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Elementary Teachers' Perspectives of the Support Facilitation Instructional Model

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Abstract

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by

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Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

The problem in an elementary school in Southern Texas was poor reading performance on grade level and progress monitoring tests for students with disabilities (SWDs). SWDs may learn to read proficiently when reading instruction is provided using the support facilitation model (SFM) that features a special educator who helps SWDs in literacy or mathematics in inclusion settings. The purpose of this bounded qualitative case study was to explore the perspectives of special and general education teachers about SFM. The universal design for learning framework, used to plan lessons based on how students learn, guided this study. The research questions focused on teachers' perspectives of SFM and its application. A purposeful sample of 2 special and 4 general education teachers, who taught SWDs using SFM in reading, volunteered and participated in semistructured interviews and classroom observations. The data were analyzed thematically using open, axial, and descriptive coding strategies. Participants supported inclusive education and voiced the need to understand their roles and responsibilities, and for a collaborative planning time to implement SFM. Findings indicated that SWDs learn to read best when they receive support through comprehension strategies and inclusion practices using SFM. Based on the findings, a 3-day training was designed to enhance teachers' knowledge of SFM, inclusion practices, comprehension strategies, and collaborative planning to support SWDs in reading. These endeavors may contribute to positive social change when administrators provide training for general and special educators to increase teachers' SFM knowledge and to apply collaborative planning, comprehension strategies, and inclusion practices, that may result in SWDs' improved reading performance.

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Dedication

This project study is dedicated to my beloved husband, Stephen Afolabi, for being a source of support and encouragement through the course of my doctoral program and life in general. His enduring support and understanding made it possible for me to complete this program successfully, and I am most grateful to God for bringing you into my life. I love you, honey. Secondly, I dedicate this project to my talented and blessed sons Jeremiah, Othniel, Israel, and Joshua, who endured the effects of my academic pursuit in several ways. I love you with all my heart and may God bless and reward you all.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The problem at a local elementary school in an urban setting in a southern part of Texas was that students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms had exhibited poor performance, especially in reading. Students with disabilities fell below target achievement levels, and the reasons for their poor performance were unknown. The support facilitation model was implemented and was expected to improve reading proficiency for students with disabilities. However, the grade level test data and the district I-Station Indication of Progress reading scores continued to indicate a high failure rate, in reading, among students with disabilities. Most students with disabilities receiving inclusion services in the school also received accelerated instruction (extra tutorial) from the special education (inclusion) teachers through the 2015-2016 and 2016 -2017 school years due to their low I-Station Indication of Progress scores in reading, yet the reading scores remain low.

Students with disabilities received instruction in the inclusive classroom with peers who were nondisabled; this provided the least restrictive environment for them to learn as required by federal law. Although students who received special education services were placed in the least restrictive environments, their performance levels remained low. The least restrictive environment provides students with disabilities access to the curriculum and the right to be educated alongside their peers who are nondisabled. Moreover, Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris, and Puckett (2014) conducted research on inclusive education teaching model and collaboration in U.S. urban schools and identified

discrepancies in the way teachers working in urban and diverse communities were implementing the teaching model. Gehrke et al. found teachers did not understand the inclusive education teaching model and the effective instructional strategies for meeting the needs of students with disabilities in the inclusive classrooms. Despite decades of focusing on inclusive education in schools in the United States, there remain inconsistencies in how teachers implement inclusion in their classrooms (Gehrke, Cocchiarella, Harris, & Puckett, 2014). The popular model of teaching in inclusive classrooms is the coteaching model, though the research site has used the *support facilitation model* for students with disabilities in the inclusive classrooms.

When using the support facilitation model, the special education teacher or support facilitator only comes in to provide support to students with disabilities at scheduled times depending on the student's area of need (reading, writing, or mathematics) for a maximum of 45 minutes per day. This is in contrast with the coteaching model both special and general education teachers work together in the inclusive classroom for the whole subject block or period (90 minutes), and they also coplan and coteach. In ideal situations, the inclusive teaching model requires consistency in all areas of the educational process, including coplanning and instructional delivery. However, this is not always the case in observed natural settings in schools (Mavropalias & Anastasiou, 2016). Reading is an essential skill for all students (Job & Coleman 2016; Killeen, 2014), and when a school's model of teaching fails to provide students with disabilities proficiency in reading, it is a school and district concern. These concerns led to an exploration of elementary teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model.

Some students receiving special education services in the inclusive classrooms are also pulled out of class for related services such as speech, occupational therapy, or English as a second language (ESL), and therefore miss out on the reading activities taking place in the classroom while they are out. In such cases, teachers of inclusive classrooms who engage in innovative pedagogy that draws on digital literacy need to find a way to provide learning activities around these absences from the classroom so that students with disabilities who are pulled out for related services are included in the literacy activities (Price-Dennis, Holmes, & Smith, 2015). It is challenging to plan lessons around the pullout time because of the nature of the teachers' schedules, especially when a teacher has a couple of students with disabilities who receive different related services at different times. Prince-Dennis et al. (2015) realized that students who are pulled out for related services have limited access to the layered process of digital reading assignments (or projects) that could show their creative abilities. This is one of the challenges that inclusion teachers face.

Rationale

Students receiving special education services in 2005 were taught in inclusive classrooms, and the numbers increased in 2008. In 2013, 95% of students with disabilities received instruction in inclusive classrooms (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). It is therefore expected that teachers in inclusive classrooms provide differentiated instruction for students who receive special education services (Fruth & Woods, 2015) and share their classroom with special education teachers.

Although the support facilitation model is implemented in the study site school to help students with disabilities learn meaningfully and successfully, students with disabilities still show poor performance in reading. Reasons for their low performance levels are unknown and warrant exploration of teachers' perspectives on the support facilitation model.

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

The elementary school students with disabilities perform poorly in the campus and district reading assessments, per internal school data. About 95% of the students receiving special services have fallen below the minimum score in District's I-station Indication of Progress for the past 2 years. Additionally, student progress reports and report cards for the first and second 9 weeks of school for the 2016-2017 school year continue to show low scores or no increase in reading proficiency for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms (Alief ISD eSchoolPLUS, 2017). The general education teachers who teach the inclusive classrooms and the special education teachers are concerned about the low reading performance of students with disabilities as mentioned at staffing, admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) meetings, failure ARDs, and data review meetings. Most students with disabilities in the inclusive classrooms still struggle to read and performed below expectation in the state testing.

There are three levels of performance in the state testing; level I stands for unsatisfactory academic performance, level II stands for satisfactory academic performance, and level III stands for advanced academic performance. Per the school federal report card for the elementary school under study, the percentage of students in

special education who scored at level I (unsatisfactory academic performance) in reading

for third and fourth grades on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness

(STAAR) test was 73% (out of 100) in 2014. The percentage of students with disabilities

who scored at level II (satisfactory academic performance) was 41% (out of 100) and 0%

scored at level III (advance academic performance). In 2015, students with disabilities

had a score of 46% in level I, 38% (out of 100) in level II, and 33% (out of 100) in level

III. In 2016 students with disabilities had a score of 32% (out of 100) in level I, 32% (out

of 100) in level II, and 32% (out of 100) in level III. Students with disabilities served in

special education had a 100% participation in the STAAR tests for the 3 school years

above (2014, 2015 and 2016). Although the percentage of students at the unsatisfactorily

level reduced in subsequent years, and students with disabilities who scored at the

advanced level increased in 2015 and dropped in 2016, the percentage of students at the

satisfactory level decreased in 2015 and 2016.

ARD meetings are held annually for each student with disabilities to plan for their

special education and related services. The ARD committee includes (a) the parents of

the student, (b) the general education teacher, (c) the special education teacher, (d) related

service provider such as a speech pathologist, (e) a diagnostician, (f) an administrator,

and (g) sometimes the school psychologist. The number of ARDs depend on the number

of students receiving special education services; there are at least 40 ARDs per year.

There are times when ARD meetings are scheduled besides the annual ARDs; for

example, a failure ARD can be scheduled when a student with disabilities failed one or

more subject in a report card at the end of the grading period. The school operates a nine-week grading system.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine special and general education teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model and how they implemented it. I conducted the study and created a professional development (PD) project to provide understanding of the inclusive practices of the campus under study. The study was to inform the school district about the needs of the teachers of inclusive classrooms and provide them with the necessary support they need to implement the support facilitation model. By investigating teachers' perspectives about the model and how they implement it, it may be possible to bridge the gap between the intended and actual outcomes of the model and improve reading proficiency at the campus. I embarked on this study to explore elementary teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model and its implementation.

Evidence of the Problem (Professional Literature)

The reading performance of students with disabilities raises numerous concerns (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). While 30% of students with no disabilities were below the basic reading level, 68% of students with disabilities read below basic reading level. Also, 80% of students with learning disabilities have difficulties learning to read at the elementary school age, and this problem later affects learning across the grades (Kim, Bryant, Bryant, & Park, 2017). Also, Stevens, Walker, and Vaughn (2017) stated that a high percentage of students with learning disabilities struggle in developing reading fluency, and this affects their reading comprehension in

later grades. This means students with disabilities who have challenges in learning to read in the elementary grades find it challenging to read and comprehend information or content being taught in middle and high school.

Limited research exists about the support facilitation model, but in my search, I came across three websites that contained information about the model. The first website was the Broward County Public School website, which provided a manual that was produced for sharing a common understanding of the support facilitation model as an inclusive service delivery model that could support the needs of students with disabilities. The manual contained the essential components of implementation and evaluation of an effective support facilitation model in inclusive settings to ensure fidelity in the implementation of support by teachers, administrators, and other service providers. The second website was the Florida Inclusion Network, a special project funded by the Florida Department of Education, K-12 Public Schools, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Part B. This website included a definition of the support facilitation model and illustrated with an example of how the model is implemented. On the third website, I found a PD handout about support facilitation that was presented to the staff of Lamar Consolidated Independent School District by Stetson and Associates, Inc. This document also contained the definition of the support facilitation model among other models and the roles of both the special education and the general education teachers in the implementation of the support facilitation model.

Researchers expressed concern about the problems associated with inclusive education and the implementation of inclusive instructional models. Fraser (2014) stated that there are always concerns about full inclusion in the classroom (p. 54) due to challenges such as lack of support and resource (training) and lack of understanding of the model of instruction on the part of the teachers. When an inclusive program is not well implemented, it negatively affects the performance of students with disabilities. Despite the decades of focusing on inclusive education, researchers found gaps and inconsistencies in the implementation of inclusive teaching models in schools in the United States (Gehrke et al., 2014). The cause of these inconsistencies or gaps stemmed from lack of teacher training (Gehrke et al., 2014).

Sometimes general education teachers have negative attitudes toward students with disabilities, and this may be a result of lack of knowledge and skills to teach students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom (Bottge et al., 2014). There is a need for appropriate training and support for general education teachers for inclusion (Bottge et al., 2014; Ntuli & Traore, 2013). Inclusive education is not yielding a positive result due in part to the challenges general education teachers are facing in implementing it, such as limited teaching resources and lack of proper training for teachers (Fraser, 2014). Teachers do not have a good understanding of inclusive education (Bottge et al., 2014; Hornby, 2015; Kovacevic & Macesic-Petrovic, 2012; Ntuli & Traore, 2013), and therefore will have challenges in implementing the instructional models. Therefore, schools and districts may need to train teachers and provide them with necessary resources and the instructional model used in their schools for inclusion. When teachers

do not have the proper understanding of the inclusion program and do not get the support they need, it may result in inconsistencies in implementing the instructional models of inclusion.

Definition of Terms

The definitions of terms below provide a better understanding of the study:

Coteaching: Two or more teachers providing instruction to a diverse group of students (Pancsofar & Petroff, 2016).

Differentiated instruction: When teachers provide instruction to students with various disabilities using instructional methods and materials that match each student's needs. (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & Marshak, 2012).

Inclusive education: Educating students with disabilities side-by-side with their peers with no disabilities in the general education classroom (Fruth & Woods, 2015). Also referred to as inclusion.

Individual Education Plan (IEP): The educational plan for each student receiving special education, it contains the goals, instructional accommodations, and other information of the student for the school year. The IEP is a legal document because the IEP committee develops it per State regulations (U.S. Department of Education, 2015), and teachers are expected to comply with its contents.

Peer tutoring: An instructional method where high performing students are paired with low performing students so that the low-performing students learn from the high performing students in general education or other typical settings outside the classroom but under a teacher's supervision (Nguyen, 2013).

Support facilitation: Teacher provided services to an individual student or small group of students on an individualized basis within a traditional (or inclusive) classroom (Florida Inclusion Network, 2013).

The Significance of the Study

This study explored teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation instructional model and inclusive strategies used in the school. The study is significant because it may provide information to the school, district, and other stakeholders about instructional practices in the inclusive classrooms in the elementary school. An understanding of teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model may help the school officials become aware of the issues related to inclusion and provide teachers with the necessary skills or expertise to create an efficient and inclusive learning environment that will meet the instructional needs of students with disabilities through proper implementation of the model. The study may make a positive contribution by providing useful information that may help administrators identify possible causes of students' failure in reading.

The study may also help provide a system to ensure consistency in the implementation of the support facilitation model. The outcome of this study may lead to an increase in the performances of students with disabilities and thereby increase the school academic rating. The school district might benefit by considering how to implement the support facilitation model for students with disabilities in other campuses in the district. This study may contribute to social change by creating awareness and providing training to teachers on the support facilitation model and its implementation to

better assist students with disabilities to achieve academic success in reading, a lifelong

skill.

Research Questions

The purpose of this research was to understand the perspectives of general and

special education teachers of the support facilitation model and how they implement it in

inclusive classrooms. There were two guiding questions for the study:

RQ1: What are special and general educators' perspectives of the support

facilitation model in teaching reading to students with disabilities in the inclusive

setting?

RQ2: How do teachers implement the support facilitation model to teach reading

in the inclusive setting?

Review of the Literature

The literature review section presents a foundation for the study by providing a

review of past research literature on the topic. This section includes six main categories:

inclusive education, conceptual framework, inclusive instructional models, other teaching

models and strategies for implementing inclusive education, general challenges of

implementing inclusive education instructional models, and factors that promote

inclusive promote inclusive education. I accessed the Walden library online to search for

sources for this review of the literature. I used multiple databases to find literature

relating to my research topic. I used ERIC, Education Complete, Education Source,

Education Resource Starters, and Google Scholar. The key search terms I used were

inclusive education, teachers' perspectives s of inclusion, inclusive instructional models,

co-teaching, collaboration, elementary or primary schools, and *teachers' perception of inclusion*.

These search terms provided additional information and a secondary topic, but with feedback from my committee, my topic was refined to focus on one instructional model of inclusion used for teaching reading at my research site (support facilitation model). Therefore, my search terms included *support facilitation model*, *reading in inclusive classrooms,* and *reading instruction to students with disabilities*. I found only a few articles about reading instruction to students with disabilities related to the support facilitation model on the Walden research database, Google Scholar, or other websites. Only a few websites have information about the support facilitation model. Most of the literature found were peered reviewed articles, dissertations related to my topic, and books. The focus of this study was to explore the general and special educators' perspectives of the support facilitation instructional model used in inclusive classrooms for reading.

Inclusive Education

Inclusive education first came into existence more than two decades ago as a service delivery model for students with disabilities (Dev & Haynes, 2015). Inclusive education, also referred to as inclusion, involves providing instruction to students with disabilities in the general education classroom alongside their peers without disabilities. Inclusive education denotes a total change of attitudes, practices, and ideologies that govern performance-based curricula (Boyle & Sharma 2015; Fruth & Woods, 2015; Mosia, 2014). This means the success of inclusive education depends on the knowledge

and understanding that educators have about it. Well-trained teachers can implement inclusion successfully because of their knowledge of its benefits. Without an understanding of inclusion, without training, resources and support, implementation of any inclusive education instructional model may be ineffective (Mosia, 2014). Even if a school has the best teachers in the inclusive classrooms, they may not provide the correct learning opportunities for students with disabilities.

Per research, the teaching model in an inclusive setting helps students with disabilities to access the curriculum (Ford, Stuart, & Vakil, 2014, p. 59), and become successful because the lessons are differentiated according to individual needs. In their research about the 21st-century classroom, Ford et al. (2014) discussed how to implement some culturally responsive strategies to help students with disabilities learn. The inclusive classroom consists of students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and these students bring in their experiences into the classrooms. Teachers validate the experiences students bring into the classrooms by differentiating their instruction to accommodate the diverse learners and cultures represented in the inclusive classroom.

Culturally responsive strategies provide opportunities to support diverse learners in inclusive classrooms because it empowers the child intellectually, emotionally, socially, and politically by use of cultural referents or terms to teach skills and behavior (Ford et al., 2014). Recognition of student diversity in the inclusive classroom gives rise to differentiated instruction to meet those diverse needs. Differentiation of instruction, therefore, helps students to learn because learning activities are adjusted based on the pace and level of each student, capitalizing on the students' strengths and interests (Ford

et al.,2014). The authors also stated that the inclusive education optimizes access to the general curriculum for students receiving special education and allows them the opportunity to interact with their peers.

Since inclusion means including all students with diverse abilities and needs in the classroom, it helps students with disabilities to not feel isolated or different from other students. Including students with disabilities in the general education classroom helps build self-esteem and confidence in them (Ford et al., (2014). Successful learning occurs where the student feels part of the classroom and safe; hence the importance of inclusion. Ford et al. (2014) also discussed educational delivery practices that increase students' engagement and yield a positive outcome for students with disabilities (p. 56). When teachers plan their lessons and learning activities with the diverse learners in mind, students are more willing to learn. An inclusive environment is where instruction is differentiated with leveled learning activities and two or more professionals who collaborate and work together (Fruth & Woods, 2015). Inclusion is beneficial to students with disabilities, especially when the teachers have the skills required and the instructional efficacy to teach in inclusive classrooms.

Inclusive education is frequently implemented for educating all students including those with disabilities (McGhie-Richmond, Irvine, Loreman, Cizman, & Lupart, 2013, p. 197). Inclusive education is embraced not only in the United States but across different countries and diverse cultures of the world. Different countries implement inclusive education because of the benefits it yields for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities learn better in the inclusive classrooms. They benefit from learning with their

peers who do not have disabilities instead of segregated environments with support (Fruth, & Woods, 2015, p. 352). When students with disabilities receive instruction in a resource room, away from the general education classrooms, they feel they are different from other "normal kids." Zhang and Hu (2015) also reported that inclusion helps students with disabilities to interact with their peers in the general education classroom (p. 56). They can work together in small groups, thereby creating room for interactions as students participate in the learning activities. Inclusive education provides a learning platform for students with disabilities to learn because they become successful when included in the general education, and inclusive education helps the normalization of their life (Nasibullov, Kashapova, & Shavaliyeva, 2015, p. 545). It helps them feel safe and accepted rather than isolated and different.

The concept of including students with disabilities in the general education classroom is in various declarations and policy documents on international human rights (Ahsan & Mullick, 2013, p. 151). Per DeMathews and Mawhinney (2013), for close to 40 years, federal special education policy has mandated that school districts in the United States create policies and structures that provide access for students with disabilities to the general education classroom. The intent of inclusive education is to provide students with disabilities access to educational programs available to their nondisabled peers in a least restrictive environment (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA], 2004, Sec. 300.114). DeMathews and Mawhinney conducted a case study of an urban school district that implemented inclusion reform over a period of 4 years and had a history of failure in the implementation process. The authors described the district's special

education inclusion policy implementation process and the challenges faced by district administrators. The district did not comply with the least restrictive component of IDEA 2004, and there was no proper leadership to promote inclusion. Some principals did not embrace the inclusion program because of the lack of training and financial support by the district. Principals were also cheating the system by limiting the enrollment of students with disabilities. The case study above showed that there were districts that struggled with the implementation of inclusion due to lack of support and finances.

Special education policies are used to advocate equal opportunity for education to all students and provide special education services to students who qualify. The special education services are to be provided in the least restrictive environment. In 1975–1990, the Individual with Disabilities Education Act was known as Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA), but in 1990, the United States Congress, changed it from EHA to IDEA (Public Law 94-142). This law covered students ages six to 21. The focus of the law shifted from handicapped children to individuals with specific disabilities. In 2004, the President George W. Bush signed IDEA 2004. IDEA 2004 provided a platform for educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment such as the inclusive classroom. Some changes were made to the IDEA 1990 to include children ages 3–6 years old (Public Law 99-457), providing the opportunity for families to be involved in their children's education and a wide range of other services such as being part of the ARD committee and participating in the planning of the student's IEP.

Conflicts about inclusive education. Although there is literature that supports inclusive education, there is also literature stating that inclusive education has its limits and is not appropriate for all students with disabilities. For example, Nasibullov et al. (2015) stated that inclusive education provides a platform for students with disabilities to learn because they become successful when included in the general education. He stated that inclusive education helps the "normalization of their life," but he also found that some students with disabilities are better served in specialized settings while allowing them to participate in other leisure activities with their peers in the general education classroom. Some students are easily distracted and lose concentration when activities in the classrooms involve movement.

In the same vein, Kauffman and Badar (2014) wrote about mistaken assumptions of inclusion and disagreed with the inclusion program for all students with disabilities because it was not the key to improving the quality of special education. Kauffman and Badar considered inclusion as a "bridge to nowhere" for instructional purposes because it does not address special education core issues (p. 14). The authors agreed to the fact that inclusion helps some students with disabilities to become successful, but not all of them. To Kauffman and Badar, inclusive education is not realistic and does not benefit all students with disabilities. Having inclusive education as the only option for educating students with disabilities means denying the right to appropriate education because inclusion does not work for every student; special education should focus on "effective instruction" rather than on the integration of students with general education students (Kauffman & Badar, 2014). In contrast, Ford et al. (2014, claimed that when students

with disabilities are isolated for instruction, they feel isolated and different from other students.

Including students with disabilities in the general education classroom helps build self-esteem and confidence in them. Successful learning occurs where the student feels being part of the classroom and safe, hence the importance of inclusion (Ford et al., 2014). Per Kauffman and Bader (2014), inclusive education for students with disabilities does not just mean putting students with disabilities into the general education classrooms. It involves planning lessons with them in mind and creating an environment for them to learn and become successful within the general education classroom or in a specialized setting, depending on the student. Kauffman and Badar believed that students need learning activities that will engage them and allow them to take charge of their learning, but not necessarily in an inclusive setting.

Fruth and Woods (2015) believed the inclusive classroom is the best environment for students receiving special services to learn because instruction can be differentiated with leveled learning activities when two or more professionals collaborate and work together to address the needs of the students with disabilities. Inclusive education is said to be helpful for students with disabilities, but there are others who disagree that students with disabilities learn meaningfully in an inclusive setting. Only students with learning or mild disabilities receive instruction in the inclusive classrooms in the elementary school under study. Students with severe disabilities are taught in other specialized self-contain settings.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this qualitative study draws from the universal

design for learning (UDL), which is a framework for lesson planning developed by the

Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST; 2016) based on scientific insights into

how humans learn. This framework helps to guide teachers in designing learning

environments that are accessible and effective for all students. UDL involves the use of

educational concepts, pedagogical knowledge, and technology to create learning

experiences that are inclusive for all and engage learners with diverse learning needs

(Navarro, Zervas, Gesa, & Sampson, 2016) in reading. For example, during independent

work where a student is expected to read a text and respond to comprehension questions.

A student who struggles to read and has the use of reading software listed in instructional

accommodation can be given a shorter version of the text by scanning it in the computer,

laptop, or iPad. The student can use headphones and a technology device to listen to the

text and the questions with the answer choices. The student can reread the text a few

times before writing the answers in the comprehension journal or answer sheet. This

procedure is used to complete independent work in the classroom along with his peers.

UDL provides students with different ways to represent knowledge (Kurth, Lyon,

& Shogren, 2015). Using UDL is beneficial in the inclusive education classroom because

it will help students with behavior disorders stay engaged with the material that interest

and challenge them. Johnson-Harris and Mundshcenk (2014) in their article about the use

of UDL in the classroom stated that UDL helps improve the accessibility of instruction

by all potential learners because it allows the student to "interact with the contents in a

variety of ways" (p. 168). UDL allows students to build on their strengths while providing supports that could help them "monitor and improve their behavior" (Johnson-Harris & Mundshcenk, 2014, p. 173). Monitoring is an important feature of UDL that assists teachers to manage their classrooms without disruptions to lessons and activities for students with behavior disorders.

Also, teachers plan lessons and differentiate learning activities for individual students with disabilities by applying their accommodations and modifications as stated in each student IEP. The learner drives the instruction and not the teacher. Navarro et al. (2014) conducted a pre- and posttest for 47 teachers using the same assessment rubric to evaluate the PD program for teachers from both primary and secondary schools using three UDL principles (representation, expression, and engagement). The pretest indicated that participants' experiences in designing inclusive lessons were low, and after the PD program was provided to these teachers, the posttest showed a considerable amount of growth compared to the result of the pretest. Teachers need training on appropriate competencies to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities (Navarro et al., 2014). Navarro et al. (2014) also stated that UDL is recognized as the framework most frequently used for the design and development of the curriculum for effective inclusion. UDL seems to be effective for differentiation of instruction for diverse learners because teachers can tailor their lessons to meet the individual needs of audiences. The fact that students could learn in their way and at their level makes it a valuable tool for students with disabilities to become engaged and learn.

UDL can transfer to teaching reading in an inclusive classroom by use of technology. Technology can be used to differentiate reading lessons for students with various disabilities in inclusive settings. Various reading software and websites can help students with disabilities learn to read. The audio or visuals embedded in the software or website activities help provide the opportunity for students with disabilities to learn creatively.

The use of UDL was also common in some research literature (Brooks, 2016; Fruth & Woods, 2015; Johnson-Harris & Mundschenk, 2014; Soleas, 2015). Students with disabilities have diverse needs, so it is necessary for teachers to provide different opportunities for them to learn instead of using one-size-fits-all lesson plans and strategies. Presenting a lesson in a variety of ways (differentiated instruction) gives opportunities for meaningful learning. Soleas (2015) found that UDL is central to the teacher preparation coursework about inclusion (p. 295). This is to prepare teachers for inclusive settings.

Students come into the inclusive classroom with diverse needs, so UDL helps students to access the curriculum and be engaged in learning in the way they learn best. UDL makes learning exciting and fun for all students, not just students with disabilities. This means that UDL can help students build confidence and self-esteem while learning meaningfully. Effective practice of inclusive instructional strategies depends on how much teachers know and are involved in inclusion and the PD opportunities available to them (Pancsofar & Petroff, 2016, p. 1051). The opportunities for teachers to learn should be available to them so that they can in turn help students learn in their classrooms.

Inclusive Instructional Models

In this subsection, I discuss two inclusive models, the support facilitation model and coteaching model. The support facilitation model is similar to the coteaching model; both are inclusive instructional models and involve the general and special education teacher, but they have several differences.

Support facilitation model. This is a service delivery model that supports the general education teachers and the special education students in an inclusive setting by a state certified teacher. The support is provided according to each student's needs as reflected in the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) (Broward County Public Schools, 2016). The support facilitation model is used when the special education teacher, also known as the support facilitator (or speech therapist or other related service provider), comes into the classroom at a scheduled time to provide support in reading, writing or mathematics, depending on the need of the students, for a maximum of 45 minutes per day, five times a week. The support facilitator provides various supports to the general education teacher and students on a regularly scheduled basis. Some of the support facilitators' roles include:

- Instructional planning: Develop lessons plans that align with the general education teacher's lesson plan.

- Delivery of instruction: provide small group instruction, facilitate cooperative learning, differentiate instruction, provide individualized learning materials, provide needed accommodation or modification needs, facilitates peer supports, reteach where necessary and implement accelerated instruction.

- Formative/ongoing assessment: Implement campus and district assessments, provide tutorials to prepare students for state testing, retest, monitor progress on IEP goals and objectives and behavior intervention plans (BIP).

- Administrative system support: ensure appropriate percentage of special education students, allow for adequate time to appropriately support each student, and provide daily instructional support for a minimum of 45 minutes per block/class/period, collaborate with the general education teacher, and serve as a tracking teacher/case manager for special education students as assigned by campus special education team leader.

- Learning environment: reinforce classroom rules, provide positive behavior support and academic support as noted in the student's IEP, model respectful communication.

Coteaching model: The co-teaching model refers to a where the general and special education teacher are formally committed to plan, provide, and assess instruction jointly for the students in inclusive classrooms. This commitment could be a year-long or semester-long. Coteaching has different forms. According to Pancsofar and Petroff (2016), there are different forms of co-teaching as stated below:

- One primary, one passive

- One delivers, one supports

- Instruct different groups of students at the same time

- One enhances the instruction of the other

- Share responsibility for planning

- Coplan and coinstruct (p.1047).

A school can decide which form of co-teaching model would be helpful for its students and utilize it. Karina and Tierman (2014) found out that coteaching helps to monitor skills related to students' IEP goals because there are two teachers involved compared to a situation where there is only one teacher (p. 94). This implies that applying the IEP target to a classroom context needs the efforts of more than one teacher.

Teachers can use the station teaching, which is a form of co-teaching where teachers work on specific contents at different stations with students moving from one station to the other to involve in the learning experience (Kerins & Tierman, 2014). Station teaching method is particularly suitable for in-class support, and this, therefore, means that the in-class-support and general education teachers need to plan together, that is where teacher collaboration comes into play. They also found that co-teaching is an effective model for supporting young students to develop literacy skills and the various ways teachers can work together to meet all students' needs through the co-teaching model. For a coteaching model to be effective, the collaboration between general and special education teachers need to be consistent. This relationship between the co-teachers provides a conducive learning environment for students with disabilities.

Other Teaching Models and Strategies for Implementing Inclusive Education

Research-based strategies and models for teaching reading to students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom incorporate "inductive, deductive, monolog, direct, exploratory and cooperative learning" (Tsakiridou & Polyzopoulou, 2014, p. 972). Some of these models and strategies include:

Team teaching is a teaching model involving two or more teachers who plan, present, and assess together (Jenkins & Crawford, 2016).

Differentiated instructions is when teachers adapt or modify learning materials or activities to meet individual student needs (Fruth & Woods, 2015; p. 352, Gadzikowski, 2016, Navarro et al., 2016). Students with disabilities are diverse, and this often, affects their social relationships, hence the need for differentiation of instruction by teachers to include every student using flexible grouping visual teaching/learning aids because younger children learn and retain better with visual materials, they can see or touch (Elder et al., 2016, p. 424).

Peer-mediated instruction and interventions (or peer support) is where peers of students with disabilities are taught to help and interact with students with disabilities to learn (Carter et al., 2015, p. 17; Ford et al., 2014, p. 2). Peer support promotes the student's' relationship thereby helping students with disabilities participate in reading activities with other students.

Question and answer relationship (QAR) is another reading strategy that helps students to comprehend text read. QAR is a systematic way of teaching students the process to locate answers to comprehension question (Green, 2016). There are five effective researched-based teaching practices stated by Fenty, McDuffie-Landrum, and Fisher, (2012) that can be used to the question and answer relationship (QAR) strategy instruction as listed below:

- Anticipatory set: This helps activate students' prior knowledge, engage students and introduce a new topic.

- Modeling: This is when the teacher shows or demonstrates to the student how to follow the steps of a strategy before guided practice.

- Guided practice: This is where the teacher allows students to practice the strategy with a peer while providing needed support to them.

- Independent practice: The teacher allows students to apply the new concept or skill learned to a novel situation.

- Closure: This is where the teacher wraps up lesson and checks for students understanding (p. 34 – 37).

There are other things as stated by researchers that help teachers of inclusive classroom support their students to learn reading, such as; collaboration, personal support, and administrative support (Brooks, 2016, p. 10). These components are believed to support students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. In addition, teachers need support to keep current with the most recent teaching methods and strategies needed in inclusive classrooms, for example, administrators may provide teachers with some training about using the reading software needed for students learning, or other instructional materials or programs needed for reading lessons for students with disabilities. Fenty et al. (2012) mentioned question and answers relationship (QAR) through co-teaching and collaboration.

QAR is a reading strategy that allows students to learn ways to respond to questions about the texts they read. QAR makes students think critically about the text being read and therefore keeping them focused and engaged – because the students do the

thinking process to come up with a good prediction, conclusion or whatever the focus of the lesson might be at a given time. The QAR strategy is one of the strategies used for reading in inclusive classrooms, though the strategy is used in other settings, not only in inclusive settings.

Collaboration is one of the key components of inclusive education because both general education and special education teachers need to collaborate and work together to plan reading lessons for students in inclusive classrooms. Research supports collaboration between special education and general education teachers, as well as with parents because it helps effective inclusion practices that lead to student success. Hamilton et al. (2014) stated that both certified special and general education teachers are expected to come into the field with proficient collaboration skills to optimize services for students with disabilities in inclusive settings (p. 76). Like Hamilton's idea, Simons et al. (2012) found that effective inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom requires a culture of collaboration to meet the diverse needs of students and to overcome the challenges that arise from inclusion practices (p. 754). Teacher collaboration helps achieve student success.

The building administrator (or principal of the school) plays a significant role in evaluating and ensuring that effective collaboration is taking place between special and general education teachers within the school. Collaboration helps to create awareness about new mandates, and improve and enhance collaborative teaching (Simons et al., 2012). Collaboration between the special and general education teacher helps them in

making decisions about reading strategies that can engage students with disabilities to participate, learn reading and become successful.

Teacher collaboration is essential when it comes to reading because it helps the teachers to plan lessons that are tailored towards each student's needs, thereby increasing their reading performance. For example, if a student with disabilities who is struggling with blending sounds to read words, or word segmentation or any aspect of phonological awareness is given a text to read and respond to questions about the text, it will be difficult for that student to read and comprehend the given text independently, so both teachers can come together to decide on how to modify the student task to a level he can understand. The teachers may assign a *peer buddy* to help the student with a disability with the reading portion or use audio text, so he can listen and comprehend the text, or use other accommodation they think will help the student learn better. While other students are responding to comprehension questions in their reading journal, a student with disability may respond by drawing pictures or respond orally to the teacher, and teachers need to plan everything about the reading lesson ahead of time. This, therefore, means that inclusion without teacher collaboration may not be effective, and students with disabilities may continue to perform below expectation in reading if they are not provided with the support they need.

General Challenges of Implementing the Inclusive Teaching Model

Teachers' issues. One important thing to consider is how qualified the teachers are to teach in such diverse classrooms. Highly qualified teachers are expected to teach students with disabilities (U. S. Department of Education) in the inclusive classrooms.

Sharma et al. (2014) found high teachers' self-efficacy as a key ingredient in creating "successful inclusive classroom environments" (p. 13), which therefore means that if teachers' perceived efficacy is low, it affects the teaching and learning in the classroom. When teachers are knowledgeable about a program, they have confidence in implementing it. Therefore, teachers' understanding of co-teaching models helps them to implement it well to meet the needs of students with disabilities in their classrooms. Therefore, it is important for teachers of inclusive classroom receive training to meet the needs of their students. Studies show that teacher preparation is a primary ingredient affecting successful implementation of inclusive education (Bottge et al., 2015; Gehrke et al., 2014; Lalvani, 2013, Zion and Sobel, 2014). Universities need to include teaching models for teachers of the inclusive classroom so that they can be prepared to teach since inclusive education is widely used in the United States. Gehrke et al. (2014) in their research found out that the implementation of inclusive education across settings is still not consistent despite the focus on the program for decades.

Gehrke et al. interviewed student teachers and concluded that it was challenging to align teacher education at the pre-service level with current practices (Gehrke et al., 2014, p. 910) because there was a gap in the special education teacher preparation program. The findings call for the need for universities to include courses that will help special education teachers acquire the pedagogical knowledge and skills needed to teach students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The authors suggested assignments like requiring teacher candidates to observe, evaluate, and reflect on the education of students

with disabilities in the mainstream classrooms (Gehrke et al., p. 91), this will help enhance special education teachers to be ready for inclusion.

Mangope and Mukhopadhyay (2015) explored teachers' belief about PD for inclusive education from two elementary and two secondary schools in Botswana and teachers emphasized on the need for on-going PD for teachers and in-house mentorship to make teachers ready to teach in the inclusive classroom (p. 70). The on-going professional training will help prepare teachers with the strategies and skills that enhance meaningful learning to the diverse students in the inclusive classrooms. This shows how new teacher training and in-service training are vital to keep teachers informed and knowledgeable about new developments and prepare them to teach in inclusive classrooms.

Lalvani's (2013) findings indicated that there is a need for a *paradigm shift* in teacher education from deficit models towards the "understanding of inclusive education as linked with issues of social justice" (p. 14). In the same vein, Ahsan and Mullick (2013) are also of the opinion that there is a need to reform the teacher pre-service and in-service curricula, so teachers will be well prepared to create a conducive learning environment for inclusive education. Teachers should also be prepared to provide the necessary supports to students with disabilities in their classrooms per standards for inclusive education. Parents of students with disabilities can contribute to their children's learning by providing useful information that will help teachers in preparing lessons for these students.

Slee (2013) stated that there are parents who have "unique and extensive knowledge" about disabilities and can join the school to build educational learning communities (p. 906). Parents know their children more than anybody else does, so working closely with parents can help the teacher get information to help them meet the needs of the students. Parents are a great resource to the teacher when it comes to getting useful information about students with disabilities. So, students whose teachers work with their parents have a better chance to succeed compared to those that do not.

Some teacher-related variables that influence the implementation of inclusion in the classroom as reported by McGhie-Richmond et al. (2013) include the experiences, attitudes, and beliefs of teachers. McGhie-Richmond et al., also stated that some environmental issues affect inclusive education, such as financial and personnel support to general education teachers (p. 201), which means that successful inclusion depends on both the teacher-related and environmental factors. The knowledge and understanding of the program on the part of the teachers would help the schools to implement inclusion successfully. While on the other hand, support from the school, district or even state, can also boost the effective implementation of inclusive education. Ian (2013) indicated that it is important to encourage more systematic and supportive policies of inclusion to help promote positive inclusive practices (p. 14). Policies about inclusive education need to allow opportunities for teacher training and necessary support for effective implementation of inclusion. Teachers need all the support they can get to create a conducive and engaging environment for students with disabilities in their classrooms.

It is important to note that including students with disabilities in the general education classroom alone does not automatically guarantee their academic progress and achievement; but the quality of teaching they receive makes all the difference (Dev et al., 2015). Inclusive education for students with disabilities does not just mean putting students with disabilities into the general education classrooms only. It involves collaboration and planning lessons with them in mind. It also includes creating an environment for students with disabilities to learn amidst other students and become successful. Students need learning activities that will engage them and allow them to take charge of their learning.

Mitchell (2015) stated that there are no disability-specific strategies used for teaching students with disabilities, all they need is "good teaching" (p. 10). The teacher studies and understands the best way each student learns and provide instruction accordingly. Mitchell also stated that teachers need to provide "explicit and intensive application of a wide range of effective teaching strategies – day-by-day, minute-by-minute – in classrooms" (p. 10) because each student learns differently. Knowing their learning styles will help plan a productive and exciting lesson that will include all students, not students with disability only, but all students will benefit from it. So, knowing each student and the way they learn help the teacher to plan lesson activities to meet the student's needs.

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes influence how they teach or relate to students. Therefore, teacher training on inclusive education will help them be prepared to implement inclusion with fewer challenges (Palasan & Henter, 2015; Schwab, 2015).

Learning about how students with disabilities learn may change teachers' beliefs or orientation about them and think of ways to help them learn. Teachers of inclusive classrooms need to understand that a lessons plan should target students' individual needs, at their different levels. Dev et al., (2015) in their qualitative study, interviewed 11 teachers about their perceptions of self-contained, resource, and inclusive classrooms. They found out that teacher education and preparation for inclusion is essential in implementing a successful environment for inclusive education. Participants were knowledgeable about inclusive education and had experiences with students transitioning from self-contain and resource classrooms to an inclusive classroom.

The participants indicated that inclusive education provides opportunities for students with disabilities to learn. They also stated that students transiting from resource class could learn higher-level skills faster compared to students transitioning from self-contained classrooms, which means the teachers need to be knowledgeable about meeting the diverse requirements of the various levels and take into consideration the learning pace of each student that comes into the general education classroom. The participants also indicated three elements that were necessary to allow special and general education teachers to plan for an inclusive classroom; Pre-service (and in-service) teacher education for inclusive settings, teacher attitudes toward inclusion, and administrative support (Dev et al., 2015). Teachers' attitude will change towards inclusion or students with disabilities if they receive the support they need.

Training, support, and other challenges. As mentioned earlier, there are challenges in implementing inclusive education teaching models, and a body of research

shows that the causes of the challenges associated with inclusion may stem from a lack of teacher training and support (Kovacevic & Macesic-Petrovic 2012; Gehrke et al., 2014). Every teacher wants her/his students to be successful readers, but also need to understand the methods of instruction that will help each student learn to read. A one-time reading workshop for the school year is not enough for teachers to develop or maintain the adequate skills needed to teach reading effectively in inclusive classrooms (Mukhopadhyay (2015). Some teachers have negative attitudes toward inclusive education, or towards students with disabilities who cannot read. Teachers who are not trained to teach in an inclusive classroom lack the skills to implement the instructional model reading used at the research site.

Navarro et al., (2016) also reported that challenges faced in inclusive classrooms include inadequate resources, planning time, and lack of training. Teachers need the support of the school by way of training and resources to teach students with disabilities in the inclusive classrooms. Bottge, Toland, Gassaway, Butler, Choo, Griffen, and Ma (2014) also reported a lack of planning time as one of the challenges of inclusive education, though most schools have planning time, some special and general education teachers may not be planning together as expected due to differences in their schedules or other issues. When there is a continual collaboration between the general education teacher and the special education teacher, it creates an opportunity for the teachers to share information that could be useful in helping students with disabilities learn to read successfully.

It is important for both teachers to do planning for reading lessons and activities together to help with the proper application of accommodations or modifications for each student to help them learn. The planning of lesson activities that involve hands-on activities helps most students with disabilities learn better and retain what they learn at their level rather than listening to teacher lectures. They need to explore and experience things for themselves, and that is why it is important for inclusive classrooms to provide supports and accommodations for students with disabilities, but only possible when teachers have the knowledge and skills needed to teach students with disabilities and differentiate their learning activities. Besides teachers having the skills required for inclusive education, teachers also need the reading materials and resources required to provide meaningful instruction to students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms effectively. In addition, the general education and special education teachers need to collaborate and plan reading lessons together to create a learning environment that can engage students and make learning exciting for them.

Similarly, Fraiser (2014) also found out that the issues that get in the way of inclusive education include lack of differentiation, resources, funding, teacher attitudes, an unmodified curriculum, and peer attitudes (p. 54). The lack of differentiation is due to lack of teacher training. As earlier stated, students learned differently and might need different learning activities to learn the same concept base on their learning styles, but teachers need the skills that will help them differentiate reading lessons for students and assist them to learn. Teacher training is common across literature as the primary

challenge to inclusive education, school districts and teacher preparation programs (universities or colleges) need to take note.

Factors that Promote Inclusive Education

For inclusive education to be successful, there is a need for consistency in its implementation, which means, teachers must be knowledgeable and be given the needed support to create an environment where students with disabilities can learn and become successful readers. Fraser (2014) examined some positive benefits and factors that promote inclusion and found out that effective teacher training, positive attitudes, and values, a structured curriculum, community support, adequate resources, and funding promote inclusive practices (p. 54 -55). It is important for teachers to be well prepared for inclusion, and for schools to make available the needed resources for use in the inclusive classrooms per each student's needs in reading.

In other words, universities need to prepare and equip new teachers to teach reading in inclusive classrooms since inclusion provides an effective environment for students with disabilities to learn and interact with peers (Zhang & Hu, 2015). Schools and districts need to provide ongoing PD to support teachers to teach reading effectively in inclusive classrooms. Students with disabilities will become successful readers if their teachers implement the teaching models appropriately and use the right reading strategies to teach and engage and motivate them to learn. Students who struggle with reading also struggle in other subjects because reading helps to comprehend other contents. Therefore, it is essential for teachers of inclusive classrooms to have the required skills and strategies to teach reading and to help students with disabilities attain their reading goals.

Implications

The result of these findings indicated a need for professional training for inclusive teachers about the support facilitation model and the implementation of the model in the inclusive classrooms. The school may decide to make some improvement or changes to the existing instructional model to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities in reading. Based on the data collected, a 3-day PD was designed for inclusion teachers on the support facilitation model and strategies for teaching reading. So, they can utilize the model's strategies to teach students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom (Bottge et al., 2014).

Summary

Any problem that affects student performance becomes a concern to the school community. This study explored elementary teachers' perspectives of the facilitation model of inclusion and how the model was being implemented in the inclusive classrooms. The findings may be useful to school administration in decisions about the implementation of the support facilitation model and strategies for teaching reading to students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms.

I searched literature relating to the topic of the study. I used the Walden library and google scholar to search for peer-reviewed articles that fall within the last five years. I selected articles that were current and relevant to my topic. Section 1 started with the existing problem and evidence of its existence, both at the local level and through professional literature. It also contained the rationale for the study. Section 2 described the methodology for collecting and analyzing data, the research design, research site, and

how the participants were chosen. The section also included the limitations of the study,

the analysis method, and ethical considerations. Section 3 contained a description of the

project and how the project addresses the problem as in Section 1. Lastly, section 3 listed

the evaluation method for the project and the implication of the project. Section 4

contained reflections and conclusions based on data collected and discussed the strengths

and limitations of the project.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

In this section I describe the qualitative study design used for this project study. The purpose of this study was to explore the perspectives of teachers regarding the support facilitation instructional model and to learn how teachers implemented the model to teach reading in the inclusive classroom. This involved collecting data about teachers' perspectives, ideas, experiences, and knowledge of teaching the model and how they used it to teach reading in inclusive classrooms. Talking to the teachers who teach students with disabilities in the inclusive classrooms provided insights regarding the facilitation model, and how they teach reading to students with disabilities.

A case study is "an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (Merriam, 2009, p. 40). I conducted a case study to gain an understanding of a case or unit of study (in this instance, the elementary inclusion teachers), and the elementary school under study was the bounded system because the school was considered a single entity. This case study explored teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model and its implementation for reading instruction in inclusive classrooms. This project study may result in a positive change by providing an in-depth exploration of the elementary school's inclusion instructional model, which is best studied using a case study design (Creswell, 2012).

Research Design Rationale

I considered a qualitative case study the most appropriate design for this study because I could explore perspectives from the points of view of individual, in this case

teachers. A qualitative design made possible the collecting of narrative data about a social phenomenon in a natural setting. It also allowed the participants to express their views and feelings about the phenomenon. Qualitative research studies examine life experiences of people in real-world conditions (Yin, 2015).

The qualitative method was consistent with the focus of this study, which was to explore teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model, the implementation of the model, and strategies used in the inclusive classroom. Merriam (2009) stated that qualitative research involves the understanding of how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their world, and the meaning they attribute to their experiences. Using a qualitative case study for this research provided an opportunity for participants to share their thoughts and feelings about the topic. This design was compatible with the purpose of the study: seeking to explore teachers' perspectives on the support facilitation model and its implementation. As outlined by Creswell (2012), it also provided an up-close view of the problem within the setting. The design helped me to discover meaning, gain deeper insight from the participants (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010), and allowed me to collect more detailed data from the participants (Merriam, 2009) compared to other designs.

I considered other designs but found them not suitable for this research study because of the nature and focus of the research. Other research designs commonly used for qualitative research include phenomenology, ethnography, historical, and grounded study; however, the case study fit the purpose of my study. Phenomenology is a design that focuses on describing lived experiences of individuals about an issue. Lodico et al.

(2010) defined phenomenology as "the study of daily lived experiences, and the meaning that people construct from them" (p. 148). The focus of phenomenology is to capture the essence or structure of the experience from the participant's perspective. Phenomenology was not suitable for this study because I intended to seek an explanation rather than the interpretation of teachers' experiences.

Ethnography was not suitable for the study because ethnography describes the characteristics of the culture of a set of people, and the influence of their interactions to a larger society (Lodico et al., 2010). In other words, an ethnographic design describes, analyzes, and interprets a cultural group who share patterns of behavior, beliefs, and language that develops over time (Creswell, 2012). This design was not suitable because the focus of my study was not to discover cultural patterns but to explore teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model and how it is being implemented. A historical research design was considered but not suitable for this project study because it does not focus on existing people or events. A historical research design deals with collecting, verifying, and synthesizing data from the past to establish facts (Merriam, 2009), but this project study focused on collecting first-hand data from elementary teachers who are presently teaching in inclusive classrooms.

Grounded theory focuses on theory development, so it involves the collection of data over an extended period to understand a process and develop or build a theory. It requires formulation, testing, and redevelopment of propositions until a theory is developed. Grounded theory is appropriate for research studies that focus on the way things change over time or the process of the change (Merriam, 2009). Grounded theory

designs are used by researchers to generate explanations from participants about a process, action, or interaction among people (Creswell, 2012). Nevertheless, my research did not focus on building any theory about a process or action; instead, it was to gain insight into teachers' perspectives of inclusion strategies. Therefore, grounded theory was not appropriate for my research study because I was comparing perspectives of participants to understand a phenomenon.

Although the above designs are qualitative designs, only the case study design fit the purpose of this study because the purpose of the study was to understand teachers' perspectives, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes regarding working with students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. A case study allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding and bring to light the issue under study. In addition, the case study enabled me to gain from teachers' perspectives in a natural setting, obtain data that are meaningful and realistic, and analyze emerging themes (Creswell, 2013).

Participants

Teachers who teach in inclusive classrooms were selected to participate in this study to provide the needed information towards understanding the phenomenon because they were involved in teaching students with disabilities in inclusive settings. A purposeful sampling frame was used to select the sample. In purposeful sampling, participants should have background knowledge of the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012) because having the background knowledge helps to support an in-depth study of information-rich cases (Lodico et al., 2010). The participants were special and general education teachers in inclusive classrooms in the elementary school (second to fourth

grades). Seven teachers were invited to participate, and six consented to participate. The teachers were four general education teachers (two teachers of third grade, one teacher of fourth grade and one teacher of first grade) and two special education teachers (one teacher across Grades 1-4, while the other teacher teaches only third and fourth grades). I interviewed them individually at different times and observed the four classrooms during reading instruction.

Criteria

For this project study I explored the general and special education teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model and the implementation of the model in inclusive classrooms for teaching reading. The criteria for choosing participants for the study were their qualifications to teach in the State of Texas and their experiences in teaching students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom using the support facilitation model. I consulted with the special education team leader for the names of teachers who had students with disabilities in their classrooms. Therefore, I used the purposeful sampling to select participants for the study. Following Creswell (2012), I selected participants based on their experiences with inclusive education. The participants were teachers of elementary school who taught in inclusive classrooms.

I selected teachers of inclusive classrooms to participate in this study to provide the needed information towards understanding the phenomenon because they were involved in teaching students with disabilities in inclusive settings. In purposeful sampling, participants should have background knowledge of the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012) because having the background knowledge helps to provide an in-depth

study of information-rich cases (Lodico et al., 2010). Creswell (1998) recommended 5–

25 participants, only six teachers met the participation criteria. I interviewed them

individually at different times and observed the four classrooms during reading

instruction.

Setting

The setting for this research study was an urban public elementary school in the

southern part of Texas. The school consists of prekindergarten to fourth grades with a

population of about 850 students. It is a Title I school with students receiving free

breakfast and free or reduced-price lunch through the School Breakfast Programs and

National School Lunch Program.

Justification for the Number of Participants

The setting for this research study was an urban public elementary school in the

southern part of Texas. Lodico et al. (2010) stated that researchers often seek participants

until they reach saturation because a high number of participants provides a greater

variety of perspectives about the topic. In addition, Sandelowski (1995) noted that the

sample size in qualitative research should not be so small that it is difficult to achieve

data saturation, theoretical saturation, or informational redundancy. I intended to recruit

10 participants for this study, but the research site had only five general education

teachers who taught in the inclusive classrooms and two special education teachers who

worked with students with disabilities in the five inclusive classrooms. So, four out of the

five general education teachers and the two special education teachers who provided

support for students with disabilities participated in the study. These participants were

chosen because they were the inclusion teachers at the research site who could provide information relevant to the research questions (Lodico, et al., 2010), and they constituted about 86% of the inclusion teachers.

Procedure for Gaining Access

Gaining access to conduct the study involves obtaining permission at different levels. Seeking permission is a necessary step in the research process, especially for a qualitative study. Before the start of data collection process, I applied to the Walden University Instructional Review Board (IRB) and obtained probationary approval. I then requested permission from the school principal of the research site. I applied to the school district's IRB enclosing my proposal, the school principal's approval letter, and the probationary approval from Walden as required and was given approval from the school district's IRB. I forwarded the approval letter from my school district IRB to Walden IRB and received final approval to conduct the study (approval # 10-30-17-0543384). As soon as I received approval from Walden IRB, I started contacting eligible participants by going to the school (research site) to meet to meet the participants, discuss the study, and provide them with the consent form.

Establishing a Researcher–Participant Relationship

I treated the participants with respect and made them feel comfortable in the study process. Establishing a relationship (researcher–participant) with the participants was not a problem. I met some participants before school and some after school to explain the study's purpose and encourage each of them to be open and sincere when responding to the interview questions. Participants were involved in one interview and one classroom

observation during reading instruction. They also participated in member checking after I

analyzed and interpreted the data.

Ethical Considerations

In qualitative research design, maintaining the confidentiality of participants is

essential. The researcher needs to respect and seek the cooperation of participants and

ensure to protect their rights and safety (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). After obtaining the list

of eligible teachers from the special education team leader, I contacted the participants

individually to seek their consent. I explained the potential benefits of the study and let

them know that their participation is voluntary. I also explained that they could withdraw

their participation at any time during the study. I assured participants that I would keep

their identities confidential. I handed them a copy of the written consent form and

allowed them a week to sign and return to me if they decided to participate. Six out of the

seven teachers I contacted consented to participate. I was neutral during the process of

data collection and ensured not to influence participants' responses. I used the same

interview questions (Appendix B) for participants and the same observation guide

(Appendix C) for each of the four classrooms. Data collected were secured in my file

cabinet at home. The data will remain under lock and key for five years after completing

the project study to satisfy Walden University policy.

Data Collection

This study explored the perspectives of elementary special education and general

education teachers about the support facilitation model and how it is being used to teach

reading in the inclusive classrooms. This is a qualitative case study, therefore, I identified

themes using the natural context from multiple sources (Lodico et al., 2010). I collected

data through one-on-one teacher interviews with each teacher, and observation of

inclusive classrooms during reading instruction. The above two sources of data were

considered appropriate sources for a qualitative case study. I obtained permission to use

the interview protocol and observation guide from Peacock (2016). The author conducted

a related research on inclusive education, and the research instruments were relevant to

my topic (see Appendices B and C).

Firstly, I conducted interviews. The interviews were conducted outside school

hours as convenient for each participant. Each of the first five participants was

interviewed within the school for 45 minutes or less. The last interview was conducted

outside the school building because the school was closed for the Christmas holiday. The

interviews and classroom observations were completed within two weeks.

Secondly, I went into the inclusive classrooms and observed how the support

facilitation model was being implemented by the general and special education teachers

to teach reading. I used the observation guide (See Appendix C) and observed each

inclusive classroom for 45 minutes. Observations permit a researcher to gather data that

is natural and reflects in real life the situation as the participants see it (Lodico et al.,

2010). I used the data from the observations to understand how the support facilitation

model is implemented in the inclusive classroom during reading. The observation data

provided clarity or confirmation about what was gathered during the interview and helped

me see things as they happened (Lodico et al., 2010). I validated the information gathered

through teacher interview with my observation notes. The outcome of the observations

provided more information to develop rich and comprehensive data. The data from the observations helped in establishing the reliability of the study by triangulating the interview data with the observation data. The classroom observations were conducted within one week after the interviews were conducted.

These two sources of data provided a deeper understanding of teachers' views about the support facilitation model implemented in the inclusive classrooms. Apart from using these two sources to facilitate validity of data through triangulation, these sources helped to develop a detailed, comprehensive and rich information for the study.

Data Tracking

I handled the data obtained securely to ensure that no one could access them. All recordings from interviews, field notes, and consent forms will remain protected for five years. According to Walden policy, all written or printed transcripts will remain under lock and key in my filing cabinet at home. I downloaded all the recordings to a password-protected folder on my laptop and deleted the original records from the recording device after transcribing. I kept participants' identity confidential; I used pseudonyms (fictitious names) to replace participants' real names. While at school, I locked all research documents and recording device in a file cabinet during school hours and took the research documents and recording device home with me after school hours. I made sure I did not leave anything at the school overnight. Nobody else had access to the research materials except me. I will keep the data secured for five years from the time of completing the project study per Walden University policy.

Role of the Researcher

I was a special education teacher for grades 1 and 2 in the elementary school under study for two years and started my third year but was moved to another school due to the low enrollment of students into special education in the research site. Since I do not work in that school anymore and have no supervisory role or professional relationship with the participants, data collection from these participants did not present an issue.

I felt the teachers have limited knowledge about the support facilitation model, and therefore not implementing it correctly. To limit this personal bias, I employed the strategies of credibility such as triangulation and member checking process (Creswell, 2012). I did not participate in providing any information towards this study, and I made conscious efforts to keep any personal biases from interfering with the outcome of my study. I ensured not to influence the participant responses in word or body language. I was respectful to participants and allowed them to state their views without responding in a judgmental fashion. I intended to produce a research study that was meaningful and credible.

Data Analysis

The process of data analysis is when the researcher gives thoughts and meanings to findings gathered by combining and condensing the data into manageable information (Creswell, 2012). Data analysis involved consolidating, reducing, and interpreting of data (Merriam 2009, p.176 & 177). Qualitative data analysis can be done by hand (manually or by use of computer software) (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I did not use software but analyzed my data using the thematic method. I analyzed the data and searched for

themes. I used the open-coding strategy to code the data followed by axial coding. I

analyzed the interviews first, then the observation data. Open coding, which was the first

coding strategy I used, is the process of identifying segments of the data that might be

useful by making notations or comments in the margin (Marriam, 2009). Based on data

gathered from the interviews and classroom observations, the codes that emerged at the

beginning of my coding were as follows:

1. Teachers/ roles

2. Inclusive teaching

3. Teachers/ feelings

4. Positive effects or advances in inclusion

5. Teacher motivation

6. Challenges of teachers

7. Teacher knowledge and understanding

8. Teacher training

9. Benefits of inclusion

10. Inclusion model

11. Planning

12. Experiences of teachers

13. Differentiation

14. Share of responsibilities

15. Level of collaboration

16. Support facilitation

17. Students engagement and involvement

18. Instructional grouping patterns

19. Routines and formal procedure

Next, I used axial coding to group my open codes into concepts and categories that emerged (Merraim, 2009). After coding the above open codes, I started building over-arching themes by combining or grouping related categories into core themes (Marriam, 2009). This resulted in four core themes:

- Teachers roles and responsibilities in the implementation of support facilitation model.

- Benefits and challenges of support facilitation model.

- Teacher knowledge and training.

- Teacher collaboration and planning time.

I used different colors of highlighters to label the data codes to distinguish and categorize labels per similarity and regularity. Coding is not just labeling data, but it involves linking, summarizing, and condensing the data (Saldana, 2009, p.8). Coding helps the organization of data and in discovering patterns within the data (Auebach & Silverstein, 2003). Therefore, I used open and axial coding at the initial stage to identify patterns by using colored highlights to distinguished distinct concepts and categories (Merriam, 2009). After axial coding, I used descriptive method (assign topics to aspects of data) and in vivo method (participants' words) to analyze the data (Saldana, 2009). I searched for repeated words, phrases, and the experiences that are similar among participants regarding instructional strategies in the inclusive classroom. I examined each

participants' responses chronologically. This process helped to identify themes in the data as they emerged and the relationships among the themes. After identifying the core themes, I re-read my data transcripts and grouped categories that are closely related. I reduced the categories by merging similar groups of data to form fewer numbers of themes (Creswell, 2012) without losing the meaning of the data. I also searched for, identified, analyzed, and reported discrepant data that were exceptions or alterations of the patterns found in the data.

Evidence of Quality and Procedures

For accuracy and credibility, I used member checks (Creswell, 2012) to validate the findings. I returned a 2-page summary of my findings to all participants to check the accuracy of the account by asking questions about the interpretation and the representation of the report to establish credibility and validity (Creswell, 2012). I met with all the participants to check the accuracy of the data they provided. They had a week to complete the modified member checking. Modified member checking was conducted to rule out the possibility of my misinterpretation of participants' perspectives (Merriam, 2009) and to ensure the accuracy of information. The interpretation needed to be derived from participants' experiences and not be misrepresented. I provided a two-page summary to each participant and received responses back within one week. I gave each of the participants the option to discuss their feedback outside of school hours or make notes on the summary. They provided feedback by making notes on the summary. I met participants individually to confirm the data.

Next, I analyzed the two sets of data (interviews and observation) separately and corroborated themes from both data sets. I used the triangulation method to validate the data gathered through interviews and classroom observations. Drawing information from more than one source contributed to the credibility and accuracy of the information. Findings are more dependable and valid when they can be buttressed from more than one source (Miles & Huberman, 2014). In addition, I identified discrepant or negative data that emerged during my analysis. I discussed the discrepant data in my report to add to the credibility of the data (Creswell, 2014, p. 202). Discussing contrary information also strengthened the quality of the data.

Data Analysis Results

I documented the thoughts, feelings, and perspectives of the inclusion teachers using a narrative approach. Narrative data presentation allows the participants to express their views and feelings about the phenomenon (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 142). A qualitative design emphasizes collecting narrative data about a social phenomenon in a natural setting. I reported the data, which were captured from interviews and classroom observations of both the general education and special education teachers during reading instruction in an inclusive classroom setting. The data described inclusive teachers' instructional experiences and feelings about the inclusion instructional model used in the school. Data also answered the questions about the perspectives of general education teachers on the instructional model (support facilitation model) and their effectiveness in implementing the model within the inclusive classroom. Furthermore, the data showed inclusive teachers' perspectives of their effectiveness in implementing the instructional

model in the inclusive classroom, as well as the inclusive teachers' thoughts, feelings, ideas, knowledge, and experiences about the support facilitation model. The narrative description of the data provided insights to the readers about the participants' feelings and thoughts because the first-person account of experiences forms the narrative text in a qualitative case study like this (Merriam,2009).

Discrepant Cases

Analyzing discrepant or negative cases involves examining the data that contradicts or negate something identified as common to the experiences of all participants (Creswell, 2014). I searched for discrepant cases as I coded my data for the interview transcripts and observation notes. Although participants had similar experiences, challenges, and needs, one of the participants shared an experience that was different from others. While inclusion is considered beneficial for students in special education by researchers, Participant D34 stated that her students performed better with the resource model (pull-out) compared to the support facilitation model of inclusion: "Initially, I was the resource teacher for reading, and I had more flexibility with groups and everything, and I saw faster growth in my students, versus when you are in-class support." (Participant D34). Based on the core categories of this study, some information provided by Participant D34 is a discrepant case because it did not fit into the data from other Participants. In other words, the information indicated a different thought from that of the other participants. This shows that Participant D34 had the knowledge and skills needed to teach in a resource room which was like teaching in a traditional classroom. Participant D34 had the flexibility of teaching the students in the best way they learned.

However, the support facilitation appeared challenging to Participant D34 because it is a new model and inclusive teachers did not receive training about the model to help with successful implementation.

Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perspectives of the inclusive teaching model used in the school. The research findings were analyzed to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What are special and general educators' perspectives of the support facilitation model in teaching reading to students with disabilities in the inclusive setting?

RQ2: How do teachers implement the support facilitation model to teach reading in the inclusive setting?

There were six participants in the study. Individual teacher interviews were conducted within the school outside school hours (before and after school hours), and classroom instruction were also observed for each of the four inclusive classrooms in the school during reading instruction. Interviews were conducted within the school. I interviewed five teachers from the school. I was invited to the sixth participant's house for the interview because she was not available before or after school. Interviews lasted approximately 30-45 minutes. Based on the data analysis from the interviews and classroom observations, themes emerged. I started building over-arching themes by combining or grouping related categories into core themes (Merriam, 2009). This resulted in four core themes:

1. Teachers roles and responsibilities in the implementation of support facilitation model

2. Benefits and challenges of support facilitation model

3. Teacher knowledge and Training

4. Teacher collaboration and planning time

These themes were common to both special and general education teachers and described in detail below with supporting statements from the interviewees along with the classroom observation notes. Table 1 shows the core themes for this study and the interview questions relating to each theme. The themes were inductively derived from the data collected through the data analysis.

Table 1

Themes and Interview Questions

Themes	Interview Questions
Theme 1: Teachers' Perspectives on Roles and Responsibilities	*What is your role in teaching students with disabilities? Tell me about your role as a teacher in an inclusive setting. How do you feel about your role? Briefly describe how you share responsibilities in the classroom.*
Theme 2: Teacher Knowledge and Training	*How would you describe an inclusive teaching situation?* *What professional development training have you received or are currently receiving regarding students with disabilities, teaching inclusion? In what ways has this training helped you regarding inclusion, students with disabilities Based on your training and experience, how comfortable do you feel teaching students with disabilities in an inclusive setting? What kind of training would be beneficial for you as a teacher of inclusion?*
Theme 3: Teacher Collaborative Planning	*How do you include SWD in your lessons? How do you plan or collaborate with your team teacher? How do you feel about the planning process?*
Theme 4: Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Inclusion	*Are there features of these models that you like? (If so, please explain why/how? In what ways do you believe that inclusive education benefits both general and special education students and the teachers involved*

Theme 1: Teachers Roles and Responsibilities

There were four roles teachers executed to help students with disabilities learn successfully and to achieve their educational goals: support, collaboration, effective communication, and differentiated instruction. Participant C4, a general education teacher, stated:

> My role is just to be a general ed. teacher to provide them with accommodations that they need to be successful, so whether that will be an extra resource or extra time, special attention, whatever, it is my job to make sure that they walk out more knowledgeable than they were when they walk in.

Participant D34 and participant C34, the special education teachers also stated that they provide support to students with disabilities within the general education classroom and set the IEPs goals on their behalf. Participants indicated that collaboration and effective communication between the special education teacher and the general education teacher is part of their roles. Participant C34 and Participant H3 also believed it was a part of the teachers' role and responsibilities to ensure that the students with disabilities in the classroom were provided with the correct accommodations, included in the classroom learning activities, and exposed to grade level curriculum. Participant S2 stated that her role was to facilitate students' learning. Participant B3 said that her roles were "lesson preparation and delivery" and also to collaborate with the other inclusive teacher to help students with disabilities become successful. Overall, the participants voiced a sense of what their roles and responsibilities were in using support, collaboration, effective communication, and differentiated instruction with students with disabilities. To further

provide scope within the theme of roles and responsibilities, observation was used as triangulation.

The observation data (See Appendix D) supported the 4 roles of support, collaboration, effective communication, and differentiated instruction, as stated by teachers' interview responses. For example, the roles of support, collaboration, effective communication and differentiated instruction were observed in the classroom as the teachers had identified in their interviews. Support was seen when students with disabilities read, for example, when the student came across a new word, the special education teacher reminded the students to chunk the word or sound the beginning or ending blends or sound the letters and blend to read the work. In addition, the special education teacher came into the classroom for 45 minutes during reading and performed guided reading with the students with disabilities during small group instruction. After the picture work, the teacher reviewed a list of vocabulary words, the bilingual students had picture/words vocabulary to support their comprehension. After learning the vocabulary words, the special education teacher read with each student for a few minutes while the rest of the students in the group completed independent work.

Teachers collaborated when the general education teacher and the special education teacher had a brief meeting and discussed the reading activities the students were working on and both showed activities to differentiate instruction for the students with disabilities to maximize understanding of the text. Effective communication was observed as both general and special education teachers discussed differentiated strategies. Differentiated instruction was evident in the way the special education teacher

for 2nd grade read with one student at a time while others participated in other

independent reading activities. The framework is aligned with the findings of teachers'

roles and responsibilities in the areas of providing support, collaboration, effective

communication, and differentiated instruction. The UDL three principles of learning are:

- Multiple means of engagement to empower the students to take charge of their

  learning and connect their learning to experiences that are meaningful and

  valuable to them.

- Multiple means of representation to allow students to show what they learn in

  different forms like drawing or verbally.

- Multiple means of action and expression, when teachers provide tools or

  materials with which students can interact to make learning physically

  accessible to them, for example, the computer or iPad (CAST, 2018).

Theme 2: Teacher Knowledge and Training

General education teachers received no training about inclusion or the inclusive

instructional model used in the school, or about how to use accommodations for students

with disabilities. Participants indicated that that no training was provided to teachers on

the inclusion model or strategies for teaching reading to students with disabilities.

Participants indicated interest in attending PD for inclusion if recommended or if given

the opportunity. Participant B3 wanted additional training on accommodations.

Participants mentioned inclusion in their responses without specifically

mentioning the support facilitation model except one of the special education teachers,

this is because the teachers did not know the name of the model the school is using.

General education and special education teachers felt they need PD on the inclusion

model used in the school and other topics about teaching reading comprehension

strategies, academic vocabulary, understanding how to use accommodations for students

with disabilities. Participants also indicated the need for PD that may help provide

intervention tips or strategies to help minimize students' frustrations and outbursts that

may disrupt instruction. Both special education and general education teachers needed

training to support students with disabilities in comprehension, vocabulary, and strategies

that will help the students be successful thereby closing the educational gap that exists

between them and their peers. The principles of UDL regarding teacher knowledge and

training support the findings. According to Kurth (2013) teachers need to be trained about

the UDL features and the variety of strategies to meet the learning styles of students in

the classroom). UDL features provide support to teachers' needs, for example, providing

guidance to planning lessons activities based on students learning needs in reading.

Theme 3: Teacher Collaborative Planning

Both general and special education teachers indicated that they do not have

specific planning time together. The general education teachers stated that grade level

teachers had scheduled planning time once a week. The special education teachers did not

participate in the team planning because their schedules did not allow time for the team

planning; however, general educators share lesson plans and other necessary resources

with the special education teachers.

General and special education teachers indicated that they communicate, share

ideas and resources at every available opportunity they have. Participant S2, a general

education teacher, said, "We take moments here and there to share lesson plans and discuss what students will be doing in class." Participant D34, a special education teacher, indicated that she communicates with the general education teachers every day, provides feedback to the general education teachers, and have access to students' grades and team planning minutes (lesson plans and notes). Participant C4 said that she does have "a dialogue or conversation" with the special education teacher daily while in her classroom about student performance. Participant H3 stated, "I get together with the special education teacher and we go over what we have for that week . . . and how we're going to grade them . . . and how we're going to accommodate them that week." Special and general education teachers indicated that they communicate or discuss the needs and accommodations for the students with disabilities, but there is no set time on the schedule for them to collaborate consistently every week. This means the special education and general education teachers do not have the opportunities to discuss and plan lessons together. Participants also indicated the need for a set time for both special and general educators to meet and collaborate to plan the lesson for students with disabilities.

During my observation, the general education teacher discussed the students' independent work with the special education teacher in one of the inclusive classrooms. The general education teacher gave a reading assignment to students. The story was from the 3rd grade reading text book but one of the students with disabilities in her classroom who could not read and needed help. The special education and general education teachers decided that the special education teacher would read the story to the student and so the student could respond to two out of the three questions. The finding of Teacher

Collaborative Planning did not align with the inclusion model because the special and general education teachers did not have specific time for planning reading lessons collaboratively. The teachers of inclusive classroom need time to collaborate and plan lessons together to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom (Gebhardt, Schwab, Krammer, & Gegenfurtner, 2015). Preparing lessons collaboratively help teachers not to lose instruction time talking about students' assignment as observed only with a brief meeting during instruction time.

Theme 4: Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Inclusion

Participants expressed their feelings about benefits and challenges of implementing the inclusion instructional model used in the school. Participants identified students with disabilities learning with their peers in the general education classroom and being exposed to the grade level curriculum as benefits of the model. Participant H3 stated that students are exposed to the curriculum compared to previous years. To Participant C4, one of the benefits of the model was that "I'm allowed to get a variety of kids that I deal with. Participant C4 also stated that the model was beneficial to the special education teacher because she was not left to work with students with disabilities all by herself, and it was beneficial for the students because they felt included. The special education teachers stated that they provide support to students with disabilities and sometimes extend their support to other students in the inclusive classroom who are not students with disabilities but need help. For example, Participant B3 said that the special education teacher provided support, not only to students with disabilities but to other students who appeared to be struggling and needed help. Participant B3 also stated

that "I really like the relationship…If she sees something that may need assistance with, she comes in and walk around and help as well. I really like that." Participants H3 also said: "I get support from the special Ed teacher." The general education teachers of inclusive classrooms feel that the special education teachers support them. There are also challenges in implementing inclusion: Although the participants mentioned the above benefits, there are also challenges that both general education and special education teachers and students with disabilities face in implementing the support facilitation model. The primary issue was lack of training about the model of inclusion and teaching strategies. The other challenges the special education teachers stated were:

- There was a lack of flexibility. The special education teachers were limited on what they can do with students with disabilities during reading instruction because they have limited time to work with the students. The special education teachers were limited about using the big boards or creating their anchor charts or lesson plans (they used district's readymade lesson plans).

- The special education teachers also believed that the curriculum pacing was not appropriate for the students with disabilities to master concepts because teachers were expected to be time efficient and some students with disabilities learn at a slower pace.

- Some students with disabilities needed more one-on-one time than what they were receiving.

- Distractions within the classroom, especially for students with ADHD. Some students with disabilities may lose focus when other activities involving movement or sounds occur within the classroom.

- Language issue for bilingual students.

- There was a lack of support from home (from parents). The school is a bilingual campus and some parents did not speak English, which was challenging for them to support their children with homework or school assignments and projects.

- There was a lack of enough time for both special and general educators to collaborate

- Having students with disabilities is more work for the teachers (Participant C4). Participant C4 stated that it was more responsibility for general education teachers to ensure that students with disabilities had the support they needed to succeed. The support facilitation model requires general education teachers to use strategies according to the individual needs of students with disabilities.

- Participant H3 believed the challenges students with disabilities face is limited exposure to the reading at an early age, and in some cases, it is lack of student motivation to learn "some students learn at a much slower rate, and retention is not as strong." Participants S2 believed that the 45 minutes inclusion time for reading is not enough support for students with disabilities.

Using the support facilitation model, a special education teacher is expected to provide support to students with disabilities within a 45-minute per period then move to

another classroom. Participant S2 believed this is not enough time to help students with disabilities to succeed. Participant C4 believed that one special education teacher should support the students with disabilities instead of multiple teachers coming into her classroom, this is because a paraprofessional (structure), speech, and the in-class support teachers were in and out of the classroom for different students at different times. Students in structure program are students with moderate to severe behavior issues, while the speech teacher comes to work with students that qualify for speech impairment, and the in-class support teacher works with students with learning disabilities. Some of these students sometimes qualify for two disabilities at the same time, for example, one student can qualify for learning disabilities and speech impairment and will have the speech, and in-class support teachers come in and work with him/her at different times. Some students with disabilities also have mild to moderate behavior issues too.

The special education teachers felt limited on what they can do with their students. Participant B34 said: "With the way we do it, it can kind of limit at some point, what we are able to get the kids to do within a certain time frame." Participant B34 also stated that there were some things teachers could not control within the curriculum such as the timing, and the curriculum pacing, "how fast they expect kids to basically master a concept." Participant D34 also stated that she experienced faster growth in her students when she was a resource teacher compared to using the inclusion model. According to D34, special education teachers had flexibility using the resource model, but the inclusion model tend to limit teachers from doing things to benefit student learning. Participant D34 also gave examples that special education teachers had no opportunities to use the

big boards or put up anchor charts on the classroom walls as a reference for the students with disabilities because they had no classrooms of their own. Special education teachers using the inclusion model moved from room to room and had to erase everything they used after instruction or take a picture and then start over the next day (Participant D34). This finding aligns with other research in this area (Israel et al., 2014; Fraiser, 2014). The benefits of implementing inclusion include: students with disabilities learn with peers and receive support through instructional accommodations. The challenges of implementing inclusion include: lack of teacher training and lack of collaboration and planning time (Israel et al., 2014; Fraiser, 2014). Inclusive education was desired to allow students with disabilities to receive instruction with their peers and not be segregated (Mukhopadhyay, 2009); however, there are challenges related to lack of training and lack of time for the special and general education teachers to collaboratively plan lessons for students with disabilities.

Interpretation of Findings

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the special and general education teachers' perspectives of the inclusive instructional model used in the school and how they implemented it. The findings were categorized into four themes:

Theme 1: Teachers roles and responsibilities. The teachers need to understand their roles and responsibilities in implementing the support facilitation inclusive model. According to a document, "A Guide for School Site Leaders," from the department of education Louisiana by Kilgore (n.d), one of the 10 steps to implementing effective

inclusive practices is to train educators on the model of inclusion to understand their roles and responsibilities in implementing it:

> If inclusive practices are to be implemented appropriately, staff members must receive professional development on the models of inclusive practices and how to implement them. Without training, staff will not be able to implement inclusive practices in reasonable and appropriate ways (p. 11).

Inclusive teachers, especially general education teachers, benefit from training to clarify the roles for teachers of students with disabilities. For example, making general education teachers aware of their roles and legal responsibilities for meeting the academic needs of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (Villa & Thousand, 2003). The knowledge and understanding of teachers about their roles and responsibilities might help teachers implement the support facilitation model with fidelity.

Theme 2: Teacher Knowledge and Training. Teachers expressed a desire to increase their knowledge through training. Teacher training is how the participants can learn about the inclusive model and various reading strategies they need to support reading students with disabilities. In addition, teachers can utilize UDL features that align with their needs to teach in a manner that is consistent with UDL framework (Israel et al., 2014). Furthermore, The UDL framework features support teachers in planning reading lessons to meet the individual needs of students using a variety of methods. The UDL framework supports teacher knowledge and training in that Kurth (2013) argued UDL helps teachers to provide a variety of opportunities for students to learn instead of using *one-size-fits-all* lesson plans and strategies.

Theme 3: Teacher Collaborative Planning. The findings indicated teachers had no scheduled time for collaborative planning. Teacher collaborative planning is vital to inclusion and is supported by UDL framework. The implementation of the UDL principles can lead to improved outcomes for students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). UDL can provide support to teachers' instruction and students' learning. Furthermore, according to Gebhardt et al. (2015), teamwork and collaboration between special teachers and general education teachers are vital factors for student achievement. For students with disabilities to learn successfully, the teachers need to work collaboratively to plan their lessons using researched based strategies align with the students' needs.

Theme 4: The finding is Benefits and Challenges of Implementing Inclusion. Based on the findings, teachers indicated benefits (such as no segregation) and challenges (lack of teacher training) associated with inclusion. This finding aligns with other research in this area (Israel et al., 2014; Fraiser, 2014). The benefits of implementing inclusion include: students with disabilities learn with peers and receive support through instructional accommodations. The challenges of implementing inclusion include: lack of teacher training and lack of collaboration and planning time (Israel et al., 2014; Fraiser, 2014). Inclusive education was desired to allow students with disabilities to receive instruction with their peers and not be segregated (Mukhopadhyay, 2009); however, there are challenges related to lack of training and lack of time for the special and general education teachers to collaboratively plan lessons for students with disabilities.

The framework used for this study was the UDL which is a framework for lesson planning developed by CAST based on scientific insights into how humans learn. The UDL framework supports the research findings and outcomes based on the three principles that involve what students learn, how they learn, and why they learn. The framework supports teachers' roles and responsibilities, teacher knowledge and training, and benefits and challenges of implementing inclusion. The finding of collaborative planning was supported by other research. Based on the findings of this study, a 3 full-day PD for the participants to enhance the inclusion practices for the teachers of inclusive classrooms is a logical project to address the problem. The UDL was considered appropriate for this study because it emphasizes the use of a variety of teaching methods to support diverse students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms (CAST, 2016). UDL provides students with different ways to represent knowledge (Kurth, 2013). Teachers will be introduced to UDL reading resources that can help students with comprehension and help teachers to plan differentiated reading lessons for students with disabilities. Teachers voiced a need for skills they need in their professional practice.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to explore teachers' perspectives of the support facilitation model and its implementation. The data gathered from the study revealed inclusive teachers' perspectives, thoughts, and feelings about the inclusion model used in their school. Data were gathered through face-to-face teacher interviews, and classroom observations during reading instruction. Participants supported inclusive education but indicated some challenges that affect implementation of the support facilitation.

Emerging themes from the analysis included the roles and responsibilities of the inclusive teacher, teacher knowledge and training, teacher collaborative planning, and benefits and challenges of implementing inclusion.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

I developed a 3-day PD to address the needs of the inclusive teachers based on the data analyzed. I created the PD to provide training for inclusive teachers in three areas: (a) the support facilitation model and participants' roles and responsibilities in implementing it, (b) instructional strategies for reading comprehension that may benefit students with disabilities in the classrooms, and (c) collaborative planning and the keys to successful collaboration. The desired outcome of the PD is for teachers to implement the support facilitation model which may, in turn, lead to increased reading performance for students with disabilities.

The most frequently used model of inclusion in schools is the coteaching model. The elementary school under study uses the support facilitation model of inclusion, which is a new model but is similar to the coteaching model. The problem is teachers' lack the knowledge of the support facilitation model and how to implement it successfully. This study was conducted to understand the perspectives of the inclusive teachers about the model and its implementation.

The project for this study is a PD for the teachers who teach students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom. For a PD to be successful, it needs to be rigorous, content-specific, enduring, and relevant to teacher practice; a successful PD creates a working relationship between colleagues (Chong & Kong, 2012). The PD benefits can include developing a collaborative relationship between the special education teacher and the general education teachers, and this relationship can translate to the classroom, which

in turn helps increase the performances of the student with disabilities in reading (Perkins & Cooter, 2013). This study led to the development of a project to be implemented in the elementary school (Appendix A).

Goals for the Project

The goals of the project are to provide support to teachers of inclusive classrooms so that they can properly understand the support facilitation model and their role in its implementation. The successful implementation of the support facilitation model may lead to increased performance in reading for students with disabilities. Also, teachers will be provided with tools or strategies to help students with disabilities to learn successfully during reading instruction, and teachers will also develop collaborative relationships that will enable them to provide the needed support to students with disabilities.

Module-based PD training is the foundation for teacher engagement in collaborative work (Valdmann, Holbrook, & Rannikmae, 2012). Module-based PD is when contents for PD are structured and taught as separate parts of a whole. The instructor acts as a facilitator while allowing the participants to be actively involved in the learning process (learning by doing); this helps deepen understanding of PD content. There are three modules in this PD:

- Instructional model of inclusion: The PD will educate teachers about the instructional model of inclusion used in the school so teachers can understand how to implement it.

- Comprehension strategies: This module will help provide teachers with strategies to use during reading instruction to support learning for students with disabilities

- Collaborative planning: This module will cover collaboration between the general education and special education teachers. It provides a guide to teachers on how to collaborate and plan together to provide the maximum support for students with disabilities.

Teachers will also learn what items to discuss during collaboration. The three modules are separate but related. The goal of these modules is to educate inclusive teachers on how and why to implement the support facilitation model, which may lead to an improvement in the reading performances of students with disabilities. Using modules is found to be effective for professional training. Teachers are more prone to work with new ideas in their practice when the new information is practically modeled or exhibited (Valdmann et al., 2012). The modules are created to encourage teacher participation in the PD that help them take charge of their learning through collaboration, practice, and interactions with each other (Epp, 2017). Therefore, the instructor's role is to facilitate the learning process rather than to control the learning process (Khiat, 2015). The goal of the instructor or facilitator is not only to transfer knowledge but also to urge or encourage the learners to search for knowledge themselves and engage in lifelong learning (Giannoukos, Besas, Galiropoulos, & Hioctour, 2015). The modules will provide teachers with an understanding of the content of the 3-day training and the ability to apply what they learned in implementing the support facilitation model.

Each day of this workshop will cover topics based on the needs of teachers as indicated by the data in Section 2. Hands-on activities, instructional videos, and small group/peer collaboration will be used to guide learning. The special education PD facilitator and the reading specialist will serve as the official facilitators of this project. While the project is mainly geared towards meeting the needs of the inclusive teachers, there will be opportunities for the administrators and the special education team leader to participate in some of the training sessions. Some of the general education teachers indicated the need to collaborate with their special education colleagues. One session of the workshop will focus on collaboration. The special education teachers will also serve as resources throughout the workshop to share their knowledge and expertise about best practices in teaching students with disabilities.

Learning Outcome

The targeted audience for this PD is the general education teachers and the special education teachers who teach in elementary inclusive classrooms. The intended outcome of this training is to enhance teachers' knowledge and understanding of the inclusive instructional model used in the school. The PD training may also help teachers learn strategies that could help students with disabilities in reading comprehension. In addition, it may help a collaborative relationship between the general education teachers and special education teachers to develop through continuous teamwork, effective communication, and professional learning community planning.

The Rationale for the Project Genre

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perspectives on the inclusive instructional model used in the school and how it is being implemented. The findings indicated that the general education teachers did not know the instructional model used in the school because none of them had any training about the instructional model or how to implement it. The project is based on the summary of the research outcomes and is a logical choice based on those outcomes. The teachers indicated that a PD focusing on reading comprehension strategies would be helpful for them to teach students with disabilities. Part of the 3-day PD (Day 1) will focus on the support facilitation inclusive model and teachers' roles and responsibilities in its successful implementation (see Appendix A). Day 2 will focus on comprehension strategies for students with disabilities, and Day 3 will be about collaborative planning between the general education and special education teachers. The outcome of this project is intended to educate participants about the support facilitation model so that they can implement it and increase the reading performance of students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. PD is considered the appropriate genre for this project because it is one of the means by which teachers gain knowledge about topics relevant to their profession (in this case about the support facilitation model and how to implement it). The participants for this project are elementary teachers of inclusive classrooms who indicated the need for PD about support facilitation.

Review of the Literature

The research relevant to the proposed project is reviewed in this section. The literature for this review was obtained by searching scholarly journals through the Walden library database and Google Scholar.

Keywords used for searching the literature were *inclusive education for elementary school, reading comprehension strategies, professional development, special and general education teachers in inclusive classrooms, teaching reading in the inclusive classroom,* and *support facilitation model of inclusion.* The search for support facilitation model of inclusion did not yield any articles because no research has been conducted on the model. The topics covered in this literature review included implementation of the inclusive instructional model, PD, teaching strategies, collaboration, and effective communication.

Implementation of the Support Facilitation Model

The implementation of the support facilitation model will be achieved when the teachers understand their roles in implementing the model. Inclusive education (or inclusion) requires knowledgeable teachers and administrators, differentiated instruction, and an environment that makes the students feel safe and motivated to learn. The PD is intended to provide these requirements to participants. Also, positive teacher attitudes and beliefs, appropriate school policy, and sufficient teacher education are required to successfully implement inclusion (Kurniawati, De Boer, Minnaert, & Mangunsong, 2014). Teaching in an inclusive classroom requires knowledge and skills.

Professional Development/Training

PD is a means to help teachers increase practical knowledge and skills in their field. Teachers need training that embodies student-centered methodology, teaching in inclusive and multicultural environments, and using individual educational plans (IEPs) to adapt to and support children with disabilities (United Nations Children's Fund, 2011). Inclusion teachers should be provided with an on-going high-quality PD training opportunity that addresses the inclusive methodologies and practical work experiences. In their research to understand the difficulties inclusion teachers experience, Coelho, Blázquez, and Cubo (2017) found that inclusion teachers lack training about working with students with disabilities. The authors also found that one-time training is not enough for teachers in inclusive classrooms. Frequent and continuing training about students with disabilities as part of their PD resulted in positive attitudes towards inclusion.

Follow-up training (refresher courses) will help teachers to maintain positive attitudes, improve their knowledge and skills, and make them consistent in the effective implementation of the inclusive model (Kurniawati et al., 2014). Teachers need reminders or updates about the implementation of the support facilitation model, and such information could also be helpful to new teachers who may be joining the school at different times of the year. An ongoing and meaningful PD is important to support teachers' professional needs (Smith, 2015; White, 2014) in the inclusive classrooms.

Teachers who receive PD adjust to implement what they learn. Howell, Hunt-Barron, Kaminski, and Sanders (2018) conducted a study in two school districts. The

authors gathered data through teacher interviews, observations, and surveys to find out if teachers implemented or used the information they learned in the PD. The researchers found that teachers implemented what they learn from the PD, and student performance increased after the PD. This shows that when teachers implement skills learned during PD, they improve their instructional practice, which may contribute to the desired outcome of increasing the reading performances of students with disabilities.

Opartkiattikul, Arthur-Kelly, and Dempsey (2016) provided a PD for classroom teachers in functional behavior assessment to help them develop a process that is effective and efficient to address behavior problems and help students with disabilities reach their educational potential. Data were gathered after the PD through interviews, observation, and rating scales. Opartkiattikul et al. (2016) found that the teachers implemented what they learned by including functional behavior assessment practices in their classrooms during the study. The study showed that the opportunity to learn and practice skills during PD was essential to support teachers in the task of improving student outcomes. Teachers need PD experiences that challenge them and translate into the classroom in meaningful ways (Epp, 2017). Continuous PD for teachers of inclusive classrooms plays a significant role in the instructional competence of the teachers and school performance (Duru-Uremadu, 2018). As in Opartkiattikul et al.'s study, teachers used the knowledge they learn in their teaching practice. Therefore, it is necessary for schools to have a culture of continuous PD.

Cunningham, Huchting, Fogarty, and Graf, (2017) conducted an evaluation of 18-months UDL PD which was conducted to improve teachers' inclusive classroom

practices in a school. Inclusive teachers with little or no training about teaching inclusive classrooms were invited to the PD program. The evaluation of the PD was conducted to find out the effect of the PD on teachers' instructional practices and students' engagement in the classroom. Data were gathered through teacher interviews and classroom observations. The findings of the evaluation revealed improvements in classroom instruction and student engagement. Valiandes and Neophytou, (2018) also researched on the outcome of a PD provided to teachers to improve student learning, and the result indicated an increase in student achievement.

In addition, professional learning community (PLC) is another means where teachers meet to collaborate, plan, and share ideas for their students. D'Ardenne, Barnes, Hightower, Lamason, Mason, Patterson and Erickson were elementary teachers who were faced with low performance of students in reading. These teachers decided to form a professional learning community (PLC) to address the problem of low performance. (D'Ardenne, Barnes, Hightower, Lamason, Mason, Patterson & Erickson, 2013) The teachers collaboratively created reading lessons that addressed (a) comprehension strategies, (b) decoding, (c) vocabulary development, and (d) responding to test question stems from standardized testing. They shared ideas, learned from each other's expertise and planned students' lessons to meet students' needs. Collaborative planning helped students' learning and increased students' performance (D'Ardenne, Barnes, Hightower, Lamason, Mason, Patterson & Erickson, 2013). Also, according to a study conducted in two urban public elementary schools PLC contributes to sustainable school improvement. Fahara, Bulnes, and Quintanilla (2015) found that PLC helped teachers to reflect and

solve problems while they share experiences from their teaching practices. The contribution of PLC to sustainable school improvement may result in an increase in student performance. Also helping teachers reflect and solve problems and share their experiences helps them improve their professional practices which may lead to improved student performance. The above research studies are related and resulted to improving student performance. PLC could also be used as an avenue for collaboration and planning reading lessons that will benefit students with disabilities.

Pang et al. (2016) examined the practices in three schools identified as good PLC campuses and found that the school leaders and the teachers had good emphases on PLC practices. The school leaders in these three schools established a supportive framework for PLC:

> They had strong mutual understanding, support and a well-developed administrative system in promoting teachers' continuous professional development. Their strong leadership focused on teacher learning and nurtured a strong culture of sharing information, knowledge, and practices. Moreover, teachers in these schools generally had high capabilities of collaborative learning and developed a strong sense of focus on student needs (Pang et al., 2016).

This shows the importance of PLC in schools, and the need for teachers to engage in collaborative planning through PLC, especially for teachers of inclusive classrooms. It will give teachers the opportunity to share ideas, ask questions, and provide accommodations and modifications as needed for students with disabilities.

Teacher attitude is also relevant to inclusive education. Yeo, Chong, Neihart, and Huang (2016) stated: "Teachers' positive attitude is most critically and consistently associated with successful inclusion" (p 71). This indicated that teacher attitudes have some influence on the way general education teachers implement inclusion. A PD that is relevant to needs of the teachers may have a positive influence on their attitude about inclusion and students with disabilities.

PD that was created to provide the support needed by inclusive teachers is a variable in implementing inclusion best practices (Urton & Hennemann 2014). Urton and Hannemann conducted a study to find out the relationship between attitudes towards inclusion and sense of efficacy as well as mainstreaming (inclusion) experiences at different levels. Forty-eight elementary schools with inclusive classrooms were used for the study. The outcome of the study showed that teaching staff differs in their attitudes about inclusion based on their experiences. Knowledgeable teachers had a positive attitude about inclusion, but the others did not because they had no knowledge or understanding about the need for inclusion. Some teachers believe students with disabilities should be removed from the mainstream classrooms and taught separately from students who do not have disabilities. The authors, therefore, suggested that PD be provided to help the school staff implement the model successfully. Also, the PD helped teachers understand that students with disabilities benefit from receiving instruction with their peers in the mainstream (inclusive) classroom. Per Dev and Haynes (2015) students with disabilities learned better in the inclusive classroom rather than in specialized settings. Teachers need to understand the inclusion model and how to implement the

model and teach content (LaSalle et al. 2013) to students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom. This understanding can be achieved through PD.

PD for teachers can be presented in various formats (Koellner & Jacobs, 2015). However, for PD to be effective, it is necessary to engage teachers in active learning where teachers learn by doing. It needs to be collaborative where teachers work in small groups or with partners through activities and discussions. PD needs to be ongoing as part of the school normal practices. PD needs to be aligned with the school's mission, and vision and every teacher should follow policies and procedures that are in place towards achieving the school's vision. The purpose of PD is to provide professional support for the teachers so that they can implement the support facilitation model successfully (Gulamhussein, 2013; Koellner & Jacobs, 2015). In this changing world, PD is used for developing teacher learning, skills, and improved teaching quality (Teague & Anfara, 2012) based on the teachers' and students' needs (Koellner & Jacobs, 2015). Teachers need to learn about researched-based teaching strategies that help students with disabilities learned. PD that is focused on inclusion topics may lead to the successful inclusion of students with disabilities (Brusca-Vega, Alexander, & Kamin, 2014).

Schools need to use PD formats and approaches that allow teachers to participate by collaborating and taking active roles in their PDs. The mandated "top-down fashion" of presenting PD is ineffective in changing teachers' practices (Gulamhussein, 2013; Roseler & Dentzau, 2013). Teachers should attend PD on a regular basis rather than attending a one-time lecture-workshop that generally has limited effect on the teachers. Teachers need to be involved in PD training by collaborating and participating in

activities with colleagues in whole and small groups. Collaboration is used in different ways for different kinds of interaction among teachers (Forte & Flores, 2014; Williams, 2013). Collaboration helps teachers take control of their learning by discussing and working together in groups or with a partner, and sharing their expertise, experiences, or ideas with each other.

Teachers' engagement and participation in the training help them understand the instructional model or content of the training. Per Bayar (2014), an effective PD activity should be developed to allow participants to be actively engaged in the activities to help participants understand the content of the PD: learning by doing. I developed a learning opportunity for teachers' professional growth about the support facilitation model. The teachers will use the knowledge from the PD to support the learning of students with disabilities (Petrie & McGee, 2012). Inclusion teachers will be engaged and work with colleagues to understand the inclusion model and its implementation.

Jeong, Tyler-Wood, Kinnison, and Morrison (2014) further stated that training is needed for effective implementation of inclusion and suggested that schools should first determine effective training strategies that facilitate inclusion before implementing the model. As much as the teachers need PD training for students with various disabilities and the inclusion model, they also need training on the effective strategies that will support student learning. The participants in this study indicated specific areas they need the training on. These areas include strategies for reading comprehension, grading, assessment, behavior management, and instructional accommodations. The training may

help teachers become more efficient in implementing the support facilitation model of inclusion and supporting students with various disabilities become successful learners.

Differentiation and Comprehension Strategies for Students with Disabilities

Teachers of inclusive classrooms need the comprehension strategies that will help them meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities in reading comprehension. An important strategy that can be helpful for teaching reading comprehension to students with disabilities is differentiation. Differentiation is a technique that can help teachers meet the learning need of the diverse learners in the inclusive classroom (Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan, & Brown, 2010). Students with disabilities may not learn the same way as their peers without disabilities, some learn slower than others, and comprehend at different levels. Therefore, teachers need to identify the best way each student learns, and students' reading level and differentiate the learning activity to meet their needs. For example, some students may need more time to complete a task because they need to read the text a few times to respond to comprehension questions. Some may do better listening to the text read to them, others may need pictures to support their comprehension. Also, students with disabilities may be in the same classroom but reading at different levels. Although students with disabilities perform better in inclusive classrooms, their learning activities need to be differentiated to meet their individual needs (Morgan, 2014). Therefore, it is vital for teachers to understand how students learn and teach them on their level of understanding.

Differentiated instruction helps students with disabilities participate in learning activities in the inclusive classroom (Acosta-Tello & Sheperd, 2014; Nishimura (2014),

because they cannot learn content if concepts are not simplified in a way they can learn and understand. Differentiation is a complex strategy (Mills et al., 2014), and teachers only learn the introductory part of it in the teacher preparation programs (Dixon, Yessel, McConnell, & Hardin, 2014). Therefore, without PD and support for the inclusive teachers, differentiation may remain under-developed in the inclusive classrooms. Teachers need a deeper understanding of differentiation to support the diverse needs of students with disabilities in the school. Differentiating students' reading activities helps the teacher to utilize the appropriate strategy that will help each child to learn successfully.

Text preview is when the teacher gives the student a preview or explains to students in brief about the story they are about to read. This helps to give the student an idea about the story and sets a purpose for reading (Burkins & Crof, 2010).

Guided reading, using listening station (read aloud) is where a student will have the book containing the story that is being read from a tape at the reading station. The student follows the text as it is being read. This helps with decoding words, and some students comprehend better when they listen to a story or text being read to them (Burkins & Crof , 2010 ; McLaughlin & Allen, 2009). One of the components of guided reading by Burkins is to listen to someone read.

Use of interactive story maps or thinking maps is a comprehension activity that is visual. It helps students to organize their thoughts about a story they read in response to comprehension prompts given to them by the teacher (Hyerle, 2018).

Planning, Collaboration, and Effective Communication

It is essential for special education and general education teachers to have a common planning time scheduled for them to share personal knowledge of the students and their unique needs (Royster et al., 2014) because collaboration is vital in the implementation of the support facilitation model. Teacher collaboration and effective communication between the general education and special general education teachers influence the effective implementation of inclusion (Majoko, 2016). Schwab, Holzinger, Krammer, Gebhardt, and Hessels (2015) in their study about inclusive education in Australia, stated that general and special education teachers need to work collaboratively. Individual teachers cannot solve the problems in inclusive practice on their own; they need to work and support each other through effective communication to help meet the needs of students with disabilities effectively. Effective communication is more than exchanging information; it is also listening and understanding the information. Effective communication also involves asking questions to understand information received and how to use the information. General education and special education teachers need to relate and understand the needs of each student with disabilities in their classrooms and how to help them learn.

PD is one of the avenues for a collaborative relationship between special and general education teachers where they collaborate and share from each other's expertise. Teachers' growth in teaching practices occurs where there are good collaboration and effective communication between the special and general education teachers focusing on students' area of need (Svendsen, 2016). Collaboration between the general and special

education teachers can influence student success. Both teachers can discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each student and plan lesson activities to meet each student's reading needs.

Project Description

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

The PD training is expected to take place at the research site, and the district special education facilitator (elementary) will serve as the training facilitator, to be assisted by the campus special education team leader. The district special education facilitator does provide PD for teachers at individual schools within the district as needed. The district provides the technology (projector, smart board, laptops, ipads) and materials (pens, note cards, sticky notes, markers, highlighters, and others) used in PD and these items are already available at the school site and available for approved PD. Teachers will be advised to bring reading lesson plan templates to be used for practice. Handouts on PD content will also be made available to participants. PowerPoint presentations will be used to present the training modules. Participants will be required to participate in small group activities to discuss topics presented or practice the skills learned. Participants will also engage in whole group discussions. The workshop will be implemented during the summer which is the regular time for PD for teachers. An on-site refresher (follow-up) training will also be recommended for inclusive teachers throughout the year. The follow-up PD content will depend on the needs of the teachers

Potential Barriers

The potential barrier to implementing the PD is individual teacher plans for the summer that might coincide with PD days. Depending on the date or time scheduled for this PD, some participants might already have planned for a family vacation or travel out of state on the days this PD will be scheduled thereby missing out on the PD. To overcome this barrier, the principal may decide to schedule a different time for the PD instead of the week before school resumption (or planning week), so that summer travelers and new teachers can benefit.

Proposal for Implementation

The PD is a 3-day workshop to be conducted at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year. I will make recommendations to the principal that inclusion teachers be trained at the beginning of the second semester as a refresher course and that time be scheduled monthly for a follow-up PD to provide tips or support to inclusive teachers as needed by the special education team leader. Since each grade level teachers have PLC once a week, the special education teachers can attend the PLC to provide support, answer questions the general education teachers may have, and ensure students' IEPs and their accommodations are taken into consideration during lesson planning.

The principal may consider ensuring that all teachers involved with the students with disabilities be a part of the grade level planning team. This will allow ongoing support to teachers of inclusive classroom thereby strengthening effective communication and collaborative relationship. Teachers would discuss, share progress and concerns about the strategies they use, and the performances of students with disabilities in their

classrooms. This will be an avenue for inclusive teachers to discuss strategies that work

for the students and strategies that need to be changed or share new research strategies.

This will also provide support to new inclusive teachers who did not attend the summer

training, the opportunity to understand inclusion, and their role in implementing it. It is

proposed that the 3-day workshop be conducted during the week before students'

resumption (preplanning week). Teachers will start implementing strategies they learned

beginning from the 2nd week of school.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

My role is the developer of this project, and it is my responsibility to take into

consideration the needs of the participants as I develop the PD. The teachers need

training on the support facilitation model and their roles in implementing it successfully

using the strategies that are research-based. Teachers also need to learn how to use

instructional and assessment accommodations to meet the specific needs of each student

with disabilities in reading, because every student with a learning disability in the school

has accommodations in their IEP. Participants indicated the need to understand how to

use the accommodations to support students' learning. All participants will be invited to

participate in the workshop and implement the learned strategies in their classrooms.

The general education and special education teachers may collaborate during

common planning times or anytime assigned by the principal. They may use the

knowledge gained from this PD to provide the needed support for students with

disabilities during reading. An administrator(s) will be invited to attend the PD and may

decide to create a scheduled time for general and special education teachers to have

common planning. It is also important that administrators provide teachers with the necessary resources (a variety of leveled books and supplies needed) and tools (teacher guide books, technology devices, feedback) to implement the inclusion model and strategies learned during the workshop.

Project Evaluation Plan

The project was developed to educate inclusive teachers about implementing the support facilitation inclusive model. The project effectiveness will be evaluated using formative and summative evaluations. Using both formative and summative evaluation methods will allow for immediate feedback and overall feedback. Feedback is a vital part of achieving efficiency (Glazer, 2014). The formative and summative evaluation will help me as the project developer to adjust the PD as necessary.

Formative Evaluation

Participants will be asked to respond to questions at the end of each day of the 3-day PD. Participants will be asked to indicate areas they feel need improvement and provide feedback on the overall organization and presentation of the PD. Participants' feedback helps the developer to make adjustments as necessary for the maximum achievement of project goals because it is my responsibility as project evaluator to ensure that the goals of the project are achieved. I will make daily adjustments to the PD presentation where necessary.

Summative Evaluation

Participants will also complete a summative evaluation at the end of the school year to provide data on the overall effectiveness of the PD. At the end of the year,

participants will complete a survey evaluating the PD goals. Summative evaluations provide an overall summary of the participants' experiences (Lodico et al., 2010) and provide the developer with data about the outcome of the project; whether the desired outcome is attained (Spaulding, 2014). The project goal is for the participants to gain and apply the knowledge/skills learned to implement the support facilitation model successfully. The outcome of the PD may lead to increased performance in reading for students with disabilities (or improved reading scores).

The project was developed to educate teachers of inclusive classrooms so that they can implement the support facilitation model successfully thereby leading to improved students' performance in reading. The content of the PD is developed to help teachers of inclusive classrooms understand the support facilitation model and implement it successfully. Success will be determined by the summative evaluation at the end of the school year as stated earlier. Successful implementation of the inclusion model may create a conducive learning environment for students with disabilities, equipping the inclusion teachers with the necessary skills and strategies that may provide a positive change for both the students and inclusion teachers.

Project Implications

Local Community

Participants in this study are in support of the inclusion program. However, they indicated that it is challenging. They also indicated the need for training about the inclusive model used in the school, its instructional strategies for reading comprehension and the use of accommodation to support student learning. This project can positively

affect the inclusive instructional practices of local teachers. The project may also provide the opportunity for teachers to provide support that will help students with disabilities perform better in reading because PD has been linked to an improvement in instructional methodology which results in greater student achievement (White, 2014). Teachers may feel fulfilled and be more confident in the implementation of the support facilitation model in subsequent years. The school community (administrators, staff, and students) may also benefit from the high performance of students with disabilities in reading because the school rating may improve because of the increase in reading performance (scores) of students with disabilities. Low performance of students affects the school rating negatively, but high student performance increases the school rating.

Far-Reaching

This project has the potential for bringing about changes to the inclusion practices in schools. This project study can help schools to reach and support every student with disabilities in reading and other subjects. Although the project was designed to meet the needs of local elementary inclusion teachers, other schools within the district or other neighboring districts around where the support facilitation model is used could benefit from it, too. This project can prepare teachers to meet the needs of a diverse learning population. The project has the potential to improve the way inclusive teachers teach and the way student with disabilities learn.

<div align="center">

Conclusion

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The PD project focused on teacher understanding of the support facilitation model of inclusion and its implementation. The goal of the project is to provide both special and

general education teachers with the knowledge necessary to help them implement the support facilitation more successfully and provide the support needed for students with disabilities to perform better in reading. Inclusive teachers struggle with collaborative planning and time constraints in their current settings. This project is intended to provide inclusion teachers with the knowledge that target the inclusion model and its implementation by providing strategies that will help teachers differentiate reading instruction according to each student's needs.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

In this section I outline the strengths and limitations of the project and discuss how the project addressed the problem. A PD was designed to address the needs of the inclusive educators as indicated in the data. The purpose of the study was to explore teachers' perspectives about the inclusive instructional model used in the school for reading and how the model was implemented. In the following sections, I state what I learned while developing the project in areas of scholarship, becoming a practitioner, and being the developer of a project. I address social change in the context of the project and its implications for research in the future.

Project Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

The study addressed special and general educators' concerns regarding the support facilitation model and its implementation in the school under study. Teachers indicated that PD could be helpful to them in supporting students with disabilities in their classrooms. In the literature, PD is considered necessary and important in implementing an inclusion instructional model (Matović & Spasenović, 2016; Polly, Neale, & Pugalee, 2014). One of the strengths of this project is that it will provide an opportunity for teachers to learn about the inclusive model and their roles in its implementation; it has the potential to provide the participants with reading strategies that may help them support students with disabilities improve comprehension. Understanding and using reading comprehension strategies to teach students based on how they learn helps improve their

reading comprehension (Johnson & Brumback, 2013). The strengths of this PD also include active participation by both general and special education teachers through activities and discussions with partners or in groups as they learn together. It is a module-based PD that focuses on one module each day of the PD to allow teachers the opportunity to process the information. The instructor will act as a facilitator during the PD, and participants will be involved in active learning (learning by doing) as they participate in discussions, interactions, and engage in the PD activities together. Learning together as inclusive teachers will strengthen their professional relationships and encourage support for each other in the classroom during reading instruction. Teachers will learn by modeling to help them support their students better in the classroom. The PD experience will provide knowledge that teachers lack about the support facilitation model and how to implement it successfully. The PD will help teachers learn about strategies that could help students with disabilities in reading comprehension. The administrator(s) attending may understand the importance of collaboration through the PD (day 3) and establish an opportunity for a scheduled collaborative planning between general and special education teachers that did not exist on their schedules before the PD.

Limitations

The limitations for this PD include PD scheduling or participants' availability to attend the PD. Participants' availability is beyond my control; participant(s) may miss this PD because of their summer plans that may coincide with PD days. The principal oversees the PD schedule; I can only make suggestions. My suggestion will be for the principal to have a meeting with the teachers to decide on the dates for the PD so that

participants can agree on the date they will be available to attend. Also, the administrators would have to make a monthly schedule for a collaborative follow-up time between special and general education teachers. The authority to do so is in the hands of the school administrators.

<div align="center">**Recommendations for Alternative Approaches**</div>

The problem as described in Section 1 was focused on the performance in reading of students with disabilities in the inclusive classrooms. An alternate way of defining the problem could be that students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms perform low in reading fluency. An alternative way to address the problem could be to use other forms of research instruments. For example, a researcher could use teacher surveys (or questionnaires) to collect data in addition to the classroom observation and student records for a mixed method design (quantitative and qualitative). To research the problem using mixed methods requires a need to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The project would focus on ways to support inclusive teachers with appropriate strategies for teaching reading fluency for students with disabilities in the inclusive classrooms. Students' scores would be measured and compared to determine whether students' performance scores increased after providing support to inclusive teachers. Interviews and classroom observations would be used to collect the qualitative data for the study.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change Scholarship

This research study helped me to develop resilience through the challenging and demanding task of the doctoral program, but God helped me through the challenges to

persevere and work harder. The best way to handle a challenging assignment is hard work and facing it without giving up. I learned about scholarship by reading and gaining more knowledge and using the knowledge I gained in my writing and to develop my project. I read literature about my topic and analyzed the information from the literature to support my findings. I read textbooks for information about the form and style of qualitative research and case study. The study helped me to be focused, determined, and disciplined because the processes require effort, time management, and organization skills. Conducting this study made me improve in those areas. Also, I have learned to view ideas from other people's perspectives because I realized through this study that my thoughts and views about issues may be different from the way others see them. Every participant offered a valuable and unique perspective on the subject. In the course of my doctoral program, I have gained knowledge from literature, my instructors, course mates, and colleagues. I used the knowledge I gained to conduct my data collection and analysis. I developed this project based on my findings. During this project, I participated in the collegial dialogue with colleagues. This open discussion has created a sharing of ideas and resources.

Project Development

I developed my project based on the findings; I reviewed peer-reviewed literature and texts to understand more about developing my project. I learned to develop the project based on my findings from the research site. I searched scholarly literature and obtained information that helped me in developing this project to meet the needs of inclusive teachers. Developing this project taught me how to be focused and disciplined.

It also taught me that hard work yields positive results. I also learned to relate or communicate with others (course mates) while learning from them.

Leadership and Change

Over the course of conducting this project study, my concept about the need for flexibility in leadership grew. I realized that leadership is beyond taking charge and dictating to subordinates. From my doctoral experience, I would say that leadership requires deep thought about the needs of colleagues (teachers/staff) regarding resources and goals. Leadership is the ability to build or develop the leadership capacity in others and support them to become effective leaders by providing guidance towards self-actualization. Change is a challenging process; it requires effective communication of a shared vision and being able to create a sense of urgency (Tomlinson & Allan, 2000). Creating the sense of agency in this context simply refers to realizing that efficiency is vital to success. A leader who provides opportunities for subordinates to grow and be efficient promotes social change. In completing this project, I have learned that a leader's role is not just to create change but to facilitate others to grow. Effective leaders understand that they are in the "environmental-building business" so they establish an environment that balances the necessity for change with an atmosphere that supports it (Tomlinson & Allan, 2000). Change occurs when all stakeholders join hands to work and collaborate as a team, which helps bring about change and maintain it.

Analysis of Self as Scholar

During this doctoral process, I have grown not only professionally but also as a scholar. I grew in skills during the period of this project study especially when it comes

to designing and conducting research. Being able to reflect on data for improvement of the local setting via project development helped me understand the importance of looking for support in other research to help address participants' needs. I have been inculcated with the practice of taking learned information and applying it in new situations. I have learned the importance of reading and analyzing relevant information, and I now understand that as a scholar, I am required to be committed to seeking more information by reviewing the work of others to help improve the school community. As a scholar, I related with other scholars in the field, which involved sharing or exchanging ideas, questioning premises, and providing (and accepting) feedback about issues pertaining to the field. Those discussions allowed me the opportunity to gain from the experiences and knowledge of others. The learning process is a continuous one, and it is vital to lifelong growth. Acknowledging the expertise of others contributes to the repertoire of support needed to continue learning or growing as a scholar. Personal experiences from this course made me realize that with determination and hard work, I could accomplish anything I want. I now have more confidence in my abilities and have developed some skills as a scholar. Developing this project gave me the opportunity to put into practice the skills I learned throughout my doctoral program.

I have also learned that as a scholar, I need to acknowledge and accept the different beliefs and ideas of others. Finally, it is essential that a scholar willingly contributes new ideas and thoughts in a larger community; hence, I developed the project to meet the professional needs of the school community.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

My experiences and knowledge from my doctoral process have made me emerge as a practitioner. I view things differently than I used to before engaging in this process; I now search for research-based practices instead of relying on old or traditional ways of doing things without positive results. The project study has helped my relationship with my colleagues grow and become more meaningful than it used to be. We discuss issues and share ideas freely with partners. I feel well equipped to explore scholarly research-based practices since my personal growth is an on-going process, I am empowered to grow more and contribute positively to the learning community on a continuous basis.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

The project was developed to meet the needs of the inclusive teachers indicated by the participants. The participants indicated that they did not receive any training on the support facilitation model of inclusion used by the school. Developing the project has been a major undertaking for me. I developed the project bearing in mind its relevance to the needs of the teachers. I reviewed the data collected again and again to ensure its alignment with the needs indicated by the participants.

In the beginning stages, I was looking at things differently, I thought inclusive teachers were trained about the support facilitation model and thought the cause of the low performance of students with disabilities in reading was due to teachers' attitude towards students with disabilities. Conducting this study has helped me realize the importance of approaching issues differently because what I thought was not what was obtained. The outcome of this study proved me wrong; I learned not to conclude about

issues until I find out about it. t. As a result, I reviewed every aspect of this project numerous times to eliminate personal bias and to closely align with the identified needs from the study. During the process of developing this project, I paid attention to every detail. Designing a project requires a focus on details. As a project developer, the importance of the details is my most significant takeaway from this project. It has become an essential aspect of my daily practice.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

This project was important in providing the support needed by special and general education teachers to teach reading effectively for students with disabilities. This project is one of the ways the inclusion teachers in the research site need to help them teach students with disabilities in reading. Inclusion teachers can apply the knowledge gained in this project to support students with disabilities to learn and become successful readers.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Due to the way education continually evolves, teachers need to grow professionally to present new knowledge and ideas that can be used in the diverse classrooms. In that light, my goal for this project is to help teachers of an inclusive classroom with the information that may help them support students with disabilities in their classrooms become successful in reading. Also, the outcome of this project may add knowledge to the teachers and provide opportunities for students to become better learners. Students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms may find learning exciting because reading activities may appear more meaningful to them. Students with disabilities may gain confidence as they learn along with their peers and complete

reading tasks with fewer struggles due to the accommodations and support they receive. This project may also be a resource for other schools or districts that use the support facilitation model. The understanding of the inclusion instructional model may help teachers collaborate and plan better to meet every student's needs.

Recommendations for Practice and Future Research

General education and special education teachers indicated that they do not have a scheduled time for collaborative planning. Collaboration between inclusive teachers (special and general education teachers) may offer support that benefits students with disabilities. When both teachers collaborate, they share their expertise to support each other and plan meaningful lessons to meet the needs of students with disabilities in reading. Schools can utilize staff and scheduling to maximize the support and provide meaningful guidance for reading instruction for the benefit of students (Ashby, Burns, & Royle, 2014). Therefore, school administrators should allow a set time on the schedule for special and general education teachers to collaborate to help teachers implement the inclusive instructional models and strategies consistently to support student learning. Collaboration makes teachers feel confident about their contribution to the success of students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom (Wang, Hall, & Rahimi, 2015). A PD training about the importance of collaborative planning, its benefits, and topics for collaboration may help teachers and administrators to see the need to have a scheduled time for collaborative planning. Also, conducting PD for inclusion teachers about the support facilitation model of inclusion may help them implement the model practices successfully, hence fulfilling the purpose of the PD.

The school administrators may need to encourage inclusive teachers about practices that help in the implementation of the support facilitation model to increase student achievement. This project study mainly addressed the perspectives of general and special education teachers in elementary school. Future research could consider the outcome of this project in the way teachers implement the facilitation model. Student data could be gathered to see whether students' scores improved.

Conclusion

Students with disabilities served in the inclusion classrooms perform low in reading. One of the reasons for the low performance may be because inclusive teachers did not receive training on the support facilitation inclusive model used by the school. Without this PD students with disabilities may continue to perform poorly on reading assessments. And may not be prepared to meet their needs in the inclusive classrooms. The project was designed to address the problem. The participants indicated the need for PD about the inclusive model, strategies for teaching reading comprehension, the need for collaborative planning, and how to use accommodations for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The project study attempts to address teachers' needs regarding the implementation of the support facilitation model. The overall goal is to educate inclusive teachers about the support facilitation model and their roles in its implementation to foster increase performance of students with disabilities in reading.

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Appendix A: The Project

Inclusive Instructional Model: Support Facilitation Model

Professional Development for Inclusive Teachers

The project is a professional development training program that focuses on supporting teachers in inclusive classrooms on the inclusive instructional (support facilitation) model. This project was designed based on the needs of the inclusive teachers as indicated in the findings and outcomes.

Purpose	This professional development project was created to address the problem of implementation of the support facilitation instructional practices. This project will provide inclusive teachers with information about the support facilitation model, differentiation of learning activities for students with disabilities, and provide research-based reading instructional strategies for teaching reading to students with disabilities. General education teachers will also practice developing collaborative lesson plans with the special education teachers, and to take some time to reflect and discuss ways they can implement the strategies to improve their teaching and better support students with disabilities to learn and achieve their reading goals.
Targeted Audience	The target audience of this project consists of the general and special education teachers of inclusive classroom in the targeted elementary school. The school administrators, reading specialist,

	and the special education coordinator will also be invited to attend.
Guiding Questions	Day 1 1. What is inclusion and why do we have students with disabilities in the general education classroom instead of the resource room or other specialized setting? 2. What are inclusive instructional models and what model is the school using? 3. What are your roles and responsibilities as a general/special education teacher in implementing the support facilitation instructional model of inclusion? Day 2 1. What are some effective instructional strategies to use in teaching elementary school students with disabilities for reading comprehension? 2. How is differentiated instruction and universal design for learning relevant to teaching reading comprehension in an inclusive classroom. Day 3 1. Why collaborative planning? 2. How can we build an inclusive partnership and strengthen professional relationships between general and special education teachers?

	3. What topics are essential for effective collaboration?
Learning Outcomes	This project is designed to address the following learning outcomes: 1. Special and general education teachers will understand the inclusive instructional model used in the school and understand their roles and responsibilities in implementing it. 2. Inclusive teachers will gain knowledge to effectively implement instructional strategies for reading comprehension that will benefit student with disabilities in the classrooms. 3. Administrators and inclusive teachers will understand the importance of collaborative planning and identify the keys to successful collaboration.
Evaluation	PD participants will complete formative and summative evaluations anonymously (without indicating their names). A formative evaluation form will be completed by participants on the first and second day of the PD. The summative evaluation will consist of professional development evaluation worksheet that will be completed at the end of the training on the third day.
Resources/Materials	PowerPoint Presentation Cardstock for name tents Projector Internet connection

	Laptops/iPads
	Handouts
	Note cards
	Sticky notes
	Pens/pencils/markers
	Chart paper
	Formative evaluation form
	Summative evaluation worksheet
Timeline	The professional training will consist of a total of 8 hour sessions per day for 3 consecutive days.

3-Day Professional Development Outline

Day 1: Understand Inclusion and the Support Facilitation Model	Day 2: Comprehension Strategies for Students with Disabilities	Day 3: Collaborative Planning
• Inclusion in brief • Understanding the support facilitation model • Understand general and special educators' roles	• Differentiation • Inclusion strategies for reading comprehension By Universal design for learners	• Understanding the IEP • Accommodations and modifications for learners • Lesson planning and delivery

Professional Development Session Day 1 Activities:

Understanding Inclusion and the support facilitation model.

Handouts, PowerPoints, and other resources will be uploaded under "instructor's notes" in Euphoria prior to the PD so that registered participants can access them when they log into Euphoria.

Day 1 Learning Outcome: Special and general education teachers will understand the inclusive instructional model used in the school and understand their roles in implementing it.

Day 1: Agenda

8:00-9:15 Sign-in, Introduction/ Welcome/ Ice-Breaker Activities

9:15 – 10 AM - A presentation about inclusive education will be presented

10:00 – 10:15 Break

10:15 – 10:25 - A brief discussion on IDEA 2004 and IEP/504)

10:25 – 11:00 AM - Group Activity

11:00 – 11:30 – Power Point: Inclusion and the Support Facilitation Model

11:30 – 12:30 Lunch Break

12:30 – 2:00 PM Power point (cont.)

2:00 – 3:00 PM: Complete power point/ideas, thoughts, and questions.

(Formative evaluation)

Training Facilitator's notes…

8:00-9:15 - Sign-in, Introduction/ Welcome/ Ice-Breaker Activities:

The Special Education Facilitator and Reading Specialist will serve as the official facilitators of this professional development course.

- *Start by welcoming participants to the workshop*

- *Introduction*

- *Description of the course*

- *Desired outcomes of the professional development course.*

- Let participants introduce themselves and state their position or title

- The ice breaker will create opportunities for participants to interact with themselves and know a few things about their colleagues.

Ice breaker: *Explain the ice breaker activity to participants. Play some music and ask participants to move from their seats and walk around while the music is playing. The moment the music stops participants will stop and tell the closest person to them about one thing that motivates him/her as a teacher and that person becomes their partner. Both partners will decide who is "A" while the second partner becomes "B." Partner "A" will start by stating 2 things she/he thinks about inclusive education, and vice versa. The activity will be repeated twice, and participants will ensure they do not repeat same partners. After the activity, invite 2 or 3 volunteers to share what they learned about their partner.*

Next, groups discuss and write out solutions to this scenario: Akin is a 3rd grade student with disabilities, he always present behavior problems during group work because he cannot read, how do you as Akin's teacher help him participate in reading activities with his peers?) – groups will brainstorm and write the strategies they think Akin needs.

The second scenario: Ben is a 3rd grader but have difficulty with decoding, during small running records. You realized that Ben skipped words he did not know when he was

reading his story book. He did not attempt to decode the words that he didn't know, and at the end of his reading, he was not able to respond to retell a part of the story. What do you think is going on with Ben, and how will you support Ben in this area? *Instruct each group to put their ideas together and appoint a spokesperson to represent the group. Record ideas on the board and make comments as necessary.*

9:15 – 10 AM - What is Inclusive Education? (Handout)

After the discussion on inclusive education, each group will complete a graphic organizer of their choice to present what they learnt from the discussion on a chart paper (poster) using markers, and present to the whole group.

The training facilitator will allow room for general discussion about the discussion (inclusive education) as need be.

10:00 – 10:15 Break

Discuss briefly about the following:

(Start by asking participants what they know about IDEA, 504 and IEP)

1). IDEA Basics: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act:

2). IDEA Basics: (504 Plan) How is an IEP Different from a 504 Plan? (presentation)

 (Advise participant to jot down questions on the sticky or note cards as the presentation is going on.

10:25 – 11AM - Group Activity: Participant will discuss the videos in their groups, jotting down important facts from each video they just watched and answer these questions.

What is IDEA all about?

What is a 504 plan?

What is the difference between an IEP and a 504?

Which is easier to work with and why?

Note: Remember to allow each group to share what they learned and allow participants to share any "aha moments" and discuss any questions that comes up.

11:00 – 11:30 – Power Point: Inclusion and the Support Facilitation Model

11:30 – 12:30 Lunch Break (Pause)

12:30 – 2:00 PM Power point: Inclusion and the Support Facilitation Model (cont.)

Participants discuss at their table groups the difference between *push in* and the support facilitation instructional model. *Give room for participants to share their thoughts or ask questions.*

Power Point: 2:00 – 3:00 PM: Power point: **Inclusion and the Support Facilitation Model.** Conclude the power point by explaining to participants that *push-in* is simply another word for inclusion while the support facilitation model is one of the inclusive instructional models. Allow time for ideas, thoughts, and questions from participants. **Give out the formative evaluation form to participants to complete and place on the table as they sign out.*

Day 1 PowerPoint

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INCLUSION AND THE
SUPPORT FACILITATION
MODEL

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Slide 2

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education also known as inclusion means:

- Educating students with disabilities with their peers who are not disable in the general education classroom to

the greatest extent appropriate.

- Expectations are high

- Instruction is standards-based

- The curriculum is the general education curriculum

- Individualized supports are available for students with disabilities.

- Decisions are made on the basis

of student needs and not labels

Slide 3

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Slide 7

SPECIAL EDUCATION'S PERSPECTIVE

Individual with Disability Education Act's (IDEA) Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Provision:

- "To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities… are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."

(Section 612 (a)(5) (A) (IDEA '04)

Slide 8

INCLUSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS

- Co-teaching
- Support facilitation

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Professional Development of Inclusive Instructional Model (Support Facilitation)

(Day 1 Formative Evaluation)

<u>**Circle one:**</u>

General Education teacher   Special education   Teacher Administrator

Please take a few moments to respond to the following questions. Your answers will greatly assist us in determining how to improve professional development workshops

<u>**Circle Yes or No**</u>

1. Course/Activity was well organized   Yes   No

2. Course/Activity objectives were stated   Yes   No

3. Course/Activity assignments were relevant to Course/Activity objectives. Yes

No

4. How did this workshop relate to your job?

_____

_____

5. What information was valuable to you?

_____

_____

6. What specific suggestions do you have to improve this activity?

_____

_____

7. Additional Comments

_____

Professional Development Session Day 2: Teaching Strategies for Students with

Disabilities in Inclusive Classroom

Handouts, PowerPoints, and other resources will be uploaded under "instructor's notes"

in Euphoria prior to the PD so that registered participants can access them when they log

into Euphoria. (Paper copy handouts will be given to participants for today's training).

Day 2 Learning outcome: Inclusive teachers will gain knowledge to effectively

implement instructional strategies for reading comprehension that will benefit student

with disabilities in the classrooms.

Day 2 Agenda

8:00 – 9:15 AM – Sign -in, Welcome, Introductions, Goals for today's PD

9:15 – 9:30 AM – Revision Activity

9:30 – 10:00 AM - Brainstorming Activity (Strategies for teaching comprehension)

10:00 – 10:15 AM - Break

10:15 – 11:30 PowerPoint presentation

11:30 – 12:30 PM – Lunch Break

12:30 – 1:30 PM PowerPoint presentation

1:30 – 2:30 - PowerPoint

2:30 – 2:40 Break

2:40 – 3:00 PM - Last Activity

Training facilitator's notes:
8:00 – 9:15 AM - Introductions: Start by asking participants to form new groups today

so that nobody is in a group with same people as yesterday. This will help teachers to

work with different set of colleagues and creating some professional relationship that will

be on-going after the 3-day workshop.

After the grouping, welcome participants.

Trainer will introduce participants to the agenda and the learning goals of the today's

professional training.

9:15 – 9:30 AM - Revision Activity

Participants will take numbers 1, and 2. All the participants with number 1 will form

group 1, while others form group 2. Each group will find a location within the room and

form a circle. Give one person in each group a bean bag and explain to the groups how to

play the activity. The person with the bean bag will state one thing they remember from

yesterday's workshop within 30 seconds and toss the bean bag to any person in the circle

and the person will do the same and toss to another person until the set alarm goes off (5

minutes activity)

9:30 – 10:00 AM – Brainstorming Activity

Participants will brainstorm in their groups and complete a circle or map about various

strategies of teaching reading comprehension that they know. (chart papers and markers

will be available). Each group will present to the whole class what strategies they have

written down

(5 minutes for any comments, thoughts and ideas before the break).

10:00 – 10:15AM – Break

10:15 – 11:30 AM – PowerPoint

- Reading comprehension strategies for student with disabilities in inclusive
  classrooms.

- Differentiated instruction is key to inclusive education

- Universal Design for Learning provides useful tools and strategies for diverse
  learners

11:30 – 12:30 PM – Lunch Break

12:30 – 1:30 PM PowerPoint presentation

1:30 – 2:30 PowerPoint presentation

2:30 – 2:40 PM – Break

2:40 – 3:00 PM Activity: Reading comprehension strategies

Remind participants to complete the formative evaluation

Day 2 Handout

READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH

DISABILITIES IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Reading Comprehension Strategies

There are various reading comprehension strategies for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. These strategies are also beneficial to all students not only students with disabilities. Therefore, teachers can use them to **differentiate** their instruction in the inclusive classroom. Differentiation of instruction is vital in inclusive education.

What is differentiation of instruction?

Differentiation is not a program; it is simply a way teacher plan and teach their students according to students' needs and learning styles. The key principles that form the basis for differentiation include:

1. On-going formative assessment: This assessment helps teachers identify students' strength and areas of needs.

2. Flexible group work: This enables students to observe and learn from each other as they work together.

3. Choice of activity/Student learning style: Students learn differently, some are visual learners, some auditory learners and some tactile or kinesthetic learners. Recognizing the diverse learners in the classroom helps the teacher to plan lessons according to students 'reading needs. The teacher may provide students with reading comprehension tasks but in various formats, so students can choose a task based on their learning style or interest.

4. Both teacher and students are collaborators in learning: Teachers collaborate and negotiate with students to create motivating tasks or assignments that meet the diverse needs of students.

The universal design for learning is a program that helps teachers teach, and students to learn at their own level using modified or simplified vocabulary for students to understand. UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone--not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs. These are few out of the numerous strategies by UDL to help students reading comprehension, and these strategies are not only for students with disabilities but for all students:

1. Adapted Text

An adapted text is any text that has been changed from its original print format. This may include presenting the text in a different visual manner (text with pictures or video format), or auditory (e.g. audio book) to meet their comprehension need.

2. Reading guide (or Tracking) Strips

Reading guide strips are practical assistive reading tools designed to help readers better see, focus and remember what they read. They usually look like ruler-sized strips with a tinted, transparent window that are placed over text that needs to be read to help students focus on the text. They are intended to be used as an intervention for struggling readers to reduce word and line skipping and pattern glare, enhancing reading fluency and improving reading comprehension.

3. **Listening Station, Text-to-Speech or Read Aloud**

A Listening Station is a center-based engagement strategy in which students listen to an audio recording (e.g., of a book, speech, other educational videos) to increase reading fluency and deepen comprehension through auditory processing. Students can use the Listening Station independently (e.g., individually, with a partner, or a small group). This strategy supports students through auditory, kinesthetic and visual input.
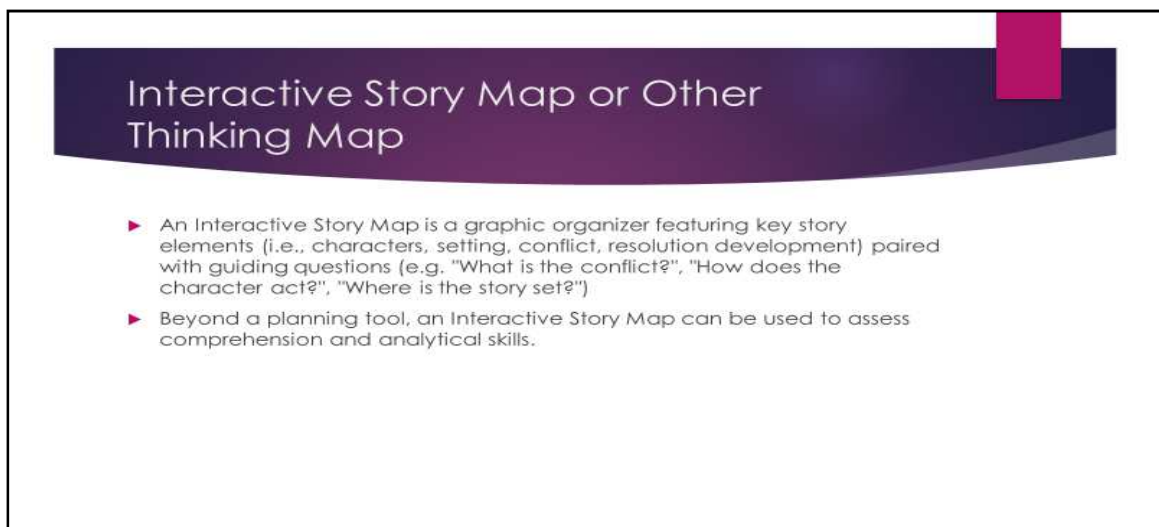
Text-To-Speech

Text-to-Speech is an application on a computer that reads typed content aloud as it would be read naturally by a human (i.e., reading with inflection for punctuation, reading words exactly as they are spelled). This can be used by students during independent reading. It is also one of the listed accommodations for reading. While Text-to-Speech is often used to overcome barriers with respect to reading fluency and comprehension, it is also a proof-reading tool.

Read Aloud

Read aloud is when the teacher reads the story or text to student(s) during one-on-one, small group instruction, or whole group. In some cases, a student who is a fluent reader can also read to a peer who is a struggling reader.

4. **Interactive Story Map or Other Thinking Map**

An Interactive Story Map is a graphic organizer featuring key story elements (i.e., characters, setting, conflict, resolution development) paired with guiding questions (e.g. "What is the conflict?", "How does the character act?", "Where is the story set?")

Interactive Story Maps reinforce story structure when reading a fictional text and are helpful planning tools for students when developing storylines and characters for a creative writing assignment. Beyond a planning tool, an Interactive Story Map can be used to assess comprehension and analytical skills.

Other thinking maps like circle maps, tree maps, flee (sequencing) maps, bubble map, or Venn diagrams (comparison) can be used to enhance comprehension and organization of thoughts.

5. The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity

The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity is a metacognitive reading comprehension strategy in which teachers guides students to monitor their reading thought-process. Before reading the assigned text, teachers **D**irect the students to make predictions about the text using the text features (e.g., title, pictures, etc.) to access any background knowledge they have on the topic. Then students read the text, pausing at specific sections of the text marked by the teacher to **R**eflect on what they read and modify any predictions, referring to evidence from the text. At the end of each section the students **T**hink about what they have read and make final modifications. The strategy can be modeled by a teacher in a class mini lesson, small group, or individual reading conference. Good readers use metacognitive strategies automatically to understand what they are reading.

Day 2 PowerPoint Slides

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Use Adapted Texts

An adapted text is any text that has been changed from its original print format. This includes a variety of strategies to make traditional texts accessible to students with a variety of learning styles. This may include presenting the text in a different visual manner (e.g. enlarged text), auditory (e.g. audio book) or simplified manner to meet their comprehension need.

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Reading Guide (or Tracking) Strips

▶ Reading guide strips are practical assistive reading tools designed to help readers better see, focus and remember what they read. This strategy is used as an intervention for struggling readers.

▶ It also enhance reading fluency and improves reading comprehension.

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Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA)

- The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity is a metacognitive reading comprehension strategy in which teachers are guiding students to monitor their reading thought-process.
- The strategy can be modeled by a teacher in a class mini lesson, small group, or individual reading conference. Good readers use metacognitive strategies automatically to understand what they are reading.
- The DRTA is a guided way teachers can demonstrate how that process works in their brains.

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Practice Time

► *Activity prompt*: Using the story books given to you, pick a strategy of your choice to complete this activity. Use your handout to guide your work. One of you will play the role of the teacher while others will play the role of the students. Share your ideas in the process. Assume you are working with students who struggle with comprehension.

► *Choose from the following strategies*:

1. Adapted Text (simplify text, reword vocabulary words)

2. Reading guide (or Tracking) Strips (use sticky or note card to note important events)

3. Listening Station or Text-to-Speech or Read Aloud (if you are choosing any of these three, get one of the laptops, go to the school common and pick an audio story from the "read aloud" folder under "Reading Resources" or use the Ipad and let one of the special education teachers log into her "Snap and read" account so you can use one of the stories saved in the teachers reading folders.

4. Interactive Story Map or Other Thinking Map (use any of the thinking maps that fits your story book)

5. The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (text features, picture walk, make predictions before reading)

Slide 19

Conclusion

► This brings us to the end of the presentation about the strategies for reading comprehension.

► Thoughts

► Ideas

► Questions

► We will now practice

Slide 20

Printed Handout

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

Provide Multiple Means of
Engagement
Purposeful, motivated learners

Provide Multiple Means of
Representation
Resourceful, knowledgeable learners

Provide Multiple Means of
Action & Expression
Strategic, goal-directed learners

Provide options for self-regulation
+ Promote expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation
+ Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies
+ Develop self-assessment and reflection

Provide options for comprehension
+ Activate or supply background knowledge
+ Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships
+ Guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation
+ Maximize transfer and generalization

Provide options for executive functions
+ Guide appropriate goal-setting
+ Support planning and strategy development
+ Enhance capacity for monitoring progress

Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence
+ Heighten salience of goals and objectives
+ Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge
+ Foster collaboration and community
+ Increase mastery-oriented feedback

Provide options for language, mathematical expressions, and symbols
+ Clarify vocabulary and symbols
+ Clarify syntax and structure
+ Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols
+ Promote understanding across languages
+ Illustrate through multiple media

Provide options for expression and communication
+ Use multiple media for communication
+ Use multiple tools for construction and composition
+ Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance

Provide options for recruiting interest
+ Optimize individual choice and autonomy
+ Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
+ Minimize threats and distractions

Provide options for perception
+ Offer ways of customizing the display of information
+ Offer alternatives for auditory information
+ Offer alternatives for visual information

Provide options for physical action
+ Vary the methods for response and navigation
+ Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies

Teaching Strategies for Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Classrooms
(Day 2 Formative Evaluation)

<u>**Circle one**</u>

General Education Teacher   Special education   Teacher Administrator

Please take a few moments to respond to the following questions. Your answers

will greatly assist us in determining how to improve professional development workshops

<u>**Circle Yes or No**</u>

1. Course/Activity was well organized   Yes   No

2. Course/Activity objectives were stated   Yes   No

3. Course/Activity assignments were relevant to Course/Activity objectives. Yes

No

4. How did this workshop relate to your job?

_____

_____

5. What information was of great value to you?

_____

_____

6. What specific suggestions do you have to improve this activity?

_____

_____

7. Additional Comments

_____

_____

Professional Development Day 3: Collaborative Planning

Handouts and PowerPoints will be uploaded under "instructor's notes" in Euphoria prior

to the PD so that registered participants can access them when they log into Euphoria.

Day 3 Learning outcome: Administrators and inclusive teachers will understand the

importance of collaborative planning and identify the keys to successful collaboration.

Day 3 Agenda:

8:00 – 8:30 AM – Welcome, Celebrations, Participants form new groups

8:30 – 9:00 AM – Group Activities

9:00 – 9:45 – AM Powerpoint/discussion

9:45 – 10:00 AM Break

10:00 – 11:30 AM Group Activity

11:30 – 12:30 AM Lunch Break

12:30 – 2:00 PM Planning Reading Lessons

2:00 – 2:10 Break

2:10 – 3:00 PM Conclusion/Dismissal.

KWL Activity Form for Day 3

Topic_____ Name_____

Date_____

KNOW	WONDER	LEARNED

Day 3 Training Facilitator's notes

8:00 – 8:30 AM - Welcome, Participants form new groups

Welcome participants to the workshop, and affirm them for making it through to the third

day. Participants share celebrations they may have. Instruct participants to form new

groups for today. Administrators are added to the participants for today's PD session.

8:30 – 9:00 AM – Whole Group Activity (Collaborative Planning)

Instruct participants to respond to these questions on a note card:

1. *What is collaborative planning?*

2. *What do you think are the topics of discussion during a collaborative planning*

between the general and special education teachers?

9:00 **– 9:45 –Discussions**

Special and general education teacher collaboration:

Participant discuss their experiences about teacher collaboration. Invite participants to

also why they think teacher collaboration is important for inclusive teachers. Present the

discussion on teacher collaboration share collaboration means. Allow time for comments,

thoughts, or questions.

9:45 – 10:00 AM Break

10:00 – 11:30 AM Power point

11:30 – 12:30 AM Lunch Break

12:30 – 2:00 PM PowerPoint

2:00 – 2:10 Break
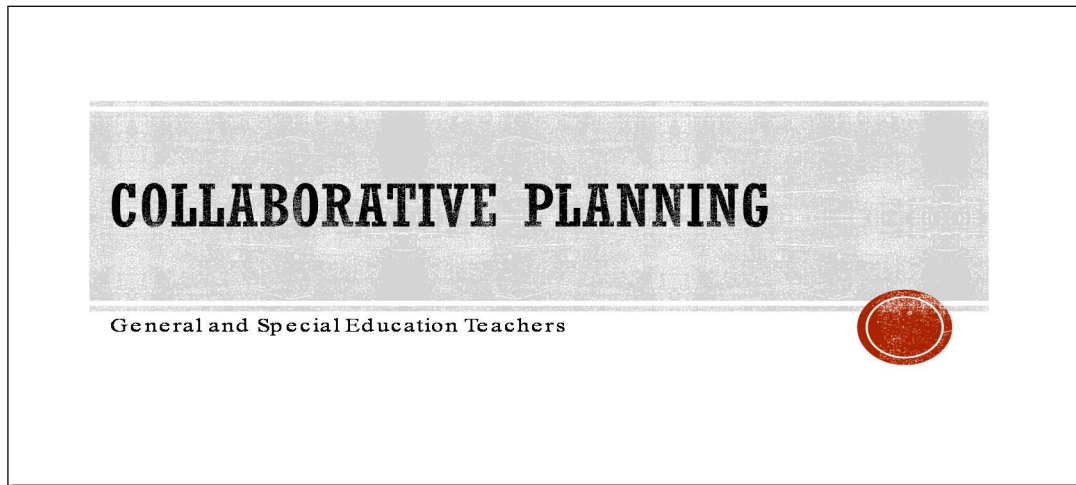
2:10 – 3:40 PM Group Activity

2:40 – 3:00 PM   Comments, thoughts, questions/Dismissal.

Give out the formative evaluation form to participants to complete.

Day 3 PowerPoint with training facilitator's notes

Slide 1

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Notes: Instruct everyone to write down their response on a note card within 5 minutes. Next, instruct them to discuss their responses with their group members, one person at a time while facilitator walks around the room and listening to the conversations. Then, invite two or three people to share their responses with the whole group, and allow time for comments or questions.

Slide 3

Notes: Participants discuss what they learned from the presentation in their groups. Two groups volunteers to share what they discussed in their groups. Ask participants for comments, thoughts, or questions.

Slide 4

Take a 15 minutes break

Slide 5

Notes: Collaborative planning helps build a long lasting professional relationship that benefits the students we teach. It builds an inclusive partnership and strengthens relationships between general and special education teachers.

Slide 6

Slide 7

BENEFITS OF ON-GOING COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

- Lesson planning and delivery according students needs
- Share ideas on new reading strategies

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BENEFITS OF ON-GOING COLLABORATIVE PLANNING (CONT.)

- "Successful collaboration requires explicit expectations

for all students in the inclusive classroom, including the student with a disability."

(Magiera (2014)

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Notes: Explain each topic briefly and mention that the result of teacher collaboration is towards student success. Every discussion is about the students and how they can learn successfully.

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Note: Remind participants to be on time

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ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations: Changes that allow a person with a disability to participate or complete the same assignment or activity as other students.

Notes: Explain the difference between accommodations and modifications.

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ACCOMMODATIONS DIFFER FROM MODIFICATIONS

Modifications:

An adjustment to an assignment or a test that changes the standard or what the test or assignment is supposed to measure

Note: Explain with an example: Accommodation – A 4th grade student with 'reduced assignments' as one of his accommodations may be expected to respond to his comprehension prompt verbally rather that writing it down as the rest of the students. Modification: The 4th grader is given an adapted text (shorten text with simplified vocabulary). Accommodation when the student is provided with tools to complete the task. It is accommodation when the task is changed from the original form to make it accessible to the student.

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HOW TO COLLABORATIVELY PLAN

- Approach to Interaction – Used within the context of planning or problem solving
- Parity – Each participant's contribution is valued
- Interaction Processes – Use communication skills to solve problems and respond appropriately
- Shared Responsibility and Accountability – Share responsibility for decisions and activities

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ROLES OF TEACHER IN COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

The General Education Teacher	*The Special Education Teacher*
1. Be the content expert. You are knowledgeable of the curriculum and pacing	1. Be responsible for specialized instructional strategies in the classroom.
2. Be open to new ideas and instructional models.	2. Advocate for your students.
3. Support facilitation model strategies, flexible groups, differentiated activities	3. that the services and accommodations in your students' IEPs are
4 Take advantage of the special education teacher expertise	provided.

Notes: Have general and special education teachers share with their group what they think about their role in implementing the support facilitation model.

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STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUPPORT FACILITATION MODEL

- Establish honest and open communication
- Identify strength and weaknesses
- Make time for collaborative planning
- Remain focused to helping students to succeed

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BREAK TIME (10 MINUTES)

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Notes: Instruct participants to work in their groups and collaboratively plan one lesson for students who struggle with reading comprehension using the information they learned so far. Participants will use the accommodation handout to decide which accommodations are appropriate for the student of their choice. Remind participants that each student's accommodations are decided by the Admission, Review and Dismissal committee based on students' needs.

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Notes: Remind the administrator(s) attending the session on the expectations of the support facilitation model. Let them know that it is very important for the general education and special education teachers to have some time in their schedules to collaboratively plan lessons and learning activities for students with disabilities to help students achieve their goals. Emphasize the need for continued professional development for inclusive teachers in the future.

Notes: Explain to participants about the importance of on-going PD. They need some time to implement the strategies they learned, and a follow-up session will be necessary at the end of the semester to check teachers' progress and evaluate the consistent implementation of the support facilitation inclusive practices.

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Notes: Allow each participant to discuss with a partner one thing they learned in the course of this PD. Invite two or three volunteers to share with the whole group one thing that stood out for them in the PD.

Notes: Distribute the formati8ve evaluation forms and let participants know that they do not have to put their names on the form. Affirm participants for completing the 3-day professional development training.

Appendix B: Interview Protocol Form

Project: Elementary Teachers' Perspectives on Inclusive Education Instructional Models

Teacher: Date:

Grade: Subject:

Location: Interviewer:

Interviewee: Interviewer Position:

Questions:

1. How many years have you been teaching in an inclusive setting?

2. What is your role in teaching students with disabilities in an inclusive setting?

3. How are roles determined in this setting?

4. How would you describe an inclusive teaching situation? How does teaching in an inclusive setting affects your teaching? (Feelings, Thoughts)

5. Tell me about your role as a teacher in an inclusive setting. (Thoughts)

Follow-up question: How do you feel about your role?

Follow-up question: Do you feel that you are effective in this role? Why or why not? (Thoughts, Feelings)

Follow-up question: Have your feelings about your role changed throughout your teaching career? (Feelings)

6. Based on your training and experience, how comfortable do you feel teaching students with disabilities in an inclusive setting? (Feelings, Thoughts)

Follow-up question: What makes you feel this way? (Feelings)

7. How does a teacher's motivation to succeed reflect in the way he or she teaches in an

inclusive setting? (Motivation, Thoughts)

8. What types of inclusion models have you used since your participation in teaching in inclusion classrooms? (Behavior)

Follow-up question: What model are you currently using? (Behavior)

Follow-up question: Briefly describe how you share responsibilities in the classroom. (Motivation, Behavior)

9. What inclusion models have you seen at your school or at other schools?

Follow-up question: Are there features of these models that you like? (If so, please explain why/how).

Follow-up question: What ability do you have to change or adjust the model that your school uses? (Thoughts, Motivation)

10. What professional development training have you received or are currently receiving regarding students with disabilities, teaching inclusion, or coteaching? (Thoughts)

Follow-up question: In what ways has this training helped you regarding inclusion, students with disabilities, or coteaching? (Thoughts, Feelings)

11. What kind of training would be beneficial for you as a teacher of inclusion? (Motivation, Thoughts, Feelings)

12. How do you include SWD in your lessons? (Behavior)

13. In what ways do you believe that inclusive education benefits both general and special education students and the teachers involved? (Feelings, Thoughts)

14. How do you plan or collaborate with your team teacher? How do you feel about the planning process? (Behavior, Feelings).

Appendix C: Observation Guide

Observation Checklist

General Education Teacher: Grade Level:

Special Education Teacher: Date:

Subject Observed: Time:

Description of class and class activity

	NO	SE	CE	Comment(s)
Lessons are differentiated in content, process, product, and/or learning environment.				
Teachers use "we" and "us", or equality is otherwise evident.				
Both teachers are actively involved during instruction and activities.				
Students are engaged and participating in learning.				
Both teachers work with all students.				
Both teachers are observed to share equally in classroom and instructional responsibilities.				
Routines and formal procedures are evident and used by teachers and students.				
Level of collaborative and effective teacher communication and interaction are evident.				
Coteaching instructional arrangements are observed. ☐ One Teach/One Observe ☐ One Teach/One Drift/Support/Assist ☐ Parallel Teaching ☐ Station Teaching ☐ Team Teaching ☐ Alternative Teaching ☐ Other:				
Student Instructional grouping pattern or patterns observed. ☐ Whole group instruction ☐ Small group instruction ☐ Flexible grouping ☐ Collaborative Groups ☐ Individual seat work ☐ Other:				

Appendix D: Observational Data

I observed the support facilitation instructional model in a 4th grade classroom, where the special education teacher came in and provided support to students with disabilities for 45 minutes during reading and performed guided reading with the students with disabilities during small group instruction. After the picture work, the teacher went over a list of vocabulary words, the bilingual students had picture/words vocabulary to support their comprehension. After learning the vocabulary words, the special education teacher read with each student for a few minutes while the rest of the students in the group did some independent work. During the guided reading, the special education teacher started the reading, and the students were asked to read some pages for the day, the special education teacher asked questions as students were reading. Students with disabilities were supported while they read, for example, when the student came across a new word, the special education teacher reminded the students to chunk the word or sound the beginning or ending blends or sound the letters and blend to read the work. The special education teacher for 2nd grade also read with a student at a time while others participated in other independent reading activities. The special education teacher used level reading books with each student reading a book at their instructional reading levels, and students who were at a pre-reading level worked on alphabets and sounds (phonics). A common pattern was observed in students' instructional groupings in all the inclusive classrooms. The general education teachers taught all students in the whole group first, then small group after the whole group. Students worked on reading activities

independently while the teacher worked with a small group, groups rotated after 15 minutes.

During small group time, the special education teachers provided support to students with disabilities in a small group through guided reading. The general education teacher worked with two small groups during my observation, while the special education teacher worked with the students with disabilities for about 45 minutes. The teacher provided the instructional activities to the students. One teacher did not use small group instruction, rather; she walked around the classroom checking each small group and providing support as needed. All students were engaged in the learning activities. In one of the classrooms, I observed communication between the special and general education teacher where the general education teacher briefly explained the reading activities the students were working on and how the teacher differentiated the activity for the students with disabilities in the class.