning disabilities?

P10: At the start of the semester I send out an email to all Deans and Directors instructing them to forward it to the different departments asking each lecturer to observe the students for the first three weeks to observe the students to check for anybody that stands out for them whether it be a gifted student or a student who they realize is struggling, not really participating, doesn't seem to understand, for them to submit the name(s) of these students. I then pull the student's files and check on their Academic History and their previous report from High school. For example , the persons that took three years to get five CXC subjects, I would put a little tab on their files so those are what I would call my red flags, especially the person's with the Ds and Cs.. If I realize there is a need for Academic assessment, I would do one.

Interviewer: After a student is identified with a learning disability, what accommodations are available to meet their needs?

P10: The accommodation that we have to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities is that I normally send an email to the person at the head of the Writing Centre, copy the student, the Dean and the Head of the School that the student is registered in, to introduce the student to the Writing center so that they can get regular

appointments to go and get help with their assignments, reading and writing.

Interviewer: What is the nature of student disabilities that you facilitate in your institution?

P10: The nature of student disabilities that we facilitate at our institution is Autism, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia and Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD).

Interviewer: Explain how students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at your institution.

P10: Students with disabilities are monitored throughout their tenure at our institution through critiques. We have Critiques every fifteen weeks. Normally what happens is that every five weeks I do my check to see how the grades and the assignments are going. For some lecturers when I receive the course outline I can see when an assignment is due. So if the assignments are handed in, I normally ask the lecturer to mark that student's work first so I can have an idea of how they performed on task. In addition, they sometimes get sessions to come and work with me.

Interviewer: How do you accommodate students with disabilities who may require additional support from that offered by your institution?

P10: Over the years we have built a good relationship with outside entities such as Jamaica Foundation For Lifelong Learning (JFFLL) so we refer a lot of the students out when I realize that extra help is needed.

Interviewer: What training or support do staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P10: The training or support that staff members receive to facilitate the needs of students with disabilities is through the staff development workshops held by the college. Before the starting of the semester, we normally source a presenter to do a sensitization session with the staff.

Interviewer: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your institution's ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

P10: It was very challenging especially with the students with Autism, because they wanted to be in person, they didn't want to sit around the computer. In some occasions. I would have to be on campus, they would come and meet with me, to assist them with the assignments.

For the students who were boarding at the time and their parents lived out of town, most of them deferred to the next semester.

Section B: Assisting Students with Learning Disabilities

Interviewer: What has been your barriers in providing an inclusive college experience for students with disabilities?

P10: One barrier would be the few lecturers that put up a little resistance as it appears to

be a little burdensome to assist the students with learning disabilities at times. The next barrier would be physical resources.

Interviewer: What barriers have you encountered when providing accommodation for students with learning disabilities?

P10: Human and Physical Resources

Interviewer: What support do you receive to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities?

P10: We don't receive any support from the government to help facilitate the needs of students with disabilities.

Interviewer: Explain what additional support you require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities.

P10: The additional support that we require to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities is for the government to sign an agreement in constructing a Special Education Department on a section of our campus. A next support would be human resources and trained personnels.