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Teachers' Stage of Concern and Self-Efficacy Regarding Teaching Students in an Inclusive Classroom

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

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Regarding Teaching Students in an Inclusive Classroom

by

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Abstract

Federal legislation mandates inclusion of students with special needs in general classrooms. Teachers in the Shelco school system implemented this mandate to teach in an inclusive classroom given limited professional development, and a desire for more. To determine their preparedness to teach with inclusion, 44 general education teachers participated in this correlational study. Two surveys were administered: Teachers' Self-Efficacy Survey and Stages of Concern Questionnaire. Scores were combined to identify and recommend groups of teachers for differentiated professional development. Social constructivism, which focuses on how learning is affected by social concepts such as self-efficacy and concerns, was the theoretical framework. The research questions examined the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy (SE) and stages of concerns (SoC) about teaching with inclusion. Data were collected on teachers' education, inclusion self-efficacy, and stages of concern about teaching with inclusion. Correlations between means for profile scores, grade level, and building were used to define grade-level training needs. Spearman's correlations indicated a significant correlation between teacher SE and SoC (r = .36). Results for the first school sample indicated no significant correlation between teacher SE and SoC (r =.-18), while results for the second school sample indicated a significant correlation between teacher SE and SoC (r = .47). This study has the potential to contribute to positive social change by encouraging administrators and school leaders to design inclusion PD sessions that are differentiated according to general educators' specific SE and SoC scores.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this study to my loving, caring, and supportive daughter DaMera Danielle`. Your patience and encouragement has been critical to its fruition. I appreciate you so much. You are the reason why I try. I love you!

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I would like to first thank God for his grace, mercy and the many blessings he has bestowed over my life. Thank you for the strength to continue my doctoral journey despite the many setbacks and disappointments that I have encountered along the way. Thank you Lord, for taking away the spirit of defeat and replacing it with the confidence needed to keep going forward and realizing my dream. I also thank you for providing me with the best support system anyone could even imagine. My circle may be small but it is mighty powerful.

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inspirational to me. Without you this research would not have been possible. Thank you for taking time out of your already overwhelming and busy schedules to provide me with your perspectives on the topic of inclusive education. I am very grateful to those that were willing to assist me in this endeavor.

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Section 1: Introduction of the Study

Introduction

Inclusion education began to emerge as a common practice in the 1980s, over a decade after the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) of 1975 (renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Act [IDEA] in 1990). *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform,* written by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), brought needed attention to educational reform and made certain changes. As a result, special education students now spend all or part of their day in inclusive classrooms that constitute the least restrictive environment (LRE) for them (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act [IDEIA], 2004). There has been a significant movement across the nation to include all children in general education classrooms in their neighborhood schools without opposition. Today, the number of students receiving special education services within an inclusion setting is increasing; as a result, the educational system is forced to reexamine whether this the most appropriate setting for the educational well-being of all students (Runswick-Cole, 2011).

Educators have encountered many challenges when implementing inclusionary programs (Runswick-Cole, 2011). “Inclusion is not merely a placement in a general education classroom as mainstreaming often was” (Prunty, 2011, p. 26). It implies students with disabilities of both high and low incidence will receive a quality education among peers without disabilities and who are of similar age. According to Salend, (2001) inclusion is an attempt to establish collaborative, supportive, and nurturing communities. These communities ensure that all students receive the

services and accommodations they need, while respecting each other and learning from their individual differences.

Problem Statement

Implementing effective inclusive education is a gap in practice for teachers in the Shelco School District. According to Exceptional Children of the Shelco School District, (2015) the district had 149,928 students of which 18,880 (13.3%) had disabilities. This district had 101,385 (67.6%) Black students, 30,252 (20.2%) White students, 13,758 (9.2%) Hispanic or Latino students, and 4,057 (2.7 %) Asian or Pacific Islander students. Even after implementation of IDEA over 4 decades ago, teachers still feel ill-prepared to implement inclusive education sufficiently to students in schools (Florian, 2008). This was true of the middle school teachers of the Shelco School; who requested additional professional development (PD) on inclusive education. Several teachers who teach in the Shelco school system served as participants and completed surveys to document their current needs for the administration for this study.

Teachers receive pedagogy-based interaction through the formal education they receive prior to entering the classroom (Florian, 2008). This training prepares them to teach students who do not have special needs or require additional support. Although teachers have chosen a profession that requires them to interact with various student populations, several teachers in the Shelco school system believed they had limited ability to successfully implement inclusion. Many educators have not been adequately trained, nor are they mentally prepared, to handle the challenges of an inclusive setting (Florian, 2008).

Inclusion education can increase the learning levels of all and can prepare students of all abilities to function outside of the school (Wehman, 2013). Students with special needs and

disabilities should not be separated from their nondisabled peers because students with special needs will become future employees and neighbors (Goodman, Hazelkorn, Bucholz, Duffy, & Kitta, 2011). Students with disabilities will shop at the same stores, patronize the same restaurants, hotels and health clubs as there non-disabled peers. To prepare everyone to live together successfully, everyone must be educated together (Wehman, 2013). Students with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities make better academic progress within an inclusion setting (Lysaght, Cobigo, & Hamilton, 2012; Prunty, 2011).

This study was influenced by middle school teachers' multiple formal and informal requests for additional training on implementing inclusion. During a school climate survey administered in the spring of 2012, many general education teachers requested additional training on implementing inclusion. Upon learning this, I contacted several teachers at two other middle schools in the district to inquire about their experiences with implementing inclusive education within their classrooms. Many mentioned a desire for additional PD on how to successfully implement inclusive education.

During the 2014-2015 school year, the district did not offer any middle school PD training for teaching inclusion .During the 2013-2014 school year one PD sessions on differentiated instruction was offered for 48 teachers involved in the co-teaching process within the district. Only one PD session on differentiated instruction was conducted during the 2013-2014 school year. It was presented at Middle School A, where 53 teachers attended, but it was not offered at Middle School B. The one-size-fit all lecture discussed tips and strategies for teaching diverse students. While the session was well conducted and offered good information and excellent strategies, several teachers wrote in the evaluation form that the session did not

address the specific issues they faced in their classrooms. This study was expected to contribute to the knowledge needed to identify specific training needs of teachers teaching in an inclusive environment.

Background

The American education system is facing a critical issue in coming up with evidence to assess and improve teacher preparation programs (Beare, Marshall, Torgerson, Tracz, & Chiero, 2012). There have been challenges in preparing and retaining a sufficient number of high-quality teachers who can work effectively with, and raise the achievement of, all students (Wang, Spalding, Odell, Klecka, & Lin, 2010).

Teacher preparation programs were most beneficial when they responded directly to the needs of teachers through a clear, practical, and consistent approach (Hough, 2011). The need for educators to enhance inclusive cultures in mainstream classrooms focused on responding to the diverse needs of students that are beneficial to student both with and without disabilities (Tomlinson, 2012).

Teacher preparation. Federal education reform (NCLB, YEAR; IDEA, 2004) "prompted public schools to increase the performance of all students through standards, accountability, and inclusive classrooms" (Fullerton, Ruben, McBride, & Bert, 2011, p. 27). As middle and secondary classrooms become increasingly inclusive, many general educators may not be prepared to address the diverse learning needs of students and many special educators may not be prepared to teach content (Brownell, Sindelar, Kiely, & Danielson, 2010). New models that integrate the preparation of special education teachers with the preparation of general education teachers have been developed because of the inconsistency in today's schools

and traditional teacher preparation (Brownell et al., 2010). With the increasing diversity in classrooms today, all teachers are expected to acquire the skills needed to teach students who have a range of learning needs, including students with disabilities (Florian, 2008; McCray & McHatton, 2007; Sobel, Iceman-Sands, & Basile, 2007). Zundans-Fraser and Lancaster (2012) wrote "A number of studies stated that participation in a preservice course in special or inclusive education positively influence the attitudes and self-efficacy of preservice teachers" (p. 1). Many teacher preparation programs have modified their preservice programs to better meet the needs of inclusive environments, but there is little empirical evidence to support which particular knowledge, skills, and attitudes programs need to enhance. The shortage of special educators has resulted in a less traditional path to certification known as an "alternative certification path." Schools promote this less traditional path to ensure that students with disabilities are taught by fully certified special educators (King-Sears, Carran, Dammann, & Arter, 2012).

General education teachers who have special needs students in their classrooms are experiencing a difficult task of teaching all students effectively. Despite the suggested positive outcomes of inclusion, Purdue, Gordon-Burns, Gunn, Madden, and Surtees (2009) claimed that it was increasingly difficult in secondary schools to meet the educational needs of young people with disabilities in an inclusion situation. The successful implementation of inclusive practices is largely dependent on the educators' acceptance of the policies (Purdue et al., 2009). Inclusion of students implies that the learning environment and curriculum will accommodate the needs of all students in the classroom (Ryndak, Jackson, & White, 2013). Teachers' perceptions and attitudes about inclusive education must be examined in order to improve what is identified as deficiencies within the education system that are negative influences.

It could prove useful to identify the factors that influence teachers' perceptions of inclusive practices. These are the obstacles that threaten the success of any inclusive program. According to David and Kuyini (2012), there has been a shift in teachers' attitude toward inclusion, partly as a result of teachers working with students with special needs. However, teachers are most positive about the inclusion of students whose characteristics were not likely to require extra instructional or management skills on their part (Blackman, Conrad, & Brown, 2012).

Martinez (2003) identified three core values underlying the philosophy of inclusion of students with disabilities in general education settings: "(a) positive attitudes toward increased inclusion of students with disabilities; (b) high sense of teaching efficacy; and (c) willingness and ability to adapt one's teaching to meet the individual educational needs of students with disabilities" (p. 474). This indicates that the problems with PD are not a lack of content, but rather a lack of differentiated PD that takes into account teachers' feelings and teachers' place along a continuum of learning at the very lowest end. In this study, a sociocultural constructivist approach was used to identify teachers' concerns and efficacy to create clusters for differentiated PD from a combined score of teachers concerns and sense of SE.

Black-Hawkins (2013) suggested that several additional competencies should become integral components of teacher preparation programs for both special and general educators: (a) collaborative teaming and teaching skills; (b) skill in making curricular and instructional accommodations; (c) knowledge and skill in areas of assistive technologies; and (d) positive behavioral support. Black-Hawkins developed inclusive pedagogy that focuses on what is to be taught and how, rather than who is to learn it. This method focuses on the strong

interconnections between curriculum and pedagogy. This focus will move from teaching approaches that work for most learners to a more inclusive pedagogy to include learners with learning disabilities (Black-Hawkins, 2013).

According to LaPrairie, Johnson, Rice, Adams, and Higgins (2010), effective teachers know and use a repertoire of curriculum adaptations, differentiated instruction strategies, and universal design approaches. Some examples include dialogue journals, simulations, one-to-one conferences, literature circles, thematic instruction, drama, and arts integration. Employing cooperative learning, peer-tutoring formats, in which everyone has a chance to be a tutor and other sociable structures, prepares young people for the real world, where collaboration is expected and essential (LaPrairie et al., 2010). In other words, teachers can incorporate strategies they are familiar with and comfortable using.

School and Teacher Change

How teachers feel about teaching with inclusion is vitally important. Even if teachers are well prepared, have opportunities to grow, and receive plenty of time and resources to plan effectively, teachers can still be afraid of the realities of the classroom. According to Poekert (2012), collaborative PD can impact teaching practices. A substantive change in teaching practices can occur through teacher collaborative PD coupled with specific feedback on instruction (Poekert, 2012). According to Poekert, there are various types of PD activities teachers can attend that will contribute to their development. School site professional learning communities and training institutes with colleagues from other schools are the two strategies teachers must partake in for school reform efforts to change instructional practice (Poekert, 2012).

Teacher Efficacy

Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) defined teachers' SE as the perception a teacher has relating to their own ability to reach his or her students, and enabling them to learn effectively. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) found that "mastery experiences examined as satisfaction with past professional performance, was moderately related to teacher sense of efficacy for both novice and career teachers" (p. 953). The concept of self-efficacy (SE) is concerned with one's beliefs in his or her capabilities to produce given attainments (Bandura, 1986). SE has been conceived as a situational-bounded construct based on information drawn from a particular context rather than a stable trait (Bandura, 2001). According to Bandura (1986), everyone cannot be all things; even within a person's given pursuits, the levels at which he cultivates efficacy will differ.

Among new teachers with very little classroom experience, SE is likely driven by a combination of factors, including experiences and skills in the classroom, knowledge of content and pedagogy, attitudes, and personal dispositions (Bandura, 1997; 1992; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Efficacy beliefs affect how people interpret situations, and imagine future scenarios. The original instrument identifies teachers' degree of attainability according to their level of beliefs. Those with high efficacy beliefs view circumstances with a high degrees of attainability. Those with low efficacy beliefs dwell on personal deficiencies caused by cognitive negativity that ultimately undermines self-motivation (Bandura, 1997). Recently, researchers created a version of the TSES so that they could rate Teacher Efficacy of Inclusive Practices (TEIP). Park, Dimitrov, Das, and Gichuru (2014) determined the validity and scoring procedures for the instrument. The scale has three factors: Efficacy to Use Inclusive Education, Efficacy in Collaboration, and Efficacy in Managing Behavior.

Tschannen-Moran (2000) tested four different models of PD in the introduction of instructional strategies: (a) verbal persuasion (lecture); (b) vicarious experiences (lecture plus modeling); (c) mastery experience (practice with other colleagues); and (d) full mastery (coaching in the teachers' own classroom). The findings suggest that SE beliefs do not add to incremental gains through linear progression.

Stages of Concern

From its inception, the SoCQ has been used to conduct research and collect data in numerous peer-reviewed articles and studies that involve innovation (Hall, George, & Rutherford, 1979). Used primarily with in-service teachers involved in innovation, the Stages of Concerns Questionnaire (SoCQ) is an established instrument that was used in this study. According to O'Sullivan & Zielinske (1988), the SoCQ offers a way to measure and assess reforms and innovations in teacher preparation and effectiveness. The questionnaire focuses on in-service and preservice teachers. Jamil, Downer, and Pianta (2012) found that predictors of preservice teachers' level of SE at the end of their teacher preparation experience were based on extraversion (a positive association with SE) and neuroticism (a negative association with SE). Preservice teachers with progressive, democratic, child-centered views do not regard their students' difficulties as personal failures. They see students as partners in the process of creating knowledge (Jamil et al., 2012).

According to George, Hall, and Stiegelbauer (2006), the higher the score on the SoC chart, the lower the level of concern. While the full details are given in the methodology, a synopsis is shared in the next paragraphs. A score of 4, 5, or 6 indicates that the participant is experiencing a low level of concern. A score of 3, 2, 1, or 0 indicates that the participant is

experiencing higher level of concern (George et al., 2006). Al-Shabata (2014) selected a small sample size of 22 "gifted" teachers. For RQ1, "What is the concern profile most associated with the gifted' teachers in Jordan?" The lowest mean score was for Stage 0, while the highest mean score was for Stage 3. For RQ 2, "What are the predominant stages of concerns for the gifted' teachers in Jordan?" 32% of participants expressed their highest concerns at Stage 3 for RQ3, "What concerns do you have in e-learning integration?" an inductive qualitative approach was used to conduct and analyze interviews. The majority of the responses centered on Stage 4, a very low SoC about their teaching. According to these results, teachers' low SoC created the need for administration to develop a policy that encouraged peer collaboration and coaching (George et al., 2006). Brownell et al. (2010) recommended that teacher meetings and classroom visits be implemented to provide teachers with opportunities to learn from each other.

Nature of the Study

This quantitative study utilized two published surveys to collect data. A survey was chosen as the preferred type of data collection procedure because it enabled a speedy turnaround in data collection (Creswell, 2012). Collecting this data through a survey also guaranteed the anonymity of its participants, which allowed them to answer truthfully without fear of retaliation. This method of data collection also made it possible to reach a larger population as opposed to the qualitative method of conducting interviews (Banister, Bunn, Burman, & Daniels, 2011).

In this study teachers' attitudes towards and levels of concerns regarding teaching students in and inclusive classroom were examined. Teachers' SE and SoC scores were combined to create a profile for each teacher. The findings were assessed to suggest groupings of teachers for PD on inclusion in each school building and at all grade levels. Participants' scores

on the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale) were combined with the scores of the SoCQ) to determine the correlation between teachers' level of SE and their SoC. For example, teachers with a profile of SE1, SoC5 have medium concerns and low SE. These data were used to identify PD for teachers who share the same levels of concerns and efficacy.

Teacher beliefs and concerns scales. The TSES asked participants to respond to 24 questions on a 9-point Likert scale, with anchors ranging from 1 (Nothing) to 9 (A Great Deal). Participants rated themselves on how much they could perform in relation to each of the specific questions. The SoCQ is comprised of 35 statements to which the participants responded on a 0-7 Likert scale according to how true the statement seemed to them at the time from 0 (Irrelevant) to 7 (Very True of Me Now). Previous researchers indicated a link between a teacher's SE and successful classroom practices (Sharma, Loreman, & Forlin, 2012). Improving teachers' SE could improve their SoC and success in the classroom.

In this study, I examined teachers' perceptions of their preparedness to implement the inclusive model in the general education setting. The scores of the SoCQ George et al., 2006 and the TSES (were combined as a means to define each teacher's inclusion profile.

Research Questions

Teachers have not had enough PD on inclusion, and the PD they have had has been held in the traditional large group lecture format which did not meet their needs and wants. High quality education is now defined as differentiated for content and socioemotional differences (Hunzicker, 2011). In short, PD should be customized according to how teachers feel about inclusion and their concerns about teaching with inclusion.

Large lecture PD on inclusion education does not have the socio-cultural information to differentiate the session to address teachers' specific issues, for example, data that the school administrators and faculty do not know, such as teachers' level of SE and SoC in each grade level and building. Administrators and faculty have no way to know if their fourth grade teachers, for example, are really struggling with SE for teaching with inclusion. The aim of this study was to fill that gap by collecting data regarding teachers' sociocultural needs defined as SE and SoC for inclusion PD.

What are the mean and mode for SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building and grade level?

H1o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices.

H1a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices.

What are teachers' profiles as a combination of SE levels and SoC stages for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building and grade level?

H2o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School A.

H2a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School A.

Are there correlations between SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building?

H3o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School B.

H3a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School B.

PD is typically planned according to school building, grade-level, or teachers' history of education on the topic. Knowing the SE/SoC of teachers in each of that three groups will help determine the level at which PD is offered. With this information, a compelling argument can be made about documenting the preparedness that defines the specific PD needs that would allow for differentiating teachers' PD.

The results of this study will be used to make recommendations to improve differentiated PD on inclusion. The long-term goal is to address the needs of these particular teachers so that in subsequent administrations of these two survey instruments, the district can ultimately see a rise in its SE and stage for using inclusive practices. This information could also help establish coaching and mentoring relationships. A more detailed discussion on methodology appears in Section 3.

Purpose of Study

Social constructivism is the theoretical base for the quantitative survey questions based on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge, and learning (Pillen, Brok & Beijaard, 2013). The purpose of this study was to gather quantitative documentation of teachers' level of preparedness as combined SE and SoC ratings. The information attained on teachers' level of preparedness was used to make recommendations on how to differentiate PD groups, the content of each group, and the activities appropriate for each group.

The inclusion model in education is geared toward students with special needs who are receiving instruction, based on their skills, in a general education classroom during specific periods of time. The primary instruction for students with disabilities must be provided within the inclusion setting while adhering to the modifications set forth in their individual education plans (IEP).

The primary contribution of this study was to a nationwide problem in which the government has mandated inclusion of special needs students, and has provided little if any PD funding to prepare general education teachers to meet the needs of all their students. The data collected was used to determine where groups of teachers are on the levels of concern scale. Items for this survey were developed from typical responses of school and college teachers. Teacher's response to the items on this survey ranged from no knowledge at all of the inclusion process to many years of experience of this process. Depending on a teacher's level of concern, many of the items on this questionnaire may appear to be of little significance or insignificant to them at this time. Other items represented the concerns teachers have in varying degrees of intensity on a scale of 0 (Irrelevance) to 7 (Very true of me now). If subsequent use of the survey in this district showed significant gains, this could then demonstrate that if teachers' level of concern is known, then effective PD can be tailored to their level of concern.

Theoretical Framework

Social constructivism and contact theory were the two cornerstones of this research. Social-constructivism focuses directly on the social and emotional reasons that people construct knowledge. In line with the social constructivists, contact theory asserts that frequent,

meaningful, and pleasant interactions between people with differences tend to produce changes in attitude (Hwang & Evans, 2011).

Researcher has shown that teachers with higher SE regarding teaching inclusion are better inclusion teachers (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Social and emotional constructs such as negative attitude, low SE, and high SoC for surface features such as where in the classroom the disabled child sits have been identified as barriers for teachers who oppose inclusion (Chi, & VanLehn, 2012). To understand and use social constructivism, it is useful to know the premises that inspire them (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2014). Social constructivism is based on the assumption that reality is constructed through human activity, knowledge is created through interactions with others in the environment, and meaningful learning occurs when individuals are engaged in social activities (Kim, 2001).

Rae, Murray, and McKenzie (2010) stated that positive aspects that come from inclusion education/mainstreaming are often attributed to the contact theory. The reasons to learn more about inclusion are not solely content or cognitive reasons but to learn with people in the same stage and SE level are to provide the social atmosphere in which teachers learn how to implement inclusive practices. Teachers will have a better attitude, ability, and support from teachers in the same level. Most important, teachers constructing knowledge about teaching with inclusion will have a greater sensitivity to the social needs of students with special needs and disabilities.

Operational Definitions

The following terms were used operationally within this study.

Accommodations: This describes any adjustment made to an assignment that keeps the same objectives as the original assignment (Baglieri & Knopf, 2004).

Collaborative teaching: This refers to the presence of two or more educators within the general education classroom simultaneously. Both educators are jointly planning for instructing and evaluating a group of students (Friend & Bursuck, 2002).

Co-teaching consists of two or more people sharing the responsibility for teaching some or all of the students assigned to a classroom (Laprairie et al., 2010).

General education is a program that is provided or available to all students. The students are taught the general education curriculum (Nietupski, 1995). The *General Education Initiative* called for the general education teacher to become more responsible for educating students with disabilities within the school (Nietupski, 1995).

Inclusion model: This is an educational strategy that teachers use to allow the students with disabilities to be educated within the general education setting. The students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum (Laprairie et al., 2010).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): An IEP is a document that is developed and written by a committee that describes in detail how the students with disabilities are going to access the general education curriculum with special accommodations, modifications and services (Laprairie et al., 2010).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA): IDEIA is the federal legislation for educating special education students.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) refers to IDEA's mandate that students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with their nondisabled peers (IDEIA, 2004).

Mainstreaming refers to instructional, temporal, and social integration of special education students with their nondisabled peers; the general educator is the primary instructor with the resource teacher involved in special placement (Taylor, 2005).

Modification: This refers to changes instruction or course materials that allow a student to learn at their own level (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003).

Preservice training describes direct instruction that takes place before a person begins a job or task (Jobling & Moni, 2004).

Professional development: This term refers to the commitment to provide effective strategies that can be utilized to improve teaching and enhance student learning. PD is also referred to as staff development and professional learning communities by the Georgia Department of Education.

Self-contained classroom: This refers to when a student with special education services is removed from the general school population for all academic subjects to work in a small setting with a special educator (Walsh & Jones, 2004).

Social system: This describes the people in a society considered as a system organized by a characteristic pattern of relationships (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

Special education: This term encompasses a broad spectrum of individually planned teaching procedures and evaluations. Within special education, instruction is modified, adapted equipment and material are available, and other interventions are designed to help learner with

special needs achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency and success with the school and community (Friend & Bursuck, 2002).

Teacher efficacy: This term describes when a teacher believes that he or she is a highly capable and effective teacher. They believe they are successful in increasing student achievement (Deemer, 2004).

Teachers' perceptions toward inclusion: In this study, this describes teachers' feelings or thought towards working with students who receive special education services within the general classroom (Deemer, 2004).

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

Assumption

This study was based on four assumptions. The first assumption was that a majority of teachers at both locations will participate in this study. The second assumption was that participants will provide credible information when answering survey questions. The third assumption was that participants who receive the survey will considered each item and answer each question honestly without fear of repercussion. Lastly, when differentiated PD is provided for this district, surveys would be administered before and after PD to evaluate growth of individuals and groups of teachers.

Limitations

This study was limited to a single school district, which may weaken reproduction of results in dissimilar districts. The data collection method used in this study included the use of Likert-type surveys, which are composed of closed-ended questions which may have limited the teachers' responses. The sample in this study was restricted to general education teachers who

teach in inclusive environments in one school district located in a southeastern state in the United States. This limitation of this study could make the results difficult to generalize to other areas of the country.

Scope and Delimitations

The targeted population was middle school general education teachers who participated in the inclusion of students with disabilities in one school district. Using a medium size sample was sufficient in providing statistical support for the results of this study. This study involved surveying general education teachers in two middle schools located in a school district in the southeastern part of the United States. The surveys for this study included Likert-type scales which allowed for timely data collection. In order to guarantee confidentiality, the pseudonym Shelco school system will be used to refer to location and identify of the participants.

Significance of the Study

The government has mandated that inclusive education of students with special needs be implemented nationwide (McMaster, 2013). This initiative has been implemented with limited PD and funding to prepare general education teachers to meet the needs of all students (McMaster, 2013). Effective PD enhances an educator's effectiveness, which leads to greater student achievement (Odden, 2011).

The original intention of this study was to document the specific SE and SoC of each teacher and groups of teachers. An examination of the areas in which teachers feel inadequate (SoC) and how they believe they will perform (SE) is needed to group those teachers who teach in inclusive settings for the most effective PD. For example, the instruction and assistance

provided to high SE teachers with a high SoC should be different from those teachers with a low SE and a medium SoC. Indeed, the first group may be willing to mentor the latter group.

The research was intended to provide the Shelco School District with information to support general education teachers based on groupings at the level of the school, the grade level, and the clusters that most teachers fall into most often. For example, there may be 30 teachers in the low SE low SoC group and one teacher in the low-efficacy medium SoC; in this case, that one teacher would be merged with the 30. PD is an important element in bringing about an understanding among teachers regarding the changes necessary for successful inclusion (Brownell et al., 2010). It is expected that this study will enable this to happen, thus increasing the likelihood that teacher and fully included student will have a positive working relationship in the classroom.

In this school district, I sought to identify teachers' feelings and beliefs about their preparedness to implement inclusive education. The short-term goals for instigating positive social change were to provide compelling data that revealed the need for PD and suggested effective choices for PD for particular teachers. Subsequent administration of these surveys in this district could yield significant gains. Identifying teachers' level of concern and SE for inclusive practices could be used to differentiate PD to meet the needs of the local teachers with ultimately successful PD and classroom teaching results. This study has implication for positive social change. If the results are successfully implemented, then the academic, emotional, and social development of all students in the classroom will improve.

Summary

Inclusion requires a fundamental restructuring of the school and placing priority on creating and sustaining inclusive learning environments (Crockett, Filippi, & Morgan, 2012; Yell, 1998). Given the legal mandates about the placement of special needs students in the general education classroom, it would be logical of school districts to provide general education teachers with the proper training to experience positive experiences prior to placing students in an inclusive environment (Copfer & Specht, 2014). Teachers are asking for training, support, and strategies to aid them in this process.

This study examined the relationship between differentiating PD training and teachers level of preparedness when implementing inclusive education. The two surveys are used: the SoCQ, which gathers insight into the participants' concerns about inclusion and their roles in the process, and the TSES, which will show how participants feel about their own abilities when working with special needs students. Data collected during this study will also be used to identify teachers' current level of SE and SoCs with the inclusion process. Higher efficacy means a higher level of confidence and a higher SoC means the teacher is able to attend to concerns that are particular to the individual child and situation without being distracted by the array of surface features in any classroom setting. These are the types of teachers that PD can help to develop.

This quantitative study used the combination of these two surveys to document teachers' efficacy and SoC about teaching students in an inclusive classroom. Teachers still face significant problems within the Shelco school system, state systems, and at the national level. A statement of teacher SE was provided, as well as where teachers are currently in their stages of thinking on a progressive scale which is known as the SoCQ. The SoC and the SE ratings

regarding teaching as they relate to a school building and grade level were examined. The purpose of this study was to identify perceived barriers or concerns regarding the successful implementation of inclusion education. A framework explaining inclusive education and mainstreaming becoming a common practice, as well as the significance of inclusive education were discussed.

Section 1 provided a brief background on inclusion and its role in education. In Section 2, the literature review, I focus on understanding inclusion through historical perspectives, misconceptions, and current methods addressing the effectiveness and barriers to inclusion. The following three sections address the issue of teacher's feelings and concerns towards implementing inclusive instruction. Section 3 covers the details of the methodology of the study. In Section 4, the findings of the study, including appropriate tables and figures, are presented. In Section 5 there is a brief summary of the data analysis process the interpretation of the findings; it also includes the conclusions, recommendations for future practice and research, implications for social change.

Section 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Inclusion education and mainstreaming began to emerge as a common practice in the 1980s, a few years after IDEA was passed. For many teachers in the Shelco School District there is a gap in practice when implementing effective inclusive education. The purpose of this study was to gather quantitative documentation of teachers' level of preparedness as combined SE and SoC ratings. The information attained on teachers' level of preparedness was used to make recommendations on how to differentiate PD groups, the content of each group, and the activities appropriate for each group.

This literature review identifies and explains the characteristics of the study. The background necessary for understanding general education teachers' sense of efficacy, levels of concerns and attitudes toward professional development are provided. The review of literature also includes the investigation of essential areas including effectiveness of inclusion, barriers to inclusion, and teachers' preparation for inclusion instruction. An analysis of the reviewed findings which will provide a justification for the data collection methods selected.

This literature review addressed related research and theories, the theoretical framework used to identify issues pertaining to the successful implementation of inclusive practices, and identify the issues to be investigated to authenticate the significance of this problem. Supportive research related to the research questions pertaining to the effectiveness and barriers to inclusion as well as the issue of the teacher in terms of his or her preparedness for inclusive practices, self-efficacy, stages of concerns, and trends in professional development are examined. This

background literature will present an analysis of reviewed findings while providing a justification for the data collection methods selected for this study.

The strategies used for searching literature for this literature review were conducted by accessing professional databases mostly through the Walden University Library and the local Public Library. Several approaches were utilized to obtain references of the topic. Standard, comprehensive, bibliographical sources such as the index of periodicals, the ERIC system, EBSCO host, ProQuest, and ProQuest Digital Dissertations were also used. The following keywords were used to conduct the searches: *attitudes, disabilities, beliefs, education, general education teachers, inclusion, inclusive education, implementing inclusion, learning disabilities, mainstreaming, barriers, special needs students, social constructivism,* and *teacher preparation*.

Theoretical Foundation

The constructivist theory, more commonly known as social constructivism, states that knowledge and understanding is constructed through personal experiences and reflecting on those experiences. According to Vygotsky (1962), a child receives the cognitive tools needed for development through culture and constructivist teaching. Social constructivism identifies social interaction, interpretation and understanding as the basis of how learners construct knowledge.

A number of principles have emerged from the many theories of instruction that have been written from a social constructivist perspective. These theories have been interrogated as a means to identify common principles and processes of constructivist teaching. According to Gergen (1985) constructivism forms a significant challenge to conventional understandings. Constructivist teaching requires changing habits of thinking and doing to show tolerance for all learners (Forlin & Chambers, 2011).

Within inclusion education, there is a need for different ways of thinking and doing things, if conventional education is to realize a constructivist worldview that shows tolerance for all learners. Educators and trainers in both academic and work sectors are promoting the inclusion education/mainstreaming for flexible and learner-centered learning (Rae et al., 2010). In line with the social constructivists, contact theory asserts that frequent, meaningful, and pleasant interactions between people with differences tend to produce changes in attitude (Hwang & Evans, 2011). Face-to-face interaction between members of clearly defined groups is defined as intergroup contact. The goal is to take two clearly defined groups and blur the defining lines through intergroup contact. Positive interactions are surely a part of the findings that intergroup contact reduces prejudices against students with special education needs and disabilities (Rutland, Killen, & Abrams, 2010). Hwang and Evans (2011), however, believed that contact among students with special education needs and disabilities and their nondisabled peers will cause suspicion, fear, resentment, disturbance, and conflict.

Effectiveness of Inclusion

Inclusion education increases the learning levels and prepares students of all abilities to function in the world outside of the school, while self-contained special education is not helpful in preparing students for the real world (Rae et al., 2010). In order to prepare everyone to live together successfully, it is necessary to educate everyone together (Goodman et al 2011). When students with special learning needs or disabilities are placed in a general education classroom, they often view themselves as a member and not an outsider (Scanlon & Baker, 2012).

Schwarz (2007) expressed that students generally benefit from attending the same school in their neighborhood over a period of years, which helps students develop the long-lasting social

relationships that are an important component of education. For example, neighborhood school placement is very important for the success of a student with SEN and disabilities (Mittler, 2012; Tomlinson, 2012). Students with SEN and disabilities who attend the neighborhood school over an extended period of time develop long lasting relationships which is an important component of education for students with SEN and disabilities as well as their nondisabled peers (Mittler, 2010; Tomlinson, 2012). Inclusive classrooms foster a feeling of membership for students with special education needs and disabilities.

According to Lysaght et al. (2012), students with SEN and disabilities make better academic progress within an inclusion education setting. In spite of the suggested positive outcomes of inclusion, Scanlon and Baker (2012) claimed that it was increasingly difficult in secondary school to meet the educational needs of young people with disabilities in an inclusion situation. One reason for this was that staff often felt they were either not skilled enough or did not have the time to adapt the curricula to accommodate the needs of young people with disabilities (Brownell et al., 2010). In some schools students with SEN and disabilities did not have access to the entire curriculum. Physical education is one particular subject where participation with physical impairments may be experience difficulties (Cushing, Carter, Clark, Wallis, & Kennedy, 2009). Schools were also reported as having difficulties in facilitating the full participation of students with SEN and disabilities on school trips and other extra-curricular school activities (Cushing et al., 2009).

Barriers to Inclusion

The general classroom teachers who have special needs students in their classrooms are experiencing a beneficial but difficult task of teaching all students fairly. According to Schwarz

(2007), “The general classroom is the right place to support students with special education needs and disabilities” (p. 39). However, both preservice and in-service teachers have concerns about inclusion, such as the lack of time they have for other students or a lack of adequate resources for effective inclusion to take place (Forlin & Chambers, 2011; Horne & Timmons, 2009).

Capraro, Capraro, and Helfeldt (2010) stated that there is a national demand for the reform of teacher education, particularly university-based preparation. According to Zeichner (1999), an education faculty must do the best job possible in preparing teachers for schools. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan affirmed the sentiment that our schools, colleges, and departments of education are doing a mediocre job of preparing teachers for the realities of the 21st century classroom (Beare et al., 2012).

Student teaching is field experience for teacher candidates seeking to receive a teaching certificate (Zeichner, 1999). This culminating course is supervised through the college or university the teacher candidate attends. During this experience, the teacher candidate works closely with college supervisors and chosen experienced classroom teachers in a classroom setting to practice and refine their teaching skills, while learning how to promote student learning (Zeichner, 1999). This experience provides preservice teachers the opportunity to work in different schools and at different grade levels and experience an array of learning environments.

According to a qualitative study conducted by Fuchs (2010), there were common challenges with general educators’ classroom contexts that inhibited their success in educating children with disabilities in the general classroom setting. There were 3 patterns that emerged from the data collected during this study: “(a) Lack of administrative support, (b) teachers’

perceived lack of support from special educators and support staff, and (c) teachers' lack of sufficient preparation in their preservice programs" (p. 32). Constant comparison analysis ensured that the themes identified emerged from the data itself.

The topic of inclusion is often controversial and multiple barriers may be encountered when being implemented (Martinez, 2003). In order for inclusion to be successful in the general education classroom, general education teachers as well as other school personnel must be willing to accommodate students with disabilities (Martinez, 2003). Inclusion requires a philosophical change that requires general curriculum teachers to develop adequate knowledge, teaching skills, and a positive attitude towards students with special needs who are or will be included in their classrooms (Vaidya & Zaslavsky, 2000).

Teachers must be willing to relinquish unproductive traditions and beliefs and replace them with practices that are a confirmed if they are to improve students' learning (Beckman, 2001). Teachers must be willing to spend the time and effort that is necessary to plan, teach, accommodate, and differentiate for the students' individual needs (Beckman, 2001). In order for students with disabilities to be educated in the general education classroom, there are a number of barriers that need to be conquered (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000). These barriers include the number of students in a classroom, insufficient planning time, and inadequate administrative support. Other barriers preventing successful inclusive practices include a lack of effectively prepared staff, theoretical differences between regular education and special education, a lack of related services, a lack of monitoring systems, and attitudes of adults (Avramidis et al., 2000).

According to Woelfel (1994), the implementation of inclusion within a general education setting is more costly than providing special education services in a pull-out program. The addition in cost provides another barrier when implementing the inclusive process. Bradshaw (2009) indicated that many teachers were often hesitant about implementing inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education environment. Teachers' level of acceptance or lack thereof regarding implementing inclusion in the general education classroom is directly affected by their commitment to this process. Another effect on teachers' commitment to the implementation of inclusion is educators who are supportive of the idea but unwilling to make the necessary accommodations and modification needed for students to succeed in this setting.

Many general education teachers often feel frustrated and inadequate, resulting in barriers to an inclusive education for students in a general education environment (Bradshaw, 2009). There have been many studies conducted indicating that the concept of inclusion has not been supported by general education teachers due to not receiving adequate training to work with students with disabilities (Bruneau-Balderrama, 1997), a lack of support from administration to allow the needed time to plan for inclusion (Salend, 2001), inadequate personnel support (Salend, 2001), negative impact on the time the general education teacher has to work with all students in the classroom (Bruneau-Balderrama, 1997; Salend, 2001), uncertainty of social and academic gains for students with disabilities (Salend, 2001), and the inability of teachers to problem solve and work collaboratively (Bruneau-Balderrama, 1997; Salend, 2001).

Inclusion is a task that requires teachers to invest considerable efforts in handling difficult challenges (Almog & Shechtman, 2007). The amount of time and persistence a teacher is willing to invest in difficult and negative experience is affected by a teacher's SE (Almog &

Shechtman, 2007). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2007) found that teacher's SE predicts both teaching practices and student learning (Almog & Shechtman, 2007; Brady & Woolfson, 2008). The comfort level of a teacher around people with disabilities is likely to have some influence on his or her attitude towards teaching students with disabilities (Brady & Woolfson, 2008). Teachers who are knowledgeable and apply appropriate strategies will aid in the successful implementation of academics and appropriate social behaviors of all students, with and without disabilities (Brady & Woolfson, 2008).

Teacher Preparation for Inclusion Instruction

For several decades, teacher education programs in the United States have prepared personnel for separate disciplines of teaching, such as general education or special education (Pugach, Blanton, & Correa, 2011). With the increasing diversity in classrooms today all teachers are expected to acquire the skills needed to teach students with a range of learning needs, including students with disabilities (McCray & McHatton, 2011; Sobel et al., 2007). There is a shortage of special educators which has resulted in a less traditional path to certification known as alternative certification paths. This less traditional path is being taken to ensure that students with disabilities are taught by fully-certified special educators (King-Sears et al., 2012). Traditional teacher preparation programs do not fully immerse preservice educators in the school setting until their student teaching experience. This experience provides preservice teachers with on-the-job training while completing their teaching preparation program to become fully certified educators (King-Sears et al., 2012).

The number of student teacher hours required by teacher candidates varies greatly by program and state. According to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (2006),

some schools such as Chapman University and Fresno Pacific University require as few as 500 hours, while others like Loyola Marymount University require as many as 1600 hours.

Regardless of the number of hours, Martinez (2003) identified three areas as being the core values underlying the philosophy of inclusion of students with disabilities in general education settings: "(a) positive attitudes toward increased inclusion of students with disabilities; (b) high sense of teaching efficacy; and (c) willingness and ability to adapt one's teaching to meet the individual educational needs of students with disabilities" (p. 474). King-Sears et al. (2012) suggested that several additional competencies should become integral components of teacher preparation programs for both special and general educators including: (a) collaborative teaming and teaching skills; (b) skill in making curricular and instructional accommodations; (c) knowledge and skill in areas of assistive technologies; and (d) positive behavioral support (Van Laarhoven, Munk, Lynch, Bosma, & Rouse, 2007). Teacher preparation programs adapt their curriculum to meet the changing needs of inclusive environments without the evidence to support specifically which knowledge, skills, and attitudes these programs should enhance (Loreman, Forlin, & Sharma, 2014).

Researchers have stated that effective teachers use a repertoire of curriculum adaptations, differentiated instruction strategies, and universal design approaches. According to LaPrairie et al. (2010), great practice such as dialogue journals, simulations, one-to-one conferences, literature circles, thematic instruction, drama and arts integration, and other dynamic teaching and engaged learning strategies support all students. Employing cooperative learning, peer-tutoring formats in which everyone has a chance to be a tutor, and other sociable structures

prepares young people for the real world, where collaboration is expected and essential (Brownell et al., 2010).

Planning must be a continuing process for a successful inclusive educational program. Advanced planning is extremely important when including students with special learning needs and disabilities in the traditional classroom setting. Lysaght et al. (2012) recommended a process that takes into account the range of learners in a classroom while honoring the diversity of all students involved. Advanced planning must take place including the classroom teacher and the special education teacher in order to implement long term differentiated instruction strategies and adaptations. Poor planning typically results in special education teachers and classroom teachers cobbling together piecemeal adaptations which show little, if any, success for all students involved in this process (Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2010).

Teacher Self-Efficacy

The concept of SE is concerned with ones' beliefs in his or her capabilities to produce given attainments (Bandura, 1994). SE has been conceived as a situationally bounded construct based on information drawn from a particular context and not a stable trait (Bandura, 2000). According to Bandura, everyone cannot be all things, which would require mastery of every realm of human life. Even within a person's given pursuits, the levels at which they cultivate their efficacy will differ.

It is important to consider students' SE in terms of interacting with one another. According to Gebhardt et al. (2012), there are advantages and disadvantages with inclusion education for both the student with special learning needs and disabilities and his non-disabled peers. Regular students in the inclusion classroom also increase their SE in terms of relating to

students with disabilities. Studies show that educating students with SEN and disabilities side-by side with their nondisabled peers facilitates access to the general curriculum. Students with SEN and disabilities who receive inclusive education have higher academic achievement and better social skills.

SE is an important concept of the social cognitive theory and applies to both students and teachers. According to Bandura (1997), SE can be defined as an individual's perception of his or her own capabilities for organizing and successfully executing the courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. SE represents an individual's perception of the performance not the skills that he/she can demonstrate against different situations. Bandura (1986; 1997) proposed that "mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal, with mastery experiences postulated as the most potent source" (p. 944). Woolfolk, Rosoff, and Hoy (1990) explained teachers' SE as the perception a teacher has relating to teacher's reaching his or her students and enabling them to learn effectively.

It seems logical that teachers would increase in their level of SE for teaching with inclusion as time goes by. Perceived SE is concerned with people's beliefs in their ability to influence events that affect their lives. According to Bandura (2001), this core belief is the foundation of human motivation, performance accomplishments, and emotional well-being. To study SE empirically, instruments had to be created and tested.

Measuring SE in teachers has been an ongoing project. According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), researchers questioned the validity and reliability of a two-item survey that was included within a larger survey during the 1960s. Researchers attempted to measure teacher's sense of SE by asking two questions regarding their influence over their environment based on

the social learning theory (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In the 1980s, Gibson and Dembo developed a 30-point Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) using the research gathered from Rand's social learning theory and Bandura's social cognitive theory (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). This scale measured outcome expectancies of personal teaching efficacy (PTE) and general teaching efficacy (GTE). A desire to incorporate Bandura's suggestions to include various levels of task demands as well as define the problems regarding GET and PTE issues lead to the creation of the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) in April of 2001. Under the direction of Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, this scale was later re-titled the Teacher's Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES), one of the two instruments used in the current research dissertation.

The most common definition of SE reads "beliefs in one's capacity to organize and execute the course of action required to produce a given attainment" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Educators with high SE skills believe they have the ability to perform the action that will lead to an outcome. These educators strongly believe their instructional actions in the general education setting leads to desired educational outcomes for the learning of students with disabilities (Beare et al., 2012).

In terms of preservice teachers, an increase in teacher confidence was not always found to be the norm. Researchers using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey (TSES; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007) have suggested that previous inclusion training does not have a positive or negative effect on participants desire to participate in the inclusion process. According to these researchers, the beliefs a teacher has about inclusion is not an indicator of how confident a teacher feels about his or her ability to implement inclusion in their classroom.

This is just a symptom of the larger crisis; the American education system is facing a critical issue in "developing a culture of evidence to assess and improve teacher preparation programs" (Beare et al., 2012, p. 159). According to Wang et al. (2010), there has been a challenge to prepare and retain a sufficient number of high-quality teachers who are able to work effectively and raise achievement for all students. According to Wilson, Floden, and Ferrini-Mundy (2001), there is a lack of strong research based on how best to prepare teachers to meet the challenges of today's classrooms. Even after several years, formal program assessment efforts are still lacking in teacher education (Cochran-Smith, 2003). These shortages resulted in a myriad of potential solutions regarding the preparation of teachers (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2009). In this and other areas, educators are making progress; however, the road to innovation and implementation is difficult.

Hergenhahn and Olson (2005) identified strategies to help students with ADHD or similar disorders learn social skills by conducting an extensive discussion of Albert Bandura and his SE theory. The method of modeling which is a social behavioral method used to teach complex behaviors, in a short period of time through imitation (Hergenhahn & Olson, 2005) was identified as a successful strategy to show students what to do and how positive social behavioral looks. Taking into account students' mental maturity and physical motor skills level, students can learn the social skills of respect and cooperation by watching teachers model these behaviors. Teachers who use this modeling method in educating children with disabilities are often required to overcome negative influences students are exposed to such as anti-social behavior and images of violence (Bandura, 1997).

Klassen and Lynch (2007) found that the level of effort and persistence expanded on a task was influenced by SE beliefs. According to Sze (2009), a teacher's initial beliefs regarding a student will transform their behaviors in way to support their original expectations. The expectations and attitudes of teachers drive the behavior of students (Quenemoen, Thompson, & Thurlow, 2003) and students will generally do what their teacher expects of them. It is imperative that teachers understand that their behavior directly affects the education of their students (Sze, 2009). Teachers with high SE believe in their ability to bring about positive change among their students (Bandura, 1997) and view their students' disabilities as modifiable. This is a direct correlation between the teachers' role and the student's level of production.

SE is viewed as a particular set of behaviors which are composed of efficacy expectations and outcome expectations (Bandura, 1997). These two SE components relate to a belief in one's personal capacity to affect a behavior and a belief that the behavior will result in a particular outcome (Hergenhan & Olson, 2005). The theory of education has evolved from teachers giving lectures to utilizing activities and interaction with manipulatives and concepts in the classroom. Bandura's past research on the power of modeling and educational trends has shown that interactive and hands-on classroom are positive environments for students with particular disabilities. A positive environment that embraces all children, regardless of ability, would improve SE beliefs.

Over the past several decades there has been a growing interest in teacher SE (Skaalvik & Skaalivik, 2007). Because SE is the belief one has about their capabilities to carry out a particular action successfully (Bandura, 1997) it is an important influence on human achievement in a variety of settings including education. According to Brady and Woolfson

(2008), teachers with a strong sense of SE are more accepting of the inclusive process. Teachers with a sense of high efficacy were better prepared to take responsibility for students with disabilities in their classroom and were willing to accommodate students' needs by modifying teaching methods.

Stages of Concern

Used primarily with in-service teachers involved in innovations, the Stages of Concerns Questionnaire (SoCQ) is an established instrument which I used in this study. According to O'Sullivan and Zielinske (1988), the SoCQ is based on theoretical constructs that were developed in the early works of Frances Fuller and others during the 1960s in an effort to measure and assess reforms and innovations in teacher preparation and effectiveness. It focuses on in-service and preservice teachers' concerns about innovation. The stages of concern about an innovation progress from little or no concern, to personal or self concerns, to concerns about the task of adopting the innovation, and finally to concerns about the impact of the innovation. Figure 1 presents the levels for the stages of concerns about an innovation.

Impact		
4 = Consequence	5 = Collaboration	6 = Refocusing
Task		
3 = Management		
Self		
0 = Unconcerned	1 = Informational	2 = Personal

Figure 1. ***Seven stages of concern.***

Since its inception the SoCQ has been used to conduct research and collect data in numerous peer reviewed articles and studies that involve innovation (Shoulders & Myers, 2011; Castro-Villarreal, Rodriguez, and Moore, 2014; and Ahsan, Sharma, and Deppeler, 2012). Researchers have used information acquired through the SoCQ to address the needs of teachers and develop PD. In the research conducted by Al-Shabata (2014), the author utilized the SoCQ to gather and interpret data regarding gifted teachers SoC for integrating e-learning in the Gifted Schools in Jordan. The author surveyed 22 teachers, and the results showed that the participants' scores of self-concerns were relatively high, while the task concerns and the impact concerns were low. The participants were more concerned with personal aspect of their lives and duties than they were with their ability to complete the task at hand. The information gathered from the SoCQ in studies conducted by Al-Shabatat (2014), Zamani, Abedi, Soleimani, and Amini (2011), and Chamblee and Slough (2002) were used to determine PD and training in the areas identified as concerns regarding the innovation of inclusion. The results of this study revealed that teachers experienced collaboration concerns, thus, the administrations and the principals of the gifted schools were recommended to develop a policy that encourages peer collaboration and coaching (Al-Shabatat, 2014). Classroom visits and teachers meetings are highly recommended to help teachers learn from each other. It is recommended to provide both on-site and online support for teachers during the implementation process (Al-Shabatat, 2014).

When investigating teachers' stages of concern toward information and communication technology in secondary schools of Isfahan, the SoCQ was presented to teachers. Results from the study conducted by Al-Shabata (2014), revealed that most of the teachers were in the personal concerns of Stage 2. In the personal portion, teachers were skeptical about their

capabilities and their efficacies for using new technologies. At this stage administrators cannot identify the essential needs and professional requirement for implementing innovations (see Figure 1). The higher the score on the SoC chart, the lower the level of concern. If a participant scored a 4, 5, or 6, she is experiencing a low level of concern. If a participant scores a 3, 2, 1, or 0, she is experiencing higher level of concern (Zamani et al., 2011). For Question 1, "What is the concern profile most associated with the gifted teachers in Jordan?" the lowest mean score was for Stage 0 while the highest mean score was for Stage 3. For Question 2, "What are the predominant stages of concerns for the gifted teachers in Jordan?" 32% of the participants expressed their highest concerns at Stage 3. For Question 3, "What concerns do you have in e-learning integration?" Zamani et al. (2011) conducted and analyzed interviews using an inductive qualitative approach. A majority of the responses centered on Stage 4, a very low SoC regarding their teaching. These results revealed that teachers were at low SoC which created the need for administration to develop a policy that encourages peer collaboration and coaching. Zamani et al. recommended that teacher meetings and classroom visits be implemented to provide teachers with opportunities to learn from each other.

In the research of Chamblee and Slough (2002), the SoCQ was distributed to teachers in order to assess their concerns about graphing calculators. Participants in this study were from a single cohort (22 teachers) of high school mathematics and science teachers from a large urban Texas school district. All participants participated in a yearlong PD program to improve the achievement of science and mathematics students. These authors determined that regardless of the fact that algebra teachers were more familiar with graphing calculators than IPC and chemistry teachers, they all had similar concerns. These concerns focused on high information

stage concerns Level 1, high personal stage concerns Level 2, and high collaboration stage concerns Level 5 (see Figure 1). As a result of these findings, the school designed PD to increase communication and collaboration between grade-level mathematics and science teachers with the district and specifically in individual schools (Chamblee & Slough, 2002). The results indicated that teachers' knowledge on how to best use graphing calculators to teach mathematics increased after the PD courses were completed.

The SoCQ "was developed to assess the seven hypothesized SoC about the innovation. These SoC are primary dimensions of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) developed at Texas Research and Development Center to conceptualize and facilitate educational change" (George et al., 2006, p. 4). The SoCQ has been tested for estimates of reliability, internal consistency, and validity with several different samples and innovations (George et al., 2006). The TSES was compared to the Rand Items and measures of teacher SE testing its validity through three trials. Its 52 questions ultimately being reduced to 18 items (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Dodge-Quick (2011) utilized the SoCQ in her. The sample size for this study was 31 participants. This researcher focused on understanding the perception general educators has of the inclusion process and ways to improve their perceptions. The questions of inquiry in this study were: "(a) What are general educators' perceptions of inclusion? (b) What do general educators need in order to feel capable to meet the educational needs of special education students in their classrooms? (c) Does PD regarding specific disabilities and methods for modifying curriculum change the attitudes of general educators towards inclusion?" (p. 10).

The responses that Dodge-Quick (2011) received showed that participants had not progressed in their acceptance of the innovation of inclusion. For Question 1, participants' responses were in Stage 0 "Unconcerned" stage in both the pre and post intervention stages. For Question 2, participants' concerns were largely reported in the areas of time management, workload, and accountability. Despite participants' limited time and resources, they reported confidence in their abilities to engage included students and manage an inclusive classroom. Question 3 inquired about PD for participants. Results showed that the needs specific training provided to participants after they responded to the pre-intervention survey was more effective that the varied training received previously by participants. Results from the qualitative data did show changes in participants' thought processes.

In the study conducted by George et al. (2006), participants were primarily in Stages 0-3 at the beginning of the study. By the end of the study, after PD intervention, participants were still in stages 0-3 of accepting the innovation of inclusion. Question 1 of inquiry was searching for general educators' perceptions of inclusion. Participants had a number of other initiatives, tasks, and activities that take priority (George et al., 2006). Question 2 focused on educators' needs in the areas of time management, workload, and accountability. Participants felt that they did not have the adequate time needed to implement modifications and IEPs to be successful. Despite the lack of adequate time and resources, participants felt confident in their abilities to manage and engage included students. The third and final question of inquiry investigated the attitudes of general educators toward inclusion. These questions were used to determine if PD regarding specific disabilities and methods for modifying curriculum would affect teachers' attitudes.

George et al. (2006) provided training to teachers in order to assist with modifications and IEP implementation, small group instruction was provided in order to provide participants with an opportunity to ask questions and problem solve (George et al., 2006). The results suggested that the PD intervention provided did not have an effect on participants' feelings towards inclusion, thus accepting the null hypothesis of this study. By its design, the SoCQ limits possible answers. Because of these limited choices, the participants appeared to show no real change either positively or negatively toward inclusion (George et al., 2006).

Professional Development

Efforts to affect change through PD must start with the teachers who are at the forefront of this movement (Shortland, 2010). Extensive resources are spent to ensure that highly qualified teachers are available in the classroom by providing PD at the local, state, and federal levels (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2011). PD is provided to general education teachers to provide them the necessary knowledge and expertise to become effective educators which enhances their understanding of teacher development (Evans, 2014). Community support and teacher collaboration are critical factors for effective PD (Evans, 2014). This collaboration affords teachers the opportunity to reflect upon current practices and offer insight to enhance and modify lessons (Chester, 2012).

Efforts to improve education through fundamental changes in what students learn and how they are taught have been initiated through policymakers and educators at both the national and local levels. PD sessions taking place in schools were they are sensitive to the school's environment and culture can build relationships and energize thinking (Easton, 2012). Demands for programs and new practices in education have improved student achievement according to

the regulations of NCLB Act of 2002. Hsien (2007) recognized that there is a shortage of research that examines teachers' attitudes toward preparation programs and how effective they provide the essential knowledge needed to teach in an inclusive setting.

According to Burkman (2012), the method which content is delivered is an essential component to effective PD. PD programs provide participants the opportunity to learn through many different methods including socializing and reflection (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011). In order to increase student achievement, teachers must participate in effective staff development (Margolin, 2011). Teachers' sense of efficacy is influenced through PD or further education that impacts a teachers understanding of their craft, thus improving attitudes towards teaching students with disabilities. PD is an essential and relevant component at all stages of a teacher's tenure and is effective when participants are able to communicate and ask questions about lessons and the implementation of the material (Eros, 2011; Hough, 2011).

Background of Professional Development

Before colleges offered degrees in education, they conducted PD training during the summer months to provide educators with training insight, skills, and knowledge necessary to effectively impart knowledge on others (Guskey, 1986). In an effort to alleviate the chronic shortage of teachers during the 1900s an increase in the use of PD training was implemented (Guskey, 1986). These PD in-service training sessions became the means by which teacher candidates met degree requirements established by colleges.

During the mid-1960s, the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was at the forefront of the efforts to afford the help of classrooms in the United States (Guskey, 1986). PD provided in-service training, which became the means which students

attending colleges who were seeking a degree in education were able to meet the requirements of degree specification. Schools provided funds to attract candidates to the teaching profession through providing continued initiatives and quality PD sessions.

During the 1970s, various disjointed PD programs were largely responsible for teachers' professional growth (Hirsch, 2006). According to Roy (2004), teachers were being trained on a continual basis and the success of PD was equally dependent on both its process and content. During this decade the professional growth, teachers became dependent on those PD programs (Hirsch, 2006).

According to Knowles (1998), PD programs made some credible strides during the 1980s. Enhancements include harmonizing sessions, including curriculum learning models, and embracing topics based on new ideas. The National Commission on Excellence in Education was largely responsible for the improvements in PD due to the 1983 publication of A Nation at Risk. In the late 1980s, teachers were required to complete continual PD courses related to any area in education to renew their teacher recertification. Time, content, and the expectation for all students were the issues that the education community addressed.

In the 1990s, the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) took the increased knowledge on teaching and learning to improve the contents and delivery of PD. During this decade PD was characterized by several constructive transformations concerned with student achievement. With this newly attained understanding of what effective PD requires, the NSDC developed standards and essential elements to promote a universal language and guidelines for effective practices (Hirsch, 2006).

According to Desimone (2011), PD that builds community and interactive learning among participants should include teachers who teach the same grade focusing on grade level content. NSDC identified training, individually guided staff development, observation/assessment, involvement in the development/improvement process, and inquiry as the five models of effective development for teachers (Lee, 2005). The importance and necessity of PD toward student achievement took a new direction through the NCLB initiative. NCLB brought about an area of accountability, school improvement, and highly skilled teachers which require school districts to increase its use of PD planning and delivery (Lee, 2005). Developers have often successfully integrated many strategies in efforts to meet the diverse needs of teachers. PD has been traditionally provided through in-service training where school districts acquire outside personnel to conduct 1-day training sessions, conferences, and seminars focusing on specific topics (Lee, 2005).

PD reform use a variety of modern formats including study groups, mentoring, coaching, networking, and school day meeting that occur during teacher planning time or profession learning community meetings. These reforms enable teachers to make the necessary connections with how and what teachers teach in their classroom by influencing teaching practices, addressing how teachers learn, and being more responsive to teachers' needs and goals (Desimone, 2011). Effective teacher PD is one of the keys to improving the quality of schools (Desimone, 2011).

Trends in Effective Professional Development

Positive attitudes and a high sense of SE of general education teachers influence the successful implantation of inclusion policies (Lee, 2005). It is therefore critical to the successful

implementation of inclusion to understand what makes PD effective and instrumental to this process (Desimone, 2011). Inclusion of students with disabilities into the general education classrooms is among the most significant issues facing education communities both nationally and internationally (Desimone, 2011). According to Almog and Shechtman (2007), there is an overwhelming consensus that PD programs and teacher training organizations are responsible for ensuring that general education teachers are successfully trained to provide effective instruction to students with diverse needs and disabilities.

Quick, Holtzman, and Chaney (2009) identified an effective PD program as one that addresses the learning needs of teachers and specific school communities. According to Stienbecher-Reed and Powers (2012), PD sessions presented to a concentrated group where models that include individual coaching appear to be the most successful. Teachers may inconsistently apply the information in their actual practice when PD sessions are presented to a large group. A successful PD program is one that provides valuable experiences to its members through engaging learning processes and is essential to teacher retention and growth (Kelly, 2012).

PD effectiveness also depends on general education teachers' willingness to participate, the use of research-based best practices, and knowledge of response to intervention (Hall et al., 1979). High quality PD is described by NCLB as activities that are sustained, intensive, and aligned with a directly related to state academic content standards, achievement standards, assessments, and improve and increase teachers' knowledge of academic subject matter. Effective sessions should be content-focused, recurrent, coherent, cohesive, and address the most common barriers to inclusion which is specifically identified as teachers' knowledge and

implementation of research-based adaptations (Almog & Schechtman, 2007). PD has a positive effect on student success and achievement by enhancing instructional practices and learning new applications for instructional strategies (Pella, 2011; Trust, 2012).

Knowledge of content. Teachers' perceived sense of efficacy in their ability to teach students with disabilities increases with PD that targets each content area taught in inclusive classes (Desimone, 2011). General education teachers who do not receive adequate training in teaching students with disabilities often report a feeling of inadequacy (Desimone, 2011). The most influential feature of PD programs may be the content focus that engage teachers in the kind of learning experiences that they are expected to practice with their students with disabilities (Desimone, 2011). Effective PD has an obligation to assist general educators in expanding their understanding by focusing on the content they teach, their pedagogy, and explicit knowledge and skills that are needed for individual classrooms (Riggsbee, Malone, & Straus, 2012).

Curriculum and instructional goals. General education teachers value PD that provides meaningful opportunities that they can directly apply to their teaching practices to show their knowledge of the subject they teach. Because teachers are expected to know their subject area content well enough to foresee what students misconceptions will be, and are expected to be engaging when delivering the content it is imperative that PD be aligned with the curriculum and instructional goals and are aimed at improving student achievement (Garet et al., 2011). PD sessions that are aligned with curriculum and instruction goals provide teachers with the ability to recognize problems that arise from implementing the concepts learned, while presenting the

opportunity to reflect on student assessments to determine whether new practices are making a difference in student achievement (Garet et al., 2011).

Collaborative and collegial. PD has been viewed as an effective approach of educating teachers on a broad basis when presenting educational inclusion practices. Musanti and Pence (2010) noted that because teacher growth does not happen in isolation, collaboration is an effective form of PD in which teachers experience meaningful collaborative activities. Collaboration and evidence-based inquiry have emerged as powerful forms of PD in the understanding of practices instead of the previous methods of seeking out best practices (Crafton & Kaiser, 2011). PD sessions that afford general and special education teachers the chance to extensively collaborate among each other, provide teachers the opportunity to collectively enhance their teaching and have a positive impact on students (Crafton & Kaiser, 2011). When teachers are well informed, through evidence-based practices that are grounded in their own research, teachers are in a position to make informed, practical, and moral judgments that are mandatory for schools to be both effective and unbiased institutions (Groundwater-Smith & Dadds, 2004).

Effective PD for teachers is through collaboration because it emphasizes both active and interactive learning experiences through participation in a learning community's environment (Hunzicker, 2011). Chan and Pang (2006) clearly stated that in order for teachers to effectively address and improve issues, collaborating well is essential to the successful implementation of any PD program. These types of settings provide teachers the opportunity to learn from their colleagues who bring different perspectives to the task of improving teaching and learning through their collaboration. According to Brownell, Griffin, Leko, and Stephens (2011),

collaborative settings also allow teachers to build bridges with other teacher based on teaching responsibilities, interests, and needs. Teachers working together in PD experience will learn more effectively when working with teachers who share the same concerns and challenges, especially in inclusion settings. Teachers who share the same concerns will learn more effectively when working together in PD experiences.

Intensive and ongoing. The trend of PD has been altered throughout the past few decades however; it has always been intensive and ongoing. Teachers have undoubtedly been expected to keep abreast of their subject and content by securing ongoing training in their area of study. Ongoing PD includes the total number of hours participants spend in the activity and the span of time the activity takes place (Hunzicker, 2011). The more time teachers spend engaged in any PD program, the more likely their teaching practices is to improve whereas a one-time approach leads to minimal retention or change in teachers or their environment (Hunzicker, 2011). PD should be long term, embedded in practice and context, professionally informed, and continual (Garet et al., 2011).

Authentic professional development. PD has been a one-size-fits-all-that-attend type of program because of the content being discussed in the session (Flint, Zisook, & Fisher, 2011). Community support and teacher collaboration are critical factors for effective PD (Evans, 2014). This collaboration affords teachers the opportunity to reflect upon current practices and offer insight to enhance and modify lessons (Chester, 2012). Research conducted by Brownell et al. (2011) and Crafton and Kaiser (2011) showed an increase in the number of learning communities that report a positive effect on teachers and student performance. Porterfield (2013) suggested

that higher-level learning skills and student creativity are increased by teachers who are personally in learning experiences and reflection.

The key to an effective quality PD session is to make it authentic for the participants. Over the years PD has been conducted in such forums as face to face, over the Internet, through Web-based learning, even collegial kinds of learning opportunities embedded in professional learning. The methods in which PD sessions are presented are just as varied. Many PD sessions are conducted through book studies, action research, data analysis, collaborative planning, reflective questioning, model lessons, peer dialogues, journaling and conferencing (Crafton & Kaiser, 2011). High-quality PD should not only be differentiated through its delivery and methods but also through the specific needs of its participants.

Summary

Scholars have shown that educating students with SEN and disabilities side-by-side with their nondisabled peers facilitates access to the general curriculum. Students with SEN and disabilities who receive inclusive education/mainstreaming have higher academic achievement and better social skills. The National Research Center on Learning Disabilities found that graduation rates of all disabled students in the U.S. increased by 14% from 1984 to 1997. Inclusion education/mainstreaming are shown to be more academically effective than exclusion practice (Crockett et al., 2012).

Teachers require assistance in learning to adopt positive teaching attitudes, SE in order to advance through the level of concerns for teaching with inclusion students. In this study, the current researcher gathered information from the school districts' teachers in order to have a better grasp of teachers' levels of concern and sense of SE in terms of inclusion. For example, if

most of the teachers in Building A are at level 5 collaboration stage with a strong SE inclusion, it would be pointless to provide them with a Level 2 informational stage PD. It could be productive to provide time for Building A teachers to collaborate with one another regarding inclusion. Additionally, it could put Building A teachers in the position of mentoring and collaborating with Level 2 personal teachers who are becoming committed to inclusion because they personally see the benefits, but need more direction and encouragement from Building A teachers.

Since no one had data on individual teachers but only by building and grade level, administrators and teachers armed with this information could develop PD that would address the levels and SE perceptions that their teachers actually have. This would reflect data-driven teaching while adopting a teacher-centered approach. These findings can offer administrators and others valuable insight from general education teachers about the types of PD that need to be created in order to improve teacher attitudes based on teachers' SE and SoC.

Section 3: Research Method

Introduction

In this study I examined the SoC and SE levels of teachers who teach students in an inclusive environment within the Shelco School District. For many of these teachers there is a gap in practice when implementing effective inclusive practices that have left them asking for PD in this area. Two survey instruments were used to measure teachers' perceptions of their own current SE and their current SoC for teaching inclusion. This section contains the details of the setting in which the study takes place, the sample of participants, and the specific structure and content of each of the surveys. Lastly, the end of this section contains data collection and analyses methods that will be described in detail.

The methodology used in this study was descriptive and correlational; the goal was to identify clusters of teachers in one set of data from two different measurement scales. The descriptive data for each scale is displayed separately for each building and grade level. In subsequent analyses, groupings of teachers using both descriptive statistics and correlations were considered.

This quantitative study investigated two constructs: teachers' level of SE and SoC regarding their ability to successfully implement the inclusion model in a general education classroom. These data were obtained to categorize teachers using both constructs: teacher profiles rating a Level 7 on the SE scale and a 5 on the SoC scale. The number of teachers who have the same profile in a simple matrix of counts were identified; this information was used for assigning teachers for inclusion PD. The profile also informed development of the content of the inclusion PD. Measures of central tendency in terms of each school and each grade level were

reported. This helped to give an overall picture of the SE and SoC. Finally, the data for correlations between SE and SoC measurements were evaluated.

The SoCQ (see Appendix A) was used to determine participants' perceptions about inclusion. The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES; see Appendix B) was used to determine teachers own teaching efficacy in the area of inclusion. The combination of these two scores generated an Inclusion Profile for each teacher. For example, if a teacher's scores were SE1 and SoC 2, the first score would indicate a teacher who feels she is ineffective at teaching with inclusion, while the second score would indicate that she does not fixate on surface features as does a teacher with a score of SoC 1.

General education teachers from two middle schools in the Shelco school system participated in this study; they shared their personal beliefs, feelings, and concerns about implementing inclusive practices. Data derived from the results of the TSES and SoCQ guided differentiated PD. The data gathered in this study was used to recommend groupings of teachers for each school building and grade level. If teachers are supported at their level socially and emotionally, then PD could increase their SE levels and decrease their SoC levels. Future use of these surveys could investigate whether PD on inclusion did, in fact, change teachers' SE and SoC by measuring their efficacy and concerns following differentiated sessions. Ultimately, the goal was to help these teachers to provide quality education to all students in a general education classroom.

Study information was collected and displayed in three ways. First, teachers' average SE scores were calculated and broken down by grade level. This provided a measure of centrality in

terms of the overall status of each grade. Because means blur the impact of individual scores, the modes were also reported to indicate the scores most often recorded for teachers.

Second, the SE and SoC combined scores were used to identify profiles. That is, each teacher's SE and SoC overall scores were entered into a Profile column on the data Google Sheets spreadsheet. The data was sorted using that Profile column to collapse teachers with the same profile into the same group in the spreadsheets.

Third, it was estimated that higher SE will be related to higher SoC but that might not be the case. Cohen (1988) noted that the STATIC consistently indicated a Cronbach's reliability coefficient of .89. If SE scores rise as SoC scores rise, there could theoretically be a positive correlation of .89 indicating that the scales are highly related. It would be unexpected to find that, for example, high SE teachers are concerned with low level issues. For example, a -.6 correlation would indicate that the scores are inversely related, higher SE are moderately negatively correlated with SoC. This would mean that teachers with high SE can have a low stage of concern. Thus, the research questions included the mean and modes, the profile combinations of grades, and the correlations between the two surveys for this sample.

Research Questions

1. What are the mean and mode for SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for school building and grade level?
2. What are teachers' profiles as a combination of SE levels and SoC stages for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building and grade level?
3. Are there correlations between SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building?

Null Hypotheses and Hypotheses

H1o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices.

H1a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices.

H2o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School A.

H2a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School A.

H3o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with Inclusive practices in School B.

H3a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School B.

Research Design and Approach

In this study, data were collected through two published surveys which allowed general education teachers to rate their SE and concerns regarding teaching students in an inclusive environment. Collection of data through surveys was chosen for several reasons. First, Creswell (2012) noted that a quantitative study is the best approach to use when testing a theory or to provide an explanation. Second, the survey is a tool that can be completed by a group of people at the same time, at their convenience, and allows for information to be collected immediately (Fink, 2012). Third, a survey limits the researcher's influence and allows for the anonymity of its participants (Fink, 2012; Mertens, 2014). Fourth, according to Mertens, the quantitative design

uses results that have less chances of being biased, because this method of research is not open to different interpretations. Lastly, a quantitative design uses numerical values to collect and analyze data, which is a more objective method to form an opinion (Mertens, 2014).

The SoCQ and the TSES were the analytical tools used to measure general educators' concerns and perceptions and identify where they belong in relation to teaching in an inclusive environment. The SoCQ is comprised of 35 statements which participants responded on a 7-point Likert scale according to how true each statement seemed to them at the time 0 (Irrelevant) to 7 (Very True of Me Now) The TSES is a 24 item scale where participants responded on a 9-point Likert scale measuring teachers' perceptions of their ability to influence instruction 1 (Nothing) to 9 (A Great Deal). The two surveys were created, distributed, and collected through the online web program Google Drive Forms. The surveys included the consent form for participants to agree to and acknowledge their voluntary involvement in this study. Participants completed the surveys and submitted them when completed. As an incentive to participate, a basket of muffins along with a large thank you note was placed in a well-traveled area at each location, to thank participants for their time and consideration for taking the surveys. The survey was available to participants for 2 weeks. After the first week, the researcher sent participants a friendly reminder to participate (Appendix G).

Setting and Sample

This study consisted of a population of general education teachers from two urban middle schools in the Southeastern part of the United States. A total of 67 general education teachers were chosen to participate in the study. All participants teach in an inclusive environment in the middle school setting, Grades sixth through eighth. Both schools service students in Grades sixth

through eighth. Building A has 41 general education teachers. There are 16 sixth grade teachers: 4 English language arts (ELA) teachers, 4 math teachers, 4 science teachers, and 4 social studies teachers. There are 14 seventh grade teachers: 3 ELA teachers, 3 math teachers, four science, 2 social studies teachers, 1 math interventionist, and 1 reading interventionist. A total of 12 eighth grade teachers: 3 ELA, 3 math, 3 science teachers and 3 social studies teachers.

Building B has 26 general education teachers. There are 9 sixth grade teachers: 1 reading teacher, 1 social studies, teacher, 1 science teacher, 1 language arts teacher, 1 math teacher, 1 honors science, 1 honors math, 1 honors reading, 1 honors social studies, and 1 honors language arts teacher. There are 8 seventh grade teacher: 1 science teacher, 1 pre-algebra teacher, 1 social studies teacher, 1 language arts, 1 honors pre-algebra teacher, 1 honors language arts, 1 honors social studies, and 1 honors science teacher. There are 8 eighth grade teachers: 1 honors social studies teacher, 1 social studies teacher, 1 algebra/honors math and geometry teacher, 1 physical science/honors science, 1 science teacher, 1 language arts/creative writing teacher, 1 language arts teacher, and 1pre-algebra teacher. All teachers involved in this study are certified to teach in the middle school setting.

General education teachers at two middle schools were selected because of their grade levels, years of teaching experiences, demographics, education and years of experience, background levels of experience, and varying levels of subject matter taught. Chosen participants were teaching in inclusive mainstream classrooms with several students in each class that have been identified as having a learning disability and receive services from the Special Education Department. Teachers who teach core subjects in these middle schools were eligible to participate in the study. There are 219 special needs students at Building A and 158 special needs

students at Building B. The staffing ratio for the Shelco district is 12:1 for middle school. Staffing for classes are one teacher and up to four paraprofessionals. This sample was chosen to represent a majority of teachers and the different type of students they teach. In order to include those teachers who had first hand experiences teaching students with disabilities on a daily basis, only general education middle school teachers were invited to participate in the study. General education teachers educate and interact with. Excluded participants included special education teachers, elementary teachers, exploratory teachers, guidance personnel, librarians, clue teachers, special education support staff, administrative staff, and English as Second Language (ESL) teachers. Teachers were informed that their participation was strictly voluntary by completing and returning the survey via e-mail.

Based on the focus of this study, the convenience sample method was chosen as the most appropriate approach to identify the sample because of my access to participants. According to Creswell (2012), convenient sampling is used when participants are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. That is why this sampling method was chosen. This method served well due to its swift, low cost, and availability of participants. Convenience sampling provided basic yet pertinent data to be acquired without having to use a random sample. The convenience sample represented the views of general education middle teachers at one specific school district and may not generalize across all collaborative situations. However, a random sample would be more likely to be a valid measure of the constructs.

I am a teacher of the Shelco School system and have access to the teachers at the two participating schools. Permission to use the Stages of Concerns Survey (Appendix A) was obtained via mail and permission to use the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Survey (Appendix B)

was obtained through email. Verbal permission to conduct this study from both school administrators was initially obtained. Conditional written consent from the both middle school principals was obtained in order to receive approval from IRB. After permission was granted from the IRB, official permission from the Shelco School District and both middle school principals were requested. Permission to distribute surveys to teachers in the school district was granted from the school superintendent (Appendix C) as well as the both principals of the two participating schools (Appendix D & E).

I invited general education teachers to participate (Appendix F) in the study through their school e-mail and informed them that their participation was strictly voluntary. My role in this study was to make certain that the responses are completely anonymous and confidential, collect data, and analyze the results. Participants were assured that their involvement in this study was strictly voluntary and anonymous, and their results would be used solely for the purpose of this study. A reminder was sent to participants (Appendix G) 1 week after the initial request for those who had not yet completed the survey. Finally, the participants were also informed that the global overall results will be shared after the defense of this dissertation is complete in order to help the district plan future training on inclusion.

Data Analysis Plan

In this section, the plan for analyzing the data and how the results will appear in the Section Four Results will be described. Descriptive data was gathered for the teachers' mean scores for the entire sample, each building, each grade level, and for high and low amounts of education on inclusion that the teachers have had. This will identify teachers' current status of their concerns and SE. For example, it might be helpful to know that 8th grade teachers have a

low SE rating and a very low level of concern, indicating that they are likely to look at surface features. As a result of these findings, the district may adjust inclusion support in 8th grade.

In subsequent analyses, groupings of teachers using both descriptive statistics and correlations were considered. Tables 1 and 2 contain the descriptive counts of teachers in each building who fall into each category that is that matrix of the possible scores for the SoCQ and the SES. For example, high SoC and medium SoC might have a high number (or percentage) of teachers in that group, as compared to low SoC and high SoC. If this is so, a PD session that focused on high stage of concern and medium SE might be warranted.

Additionally, in a matrix there were listed both straight counts and percentages for all possible combinations of participants' SoC and SE scores. Note that the scale for the SoC was on a 7 category scale and the scale for SE for inclusion was low, medium, or high. Because the sample and range of values for the data is constrained in this study, counts for both SoC and SE dependent variables were displayed in two separate tables. In both tables, the counts are displayed for the separate buildings, and grade levels independent variables. This provides a quick visual of how many teachers are in each stage and relatively where they are. Note that the data for the buildings are separated into the two separate buildings, but the grade level data pools together teachers from both of the schools for each grade level. Frequencies of low, medium, and high levels of SoC and SE for each building and grade level, for inclusion practices were represented in Tables 1and 2.

Table 1

Frequencies of Teachers in Each Stage of Concern for Building, and Grade, of Inclusive Practices Level

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6	Stage 7
Building A	8	0	2	0	0	0	0
Building B	16	3	5	5	0	1	4
Grade 6	10	1	4	3	0	1	2
Grade 7	7	1	1	1	0	0	1
Grade 8	7	1	2	0	0	0	1

Table 2

Frequencies of Low, Medium, and High Levels of Self Efficacy for Building, and Grade Level Inclusive Practices

	Low SE	Medium SE	High SE
Building A	0	2	8
Building B	1	11	22
Grade 6	0	7	14
Grade 7	0	7	9
Grade 8	1	3	7

Correlations

Correlations are acceptable when two conditions are satisfied. First, the variables are in an interval scale of measurement, which the ratings on this survey were. The second is that a linear relationship is expected between them. It was expected that as SoC levels get higher, meaning the teacher is concerned with higher order issues, than the SE will get higher. Also, as teachers SoC are low, meaning that the teacher is concerned with lower-level surface issues, their SE will also be low. It is possible that some teachers could be at a high SoC and have low SE, but this would be true if the teacher did not view her level of concern as being reflective of a teacher that does well with included students. Some teachers, who are doing well, still don't feel they are doing well enough. The direction of the correlations are expected to be positive meaning that as SoC gets higher, SE will also get higher. It was expected that the strength of the correlation to be moderate, approximately .6 or higher (Pallant, 2013).

SE and the SoC were evaluated and correlated for the participants in both buildings and each building separately through Spearman correlation coefficients. This was sufficient to determine whether or not the two constructs were positively or negatively correlated, and how strong the correlation was. The correlations between teachers' SoC and their SE dependent variables, and the independent variables of building, grade level, and level of education for inclusion were reported in Tables 7, 8, and 9. Scatterplots were examined for both visual confirmations of correlation patterns. Scatterplots were also used to identify outliers that when eliminated would possibly yield correlations between the SE and SoC profile scores. Finally, scatterplots may display a relationship that is potentially a correlation. For example, teachers in Building A may have most of their scores on the low end, such as SE 1 and SoC 1. This would

be valuable information for designing PD for each building at the introductory level with attention paid to the teachers' low SE.

In the above example, the *r* value is equal to .8591792458, indicating that there is a fairly strong positive correlation between SoC and SE in the sample as a whole. The scatterplot for the entire sample was normal (Figure 2), indicating that there were no outliers and that the data points followed a relatively straight positive line.

Summary

Studies show that educating students with special educational needs and disabilities side-by-side with their nondisabled peers facilitates access to the general curriculum. Students with special educational needs and disabilities who receive inclusive education have higher academic achievement and better social skills. The National Research Center on Learning Disabilities found that graduation rates of all disabled students in the U.S. increased by 14% from 1984 to 1997. Inclusion education is shown to be more academically effective than exclusion practice (Ferretti, & Eisenman, 2010). Teachers require assistance in learning to adopt positive teaching attitudes in order to advance through the level of concerns for teaching with inclusion students. This study gathered information from the Shelco school districts' teachers in order to have a better grasp of teacher's SoC and SE in terms of inclusion.

This section provided a description of the research methodology that was used to conduct this study. I provided a comprehensive description of the (a) research design and approach, (b) setting sample, (c) data analysis, and (d) correlations. The framework for conducting a correlational study to analyze the relationship between teachers SoC and SE the dependent variables, and building A and Building B, and grade levels, the independent variables. The

quantitative documentation of teachers' level of preparedness as combined SE and Soc scores will identify teachers' level of preparedness for teaching with inclusion practices. The information from this study may provide a guide for developing differentiated PD groups, the content of each group, and the activities appropriate for each group.

Section 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify groups of teachers that have similar learning needs for PD in inclusion. These needs were defined by two score profiles using two quantitative surveys: The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) and the SoCQ (Hall et al., 1979). This chapter presents the findings of the data collection process. First, the data for missing responses and accuracy was examined. Second, frequencies and percentages were used to examine the demographic characteristics of the sample, and assessed the internal consistencies of the scales with Cronbach's alpha test of reliability. To address the research questions, a combination of descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, and Spearman correlations were utilized. Finally, the statistical significance was evaluated for inferential analyses at the generally accepted alpha level of $\alpha = .05$.

Pre-Analysis Data Treatment

Initially 45 responses to the survey were received. First, the data was screened for missing responses and accuracy. One participant did not have a corresponding score for the TSES. This participant was removed because the teacher SE scores could not be matched with the SoCQ. All the remaining teachers' scores fell within the theoretical range of possible values. The final sample consisted of 44 participants.

Description of the Sample

Demographic Characteristics

The majority of the participants were in the KBMS (n = 34, 77.3%), while 10 participants were in the CMS (22.7%). Most of the teachers were instructors for 6th grade (n = 21, 47.7%). A

majority of participants had been teaching for more than 10 years (n = 25, 56.8%) and had between 0-5 college credit hours specifically regarding inclusion (n = 26, 59.1%). Several participants had 20 or more hours of PD (n = 14, 31.8%). The frequencies and percentages of the demographic characteristics are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of Demographic Characteristics

Demographic	*n*	%
Education		
CMS	10	22.7
KBMS	34	77.3
Grade Level		
6th	21	47.7
7th	12	27.3
8th	11	25.0
Years teaching		
0-3	6	13.6
4-6	7	15.9
7-9	6	13.6
10+	25	56.8
Credit hours		
0-5	26	59.1
6-9	5	11.4
10-13	2	4.5
14+	11	25.0
PD hour		
0	2	4.5
1-5	16	36.4
6-10	4	9.1
11-15	5	11.4
16-20	3	6.8
20+	14	31.8

Note. Due to rounding error, not all percentages may sum to 100.

Reliability

The published Cronbach's alpha score consistently indicate a reliability coefficient of .89. However; scores for the SoC survey were calculated from the conversion of multiple raw scores

for every stage to percentile scores using a table from the manual. The Cronbach's alpha tests of reliability and internal consistency was conducted on the TSES. The Cronbach's alpha provides the mean correlation between each pair of items and the number of items in a scale (George & Mallery, 2016). The alpha values were interpreted using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery where $\alpha > .9$ is excellent, >.8 is good, >.7 is acceptable, >.6 is questionable, >.5 is poor, and $\leq$.5 is unacceptable. The TSES indicated excellent internal consistency, as the Cronbach's alpha value was greater than $\alpha = .90$. The Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics for Teacher Self-Efficacy

Scale	No. of Items	*a*
Teacher SE	12	929

Detailed Analysis

Research Question 1: What are the mean and mode for SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building and grade level?

Teacher SE Scores

Teacher SE scores for the overall sample ranged from 3.20 to 9.00, with a mean (*M*) = 6.76 and a standard deviation (*SD*) = 1.81. Teacher SE scores in KBMS ranged from 3.20 to 9.00, with *M* = 6.72 and *SD* = 1.26. Teacher SE scores in CMS ranged from 5.20 to 8.50, with *M* = 6.91 and a *SD* = 0.90. Teacher SE scores in 6th grade ranged from 3.80 to 8.80, with *M* = 6.71 and *SD* = 1.12. Teacher SE scores in 7th grade ranged from 5.50 to 9.00, with *M* = 7.04 and a *SD*

= 1.02. Teacher SE scores in 8th grade ranged from 3.20 to 8.50, with $M = 6.56$ and a $SD = 1.49$. The descriptive statistics of teacher SE scores are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Self-Efficacy Scores

Continuous Variables	*Min.*	*Max.*	*M*	*SD*
Teacher Self-Efficacy				
Overall sample	3.20	9.00	6.76	1.81
KBMS	3.20	9.00	6.72	1.26
CMS	5.20	8.50	6.91	0.90
6th grade	3.80	8.80	6.71	1.12
7th grade	5.50	9.00	7.04	1.02
8th grade	3.20	8.50	6.56	1.49

Stages of Concern Scores

Descriptive statistics were used to examine the trends in SoC percentile scores. To determine the Peak SoC, the raw scores were calculated for each participant for every SoC. Then these raw scores were converted to percentile scores using a table provided in the SoC Manual. The highest percentile score for each participant indicated what their Peak SoC was. For example, a fake participant would have a percentile score for each SoC, but Stage 4 was the highest at 88 percentile, thus this participant had a Peak SoC of Stage 4. There were 6 cases that had tied Peak percentile scores; in those cases, the participant was designated to the lower of the two stages that they tied percentile scores for. This is because it is certain that the participant had

reached the lower of the two stages, but could not be confident that they had fully transitioned to the higher stage at this time.

Table 6 illustrates the minimum and maximum percentile scores obtained from the sample. To calculate the mean Peak SoC, each participant's Peak SoC was determined. In Stage 0, for example, the percentile scores for Stage 0 for all of the participants with the Peak SoC of 0 were averaged. Then frequency and percentages were examined for the predominant stage that each participant fell into. The frequency for SoC scores was Stage 0 (n = 24, 54.5%). Descriptive statistics for the SoC scores are presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6

Stages of Concern, Percentile Scores

Stage of Concern	*Min.*	*Max.*	*M*
Stage 0	0.00	99.00	81.34
Stage 1	23.00	99.00	76.32
Stage 2	25.00	99.00	76.39
Stage 3	11.00	99.00	73.64
Stage 4	2.00	96.00	44.55
Stage 5	3.00	98.00	48.75
Stage 6	6.00	99.00	68.45

The largest number of participants (n = 24) were in Stage 0. The remaining 6 stages had far fewer participants. Stage 2 had the second highest number of participants (n = 7), followed by Stage 3 (n = 5). Stage 1 had the smallest number of participants (n = 3) with a high level of

concern. There was a small number of participants (n = 5) who reported having low levels of concerns. There were zero participants who fell in Stages 4, only one participant fell into Stage 5, and four were in Stage 6.

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages for Stages of Concern

Stages of Concern	*N*	%
0	24	54.5
1	3	6.8
2	7	15.9
3	5	11.4
4	0	0.0
5	1	2.3
6	4	9.1

Note. Due to rounding error, not all percentages may sum to 100.

Research Question 2: What are teachers' profiles as a combination of SE levels and SoC stages for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building and grade level?

Teachers' SE levels were examined by separating them into low, medium, and high groups. A majority of participants fell into the high level of teacher SE (n = 30, 68.2%). By examination of a cross-tabulation, high teacher SE and Stage 0 had the highest pairing (n = 12), followed by medium teacher SE and Stage 0 (n = 11). Table 8 presents the cross-tabulations between teachers' SE and SoC in a matrix indicating teachers who fit each cell combination. Table 9 presents the frequencies for SoC profiles by school and grade level. Table 10 presents the frequencies for levels of SE by school and grade level.

Table 8

Cross-Tabulation of Teachers' SE Levels and Stages of Concern

	Low Self-Efficacy	Medium Self-Efficacy	High Self-Efficacy
Stage 0	1	11	12
Stage 1	0	0	3
Stage 2	0	1	6
Stage 3	0	0	5
Stage 4	0	0	0
Stage 5	0	0	1
Stage 6	0	1	3

Table 9

Frequencies of Teachers in each Stage of Concern for Building and Grade Level

	Stage 0	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6
CMS	8	0	2	0	0	0	0
KBMS	16	3	5	5	0	1	4
Grade 6	10	1	4	3	0	1	2
Grade 7	7	1	1	2	0	0	1
Grade 8	7	1	2	0	0	0	1

Table10

Frequencies of Low, Medium, and High Levels of Self Efficacy for Building and Grade Level

	Low Self-Efficacy	Medium Self-Efficacy	High Self- Efficacy
CMS	0	2	8
KBMS	1	11	22
Grade 6	0	7	14
Grade 7	0	3	9
Grade 8	1	3	7

Research Question 3: Are there correlations between SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building?

H1o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices.

H1a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices.

H2o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School A.

H2a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School A.

H3o: There is no correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School B.

H3a: There is a correlation between the teachers' SE scores and their SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices in School B.

To address Research Question 3, a series of Spearman rank correlations were conducted to examine the two-way association between teachers' SE scores and peak SoC scores. A Spearman correlation is appropriate when assessing the strength of association between two variables, when at least one of the variables is measured on an ordinal scale (Pallant, 2013). Cohen's standard (Cohen, 1988), was used to interpret the correlation coefficients (β) to evaluate the strength of the association between the two variables. Correlation coefficients between the values of .10 and .29 represent a small association, correlation coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a medium association, and correlation coefficients above .50 represent a large association. Prior to analysis, the assumption of linearity through examination of scatterplots was assessed (see Figures 2-4). The assumption was met for the overall sample and KBMS, as it was evident a positive trend existed between teacher SE and SoC. Due to the low sample size in CMS, there was not a clear trend in the scatterplot.

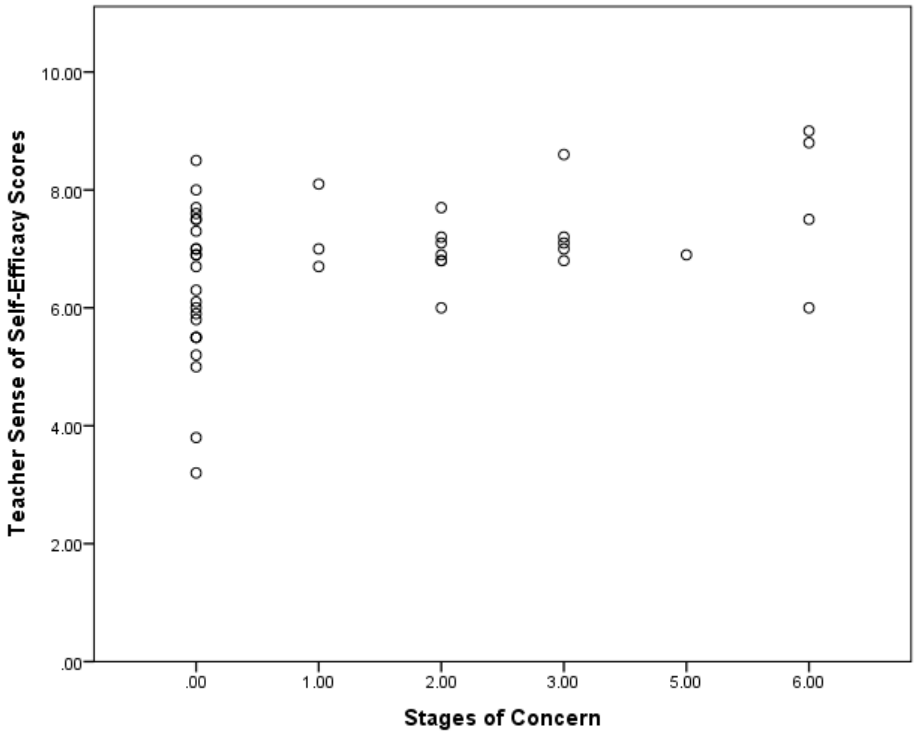

Figure 2. ***Scatterplot between stages of concern and teacher SE scores for overall sample.***

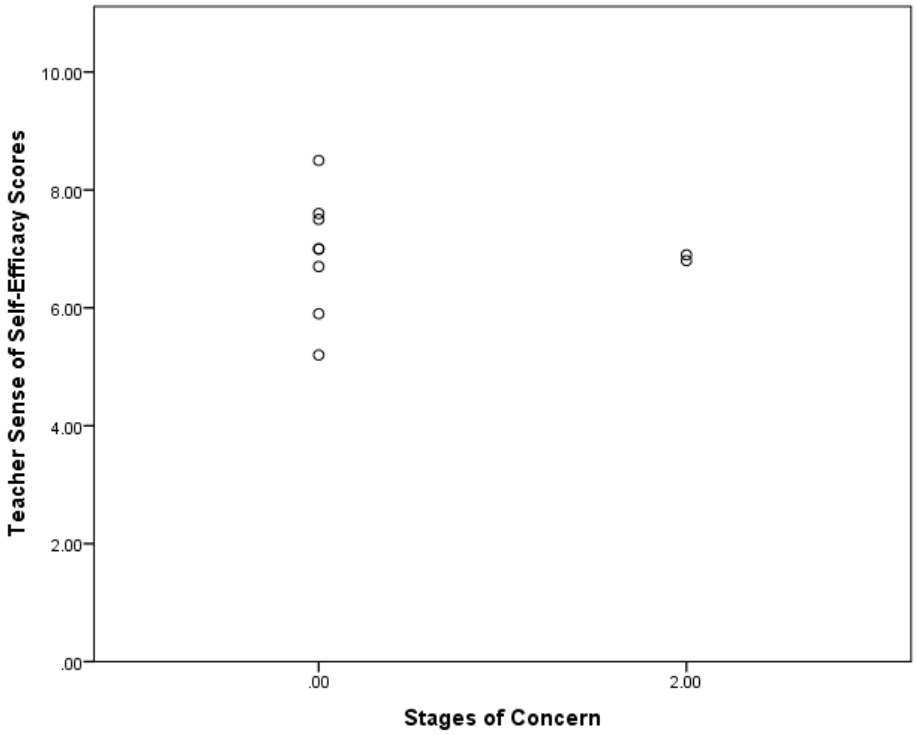

Figure 3. ***Scatterplot between stages of concern and teacher SE scores for CMS.***

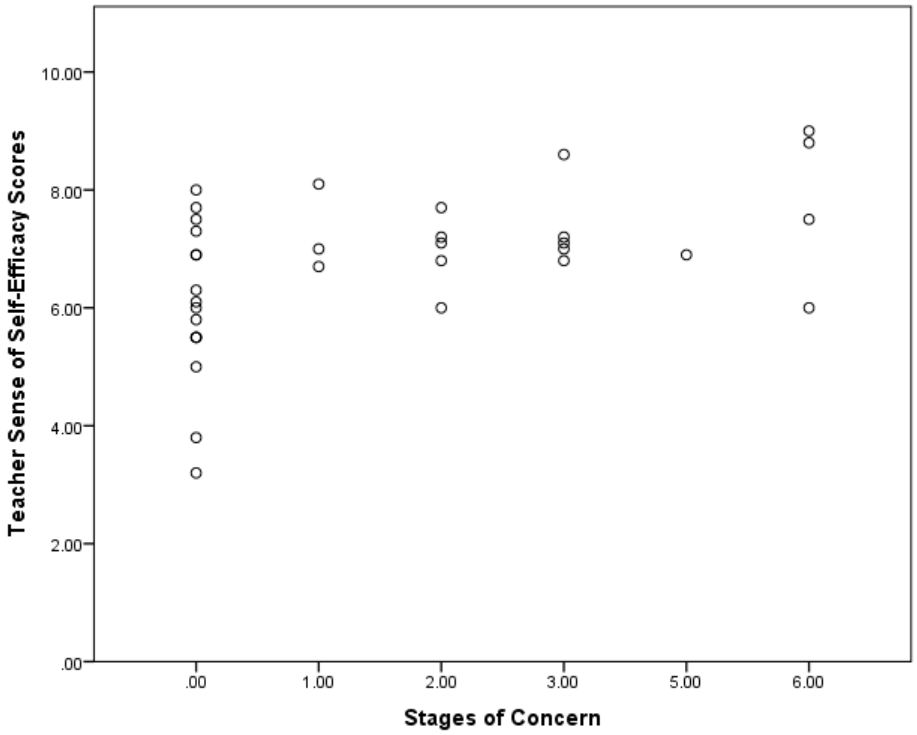

Figure 4. ***Scatterplot between stages of concern and teacher SE scores for KBMS.***

After checking the linearity assumption, the Spearman's correlation was conducted between teacher SE and SoC scores. The correlations are calculated between the SoC primary stage scores and the SE total scores. In SPSS one column contained the SoC primary stage score for each participant. For each participant in a second column there were listed the total SE scores. I calculated the correlation using SPSS software. For the overall sample, the results of the analysis indicated that there was a significant moderate relationship between teacher SE and SoC (r = .36, p = .016). For the CMS sample, the results of the analysis indicated that there was not a significant relationship between teacher SE and SoC (r = -.18, p = .629). For the KBMS sample, the results of the analysis indicated that there was a significant large relationship between teacher SE and SoC (r = .47, p = .005). Due to significance of the Spearman correlations for the overall sample and KBMS, the null hypotheses $H1_0$ and $H3_0$ was rejected. The null hypothesis for $H2_0$

could not be rejected. The results of the Spearman correlation analyses are presented in Tables 11-13.

Table 11

Spearman Correlation between Stages of Concern and Teacher SE Scores (Overall Sample)

Variable	Stages of concern	
	R	*P*
Teacher SE	.36	.016

Table 12

Spearman Correlation between Stages of Concern and Teacher SE Scores (CMS)

Variable	Stages of concern	
	R	*P*
Teacher SE	-.18	.629

Table 13

Spearman Correlation between Stages of Concern and Teacher SE Scores (KBMS)

Variable	Stages of concern	
	R	*P*
Teacher SE	.47	.005

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify groups of teachers that have similar learning needs for PD for implementing inclusion. The findings of the data collection process were presented in Section 4. Frequencies and percentages were used to examine demographic characteristics. After assessing the reliability of the data, a detailed analysis was presented by research questions and corresponding hypotheses. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze for trends in the two survey instruments. Results of the Spearman correlations for Research Question 3 indicated that there was a significant correlation between teacher SE and SoC scores for the overall sample and KBMS.

In the next section, the findings will be discussed in more detail and connections to existing literature will be made; suggestions for future research will be recommended.

Section 5: Implications, Recommendations and Conclusions

Introduction

Teachers receive pedagogic-based interaction through formal education prior to entering the classroom (Florian & Linklater, 2010). Formal training generally prepares teachers to provide instruction to students who do not have special needs or require additional support, yet this may be required of them in their teaching career. Even though teachers have chosen a profession which requires them to interact with various student populations, several teachers within the Shelco system has expressed feeling limited in their abilities. Often, educators have not been adequately trained or are not mentally prepared to handle the challenges for inclusive teaching (Florian, 2008). As such, educators have encountered many challenges when implementing inclusionary programs (Runswick-Cole, 2011). Salend (2001) described inclusion as an attempt to establish supportive, collaborative, as well as nurturing communities of students which are grounded on providing all students the accommodations and services they require to learn, while respecting other learners' individual differences.

American education faces a critical challenge in developing criteria to assess and improve teacher preparation programs (Beare et al., 2012). According to Wang et al. (2010) there have been challenges to prepare and retain a sufficient number of high-quality teachers. Middle school teachers' have raised multiple formal and informal requests for additional training on implementing inclusion (Multiple Anonymous Personal Communication, 2013). A professional development (PD) session on co-teaching was offered and provided teachers in attendance with good information and excellent strategies however; on the evaluation form several teacher expressed that the session did not address specific issues they faced in their classrooms. Research

indicated that there is a link between a teacher's self-efficacy and successful classroom practices (Sharma et al., 2012). Improving teachers' self-efficacy (SE) may improve their Stages of Concern (SoC) and success in the classroom.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine teachers' profiles of attitudes towards teaching students in an inclusive classroom. In order to source the relevant literature, EBSCO Host, Education Research Complete, ProQuest Center, and Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) were accessed. In this section I provide a brief overview of why and how the study was completed, the research questions, and the issues addressed. The purpose of this study was to gather quantitative data on teachers' preparedness to teach with inclusion. The information will be used to create recommendations to implement differentiated PD for teachers about inclusion.

The theoretical framework used in the study was social constructivism. This theory accounts for the social and emotional factors that play a great role in the construction of knowledge. The social and emotional factors were evaluated with the two surveys SE and SoC. SE is related to teachers' self-assessment on their competency. SoC relates to what teachers are currently worried or concerned about in terms of their teaching. Both of these are social-emotional constructs; when used together, they can provide information to plan PD according to teachers' different levels of preparedness to teach with inclusion for both scales.

The study research questions referred to multidimensional aspects of teaching, training, and inclusive learning environments. RQ1 reported what the mean and mode were for SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building and grade level. RQ2 determined teachers' profiles as a combination of SE levels and SoC stages for teachers teaching

with inclusion for each school building and grade level. Lastly, RQ3 examined the possible correlations between SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building.

Interpretation of Findings

Demographic Findings

The demographic findings had several notable results. The population sample consisted of 44 participants. The majority of the participants were from KBMS, while the rest of the participants were in the CMS. Furthermore, the majority were instructors for 6th grade, while 27.3% were 7th grade instructors and 25.0% were 8th grade instructors. A slight majority of the sample had been teaching for more than 10 years. The other experience ranges were roughly equal, with 13.6% having been teaching 0-3 years, 15.9% having been teaching 4-6 years, and 13.6% having been teaching 7-9 years. Thus, more than half the sample was very experienced and the other teachers had a range of experience levels.

The sample was expressed in terms of years teaching and also in terms of educational achievements in the area of inclusion. Twenty-five percent of the participants reported taking more than 14 college credit hours in inclusion; this indicates a great deal of time and effort. A moderate percentage of participants (31.8%) had 20 or more hours of PD. The groups with moderate amounts of inclusion educational achievements had small numbers of participants: 11.4% had received between 6-9 credit hours, and 4.5% had received 10-13 credit hours. In terms of the least experienced group of teachers, there were quite a few teachers at 36.4% who received only 1-5 hours of PD, and another 4.5% who had received no PD at all. The results showed 6-10 hours of PD for 9.1% of the sample, 11.4% received 11-15 hours of PD, and 6.8%

received 16-20 hours of PD. Overall, while some had extensive training, over half the participants 59.1% had only between 0-5 college credit hours focusing on inclusion education.

In summary, half of the sample was very experienced with more than 10 years of teaching, and 25% reported more than 14 college credit hours in inclusion. That said, of the remaining half of the teachers many were uneducated in inclusion. For example, 40.9% of the participants had 0-5 hours of PD in inclusion. There were a small number of teachers in each category of moderately educated and moderately experienced.

Research Question 1

RQ1 addressed the mean and mode for SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building and grade level. As part of the analyses, the distribution of where teachers fell along both scales was also considered.

Teachers' SE levels were separated into low, medium, and high groups and examined. Teacher SE scores ranged from 3.20 to 9.00, with a mean of 6.76 and a standard deviation of 1.81. Only one participant (2.3%) showed a low level of teacher SE, 13 participants (29.5%) showed a medium level of teacher SE, while the majority 30 participants (68.2%) showed a high level of teacher SE. Thus most of the teachers had high SE, a moderate amount had medium SE, and only one had low SE.

It may be that the teachers' high SE scores were related to the fact that over half of the participants were experienced teachers, and 25% of them had more than 14 college credit hours of inclusion training. This is supported by researchers who claimed says that SE is likely driven by such factors as experience and skills in the classroom, knowledge of content and pedagogy, attitudes, and personal disposition (Bandura, 1997). Teachers with high efficacy beliefs view

circumstances with a high degree of attainability. Thus, these teachers would try to practice inclusion well because they believed they could. In contrast, people with low efficacy dwell on personal deficiencies caused by cognitive negativity, which ultimately undermines self-motivation (Bandura, 1997). These teachers would be more likely to give up trying when inclusion was not going well. According to Pillen, Beijaard, and Brok (2013), teachers with higher inclusion SE turn out to be more effective teachers for disabled students. This may be because disabled students benefit greatly from an environment of positive support and encouragement (Scanlon & Baker, 2012). Simply by having high inclusion SE may improve their likelihood of trying to make appropriate teaching decisions. High SE is related to the fact that underlying curriculum implementation standards are based on tolerance of all pupils (Forlin & Chambers, 2011). This would not ensure that the teachers would be quality inclusion teachers, but at least the teachers would be trying to use inclusion with a positive attitude so that they might be able to help the student.

Teacher's SoC levels were examined by two major levels of concern. If a participant scores 3, 2, 1 or 0 they are experiencing a high level of concern, and if a participant scores 4, 5, or 6 they are experiencing a low level of concern. There were 35 participants who showed a high level of concern, while only six participants showed a low level of concern.

According to the SoC data, the 35 participants in the sample with high levels of concern would likely benefit from PD. This PD might need to be focused and extended because there is some evidence in the literature that progressing along the SoC levels might be difficult. Dodge-Quick (2011) showed that participants had not progressed in their acceptance of the innovation of inclusion even after PD. Indeed, this was also true in the study conducted by George et al.

(2006), in which participants were primarily in Stages 0-3 at the beginning of the study. By the end of the study, after PD intervention, participants were still in stages 0-3 of accepting the innovation of inclusion. Given the problem at the local setting, where many teachers had often expressed a desire for more inclusion PD, it is not surprising that 35 participants had high levels of concerns. Such teachers would benefit from PD.

Research Question 2

RQ2 identified teachers' profiles as a combination of SE levels and SoC stages for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building and grade level. These are displayed in the matrix in Table8.

Teachers' SE levels were examined by separating them into low, medium, and high groups. A majority of participants fell into the high level of teacher SE (n = 30, 68.2%). Only one participant (2.3%) showed a low level of teacher SE, 13 participants (29.5%) showed a medium level of teacher SE, while the majority 30 participants (68.2%) showed a high level of teacher SE. It is surprising that such a large number of participants have such a high level of SE, particularly because the problem the study addressed was that teachers wanted more PD.

SoC scores ranged from 1.00 to 6.00, with the majority of participants falling into the high level of teacher SE (n = 30, 68.2%). According to the SoCQ, the distribution of participants in the seven stages was heavily skewed to the lower levels of concern. The SoC stages peak scores were calculated to identify each participant's highest stage score. This information was used to determine either a high level of concern or a low level of concern. The majority of participants had a high level of concern (n = 35, 88.6 %).

RQ2 addressed the combinations between SE and SoC for teachers teaching with inclusion for each school building. For example, three teachers fell into the combination of high SE and stage 6 SoC. The combination with the most number of teachers (n = 12) were identified as having low levels of concerns (stage 0) while identifying themselves as having a high level of teacher SE (n = 30, 68.2%). More than half the teachers (n = 39) identified as having high levels of concerns (stages 0-3), while only five participants reported a low level of concern (stages 4-6).

High levels of concern. One objective of the study was to be able to recommend PD based on the clusters of teachers in the data. For the high levels of concern there are four clusters, but they included some variation. Among the high levels of concern, there was one obvious cluster of data at Stage 0 which included 12 teachers at high SE, 11 teachers at medium SE, and one teacher at low SE for 24. This cluster would require PD at Stage 0 with possible differentiation for low, medium, and high SE teachers. It might be prudent to organize two groups at Stage 0: one for medium SE and one for high SE. The second largest cluster was at Stage 2 for seven teachers, one with medium SE, and six with high SE. This second cluster would require PD at Stage 2 with medium to high SE. The next cluster was identified at Stage 3 with five teachers, all with high SE. This cluster would require PD at Stage 3 with high SE. Finally, a small cluster of three teachers were in Stage 1, all with high SE. This cluster would require PD at stage 1 with high SE.

It is unexpected that teachers with high levels of concern would also have high SE; if one is concerned, it seems logical that one would not feel very effective. However, this was not the case in this study. In terms of suggesting PD, these four clusters seem to be likely groupings that would tailor PD to the SoC while recognizing that they all have higher SE than might be

expected. Other researchers have indicated that this unexpected high SE might be helpful in supporting them emotionally to learn more efficiently (Scanlon & Baker, 2012). According to Beare et al. (2012), educators with high SE strongly believe their instructional actions in the general education setting leads to desired educational outcomes for the learning of students with disabilities. PD plays an important role in bring about an understanding among teachers regarding the changes necessary for successful inclusion (Brownell et al., 2010).

Low levels of concern. In the low levels of concern, there was also some variation but far fewer participants. There were no teachers at Stage 4, and only one teacher with high SE at Stage 5. The four teachers at Stage 6 included one at medium SE and three at high SE. With this variation in findings, it would be hard to plan PD according to these combinations because there are so few teachers in each combination. These teachers show that they have lower levels of concern however; it is interesting to note that one of the Stage 6 teachers had only medium SE, indicating that they are not highly confident in their inclusion teaching despite their highest SoC rating. Overall, Stage 5 and 6 teachers may have sufficient skills and SE and not require any additional PD. Financial challenges may stand in the way of any additional training for those teachers who have a low level of concern (Woelfel, 1994). The literature recommends that Stage 5 work on collaboration rather than traditional PD. Zamani et al. (2011) recommended that teacher meetings and classroom visits be implemented to provide teachers with opportunities to learn from each other. It is consistent throughout the literature that teachers should be allowed to collaborate.

In the research literature, some of the studies have been able to determine what the PD should be. The information gathered from the SoCQ in studies conducted by Al-Shabatat (2014),

Zamani et al. (2011), and Chamblee and Slough (2002) was used to determine PD and training in the areas identified as concerns regarding the innovation of inclusion. For example, in one study the majority of teachers experienced collaboration concerns at Stage 5 of the SoC; thus, the administration instituted PD that used peer collaboration and coaching (Al-Shabatat, 2014). According to Poekert (2012), collaborative PD can impact teaching practices. A substantive change in teaching practices can occur through teacher collaborative PD coupled with specific feedback on instruction (Poekert, 2012). According to Poekert, there are various types of PD activities teachers can attend which will contribute to teacher development. School site professional learning communities and training institutes with colleagues from other schools are the two strategies teachers must partake in for school reform efforts to change instructional practices (Poekert, 2012). For these teachers with low levels of concern, focused collaboration may be the most appropriate PD for them.

Research Question 3

The Spearman's correlation showed that for the overall sample, the results indicated that there was a significant moderate relationship between teacher SE and SoC ($r = .36$, $p = .016$). The results for the CMS sample indicated that there was not a significant relationship between teacher SE and SoC ($r = -.18$, $p = .629$). The null hypotheses $H2_0$ could not be rejected. For the KBMS sample, the results indicated that there was a significant large relationship between SE and SoC ($r = .47$, $p = .005$), rejecting the null hypotheses $H1_0$ and $H3_0$ and indicating that there is a correlation between teachers' SE scores and SoC scores for teaching with inclusive practices as well as for those teachers in School B.

In terms of the correlations, it was expected that lower efficacy would correlate with higher levels of concern (Stages 0, 1, 2, 3). This was not the case with this data set. On the broad level high stages of concern correlated with high SE. As stages advanced from level 0 - where most of the teachers were - to higher SoC, the efficacy scores continued to be high. It seemed logical that these two scales would correlate because as concerns decrease then SE would rise. In this study, there was a statistical correlation but further inspection shows that efficacy was high regardless of level of concern. It appears that sometimes teachers SE may increase before their SoC. There is some evidence supporting this finding in the literature. In Dodge-Quick's (2011) study, even though teachers reported high level of concerns at primarily stage 2 and reported challenges with limited time and resources, they nonetheless reported high confidence in their abilities to engage included students and manage an inclusive classroom. Overall, the high SE of the teachers in the current study is a positive finding. In the literature, Brady and Woolfson (2008) found that teachers with a strong sense of SE are more accepting of the inclusive process. The teachers with high levels of concerns might be more invested when it comes to teaching with inclusion. Teachers' SE has been explained by Woolfolk et al. (1990) as the perception a teacher has relating to teacher's ability to reach his or her students and enabling them to learn effectively. The participants believe they are reaching their students, regardless of their SoC. Educators with high SE skills believe they have the ability to perform the action that will lead to an outcome. These educators strongly believe their instructional actions in the general education setting leads to desired educational outcomes for the learning of students with disabilities (Beare et al., 2012).

Teachers' level of concerns and SE are similar to teachers' expectations and attitudes, which drive the behavior of their students (Quenemoen et al., 2003). Teachers in this study appear to have a variety of levels of concern, but most believe they are successful in managing their behavior to positively affect the education of their students (Sze, 2009).

Implications for Social Change

The implications from this study present valuable information and recommendations at several levels. From an educational administration perspective, it is clear that curriculum design must incorporate further PD for teachers; 59.1% had between 0-5 credit hours. The correlation between credit hours, SE, and SoC was not evaluated in this study, and should therefore be considered for future research.

School and district staff can benefit from the data in this study because the results illustrate that teachers have many concerns with the procedures for inclusion. Even though the study results showed that 68.2% of the participants had a high level of teacher SE , many educators showed a high level regarding SoC, and thus are not fully prepared to teach and must be trained effectively to implement inclusion. Teachers would benefit from more extensive training with regards to inclusion teaching because research has shown that there is slow movement along the stages.

Maintaining disabled students in the same class as their typically developing peers requires careful preparation and planning from the teacher. Teachers encounter various challenges when implementing collaborative programs. Traditional teachers may not be very well prepared to implement special services, as they were not specifically trained in the nuances of special education. In the way that inclusion training is presented to educators, these same

teachers may also be unfamiliar with the unique needs of disabled students in the classrooms (Forlin & Chambers, 2011). The practice of inclusion requires behavioral changes in the classroom and underlying curriculum implementation standards geared towards tolerance for all pupils (Forlin & Chambers, 2011). Instructors who are able to encourage inclusion in education are successful in implementing educational initiatives for disabled and normal students (Rae et al., 2010). Since there are no particular working environments for people with special needs, this method of socialization is an excellent form of preparation for real life scenarios. It would be advisable that all teachers encountering disabled students receive inclusion training in order to maintain educational standards for all pupils.

Most teachers are not prepared well for teaching in an inclusive classroom, and the results of the study could provide a rationale for administrations to supply training for inclusive classroom teaching. There should be other characteristic determinants in terms of selecting the most appropriate teachers for the position of inclusive classroom teaching, as the results showed that SE is not significantly related with SoC.

Recommendations for Further Study

From the overall study results, there is a correlation between teachers' SE and SoC. Further inspection of the data reveals that the high SE and low SoC are disproportionately paired. It would be notable if future scholars found the same thing. It is also a question as to whether it is good for low stage teachers to have high SE; researchers have suggested that this might be a beneficial situation because teachers with higher SE have been shown to be better inclusion teachers. Future researchers should look into incorporating student outcomes to see if SE and SoC are related to include student learning. It would also be valuable to the current body of

literature to expand studies to examine the variables influencing SoC. This information could aid in the development of training programs to improve the SoC scores of teachers.

This study was limited to a single school district and a small sample, which may weaken reproduction of results in dissimilar districts. Yet, the data collection method used in this study included the use of Likert-type surveys, which could easily be distributed to include larger population samples. The teaching environment is vastly different all over the globe, so a replication of this study in other countries may yield very different and valuable results. The closed-ended questions of the surveys used may have limited teachers' responses, and therefore, using a qualitative component in a mixed method study may provide more clarity on the SE and SoC of teachers. Through conducting interviews and case studies, more specific and relevant variables may be revealed, which may then be targeted specifically through training and empowerment.

Conclusion

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine teachers' profiles of attitudes towards teaching students in an inclusive classroom. SE and SoC were correlated for the larger sample, KBMS, but not in the CMS smaller school. The teachers' SE and SoC scores were combined to create a profile for each anonymous teacher. This was done to group teachers for PD. The literature showed that students with SEN and disabilities who receive inclusive education have higher academic achievement and better social skills (Gebhardt et al., 2012). Zamani et al. (2011) recommended that teacher meetings and classroom visits be implemented to provide teachers with opportunities to learn from each other.

Due to significance of the Spearman correlations for the overall sample and KBMS, the null hypotheses for $H1_0$ and $H3_0$ were both rejected. The null hypothesis for $H2_0$ could not be rejected. The results of the Spearman correlations indicated that there is a significant association between teacher SE and SoC scores. Additional research is recommended to aid in identifying teachers' specific PD needs for teaching inclusion. Future scholars should conduct studies that explore the relationship between SoC and SE in an inclusion-based school environment.

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Appendix A: Stages of Concern Questionnaire

Please respond to the items in terms of your present concerns, or how you feel about your involvement with Inclusion. We do not hold to any one definition of the innovation so please think of it in terms of your own perception of what it involves. Phrases such as "this approach" and "the new system" all refer to the same innovation. Remember to respond to each item in terms of your present concerns about your involvement or potential involvement with the innovation. Select one response for each question below. Thank you for your time to complete this task.

		Irrel-evant	Not true of me now	Somewhat true of me now			Very true of me now		
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	I am concerned about students' attitudes toward Inclusion.								
2.	I now know of some other approaches that might work better than Inclusion.								
3.	I am more concerned about another innovation.								
4.	I am concerned about not having enough time to organize myself each day (in relation to Inclusion).								
5.	I would like to help other faculty in their use of Inclusion.								
6.	I have a very limited knowledge about Inclusion.								
7.	I would like to know the effect of reorganization on my professional status.								
8.	I am concerned about conflict between my interests and my responsibilities.								
9.	I am concerned about revising my use of Inclusion.								
10.	I would like to develop working relationships with both our faculty and outside faculty using Inclusion.								
11.	I am concerned about how Inclusion affects students.								
12.	I am not concerned about Inclusion at this time.								
13.	I would like to know who will make the decisions in the new system.								
14.	I would like to discuss the possibility of using Inclusion.								
15.	I would like to know what resources are available if we decide to adopt Inclusion.								
16.	I am concerned about my inability to manage all that Inclusion requires.								
17.	I would like to know how my teaching or administration is supposed to change.								

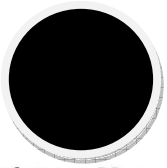
		Irrel-evant	Not true of me now	Somewhat true of me now			Very true of me now		
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	I would like to familiarize other departments or persons with the progress of this new approach.								
19.	I am concerned about evaluating my impact on students (in relation to Inclusion).								
20.	I would like to revise the Inclusion approach.								
21.	I am completely occupied with things other than Inclusion.								
22.	I would like to modify our use of Inclusion based on the experiences of our students.								
23.	I spend little time thinking about Inclusion.								
24.	I would like to excite my students about their part in this approach.								
25.	I am concerned about time spent working with nonacademic problems related to Inclusion.								
26.	I would like to know what the use of Inclusion will require in the immediate future.								
27.	I would like to coordinate my efforts with others to maximize the effects of Inclusion.								
28.	I would like to have more information on time and energy commitments required by Inclusion.								
29.	I would like to know what other faculty are doing in this area.								
30.	Currently, other priorities prevent me from focusing my time on Inclusion.								
31.	I would like to determine how to supplement, enhance, or replace Inclusion.								
32.	I would like to use feedback from students to change the program.								
33.	I would like to know how my role will change when I am using Inclusion.								
34.	Coordination of tasks and people (in relation to Inclusion) is taking too much of my time.								
35.	I would like to know how Inclusion is better than what we have now.								

Appendix B: Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale[1] (long form)

Teacher Beliefs Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.	How much can you do? Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
3. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
5. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
19. How well can you keep a few problem students form ruining an entire lesson?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
21. How well can you respond to defiant students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation from School District



[redacted]

Department of Performance Management and Research

[redacted]

[redacted]

September 6, 2015

To: Sonya Avery

Re: Research Proposal

After consideration of your proposal, Teacher's Stages of Concern and Self-Efficacy for Teaching Students in an Inclusive Classroom, we have approved your request to conduct this study in [redacted] You should use this letter as official notification of approval for your study.

The district level approval being granted with this letter does not obligate any school or any person to participate in this project. Approval by the principal of the participating schools is still needed before the study can begin at those schools. Also, individuals must be given the option of not participating.

Approval is contingent on you agreeing to use the data collected only for the purpose of the study described in the proposal.

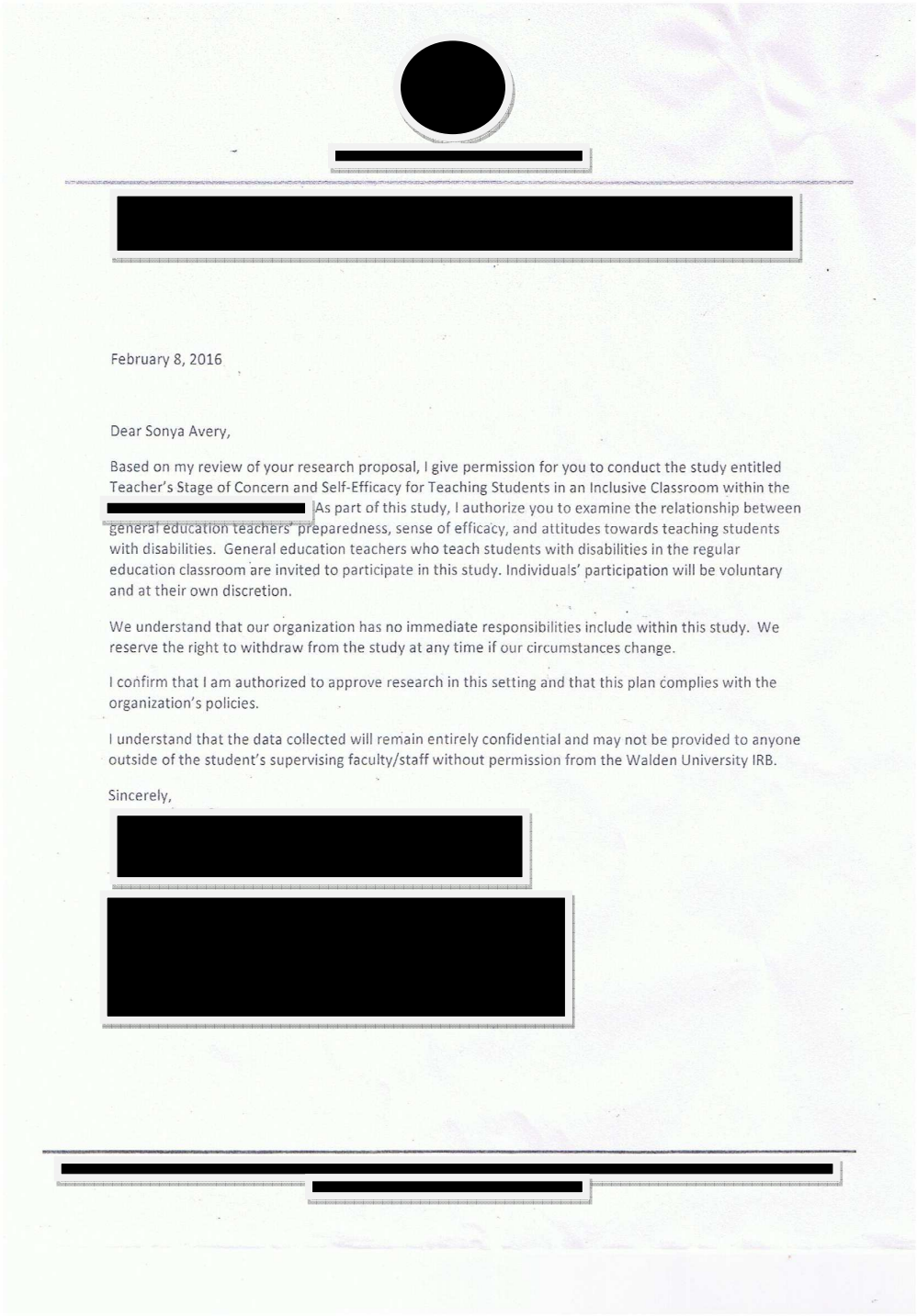
We look forward to working with you in the completion of this project.

Please direct any inquiries to me via email at [redacted]

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Appendix D: Letter of Cooperation from Principal Building A



[redacted]

February 8, 2016

Dear Sonya Avery,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Teacher's Stage of Concern and Self-Efficacy for Teaching Students in an Inclusive Classroom within the [redacted] As part of this study, I authorize you to examine the relationship between general education teachers' preparedness, sense of efficacy, and attitudes towards teaching students with disabilities. General education teachers who teach students with disabilities in the regular education classroom are invited to participate in this study. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization has no immediate responsibilities include within this study. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

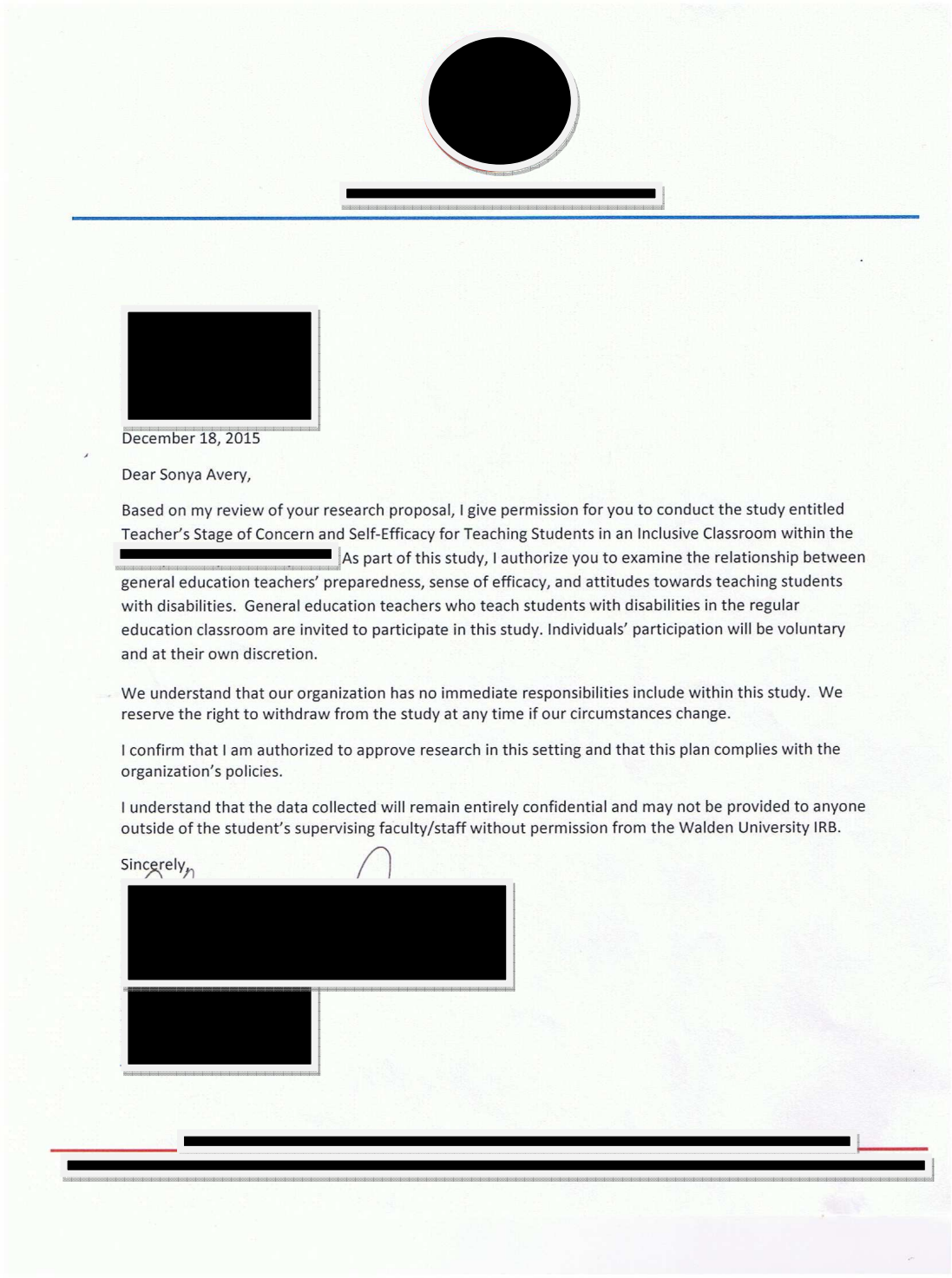
I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

Appendix E: Letter of Cooperation from Principal Building B



[redacted]

[redacted]

December 18, 2015

Dear Sonya Avery,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Teacher's Stage of Concern and Self-Efficacy for Teaching Students in an Inclusive Classroom within the [redacted] As part of this study, I authorize you to examine the relationship between general education teachers' preparedness, sense of efficacy, and attitudes towards teaching students with disabilities. General education teachers who teach students with disabilities in the regular education classroom are invited to participate in this study. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization has no immediate responsibilities include within this study. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Appendix F: Invitation to Participate

Dear Colleague,

You are invited to take part in a research study that examines teachers' attitudes towards teaching students in an inclusive setting. This study will examine the relationship between general education teachers' preparedness, sense of efficacy, and attitudes towards teaching students with disabilities. General education teachers who teach students with disabilities in the regular education classroom are invited to participate in this study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Sonya Avery, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as a general education teacher, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to identify teachers concerns and sense of self-efficacy when teaching students with disabilities in an inclusive setting.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Complete the Stages of Concerns Questionnaire which will take about 15 minutes.
- Complete the Teachers Sense of Self-Efficacy Survey which will only take about 10 minutes.

Following are some sample statements:

- I am not concerned about implementing inclusive education.
- I have a very limited knowledge about implementing inclusive education.
- I am concerned about not having enough time to organize myself each day.
- I am concerned about students' attitudes towards the inclusion process.
- I would like to know what other faculty are doing in this area.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at Shelby County Schools will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as taking a few minutes from your already full and demanding work day. Some of the questions may cause you to reflect on your personal views regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education setting. There are some questions

that will require you to examine your thoughts on implementing the inclusive process. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

The information obtained from this study will identify the connection between teachers' level of self-efficacy and their levels of concerns regarding teaching students with disabilities within an inclusive setting. The data from this study can be used to develop professional development training and materials that are differentiated to address teachers' specific needs and ability levels to improve the implementation of inclusive education.

Payment:

A basket of muffins will be put out in a common area at each location the day the survey is sent out as a thank you for taking time to participate in the survey.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept anonymous. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by taking special care to treat online identifies and their corresponding character names as authentic ones. Proper confidentiality measures are in place to ensure that participants' identities are protected. All identifiable or coded date transmitted over the internet will be encrypted to ensure that data cannot be decoded and responses cannot be tracked back to an individual respondent. All the data collected during this process will be kept in an electronic file on a computer which is password protected in my home office. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 901-736-2073 or sonya.avery@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **IRB will enter approval number here** and it expires on **IRB will enter expiration date.**

Statement of Consent:

I understand that it is very importantly that I participate in this study with the highest level of integrity. I will respond to each item as it relates to my present feelings and concerns regarding teaching in an inclusive environment. I pledge to submit responses to this survey only once to ensure the accuracy of data collection.

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By clicking the link below I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Sincerely,

Appendix G: Reminder to Participate

Reminder to Participate

Dear Colleague,

You may have already received an e-mail inviting you to participate in this survey. If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept my thanks and delete this e-mail as no further involvement is required. If you have not completed the questionnaire please take the time to consider helping me with this important research.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Sonya Avery, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as a general education teacher, but this study is separate from that role.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey, which will take about 25 minutes to complete.

The items were developed from typical responses of school and college teachers who range from no knowledge at all about various programs to many years' experience using them. Therefore, many of the items on this questionnaire may appear to be a little relevance or irrelevant to you at this time. For the completely irrelevant items, please choose "0" on the scale. Other items will represent those concerns you have, in varying degrees of intensity, and should be marked higher on the scale.

For Example:

- This statement is very true of me at this time 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- This statement is somewhat true at this time 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- This statement seems irrelevant to me 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- This statement is not at all true of me at this time 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

The questionnaire is strictly confidential and anonymous. In order to ensure anonymity, please note that you will not be able to save your responses and return to the survey at a later stage. Please review your responses before clicking ‘submit’ to send your completed survey. You will not be able to return to your responses after submitting the survey.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at Shelby County Schools will treat you

differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as taking a few minutes from your already full and demanding work day. Some of the questions may cause you to reflect on your personal views regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education setting. There are some questions that will require you to examine your thoughts on implementing the inclusive process. There are no other risks or discomfort to associate with the study. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

The information obtained from this study will identify the connection between teachers' level of self-efficacy and their levels of concerns regarding teaching students with disabilities within an inclusive setting. The data from this study can be used to develop professional development training and materials that are differentiated to address teachers' specific needs and ability levels to improve the implementation of inclusive education.

Payment:

A basket of pastries will be put out in a common area at each location the day the survey is sent out as a thank you for taking time to participate in the survey.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept anonymous. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by taking special care to treat online identifies and their corresponding character names as authentic ones. Proper confidentiality measures are in place to ensure that participants' identities are protected. All identifiable or coded date transmitted over the internet will be encrypted to ensure that data cannot be decoded and responses cannot be tracked back to an individual respondent. All the data collected during this process will be kept in an electronic file on a computer which is password protected in my home office. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 901-736-2073 or sonya.avery@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **IRB will enter approval number here** and it expires on **IRB will enter expiration date.**

Statement of Consent:

I understand that it is very importantly that I participate in this study with the highest level of integrity. I will respond to each item as it relates to my present feelings and concerns regarding teaching in an inclusive environment. I pledge to submit responses to this survey only once to ensure the accuracy of data collection.

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By clicking the link below I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.