

Module Assignment Cover Sheet

Module Number

PDT 4090/4091

Module Title

Action Enquiry for School Improvement

Module Tutor

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Student Number

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Date

9th September 2010

Submitted for the first time?

Yes / No

Re-submitted

Yes/ No

DECLARATION

Please sign here

I declare that this is my own work.

Aliya sibtain

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am heartily thankful to my supervisors Sarah Rosen-Webb and Dr Ian Terrell, whose constant encouragement, supervision and support from the preliminary to the end of the module enabled me to develop an understanding of the subject.

I would also like to thank my sponsor's without their support I would not be able to complete my research.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the schools authorities, teachers and parents for taking part in the survey and offering their utmost support and cooperation.

It is a pleasure to thank those who made this research possible for me including my husband, my parents and family members who gave me the moral support I required throughout the year.

Lastly, I offer my regards and blessing to all those who supported me in any respect during the completion of this research study.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title of the Work	An exploratory study to determine the role of integrated curriculum for students with learning difficulties	
Author	Aliya Sibtain	Date of Completion (09/2010)
Institutional Contextual Details E.g. Phase (Optional)		
Major Needs Identified	<p>*Teachers need special training to design an integrated curriculum plan</p> <p>*The school needs to provide teaching staff with adequate resource to apply an integrated approach effectively</p> <p>*Teachers need training to gain insight into how their teaching styles can impact on the outcome of an integrated curriculum plan.</p>	
Methods used to collect data.	<p>* Quantitative (survey Questionnaires, attitude towards integrated curriculum)</p> <p>*Qualitative (interviews) benefits of using and integrated curriculum</p> <p>Classroom observation to evaluate the use of integrated curriculum with SPLD pupils.</p>	
Summary of Major Findings (Or recommendations to others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-service and in-service training for all teachers should promote the social and educational benefits of inclusive education for all children. • Teachers should be taught specific skills that will enable them to design and effectively use and integrated curriculum. • Teachers should receive training and information on the various teaching styles and their direct impact on the outcome of an integrated session plan. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School authorities should have clearly designed policies for inclusive education and special needs pupils to meet their needs effectively. • School authorities should provide the teaching staff with adequate resources to meet the needs of all pupils and to enable them to apply an integrated approach efficiently.
<p>Impact of the Project (And evidence source)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Practice • Pupil/Student learning Experience • Pupil/Student Learning Outcomes <p>(What happened as result?)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall teachers reported that SPLD pupils will benefit from an integrated curriculum plan. • With proper training and skills an integrated curriculum plan can be effectively used in an inclusive educational classroom. • Generally SPLD pupils did benefit from an integrated curriculum plan. • The overall outcome of using and integrated curriculum plan with SPLD pupils was affected by teaching styles.
<p>Contact E mail or address</p>	<p>aliyasibtain@gmail.com</p>
<p>Other Information</p>	

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ETHICAL STATEMENT AND SUBMISSION

Name	Aliya Sibtain
Module Name and Code	Action Enquiry for School Improvement PDT 4090/4091
Title of the Work	An exploratory study to determine the role of integrated curriculum for students with learning difficulties

Ethical Codes and Guideline	Tick
I have checked my institutional policy for concerns about ethical behaviour.	✓
I have checked the BERA code of practice	✓
I have checked the Mdx School of Arts and Education policy for practitioner research	✓
Voluntary Informed Consent	
I have informed relevant managers, participants, stakeholders, and parents	✓
I have asked for the consent of relevant managers, participants, stakeholders, parents and others involved or connected with the research to carry out the research	✓
Participants have given their consent freely and without duress or inappropriate use of power.	✓
The right to withdraw from the research process has been made clear to appropriate participants	✓
Rules for confidentiality	
Managers, participants, stakeholders, and parents have been informed about the rules for confidentiality that the study will use.	✓
I agree that I can maintain anonymity in the Mdx submitted work.	✓
Purpose and Audience	
I have clarified with participants that the purpose of the research is to improve practice, to generate knowledge and to gain a qualification.	✓

Participants are aware that their permission relates only to the purpose of the research project and that any further use will be renegotiated with them.	✓
Participants have been informed that the purposes will be to maximise good and minimise harm to individuals and institutions.	✓
I have made clear to participants that the audience is	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the University and tutors 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other participants of the professional development programme 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate staff in the school 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a wider audience 	
Legal requirements of the Data Protection Act have been addressed.	✓
The research data will be kept securely.	✓
Rights of response	
I have agreed with participants the rules for feeding back reports to them and allowing a right of response.	✓
Truthfulness	
I commit to using my scholarship and research skills to producing research, which is honest, truthful and verifiable.	✓
I commit to ensuring that the research will not deliberately advantage or disadvantage any specific individuals or groups.	✓
Disruption	
I have minimised the disruption the research exercise creates.	✓
I agree only to collect sufficient evidence for the research project purposes.	✓

Signed

Verification by Workplace Advocate or Senior Manager

Fatima Hassan

I have overseen the project above and am satisfied with this ethical statement.

Signed

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Assignment Feedback

First Marker

Name	Student ID	
Module Name	Module Code	
Assignment Title		
Comments		
Targets		
*		
*		
*		
*		
*		
Signed		
Unconfirmed Grade		
(Grades Can only be confirmed by the assessment board)		

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Second Marker Comments

Name	Student ID	
Module Name	Module Code	
Assignment Title		
Comments		
Unconfirmed Second Markers Grade		
Signed (Second Marker)		

Unconfirmed Agreed and Moderated Grade	
Signed (Module Leader)	

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

Level 4 Criteria	Where in the portfolio
<p>A thorough review of literature done prior to the selection of the study design and objectives. Reference from studies conducted in Pakistan was used to provide a clear view of the educational setup of schools in Pakistan and the benefits of use and attitude towards integrated curriculum.</p>	<p>In the needs analysis, literature review and analysis of data.</p>
<p>After a review of literature it was decided to use a mixed methods approach applying both qualitative and quantitative data techniques in order to obtain most accurate information.</p>	<p>The methodology section.</p>
<p>Survey questionnaire were used to gain insight into teachers knowledge and attitude towards use of integrated curriculum with SPLD pupils. This information was further supported by interview data from a random sample of teachers.</p> <p>The benefit of integrated curriculum was further evaluated using a classroom observation technique with SPLD pupils.</p>	<p>The methodology section.</p>
<p>Consistent with the literature review most teachers did report that an integrated curriculum is beneficial for SPLD pupils. However, teachers reported that lack of training and appropriate resource materials as well as difference in teaching styles impacts on the outcome of an integrated curriculum plan.</p>	<p>Literature Review, analysis of evidence and impact of the study.</p>
<p>Based on the findings of the study teachers reported that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Integrated curriculum approach is beneficial in an inclusive educational setting. *Teachers reported that they lacked skills and training to design an integrated curriculum plan. * Teachers reported that school did not provide them with adequate resource to apply an integrated approach effectively. * The teaching styles of the teacher did have a direct impact of the outcome of an integrated session plan. 	<p>Whole project & conclusion and recommendation.</p>

Contents

DECLARATION	1
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
ETHICAL STATEMENT AND SUBMISSION	5
OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT	9
UNIT ONE: INTRODUCTION, FOCUS AND OVERVIEW	12
UNIT TWO: NEEDS ANALYSIS AND JUSTIFICATION	16
UNIT THREE: PROFESSIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY	21
UNIT 4: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	27
UNIT FIVE: EXEMPLAR MODELS OF PRACTICE	36
UNIT SIX: THE METHODOLOGY OF ACTION RESEARCH AND JUSTIFICATION	40
UNIT SEVEN: THE METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND THEIR JUSTIFICATION	48
UNIT EIGHT: THE METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS AND THEIR JUSTIFICATION	54
UNIT NINE: THE EVIDENCE & ANALYSIS OF THE EVIDENCE	59
UNIT TEN: IMPACT OF THE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT	72
UNIT ELEVEN: CONCLUSION AND WAYS FORWARD.....	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY	82
APPENDIX.....	90
INFORMATION LETTER FOR SCHOOLS	93
SCHOOL CONSENT FORM.....	94
PARENT INFORMATION FORM.....	95
PARENT CONSENT FORM	96
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE.....	97
TEACHERS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	98

Unit 1

Introduction, Focus and Overview

Module 2

PDT 4091

UNIT ONE: INTRODUCTION, FOCUS AND OVERVIEW

1. Title

What are the benefits of integrated curriculum on students with learning difficulties.

2. Needs analysis and justification

The purpose of this research is to:

- Highlight the importance of integration in a classroom setting.
- How integrated curriculum can be helpful to students of SEN.
- Sources of evidence will include data collection from a selected school that is implementing integration, past research, policies and plans.

3. Literature Review

Topic	Author, Year	Description
Learning and learning difficulties: a handbook for teachers	Peter Westwood 2004	This book discusses the various types of learning difficulties and what various teaching methodologies can be used to help students with Learning difficulties.
Development of a model curriculum for elementary education in Pakistan	Malik Mohammed Asif, 2001	The study focused on integration of elementary curriculum in government schools in Lahore, Pakistan.
The differentiated classroom: responding to the needs of all learners	Carol Ann Tomlinson. 1999	This book focuses on how the teacher has to be flexible in a classroom while teaching so she can deal with the individual needs of every child.

4. Research Questions

I am proposing to investigate if integrated curriculum is beneficial for students with SpLD.

5. Data Collection Methods

Data collection will be done through:

- interviews,
- questioners,
- surveys,
- Observations of schools, teachers and pupils.

These methods will allow me to understand the feeling, problems, hurdles and barriers which are faced due to the lack of awareness and use of integration in Pakistan.

6. Resources and Support

Resources which I will require for my research include:

- Questioners
- Surveys
- Observation sheets
- Interview sheets
- Letters asking schools/parents for permission to participate in research
- Letters to educationalist for interviews.

I will plan these resources on my own and would like my supervisors to guide me if I face any problems during my planning of these materials.

7. Ethical Issues

Some ethical issues which could be involved are schools or parents concern regarding confidentiality of information. I shall address these concerns by informing the schools and parents that:

- The name of the school or child shall always be held in confidence and will never be exposed.
- All responses from parents or pupils will be held in confidence and not shared with the child's school or any other authority.
- All information will be used only for research purpose.
- Information given in interviews, surveys, questioners will only be

used for research purpose.

- Information will only be shared with the supervisors but without any names of schools or student.

8. Timescale

- **Research Planning**

Research planning will be done with the help of literature review.

- **Data Collection**

Data collection will be done by interviews, surveys, questionnaires and observations.

- **Data Analysis**

Data analysis will be done through the responses given by teachers, students and participant of the survey and interviews. The results will be analyzed and produced statistically.

- **Report Writing.**

Report writing will be done alongside the data collection and data analysis tasks.

	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Plan	X	Sub mit 2 nd N ov										
Intro and justificatio n			✓	✓								
Reading and Lit review					✓	✓						
Methodolo gy and methods section						✓	✓					
Data collection							✓	✓	✓			
Analysis of data									✓	✓		
Writing up										✓	✓	✓

Unit 2

Needs Analysis and Justification

Module 2
PDT 4091

UNIT TWO: NEEDS ANALYSIS AND JUSTIFICATION

Introduction

The focus of this research is to evaluate what the possible benefits of an integrated curriculum on students with learning difficulties. The need for this research arose after the school intended to take a new approach and start the implementation of an integrated curriculum. The research might evaluate and understand how students with learning difficulties can benefit from an integrated curriculum.

In Pakistan, integrated curriculum and learning difficulties are both very new concept which are just being explored by some private schools. This research will highlight aspects of the integrated curriculum and explore ways in which these features could be beneficial to all the students.

Integrated curriculum can help students with Learning Difficulties (LD) by allowing them to explore their potentials in different areas and not just in reading, writing and arithmetic's. Unlike the existing curriculums; integrated curriculum allows the students to get involved in every area of learning be it art, music, physical education or computers. This curriculum helps to enhance the multiple intelligences found in every child (Warnod 1998).

The school involved in this research has been using an integrated curriculum for the past 5 years and has also been trying to cater to the needs of students with learning difficulties. This is a relatively new phenomenon in Pakistan as not many schools cater to the needs to students with learning difficulties. Students with LD are mostly found to have a low self esteem as they are not respected by teachers and fellow classmates. Over the course of, the past 10 years, there has been a relative change in the private school systems and some of the schools have understood the importance of providing to the needs of students with LD. These schools are trying various methodologies to cater to the needs of students with LD.

The school The school involved in this research has a holistic teaching methodology. They believe that students have a more holistic approach to the world and hence should be provided with an integrated approach to understand the ways to learn and develop. The school policy highlights that the aims of the integrated curriculum is to provide a proper context for learning material, processes and skills; provide opportunities for interaction and co-operation with others, engage the learners in there learning process, integrate knowledge, skills and actions towards a common purpose; recognize and values each learners way of learning; help build a partnership between students and teachers; acknowledge the various learning styles; involve the students in actively gathering information; encourage students to become independent and adaptable learners; create a dynamic approach for learning and cater for students with a range of different interests, abilities, skills and motivations. Furthermore, the school believes that by providing an integrated curriculum they cater to the individual needs of each student.

Justification

Research conducted by Helen Warnod (1998) indicates the importance of integrated curriculum and the curriculum design in immersion of classrooms. Warnod study shows that integration helps to understand the cognitive levels of students. The integrated approach helps to deal with reflections and research as it considers the teaching learning process, language strategies, responsibility of students and providing a positive experience for the students. Integration helps to form a student/teacher responsibility; this helps students to accept themselves as learners and to openly discuss their success and un-successful tasks with the teachers who can provide them with different learning methods to help them be more successful. The research concludes that integrated learning helps the learners by giving them the opportunity to take up responsibility for their own learning and to know themselves as learners independently as well as in a group.

Research conducted by Malik Mohammed Asif (2001) on the development of a model curriculum for elementary education in Pakistan shows that by having an integrated curriculum the burden of learning a vast number of subjects on younger students is reduced by a great extent. In the study, three basic subjects of Urdu, social studies and Islamic education have been integrated to help the students of elementary schools in the Punjab province. This study shows a part of the government designed curriculum being implemented in the province of Punjab and how integration can help students in Pakistan from all over the province. Furthermore, the draft curriculum designed by the researcher focuses on students of all abilities and can be used for student with learning difficulties. The research concludes by highlighting the needs and aspirations of the people, mental level of students, and promotion of students, interest and suitability of the level of education being provided to the students.

A study conducted focusing on the curriculum of special educational needs in special schools of Pakistan by Zahida Lari (2000) shows that the curriculum used by schools for special education including students with learning difficulties, is the same used by all the other schools. It shows that Pakistan does not have a separate curriculum designed for students with special educational needs. The study focused on the need for designing a separate curriculum for students with special educational needs which would focus on the individual needs of students with learning difficulties, visual impairment, mental disorders and hearing problems. The research focuses on the advice of the head teachers of individual schools who concluded that an integrated curriculum was the best type of curriculum which could be made for students with special educational needs.

Research by Lewis (1999) shows the effect of integrated curriculum on students with low attainment in reading. Her research concluded that the integrated curriculum should not be used as the only teaching methodology as it does not show any significant changes in the reading ability of students with LD.

The four pieces of research described above illustrate ways in which an integrated curriculum may affect students with learning difficulties. Pakistan has a very constrained educational system with a restricted curriculum. The few schools that are making changes are opting for integrated curriculum as it caters to the individual needs of all the pupils.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as the researches discussed above have shown various results, my research will try to find out if students with LD do benefit from an integrated curriculum or not. I plan to conduct classroom observations by selecting two students with LD. I shall observe their progress (classroom assessments & results) throughout the year and see the effects of integration on them. Furthermore, the teachers will be asked to fill in questionnaire about the selected students at the beginning of the term and another at the end of the term to see the effects of integration on students with learning difficulties.

References

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- Lewis, A (1999). Integrated learning systems and pupils with low attainments in reading. *British Journal of Special Education*, 26 (3), pp 153-157.
- Warnod, H., (1998) Integrated curriculum: Designing curriculum in the immersion classroom, in Languages Victoria, *Journal of the Modern Language Teachers' Association of Victoria*, 2(1) pp 3.

Unit 3

Professional Autobiography

Module 2

PDT 4091

UNIT THREE: PROFESSIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I am a primary school teacher from Karachi, Pakistan. I have a diploma in Child and Adolescent counseling from the Stonebridge Associated College, UK and a certificate of teaching children with Dyslexia from the Direct Learning Institute UK; I also have a certificate of Early Childhood Education from Karachi, Pakistan. I have a three year work experience teaching Kindergarten children. During my teaching experience I encountered many cases of children with Learning Difficulties (LD). These encounters increased my thirst for getting information about LD and how it can be treated or how a child with LD can be helped. My search for getting a course for LD came out blank in Pakistan as unfortunately there are no policies and rules for LD, I came across this MA in Inclusive Education and was delighted to know that it was a distance learning course. I am extremely excited about this course and look forward to learn techniques which I can later on apply with children in Pakistan.

My interest in LD began when I first came across a student in my classroom with some basic signs of dyslexia, at first I overlooked but when I started getting complains from other teachers I decided to observe that child and his work closely, I started giving him extra attention and if he would get stuck anywhere would help him out. At the same time I started searching the internet about this problem and came across dyslexia.

I tried to look for some courses that I could do to increase my knowledge about it. During my search I came across a distance learning certificate course on teaching children with dyslexia; the course is being offered by the direct learning institute UK. I immediately enrolled in that course and was amazed by what I learned. The course covered all the areas of dyslexia and was a great

start for me as I had no previous knowledge about dyslexia. My enthusiasm for the course was such that I completed the one year course within eight months. While I was doing this course I was selected by my school to go on an ECE (Early Childhood Education) certificate course. This course was being conducted by the professional development center of the school where I worked in Pakistan. This course helped me understand the psychology of a child, how they think and work. We were given guidelines on how to teach children in a friendly and playful manner. I decided to ask my fellow teachers and course leader what they knew about dyslexia and learning difficulties, to my surprise except of the course leader not a single teacher knew what dyslexia was. I asked the teachers if they had ever come across a student who had problems in reading and writing and most of them responded they had. My course leader and I then prepared a little material on dyslexia and shared it with our group. At the end of the course I was given the privilege to be the course representative and speak on behalf of the group on our certificate distribution day. This was a great honor for me, and encouraged me to carry on my missions to learn more and create awareness regarding dyslexia.

After completing these two courses I asked the school if I could work with students who were showing some signs of dyslexia, during this time period the school hired a psychologist who would work with students and teachers to solve their problems. I had a meeting with her and asked her if she would like to work along with me. She agreed that she would conduct the dyslexia assessment tests on students who would be referred by teachers for signs of dyslexia. We then started working as a team on these students. Up till now everything had been going very well; then came the time we decided we need to inform the parents about what we had identified in their child. This turned out to be a major problem, because many of teachers and parents had no idea about

dyslexia. The first few parents we dealt with had only one thing to say and that "does it mean their child is crazy". At this moment I took advantage of my sister who is a Child psychologist and asked her how I should deal with such parents, she gave me a few tips and asked me to look for some course which could help me to council parents as well as children.

Thus my searches lead me to the diploma in child and adolescent counseling from the Stonebridge associated colleges UK. This course again was a great opportunity to learn, as it was a distant learning programme, It gave me an opportunity to apply my learning with the parents and children. The few tips came in very handy and it was easier to deal with the parents. The course covered a vast area from child development to child and educational psychology.

My interest in integrated curriculum started when the school designed a new curriculum focusing on integration. The new curriculum brought about positive and negative feedback from teachers of all the classes. Some of the old teachers who have been with the school for long periods of time were not in favor of it. Most of them were rigid and did not feel the need to change, as it would require too much effort on their part, they were of the view that children with special needs should be sent to special school that will cater to their individual needs, and should not be part of main stream schooling. However, there were a number of teachers who were very keen on the idea of integration, and were certain that it would have positive effect on the child as well as the overall school environment. The school authorities decided to go about with the change and an integrated curriculum plan outline was designed for classes K1 till 8 grades.

As I was interested in students with learning difficulties and was helping pupils of different classes who were identified as dyslexic my interest in understanding the benefits of integration on students with learning difficulties was further enhanced. I decided to focus my research on investigating if there are any benefits on integrated curriculum. A review of literature suggested both positive and negatives outcomes, and I therefore, felt it was necessary to explore this in our school context.

Similar to findings of other studies , in my informal discussion with teachers I got two opposite responses, some teachers were in favor that integrated curriculum was helping students with learning difficulties; where as some teachers believed that by the introduction of an integrated curriculum students with learning difficulties were over burdened and had to put in extra efforts. I got the same contradictory answers when I asked students with learning difficulties, some students responded positively while some responded with a negative attitude toward the curriculum change.

As integration is a new concept in Pakistan and not many schools have an integrated curriculum it was a new change for the staff, students and parents. The schools administrator who has been in the field of education for many years was the main source of brining about this curriculum change. I am working along with him as he has been a guide and mentor for this research. He has been very eager in understanding the benefits or drawbacks of integration on students with learning difficulties. He believes that by finding out an answer to this research the school can further develop a programme to benefit all the pupils. I am deeply aware that the topic needs to be explored in our country where there is a serious lack of awareness related to children with special needs, and an absence of published work.

This proposed research will serve as a stepping stone and the findings of this will pave the way for future curriculum designs and school teaching methods to meet the needs of all children. As this is an exploratory study, I am thoroughly eager to find out the outcomes of the study to ensure future school policy and plans are framed to meet needs of all pupils.

Unit 4

A Critical Review of the Literature

Module 2

PDT 4091

UNIT 4: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

An exploratory study to determine the role of integrated curriculum for students with learning difficulties

Introduction

Integrated learning is a learning theory which describes the movements towards integrated lessons which help students to connect with their classroom curriculums. The term integrated curriculum was initiated by *Jerry Perez de Tagle*, he believed that integration comes in many varieties which help to connect skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences which in turn help to apply skills and practices in various settings utilizing diverse and contradictory points of view and understanding issues and positions contextually.

According to Huber (2005) *'integrated curriculum is making connections within a major, between fields, between curriculums, co curriculum or between academic knowledge and practice.'*

Integrated curriculum can be understood as an approach which prepares children for a lifelong learning. There is a strong belief that curriculum integration in schools helps to look at education as a process of developing abilities required by life in the twenty first century, rather than discrete, departmentalized subject matter. Integration helps to bring together various aspects of the curriculum into meaningful association to focus upon broad areas of study. It views learning and teaching in a holistic manner and reflects upon the real world which is interactive in nature. Integrated curriculum can also include: a combination of subjects, emphasis on projects, sources that go beyond textbooks, relationships among concepts, thematic units, flexible schedules, students grouping (Good 1973).

Integrated curriculum is also known as interdisciplinary teaching, thematic teaching or synergistic teaching, hence while defining integrated curriculum it is essential to look into these terms also. According to Humphreys *"An integrated study is one in which children broadly explore knowledge in various subjects related to certain aspects of their environment."* He believes that there is a link found among humanities, communication arts, natural sciences, mathematics, social studies, music and art; which leads to developing skills and knowledge in more than one area of study.

Shoemaker defines integrated curriculum as: *"Education that is organized in such a way that it cuts across subject-matter lines, bringing together various aspects of the curriculum into meaningful association to focus upon broad areas of study. It views learning and teaching in a holistic way and reflects the real world, which is interactive."* (1989)

There are various levels of integration as illustrated by Humphreys (1981, p 59). He describes these practices as follows:

- Developing cross curriculum sub-objectives within a given curriculum guide.
- Developing model lessons that include cross curricular activities and assessments.
- Developing enrichment or enhancement activities with cross curricular focus including suggestions from cross curricular contacts following each objective.
- Developing assessment activities that are cross curricular in nature.
- Including sample planning wheels in all curriculum guides.

Learning Difficulties

Learning difficulties is a general term which refers to various groups of disorders which are manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning and mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction and may occur during the life time. Problems in behaviours, social perceptions and social interactions may exist with learning disabilities but do not constitute a learning disability. Although learning disability may occur with other problems like sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance or environmental factors like cultural differences, insufficient, psychogenic factors; it is not the result of those conditions or influences.

The World Health Organization defines learning difficulties as *"a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind. A person with learning disabilities*

has significant impairment of intellectual functioning and significant impairment of adaptive/social functioning."

The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD) defines the term learning disability as:

"A heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to Central Nervous System Dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may occur alongside with other handicapping conditions (e.g. sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance) or environmental influences (e.g. cultural differences, insufficient/inappropriate instruction, psychogenic factors) it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences."

A person with learning difficulties will have problems in understanding, learning and remembering new things and in generalizing any new learning situations. Due to these difficulties with learning the person may have problems with a number of social tasks. Students with learning difficulties can usually be recognised by their inability to meet the desired standards in schools, in particular the appropriate level identified in the national curriculum. They may also have problems in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills or both and experience difficulty with the acquisition of abstract ideas and in generalising from experience.

Integration and Children with Learning Difficulties

Current trends in special education focus on two goals. The integrated curriculum is a vehicle to effectively meet these goals:

1. Meeting the individual and unique needs of the learner i.e. individualized instructions.
2. Accommodating the learner with special needs in the classroom with typical peers i.e. inclusion model.

The integrated approach is highly effective with students who have problems in learning new skills and retaining the previously learned skills. Research shows that children who have cognitive difficulties require opportunities for repeated practice of skills to make them part of the child's repertoire or knowledge base. This may include children with mild or severe learning disabilities, mental retardation and language disorder (Lerner, 1995; Snell, 1994).

Most teaching approaches are skill based, dependent upon movement from level to level of skill acquisition. Often the skills required for one level are different from those required for a higher level and the student with learning difficulties may have trouble progressing with only limited time for practice. Therefore students with learning difficulties need to have a pre organized structure from which to apply certain knowledge and skills presented in the classroom. They may not recognize the purpose or the way in which the information is to be used, causing the learning to seem irrelevant or meaningless. Even when there is a natural connection between certain skills taught, some students may not be able to make a connection or be able to apply which is being learned in these contexts or other situations or tasks (Lewis, 1993).

The integrated approach provides a connection of skills across several content areas and requires the students to repeatedly practice certain skills and apply knowledge in a variety of ways. Therefore, students are able to generalize and transfer skills and knowledge to other learning contexts such as various academic subject areas or daily life situations in which the application is necessary for life skills. The natural use of the presented skills throughout the day or week as provided for in the integrated model and meaningful learning situations.

Reasons for an Integrated Approach to Learning

The integrated curriculum manual states there are some reasons which can be highlighted for an integrated approach to learning:

- The real world is integrated
- Students do best when learning in connected naturally and holistically.
- Students, not the teachers become the focus of learning.
- Integrated programs may help increase community involvement.
- Integrated programs may improve school spirit and a sense of belonging.
- Integration offers a viable response to problems or content balance
- Students gain a sense of ownership of learning.
- Students profit from inquiry and reflection.

- Students are active learners.

Learning Difficulties and Integrated Curriculum

A review of literature indicates contrasting findings on the usefulness of integrated curriculum with SPLD children (Czerniak et al, 1999), with some studies highlighting the advantages of using an integrated approach whereas other studies stressing its disadvantages. However studies emphasizes one of the major strength of an integrated learning system is its way in which it can be used to tailor work to individual learning needs (McFarlane, 1997). This view is reflected in teachers believes about students groups for whom integrated learning is useful. A study conducted by the NCET (1994), claimed that half the teachers involved predicted that students with learning difficulties would be most likely to benefit from an integrated curriculum. A later study (Hulme, et al, 1997) found similar findings in which students with special educational needs were identified by 51% of the teachers, under achievers by 45 % of the teachers and less able students by 40 % of the teachers as being particularly likely to benefit from working on an integrated curriculum.

However not all studies share a positive outcome on use of integrated approach. One study (Lewis, 1999) considered the effects of integrated learning on students with low attainment on reading. The study concluded that integrated learning is not and should not be a standalone system. It showed that many teachers are very enthusiastic about integrated learning for students with learning difficulties, but there is some conflict between the enthusiasms and there is limited support from the findings of the formal UK based evaluations.

Integrated Learning in Pakistan

In Pakistan, integrated curriculum and learning difficulties are both very new concepts which are just being explored by some private schools (Lari, 2001; Asif 2001; Shafi et al, 2010). A study conducted by UNESCO on primary school curriculum and textbooks in Pakistan for grade 1-5; the study showed that the students taking part in the integrated teaching were very interested in the new teaching methodology but the teachers were not in favour of integrated learning. A major finding of the study was that the students who had studied textbooks for each subject separately did significantly better than the students who had studied through the integrated curriculum books. Furthermore it showed that there was a very low level of academic achievement in students due to many factors like incompetence of teachers, un-stimulating

atmosphere in schools, gender gap, late enrolment in school, illiteracy among parents.

Another study was conducted on developing a model elementary curriculum for Pakistan (Asif, 2001), it showed that 53 % of teachers believed that an integrated curriculum helps to decrease the burden on students. 59 % said that integrated curriculum helps in acquiring the skills amongst students. 58 % of teachers were in favour of an integrated curriculum system in schools at elementary level.

According to Sewani, the Ministry of education in Pakistan has been trying to make an integrated curriculum but it is not up to the mark and is not well integrated with full resources. Mistakes in the books and wrong statements make students furious. Activities are always missing and the quality and presentation of books is very dull. He says that the Pakistani education curriculum is prepared by professional but is not yet according to the needs and requirements of the students.

Conclusion

In view of the above researches, more work has to be done to understand the benefits of integrated curriculum on students with learning difficulties. Every student is different and has their own learning styles and capabilities, students with learning difficulties could benefit for the integration of curriculum as it encourages the students to learn with hands on experience and allows them to understand a situation in many different methods. It offers students authentic and meaningful experiences in the classroom which they can apply to their daily life. Whatever is learned and applied in one area of the curriculum is related and used to reinforce, provide repetition and expand the knowledge and skills learned in other curriculum areas.

Integrated curriculum in Pakistan is still a new topic in educational setting, some schools are beginning to understand the importance of integration and how it can be helpful for students. The little research which has been done on integration in Pakistan has given both negative and positive aspects to integration in schools. One of the main barriers in introducing integrated curriculum is the rigidity of the schools and the teachers to introduce something new. The researchers conducted in Pakistan show that there is a general willingness amongst parents and students to introduce integrated

curriculum. Unfortunately the previous governments have not taken any imminent steps for the introduction of integration.

By the end of this research we will be able to understand the benefits of integration on students with learning difficulties and how it is accepted by the parents, teachers and students in Pakistan.

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Unit 5

Exemplar Models of Practice

Module 2

PDT 4091

UNIT FIVE: EXEMPLAR MODELS OF PRACTICE

Learning area: English lesson plan

Level: Primary

Lesson overview: To explore the sequence of a story in pictorial form.

Lesson duration: 40 minutes

Possible outcome /Goal: students will be able to understand;

1. The process of germination through this story
2. The value of giving gifts
3. The importance of listening to other peoples advices
4. That all living things play an important role in nature and should not be plucked

Objective: By the end of the session Students will be able to;

1. Identify different animals that were there in the story
2. Name the different days of the week
3. Re arrange the story
4. Explain the process of germination

Material required:

A set of un-sequenced picture story cards

A piece of paper

Colour pencils

Scissors

Adhesive

Warm up: teacher will take a plant in a class and ask students how they think it grows. Teacher will brainstorm all the responses on the board.

Procedure:

Introduction: once the brainstorming is done. The teacher will first read a story to the students using props and pictures (story attached underneath)

Development: After the story telling session is over the teacher will distribute the un-sequenced cards amongst the students. The class will be divided into two groups, one group will be asked to arrange the cards according to the days of the weeks and the other group will be asked to arrange the cards according to the process of germination.

The students will be asked what they think the pictures represent and how the pictures could be sequenced to create the story they have heard. They will be asked questions like, which card could go first? Why? Is there any other card which could be first? Which picture goes next? Why? Which picture will complete the story?

Practice: The students will then cut out and sequence the pictures. The students will then discuss what is happening in each picture. They will share their final product with the other group and discuss their answers and reasons of their choices.

Extension activity:

- The students can be asked to briefly write what is happening in each picture.
- The students can be asked to draw the stages of germination.
- Students can plant a seed in an egg shell and keep a record according to the days of the week.

Review:

Students will be given the story in a jumbled form and they will be asked to rewrite the story.

Felice: The Green Thumb

One day Felice the cat was very sad; because it was her mother's birthday and she couldn't decide what gift to give her. She thought of giving a big fish but she didn't know whether she will be able to catch a big fish.

She started walking in the garden when she thought of giving her mother a big bunch of flowers & so she decided to grow flowers all by herself.

On Monday, she went to a shop & bought herself few seeds then she went back to the garden & Dug up the soil to plant the seeds. She then watered the seeds expecting the next day flowers will grow. On Tuesday, when she went in the garden she became very sad & upset because there were no flowers. When the caterpillar saw that Felice was upset, he then explained that plants need some sunlight to grow; expecting that the next day flowers will come Felice went home had some milk & fish & went to sleep.

On Wednesday, Felice was very excited while she was going to the garden because she thought today there will be many flowers but when she reached the garden she again became very sad because there were no flower at all. When Felice's friend Mr. Snail saw that Felice was upset he explained to her like all living things need air to breath the plants also need air to grow & so Felice thanked Mr. Snail & went home expecting that somehow she will see some colorful flowers.

On Thursday, Felice saw a little flower but the honeybee told Felice this is not a flower but a bud and soon you will see this bud will grow in a beautiful flower. Felice was very happy.

At last, on Friday when Felice went in the garden she was extremely happy because she saw one beautiful red flower & another bud. Felice was very glad to see that finally she will be able to give something to her mother on her birthday. On Saturday when she went in the garden there were flowers and many buds.

Felice decided that now it's time to pluck the flowers and make a bouquet out of it to present it to her mom. When she was about to pluck the flowers Felice's friend Mr. Rabbit told her that when we pluck flowers they die & become dry, he suggested why don't you bring your mother here in the garden & show her this plant & so that every day when you will water them more & more flowers will grow.

Felice was very happy with Mr. Rabbit's idea & decided to bring her mom to the garden the next day. So, on Sunday Felice woke up early & wished her mom happy birthday & requested her to accompany her to the garden. When Felice & her mum reached the garden Felice the cat was shocked to see more beautiful lovely pretty flowers. Then Felice told her mom all about the flowers & her gift. Felice mum was very glad & gave Felice a big hug & said Thank You!

Unit 6

The Methodology of Action Research and Justification

Module 2

PDT 4091

UNIT SIX: THE METHODOLOGY OF ACTION RESEARCH AND JUSTIFICATION

1. Context

In Pakistan, integrated curriculum and learning difficulties are both very new concepts which are just being explored by some private schools (Lari, 2001; Asif 2001; Shafi et al, 2010). The aim of this study is to determine the knowledge of educational authorities regarding the use of integrated curriculum with children of SPLD. This study also aims to evaluate the benefits of using of integrated curriculum with SPLD children.

Based on the aims of this study it is essential that the researcher clearly states what is meant by integrated curriculum in the particular school context. Also the researcher should clarify how the children with SPLD were identified? and what types of SPLD will be considered? (e.g only children with dyslexia or all others learning difficulties). Since this is a study based on one school setting, it is a small scale research designed to meet the needs of SPLD children in a particular school. The study design and the interpretation and implications of the study findings will be in context of this school.

2. Generalization

The area of integrated curriculum with SPLD children is under-developed in most schools including those in Pakistan (Lari, 2001; Asif 2001; Shafi et al, 2010). This present research has been designed to meet the needs of one particular school. The findings of this study can be used by other schools to assist them in developing their own unique programme.

It is essential to note that every school is different as it operates in a different context. Any programme designed should take into account the specifics needs to the children and educational environment. However, the findings of this present study can help to provide insight into area which has not been explored much in Pakistan; the results of this exploratory study can therefore provide other educational institutions with the confidence to conduct similar studies and design specific interventions based on their needs.

3. Truth, Truthfulness, Reliability and Validity

Since this study is based on one school, the study does not aim to repeat itself in other institutions. Previous research in the field of integrated curriculum with SPLD children has shown contradictory results, with some studies supporting the use of it (Lari, 2001) and others reporting little or no benefits from its use (Lewis, 1999). Since both SPLD and integrated curriculum are new concepts introduced in Pakistani schools, the findings of this exploratory study will indicate whether the study design is beneficial to the school or not. The implications of the findings will be incorporated into the school policy for future curriculum development and enhancement of teaching styles for children with SPLD.

As this study has dual aims of determining the attitudes and knowledge of teachers regarding use of integrated curriculum with children of SPLD, as well as evaluate its benefits, the study will use a mixed methods design. Quantitative data collected through survey questionnaire designed to elicit teachers views regarding the use and knowledge of integrated curriculum, will be further supported by qualitative data will be collected through interviews and classroom observations.

4. Variables

The main predictor variables in this study is the teachers views on use of integrated curriculum with children with SPLD. The outcome variable will be measured as change in academic performance after use of integrated curriculum with children with SPLD.

In general students academic performance is influenced by three key factors namely child's family (González et al, 2002) the school (Atkinson, 2000) and individual child factors (Zsolnai, A. (2002). Each of these three major categories have a number of issues that play a key role in the overall academic achievement of the child. As this is a small scale exploratory study based on one school it is not possible to investigate all the factors that influence the outcome of performance. Since literature suggests that teaching styles (Cothran et al, 2000) is an important factor that influences outcome of pupil's performance, this variable will be explored. The study will focus only on children with dyslexia in order to minimize bias resulting from other characteristics of different disabilities.

5. Kinds of Data

Consistent with literature that suggest using a mixed methods approach leads to best findings, this study will combine both qualitative and quantitative data techniques (Steckler et al, 1992). This type of design begins with a strong research methodology with quantitative methods that are enhanced with qualitative measures of key processes and outcomes. Qualitative methods, such as interviews and case studies, improve the design by providing data that can give insights into how findings work and how findings can be translated to practice. By itself, a quantitative method can identify what works, but has limited explanatory power: there is little information about how students learned and how instruction worked, for example. With qualitative designs there is rich information about learners and teaching, but the information about what worked is more subjective and cannot be generalized. By combining the two methods, we can obtain a much richer understanding. In other words, using a rigorous design the quantitative methods can tell us what works, while the qualitative methods can tell us how it works.

Quantitative data will be collected in the form of survey questionnaires to be completed by class teachers, head teachers and school principals (n=50). Qualitative data will be collected by classroom observation of two children identified with SPLD (dyslexia). A small sample (n=10) of teachers will also be interviewed about their views on use of integrated curriculum with SPLD children.

Quantitative data will be collected using questionnaire rated on a 5 point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Literature search suggests that the most effective method for obtaining consistent survey responses is to use a Likert scale. A Likert Scale allows a participant to provide feedback that is slightly more expansive than a simple close-ended question, but that is much easier to quantify than a completely open-ended response (Rensis 1932; John, 2008).

However, one of the major drawbacks of using a questionnaire is that it fails to provide complete information and does not give the researcher any information about the subjects' views and perceptions regarding the topic under study. It is for this reason that recent studies have emphasized that a survey questionnaire should be followed with a brief interview to gain deeper insight into the topic. It is for this reason that after the survey questionnaires have been completed a selected sample of teachers will be interviewed using open-ended questions.

Qualitative data from teacher's interview will be analysed using grounded theory (GT), theory which emerges from and is 'grounded' in data. Grounded theory procedures, including the naming or labelling of things and the developing of categories and properties, is known as coding (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The grounded theory method offers 'a logically consistent set of data collection and analysis procedures aimed to develop theory' (Charmaz, 2001 p. 245). Coding can be done very formally and systematically or quite informally. Essentially, each line, sentence, paragraph etc. is read in search of the answer to the repeated question "what is this about? What is being referenced here?" In grounded theory, coding is normally done quite informally. There are three distinct yet overlapping processes of analysis involved in grounded theory from which sampling procedures are typically derived. These are: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Open coding is based on the concept of data being "cracked open" as a means of identifying relevant categories. Axial coding is most often used when categories are in an advanced stage of development; and selective coding is used when the "core category", or central category that correlates all other categories in the theory, is identified and related to other categories.

6. Involvement

For a successful research project, it is essential that a good rapport is built between the researcher and subject based on trust and mutual respect. Acting as both a postgraduate researcher and a practitioner (teaching coordinator), There is the possibility of bias influencing the outcome. A responsible researcher will be aware of possible bias and will make all efforts to minimize bias by taking the appropriate steps such as using randomization when selecting data sample, and using blind observer (including the researcher, and one other professional) when conducting classroom observations and coding interviews (Concato et al, 2000).

One of the most important domains of ethical interest is concerned with the protection of children perceived as vulnerable and open to exploitation by researchers (Mahon et al, 1996; (Bhutta, 2002). Issues of informed consent, the appropriateness of children as research subjects, the research methods and potential for physical, emotional or psychological harm are considerations that are assessed before permission is given for the research to commence (Medical Research Council, 2001). If researchers are to involve children, they must use methodologies which support children's intellectual and social abilities. Methodologies must also ensure that the researchers fulfil their social and ethical obligations by protecting children in the eventuality of physical, psychological or emotional threat. A relationship based on trust and mutual

respect can be developed, allowing the researcher to uphold the ethical imperatives when working with children (Keddie, 2000). This approach is consistent with the social, intellectual and communication requirements of children participating in research (Birbeck et al, 2007).

Although it is internationally accepted that ethical approval should be routinely sought when conducting research with children and adolescents (Medical Research Council, 2001), there was no research ethics committee in Pakistan when this study was carried out. However, ethical concerns relating to this research were discussed in detail with the educational authorities and the research was approved by them. After explaining the purpose of the study, written consent was obtained from the school authorities, followed by the parent of both children who will be observed. Participants were free to decline answering any specific question or to withdraw from the study at any time. Confidentiality of participants was maintained during the administration of the questionnaires. Confidentiality of the subject's information during the interviews and observation was also assured; the participants were made aware that their responses would only be used for research purpose.

7. The Kind of Knowledge being created

A review of literature indicates contrasting findings on the usefulness of integrated curriculum with SPLD children (Czerniak et al, 1999). This study is the first of its kind in Pakistan and indeed in the school settings. The findings of this study will enable policy makers in the school to arrive at the best evidence-based teaching methods of SPLD children. The results of this study will not be generalized to other school settings since it is unique to this particular school context. However, the findings may prove useful to assist other schools and professionals to develop their own unique programmes for SPLD children in their individual school's context.

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Unit 7

The Methods of Data Collection and Justification

Module 2

PDT 4091

UNIT SEVEN: THE METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND THEIR JUSTIFICATION

Design

Mixed methods qualitative and quantities study (Steckler et al, 1992).

Sample

Quantitative data will be collected in the form of survey questionnaires to be completed by class teachers, head teachers and school principals (N=50). Qualitative data will be collected by classroom observations of two children identified with SPLD (dyslexia). Teachers will also be interviewed about their perception on use of integrated curriculum with SPLD children.

Measures/instruments

Quantitative measure

1) KNOWLEDGE OF INTEGRATED CURRICULUM QUESTIONNAIRE

This especially designed questionnaire consists of 10 items to be completed by educational authorities regarding the knowledge of the use of integrated curriculum with SPLD children.

2) GRASHA-RIECHMANN TEACHING STYLE INVENTORY

The Grasha-Reichmann Teaching Style Inventory (Grasha, 2002) is a web-based assessment, available at various web sites, that asks for a Likert-type response to a series of questions designed to objectively categorize teaching style. A teacher is asked to respond to a statement such as, "I set high standards for students in this class." He/she responds within a five-point range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The teaching style is calculated via a numeric score and the results are presented in a table that presents whether the respondent is low, moderate or high, based on the numeric outcome, in a particular style. Teaching style is scored on separate scales for each of the five predominant teaching styles: Delegator, Facilitator, Personal Model (or Demonstrator), Formal Authority, and Expert. Grasha also found that these five styles group into four clusters:

Cluster 1 - expert/formal authority

"tends toward teacher-centered classrooms in which information is presented and students receive knowledge."

Cluster 2 - personal model/expert/formal authority

"is a teacher-centered approach that emphasizes modeling and demonstration. This approach encourages students to observe processes as well as content."

Cluster 3 - facilitator/personal model/expert cluster

"is a student-centered model for the classroom. Teachers design activities, social interactions, or problem-solving situations that allow students to practice the processes for applying course content."

Cluster 4 - delegator/facilitator/expert

"places much of the learning burden on the students. Teachers provide complex tasks that require student initiative, and often group work, to complete."

Qualitative measure**1) CLASSROOM OBSERVATION**

Systematic classroom observation is a quantitative method of measuring classroom behaviors from direct observations that specify both the events or behaviors that are to be observed and how they are to be recorded. Generally, the data that is collected from this procedure focuses on the frequency with which specific behaviors or types of behavior occurred in the classroom and measure their duration (Waxman et al, 1999).

Although there are several types of observational procedures or techniques that have been used to examine effective teaching (e.g., charts, rating scales, checklists, and narrative descriptions), the most widely used procedure or research method has been systematic classroom observation based on interactive coding systems (Good & Brophy, 2000). These interactive coding systems allow the observer to record nearly everything that students and teachers do during a given time interval.

Teachers interviews:

After completing the survey questionnaire, ten teachers were randomly selected by picking every fifth name from a list of all participants (N=50) for a detailed personal interview. Interview consisted of three open ended questions.

1)What are your concerns regarding the practice of integrated curriculum in your school?

2) What can you say about your current level of professional expertise with regards to integrative curriculum?

3)What kinds of support services and resources are available in your schools for promoting integrative curriculum?

The interview response were recorded and then transcribed verbatim.

RESEARCH AIMS

* The study aims to determine the knowledge of educational authorities regarding use of integrated curriculum with SPLD children in one Pakistani school.

* The study aims to determine the perceptions and attitude of educational authorities regarding use of integrated curriculum with SPLD children in one Pakistani school.

* The study also aims to evaluate the usefulness of integrated curriculum with SPLD in classroom setting by means to direct observation and improvement in academic performance.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The researcher will obtain written consent from the school authorities. They will be provided with information sheets and consent forms. The school will then be requested to arrange a meeting with the teachers and they will then be introduced to the research project; once again information sheets and consent forms will be provided to individual teachers. Ethical issues and confidentiality of information sharing will be clearly explained.

Since the research aims are dual-fold, data collection will be done in two stages. In the first stage the researcher will collect general information about the awareness regarding use of integrated curriculum with SPLD children. This

questionnaire will be completed by all teachers of primary classes 1-5 (N=50) in the target school. After the survey, teachers will be interviewed about their opinion on integrated curriculum with special needs children. After the survey, a sample of teachers (n=10) will be interviewed to determine their perception and attitudes towards the use of integrated curriculum.

In the second stage, two children from two separate sections of grade one who have been identified by the school psychologist as having SPLD (DMS-IV diagnosis of dyslexia) will be selected. In order to minimize bias, the children will be matched for demographic variables including age, gender, social status of family and type of disability. The parents of the two children will be informed about the study and consent will be obtained. The two students will be observed over a period of one month while the two class teachers apply an integrated curriculum approach (both teachers have prepared the plan together and exactly the same planning session will be observed in both classes at different times). The student's performance will be evaluated by direct observations conducted by an observer who is not part of the planning, the final outcome measure will be the student's academic report provided at the end of the academic term; this report will be used as a measure of change/improvement in students' performance over a period of one month during which integrated curriculum approach was applied.

Literature search suggest that students' learning is influenced by a number of factors and that teaching style is an important factor that influences academic outcome (Cothran et al, 2000). This study will also measure teacher teaching style by means of the Grasha-Reichmann Teaching Style Inventory (Grasha, 2002) to determine if teaching styles may have an added influence on the outcome.

IMPLICATIONS

A review of literature indicates contrasting findings on the usefulness of integrated curriculum with SPLD children (Czerniak et al, 1999). This study is the first of its kind in Pakistan and indeed in this school's settings. The findings of this study will enable policy makers in the school to arrive at the best evidence-based teaching methods of SPLD children. The results of this study will not be generalized to other school settings since it is unique to this particular school context. However, the findings may prove useful to assist other schools and professionals to develop their own unique programmes for SPLD children in their individual school's context.

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Unit 8

The Methods of Data Analysis and Justification

Module 2

PDT 4091

UNIT EIGHT: THE METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS AND THEIR JUSTIFICATION

Analyzing Quantitative data

Quantitative data will be analysed using descriptive statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics include measures of central tendency (averages - mean, median and mode) and measures of variability about the average (range and standard deviation). These give the reader a 'picture' of the data collected and used in the research project. Data will be described using frequency tables, graphs and figures.

Benefits of Quantitative research

Quantitative research uses methods adopted from the physical sciences that are designed to ensure objectivity, generalizability and reliability. These techniques cover the ways research participants are selected randomly from the study population in an unbiased manner, the standardized questionnaire or intervention they receive and the statistical methods used to test predetermined hypotheses regarding the relationships between specific variables. The researcher is considered external to the actual research, and results are expected to be replicable no matter who conducts the research. The strengths of the quantitative paradigm are that its methods produce quantifiable, reliable data that are usually generalizable to some larger population. Quantitative measures are often most appropriate for conducting needs assessments or for evaluations comparing outcomes with baseline data.

Analyzing Qualitative data

Qualitative data will be analysed using grounded theory. Grounded theory will be used to explore teacher's beliefs regarding the use and benefits of integrated curriculum. As a qualitative, systematic approach, grounded theory (GT) is often used to explore social processes in context. GT involves the iterative collection and analysis of data to formulate explanatory theories grounded in the world of participants (Chentiz & Swanson, 1986). GT was originally developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and refined by others, including Glaser (1978), Strauss (1987), Strauss and Corbin (1998), Schreiber and Stern (2001), and Charmaz (2006).

Consistent with GT methodology, a randomly selected sample of ten teachers' were interviewed about their views on use of integrated curriculum. Interviews were taped and transcribed verbatim. Throughout the interview process data analysis will be conducted, emerging themes will be identified and abstract codes will be assigned, all the codes will be put into core categories. Finally, a theory of teacher's views on the use and benefits of integrated curriculum will be constructed based on the interview data.

Benefits of Qualitative research

Qualitative research methodologies are designed to provide the researcher with the perspective of target audience members through immersion in a culture or situation and direct interaction with the people under study. Qualitative methods include observations, in-depth interviews and focus groups. Hypotheses are generated during data collection and analysis, and measurement tends to be subjective. The advantage of using qualitative methods is that they generate rich, detailed data that leave the participants' perspectives intact and provide a context for health behavior. The focus upon processes and "reasons why" differs from that of quantitative research, which addresses correlations between variables. A disadvantage is that data collection and analysis may be labor intensive and time-consuming.

It is for these reasons that current researches tend to emphasis using a mixed methods design.

Main Variables to be analyzed

Outcome variable

- * The knowledge of integrated curriculum use with SPLD children
- * The attitude of teachers regarding benefits of using integrated curriculum with SPLD children
- * The change in academic performance of children.

Predictor variable Integrated curriculum

Mediator variable: Teaching style

Control variable: Age, gender, social class, type of disability, teaching experience

Controls for Student Background

Socio-economic Status: Measures of parental educational attainment and family income are used as indicators of socio-economic status. The two children selected for observation both were matched on these indicator.

Demographic Characteristics: the two students were matched on gender, age and type of disability (dyslexia).

ANALYZING OUTCOME MEASURES

Student Outcome Measures

Academic Performance Report:

The main student outcome variable is student academic performance report provided by the school at the end of each academic term. This formal report consists of teacher's remarks indicating changes in student's overall academic performance. Since this data will be available in the form of text (academic reports) data will be analyzed using grounded theory.

Teacher and Teaching Quality Measures

Teacher Variables: Teacher variables measures that are often considered part of teacher quality in sociological and economic models of school achievement are used, namely teaching experience and educational level. Demographic factors such as teacher gender will also be included and analysed using descriptive statistics.

Teaching Style: The Grasha-Reichmann Teaching Style Inventory will be used. Teaching style is scored on separate scales for each of the five predominant teaching styles: Delegator, Facilitator, Personal Model (or Demonstrator), Formal Authority, and Expert. Data will be presented in the form of table using descriptive statistics.

Observation and interviews of integrated curriculum: Three variables will be observed. These measures are based on the student-teacher relationship, student's interaction with peers, students overall academic ability as measured by performance on tasks after the planned lessons. Classroom observation and interviews will be recorded and analysed using grounded theory.

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Unit 9

The Evidence The Analysis of the Evidence

Module 2

PDT 4091

UNIT NINE: THE EVIDENCE & ANALYSIS OF THE EVIDENCE

This chapter discusses the results of the study and consists of two parts. The first part provides details of the teachers' knowledge regarding integrated curriculum, measured through use of survey questionnaire and, as well as a detailed description of teachers' attitude and perception regarding the benefits of integrated curriculum with special needs children.

The second part of this chapter is based on classroom observation to evaluate the use of integrated curriculum with the two identified pupils with SPLD.

Demographic Results Fifty teachers took part in the study. All of them were females. Most of the teachers had at least an intermediate degree (Year 12), while a small number had a postgraduate degree. The majority of teachers had more than five years of teaching experience and, about 10% had less than one year teaching experience.

Table 1: Demographic profile (n=50)

Teacher qualification

10 years of schooling	(29.0%)
10-12 years of schooling	(32.9%)
Undergraduate / Bachelors	(27.1%)
Graduate degree/higher	(11.0%)

Teaching experience

Less than one year	(9.7%)
One year	(19.8%)
2-4 years	(23.1%)
>5 years	(38.6%)
>10 years	(8.8%)

In order to gain more insight into and to extend the understanding of the issues being investigated, separate interviews were conducted with 10 teachers. The quantitative data were analysed with SPSS computer software (Coates & Steed, 2003). Descriptive analysis was conducted. Qualitative interview data was analysed using mapping and interpretation of the themes technique (Ritchie & Spencer, 1993).

I- TEACHER'S KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE REGARDING USE OF INTEGRATED CURRICULUM WITH SPLD PUPILS

Table 2 displays the frequency and percentage of response on each item, using a three point rating scale. Teachers were required to rate their attitude and knowledge regarding the use and benefits of integrated curriculum with SPLD pupils.

The survey questionnaire response can be broken down to three categories, the first focusing mainly on items related to the concept of integrated curriculum (items 1, 2, & 3). Second focusing mainly on planning of an integrated curriculum (items 4, 5 & 6). The remaining items focus mainly on the use of integrated curriculum with learning disabled children (items 7, 8, 9 & 10).

Attitude towards integrated curriculum

A significant number of the teachers (42%) reported that they were aware of the concept regarding use of integrated curriculum. However, a considerable number of teachers (34%) reported that they disagreed with the use of integrated curriculum and 24% did not have enough information about integrated curriculum.

Interestingly most of the teachers (82%) were of the view that children should be taught in ways so that they can relate to different topics and subject areas; only a small number of teachers (18%) disagreed with this concept. This view was supported by majority teachers view (76%) that children should be able to transfer knowledge from one subject area to another; once again only a small number of teachers disagreed (24%) with this view point.

Planning an integrated curriculum

Teachers differed sharply in their views regarding planning. Most felt confident about planning an integrated curriculum (48%). However a significantly large number of teachers felt that they lacked the skill need to plan appropriately according to needs of all pupils (38%).

This was supported by the teacher's views on planning time for integrated curriculum. 46 % of the teachers disagreed that common planning time is essential. Also, the lack of concern for planning was further supported by the teachers reporting that 56% of them were unaware of the curriculum above and below their grade levels.

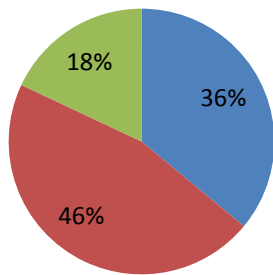
Integrated curriculum with special needs children

The majority of the teachers were unfamiliar with using special needs curriculum, with special needs children (58%), compared to only 30% who reported being familiar with it. This lack of knowledge was further supported by the teachers lack of ability of identify children with learning disability (48%), only 38% of the teachers felt they had the skills needed to identify SPLD pupils in the classroom. This was further compounded by the teacher's lack of ability (48%) to plan and make arrangements for LD pupils. However, interestingly a large number (46%) of the teachers agreed that use of integrated curriculum on the whole make learning easy of LD pupils, but a great number of teachers were unsure (38%) of the benefits of integrated curriculum.

Table 2: Teachers attitude and knowledge towards use of integrated curriculum (n=50)	Agree (n) %	Disagree	Don't know
The concept of integrated curriculum is clear to me.	21 42%	17 34%	12 24%
Children need to use connection in various areas.	41 82%	9 18%	0
It is important to emphasize the transfer of knowledge within and across subject areas in everyday life.	38 76%	12 24%	0
I know how to plan an integrated curriculum.	18 36%	23 46%	9 18%
Common planning time is a critical element in effectively integrating curriculum.	24 48%	7 14%	19 38%
I have an awareness of the curriculum content in the grades above and below me .	17 34%	28 56%	5 10%
I am familiar with the special needs area in the curriculum.	15 30%	29 58%	6 12%
I can identify students with learning disabilities (LD) in my classroom.	17 34%	24 48%	9 18%
I can make necessary arrangements for planning for students with LD.	19 38%	24 48%	7 14%
Integrated curriculum makes learning easy for students with LD.	23 46%	8 16%	19 38%

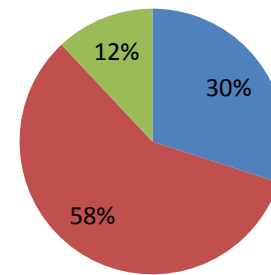
Planning an integrated curriculum

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Dont know



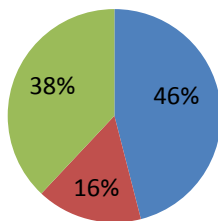
Familiarity with the special needs curriculum

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Dont know



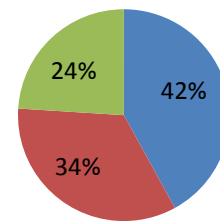
Integrated curriculum use with LD pupils

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Dont know



Concept of integrated curriculum

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Dont know



II- QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS (Teachers' interviews)

Teachers' perception on the use and benefits of the use of integrated curriculum with SPLD pupils

The three key themes that emerged from the group interviews were: 'beliefs about inclusion', professional issues' 'and resource issues'. Apart from being consistent with the responses obtained from the survey questionnaire, the qualitative findings provided a rich description of the teachers' perception and attitudes towards inclusion. Representative quotes from the group interviews have been reproduced to reflect each of the three themes.

1. Beliefs about integration

The teachers' beliefs about the benefits of using an integrated education approach lead to a mixed response, with some teachers endorsing the idea of using such approach where as others not in favour of integration.

On a positive note, teachers believed that if students with disabilities were included in regular classes it would positively boost their self-esteem and enhance their academic performance

We must not only be thinking about the placement of students with disabilities into regular schools, we also must think about how their placement is going to improve the emotional and academic performance of the students with disabilities. Integration is the only way pupils can acquire a holistic understanding of the world around them.

In sharp contrast to the above mentioned views, some teachers had a more pessimistic opinion. Some teachers felt that children with special needs, particularly those with sensory impairments, did not belonging in regular classes and were, therefore, not likely to benefit from such an (integrated education) approach.

We haven't yet come to terms with the belief that students who cannot speak or hear can be educated in regular schools ...we do not believe this is going to work. It is better if they remain in the special schools.

Teachers also believed that including students with disabilities limits the amount of teaching work they could do thereby resulting in incompleteness of the syllabuses:

This integration business does not work for me. We are always far behind in completing our syllabuses for the term... Planning time has increased as teachers have to sit together and plan one topic....this just increases the work load.

2. Professional issues

In line with the survey findings, teachers on the whole felt that integrated approach would be beneficial; however, very few teachers felt they had the skills and training to teach pupils with special needs using an integrated approach. These teachers pointed out that:

The only reason we feel comfortable using such an approach was due to their added training in use of integrated curriculum in inclusive education settings. Co-workers who have not attended these trainings are not equipped to plan such a lesson and would thus cause more harm than good to the pupils.

A large number of teachers perceived that their professional knowledge and skills were inadequate to effectively teach students with special needs in regular schools:

We do not have the requisite knowledge, skills and experience to do that sort of teaching. You meet some of the students who cannot express themselves... others too can't read normal books and you just don't know what to do to help them because you do not know yourself.

Further, the teachers expressed fear and concern, that because they do not have the required knowledge and expertise to teach students with special needs who are included in their regular classes; it is contributing to a reduction in the academic success of their schools:

How do the policy makers expect us to work with students that we have not been trained for? Our inability to meet the needs of those students with specific problems such as intellectual disabilities is hindering academic progress for us. Teaching all these students at the same time is really a difficult job for us.

3. Resource issues

Apart from teachers' negative beliefs and concern for their professional competency to practice integrated approach in an inclusive education, resource issues also drew much concern from teachers. Resource issues included physical aspects such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of proper teaching resources and visual aids to meet the needs of all pupils

It is really hard for us to manage with the existing resources.... Our classrooms are overcrowded with one teacher teaching 25 to 30 students in one class. It is not possible to give individual attention to all these students including students with special needs. It really makes it difficult to use an integrated approach

Teachers overwhelmingly believe that integrated education is impossible without addressing their needs for specialist resources. Overall belief is that without sufficient resources and support integrated education was not possible and doomed:

I am very keen on the use of integrated curriculum approach with special needs children; however, I feel that our school has not provided us with adequate and appropriate resources to meet the needs of children. We are forced to complete the syllabus and have to move on even if we are certain that some students have not grasped the concept.... it's about completing the syllabus on time... and not about what students are learning.... During trainings we were told that a separate assessment and marking criteria should be applied for children with special needs, however our school administration has still not approved this policy as a results many of our pupils with learning problems are unfairly assessed.

III- EVALUATING BENEFITS OF INTEGRATED CURRICULUM THROUGH CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Teaching style of teacher A as measured on Grasha-Reichmann Teaching Style Inventory. The table below displays the teaching style results of teacher A and on teaching style inventory.

TEACHING STYLE	POINTS	GRADE
Expert	4.20	High
Formal authority	3.0	Moderate
Personal model	4.48	High
Facilitator	3.87	High
Delegator	3.37	moderate

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION (Teacher A Student X)

The teacher started her session by showing a real plant to the students and asking them, "Can you think what topic will we be doing today"? She brainstormed all topics on the board. She then asked the students, "How does a plant grow"? She gave students time to think individually (T), and then she asked them to share with their partner (P) and then with their group (S), thus incorporating the co-operative learning strategy of TPS. After that she asked each group to give one point.

After the students had shared, she told them that she will be telling them a story of a cat named Felice who loved gardening. The teacher began the story and used props and pictures and gestures to make the story interesting for the students. She showed the pictures to the kids and let them touch the props. The whole story was based on the concept of germination but the other things integrated with it were days of the week, names of animals, care of nature around us. When the story telling was complete the teacher asked few questions related to the story to check if all students understood the plot of the story. The teacher also talked about all the integrated topics and made sure that kids valued the integrated concepts. The teacher made sure to ask all the students. She asked *lower order questions* to the less able students and *higher order questions* to the more able students. After the questioning the teacher gave germination picture cards in groups and she asked students to sequence the cards and write one sentence about each. Later each group had to present their work. In order to have equal participation the teacher gave roles to all the group members to that all of them have a sense of

responsibility and all of them get equal opportunity to learn. As an extension/ home task she asked students to draw the germination process on loose sheets and bring to class.

How did the integrated learning affect student X :

- 1. Academics:** The teacher had prepared special cards with names of days of the week for student X. When the story session was over she asked him (X) to place the cards with the pictures so that he can make a link with the story of germination and days of the week. Regarding the care and respect of nature around us, the teacher during the lunch time spent time with student X in the ground and discussed the topic with him. She encouraged him and made him a nature helper of the month to water the school plants.
- 2. Peer interaction:** Student X was actively involved during the TPS activity. When it was the groups turn to share idea the group members encouraged student X and also assisted him to share the group idea which was appreciated by the teacher. During the group task student X was actively involved as a resource manager and made sure that their group had all the resources required for the task. When the group ran out of writing sheets, he ran to the teacher and asked for more.
- 3. Student-teacher interaction:** the teacher was seen constantly encouraging and supporting student X, while the TPS activity was going on she was in their group for 5 minutes to assist student X with the discussion. She also let student X hold the pictures for her while she told the story and she asked him simple low order questions so that he could answer them and she kept reinforcing him. She constantly kept visiting the group of student X while they were doing the group task.

Student A Academic progress report (teachers' comments)

A has shown remarkable progress in his academic performance. The use of an integrated curriculum approach has enable A to grasp wide range of topics. A has also shown improvement in his interaction with peers and staff, with constant encouragement and support he will continue to do well.

Teaching style of teacher B as measured on Grasha-Reichmann Teaching Style Inventory.

The table below displays the teaching style results of teacher B and on teaching style inventory.

TEACHING STYLE	POINTS	GRADE
Expert	3.80	High
Formal authority	4.10	High
Personal model	3.0	moderate
Facilitator	3.10	moderate
Delegator	3.0	moderate

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION (TEACHER B STUDENT Y)

The teacher started her session by showing a real plant to the students and asking them that can you think what topic we will be doing today. She started writing all the answers on the board and then she told the students that today we will study about plants and how they grow. She then asked students how plants grow? She asked them to "Think and tell her". And then she asked students to share with partners and then with group. She tried to incorporate the strategy of TPS (think-pair-share) of co-operative learning, but after the groups had discussed with each other the teacher told the students that today we will do a story. She pasted pictures on the board, and she read a story on germination. Students were waiting to see the pictures closely but that time never came.

The story had many integrated concepts days of the week, names of animals, care of nature around us. When the story telling was complete, the teacher asked few questions related to the story to check if students understood the story. The teacher asked few bright students, and the questions asked were lower order questions. After the questioning the teacher gave germination picture cards in groups, and she asked students to sequence the cards and write one sentence about each. Then she asked for one pupil from each group to come forward and share what their group had done. As an extension/ home task she asked students to draw the germination process on loose sheets and bring to class.

How did the integrated learning affect student Y:

1. Academics: The teacher asked them to look at the pictures and see what is happening and remember how it is related to the story. Student Y could appear confused (either the instructions were too long or they were unclear for student Y). The student tried to copy his group mates, Student Y could not sequence the pictures related to the germination concept. He finally left the work and just watched others. The teacher did not take any notice.

2. Peer interaction: Student Y was very quiet and seemed not to have understood the instructions of the teacher. The group members did not include student Y in their discussions. During the activity the teacher was at her desk, and she did not help student Y be a part of the discussion. The student Y looked at other members of the group and tried to copy what they were doing, but could not do the task and finally gave up.

3. Student-teacher interaction: while the students were doing the TPS activity the teacher was checking the students' diaries. She sat on her seat and gave general instructions but did not individually interact with students. After the discussion time was over the teacher began questioning, but her focus was towards the bright ones, and student Y was left behind. While the students were working in groups, student Y was unable to understand the concept and sequence the pictures; the group members did not involve him much, and, as the teacher was at her desk, she could not support student Y with his learning.

Student B Academic progress report (teachers' comments)

B has shown little improvement in his academic ability. The use of integrated curriculum appears to have had little effect on him. He does seem to have shown some improvement in his interaction with peers and does appear to show interest in group activities. B is most likely to benefit from an individual 'one-on-one' approach using a structured plan rather than an integrated approach.

Unit 10

Impact of the Action Research Project

Module 2
PDT 4091

UNIT TEN: IMPACT OF THE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

The two-fold aim of this study was to determine the teacher's knowledge and attitudes towards the use of integrated curriculum with SPLD children. This study also aimed to evaluate the use of integrated curriculum with SPLD children in mainstream inclusive classroom settings through direct observation of pupils.

Attitudes and knowledge of integrated curriculum

The findings of this study suggest that teachers in Pakistan have some basic awareness regarding integrated curriculum. However most of them felt they did not have the skills and training needed to prepare an integrated curriculum plan for use with pupils. Teachers also felt that the schools did not provide them with adequate resources needed to meet the needs of pupils with SPLD.

Overall the teachers were in favour of an integrated curriculum; however, they stressed the needs for proper policies and trainings to ensure effective outcomes.

Czerniak and colleagues (1999) conducted a review of literature on integrated curriculum and offer an excellent look at the state of the art. According to them curriculum integration is a complex topic because every aspect of education is involved. It is for this reasons that many schools choose to use an integrated curriculum method. In a multidisciplinary approach, which is often used in elementary school, two or more subject areas are organized around the same theme or topic. Using such an approach enables pupils to learn and forms links about various topics that is highly beneficial to acquire an overview of things in their environment.

The beliefs, attitude and concerns expressed by teachers in this study may be explained due to lack of professional preparedness, available resources, lack of sufficient orientation and specialist assistance. Professional knowledge (initial and further training), material and human resources are found to enhance teachers' positive attitudes and their willingness to embrace and make integration work (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000; Loreman, Deppeler & Harvey, 2005). It is when teachers are sufficiently equipped in knowledge and expertise and supported by other professionals that their confident levels to work with an integrated approach all students in inclusive classrooms will improve.

Researchers have noted that inclusive education is a dynamic process without any quick fix which requires the endorsement of regular classroom teachers to be successful (Corbett, 2001; Lindsay, 2003). Thus, any intervention programmes to reduce negative attitudes and improve inclusive education should adopt a comprehensive grassroots approach and target these issues.

Benefits of using integrated curriculum with SPLD pupils

The results of the qualitative survey and interviews were supported by the classroom observations. Overall it was felt that the students did benefit from integrated curriculum approach; however, one of the key variables measured i.e. teaching styles and teachers own personality does seem to influences the overall outcome. The findings suggest that in order to ensure complete benefits of the use of integrated curriculum teachers should receive adequate training and skills of various teaching methods, and information on how teaching style influences on the pupil's performance.

The findings of this study emphasise the importance of teaching styles, suggesting that educators need to adopt approaches to teaching and assessment that enable students with different needs and learning styles to learn effectively (Felder, 2004). Teachers need to create a suitable mix of different learning opportunities to ensure that the largest possible number of students can learn effectively. Identifying individual students' learning characteristics may help educators to improve their course design and choose helpful and appropriate learning outcomes (Butler 1988), modes of delivery and assessment (Sangster 1996).

Other researchers (Ellins and Porter 2005; Wilkins and Nietfield, 2004) have also demonstrated how different teachers' attitudes can affect the learning outcomes of individual pupils described as having SEN. It is all up to teachers to begin with an expectation that pupils will learn rather than to make assumptions that they will fail. Inclusive classrooms will inevitably require teachers to draw upon an eclectic range of teaching strategies in order to respond to diverse learning needs and to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment (DfEE/QCA, 1999)

Inclusive classrooms demand flexible and diverse teaching practices in order to meet effectively the diverse learning needs of the individual learners. Effective planning and differentiation will depend in part upon the teacher's ability to match teaching styles and activities to pupils learning styles in order to develop strengths and to motivate all learners (Hume, 2005). However while it is important to identity

individuals preferred learning styles, this should not limit the experience and opportunities available to children (Coffield et al 2004). Gardner who presented his theory of multiple intelligence suggests that each learner including individuals with special needs will have a unique cognitive profile of learning intelligence, and that classroom environment should provide experience and opportunities for each individual to develop skills in all areas.

Limitations and Recommendations

Although the findings of study suggest a trend that integrated curriculum does have effective outcome with SPLD children. However, the main limitation of this study was that it relied only on classroom observation records of just two pupils observed for a period of one session. The small sample size and short time duration informal evaluation suggests that the findings should be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, these findings do indicate a positive trend that needs to be future explored.

While this study does not provide all the answers to questions about the advantages and disadvantages of integrated teaching practice and the consequence in terms of student learning because of its limitations, it does highlight the needs for future studies with much wider sample size and sound methodology to be carried out, in order to further understand the benefits of integrative curriculum with SPLD pupils.

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Unit 11

Module 2

PDT 4091

Conclusion and Ways Forward

UNIT ELEVEN: CONCLUSION AND WAYS FORWARD

This study investigated schools teachers' concerns and attitudes towards integrated curriculum as well as the benefits of using an integrated curriculum approach in schools with SPLD pupils.

The findings suggest that the qualitative themes were consistent throughout and supported the quantitative findings. The results of study suggests that teaching staffs have a positive view towards use of integrated curriculum as a larger number of teachers reported it is beneficial for use with SPLD pupils. These opinions are in line with findings from other studies (Sandbrink et al 2000); however the beliefs, negative attitude and concerns expressed by some teachers in this study may be explained due to lack of professional preparedness, available resources, lack of sufficient orientation and specialist assistance.

Research has shown that professional knowledge (initial and further training), material and human resources are found to enhance teachers' positive attitudes and their willingness to embrace and make integration work in inclusive classrooms (Avramidis et al, 2000). This present study has shown that attitudes and concerns of teachers affect their acceptance and commitment to implementing an integrated curriculum approach. It is worth noting that integrated curriculum, if inappropriately applied will not lead to equal and appropriate educational outcomes, particularly for students with special needs because of improper school practices, such as rejection of students with special needs by regular teachers, unsuitable resources, and lack of provision of generic support and training services. It is important that teacher attitude toward use an integrated curriculum in inclusive classrooms are studied in-depth on regular bases. Schools need to and can effectively communicate diversity, if they are aware of themselves and others and if this awareness transforms traditional teaching cultures. Hargreaves (1992) defined the culture of teaching as consisting of "beliefs, values, habits and assumed ways of doing things among communities of teachers". To facilitate effective inclusive education support must be provided that promotes change in attitudes, beliefs, values and habits (Wilkins & Nietfield, 2004).

The first step to make integrated curriculum work in an inclusive educational environment would be to develop inclusive policies that are adopted by all staff members of the school. Successful inclusive educational practice cannot be possible without policies to provide clear guidelines and a commitment to the principle of inclusion (Harvey, 1998).

Inclusive policy development should address issues specific to the school. Issues for example, identified in this study regarding large class sizes, professional competency, student needs, teacher beliefs and resources are, particularly important for inclusive practice to be successful. The existing pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes need to be re-evaluated to develop specific programmes for training regular classroom teachers to appropriately design and implement an integrated curriculum so that they can effectively respond to the needs of all students. It is when teachers are sufficiently equipped in knowledge and expertise and supported by other professionals that their confidence levels to work with all students in inclusive classrooms using an integrated approach will improve.

Although the study firmly established teacher's positive attitudes towards the use of integrated curriculum, the outcome of the secondary aim of the study evaluating the benefits of integrated curriculum with SPLD resulted in indecisive findings. This may be due to small sample size and short time duration which was one of the main limitations, as it relied only on classroom observation records of two pupils observed for a period of one session. The results of this observation produced inconclusive findings, however consistent with other studies highlighted the impact of teaching styles on the outcome (Cothran et al, 2005). Therefore the present findings should be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, these findings do indicate a positive trend of using an integrated approach which needs to be further explored.

While this study does not provide all the answers to questions about the advantages and disadvantages of integrated teaching practice and the consequence in terms of student learning because of its limitations, it does highlight the needs for future studies with much wider sample size and sound methodology to be carried out, in order to further understand the benefits of integrative curriculum with SPLD pupils.

The findings on this study emphasize the urgent need for pre-service and in-service training programmes to be designed for all teachers with the aim of promoting the social and educational benefits of inclusive education for all children. The trainings programmes should specially focus on developing skills and knowledge to enable teachers to design and effectively use and integrated curriculum. Teachers should also be made aware of the various teaching styles and their impact on the academic outcomes of pupils. Finally school authorities should design adequate policies for inclusive educational and special needs pupils to meet their needs adequately. Schools should also provide the teaching staff with sufficient resources to meet the needs of all pupils and to enable them to apply an integrated approach efficiently.

Recommendations:

- Pre-service and in-service training for all teachers should promote the social and educational benefits of inclusive education for all children.
- Teachers should be taught specific skills that will enable them to design and effectively use and integrated curriculum.
- Teachers should receive training and information on the various teaching styles and their direct impact on the outcome of an integrated session plan.
- School authorities should have clearly designed policies for inclusive education and special needs pupils to meet their needs effectively.
- School authorities should provide the teaching staff with adequate resources to meet the needs of all pupils and to enable them to apply an integrated approach efficiently.

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Appendix

APPENDIX

Professional Development for Teachers Programmes

Impact Evaluation

Name...Aliya Sibtain.....

Module..... PDT 4090/4091

Venue (Distance learning)

Completion (Date) 9th September 2010

To comply with the TDA funding regulations we are required to collect the following information each year from each participant. This keeps the fees for Midwheb programmes low. Please complete immediately and return to Ian Terrell i.terrell@mdx.ac.uk or the address below.

Please circle if the extent to which you agree with the statements below

1 Strongly Disagree

2.Disagree

3.Agree.

4 Strongly Agree

A. Needs analysis

1. The programme met my school's needs and development priorities. 1 2 3 4
2. The programme met my needs and development priorities. 1 2 3 4

3.Please identify the needs-priorities you have met as a result of the programme.

The study aimed to understand the knowledge and benefits of using integrated curriculum with special needs children in our school. The findings of the study are hoped to help develop school special needs policy.

B. Organisational support and change

1. My school supported the programme. 1 2 3 4
2. I received adequate support from my school-based advocate. 1 2 3 4
3. I received support from senior staff. 1 2 3 4
4. The work made a good contribution to school based developments. 1 2 3 4
5. I benefited from being able to contact professionals from outside the school as part of this programme. 1 2 3 4

6.Please comment on the extent your organisation was able to support the programme.

The school fully supported me throughout the study, to develop the materials as well as design the study and collect data. The school heads and staff were very keen on findings out the results of this study, which were shared with them in a group meeting.

Participants' reactions

1. I enjoyed the programme. 1 2 3 4
2. I found the programme helpful. 1 2 3 4
3. I found the programme valuable. 1 2 3 4
4. I found the programme interesting. 1 2 3 4
5. The programme made me more confident. 1 2 3 4

6. Please add any further comment on the quality of the programme.

This programme has helped me to develop greater understanding of action research, mainly in area of integrated curriculum with special needs children, which was the area of my study.

C. Participants' learning

1. The programme enabled me to learn about my practice. 1 2 3 4
2. The programme showed me how to improve. 1 2 3 4
3. I acquired useful knowledge and skills. 1 2 3 4
4. I acquired the skills of research. 1 2 3 4
5. I acquired professional development skills. 1 2 3 4

6. Please indicate what you feel you have learned on this programme.

1) Action research methodology

2) proper research methodology and data collection, data analysis techniques

3) working as a team leader (lead researcher)

D. Participants' use of new knowledge and skills.

1. I put my knowledge and skills into practice. 1 2 3 4
2. The programme was very practically focused. 1 2 3 4
3. I was able to share my knowledge and skills with colleagues. 1 2 3 4

4. Please give examples of knowledge and skills acquired on the programme.

proper research methodology and data collection, data analysis techniques, working as a team leader (lead researcher).

E. Pupil-Student learning outcomes.

1. The programme had a positive effect on the learning of my pupils-students. 1 2 3 4
2. The programme has resulted in improved pupil/student

learning outcomes. 1 2 3 4

3. As a result of the programme the process of learning in my classes has been improved. 1 2 3 4

4. I have been able to collect evidence of improved student learning. 1 2 3 4

5. Please state briefly the impact of the programme on pupil-student learning outcomes.

Use of integrated curriculum has helped pupils, though teachers need further trainings to improve outcomes.

F. Pupils' experience.

1. The learning experience of pupils has been improved by the programme. 1 2 3 4

2. I have collected data on the learning experience of pupils as a result of this programme. 1 2 3 4

3. Pupils report that they enjoy lessons as a result of this programme. 1 2 3 4

4. The programme has improved student attitudes to learning. 1 2 3 4

5. Please give examples of how this programme has improved pupils' learning experience.

Classroom observation and pupils academic reports indicates improvement in their learning.

G. Culture and organisation of school.

1. I was able to share my knowledge and skills with colleagues. 1 2 3 4

2. I have been promoted as a result of this programme. 1 2 3 4

3. The programme has changed the way staff work at the school. 1 2 3 4

4. The school has changed as a result of my work on the programme. 1 2 3 4

5. Please add details.

I shared the findings with the school staff and heads, they have shown keen interest. The school has now arranged for special trainings for staff use of integrated curriculum and teachings styles.

H. Any further information.

6. Please add any further comment on the quality of the programme.

INFORMATION LETTER FOR SCHOOLS

Who is conducting the survey? The study is being conducted by Ms Aliya Sibtain as part of her Master in Inclusive Education research study, under the University of Middlesex, United Kingdom.

What is the survey about? The purpose of this study is to obtain an overview of teacher's attitudes and perception regarding the use and benefits of integrated curriculum with SPLD pupils.

What is involved for schools? Incorporating special needs and integrated curriculum into the wider spectrum of educational objectives would be beneficial. Study findings enable school authorities to take initiatives and design relevant policies and interventions. These findings will also be used to design programs to train, sensitise and mobilize teachers and regarding use and benefits of integrated curriculum with SPLD pupils.

If you are happy to take part in this survey, an independent researcher will hold group meetings with staff at the beginning of the project and explain the purpose and rational of the study. Participants will then be requested to complete a survey questionnaire. A small sample of the participants will be randomly selected for an interview with the researcher. These interviews will not involve any personal questions.

Will the information be kept confidential? All the information will be coded, so that no person can be identified. All information will remain confidential, the name and address of any participant will not be included in any report.

What if I do not want to take part, or wish to withdraw from the survey? If you do not wish to participate in the survey, you may do so without justifying your decision, and this will not affect you in anyway.

What if I am harmed by the survey? None of the questions asked are anticipated to cause distress or worries. However if you feel that the interview has been distressing you can choose to stop the interview, and psychological counselling can be offered if need be.

What will happen to the results of the survey? The results will be presented and circulated the school authorities and teaching staff.

Who is responsible for the study? The principal investigator is Ms. Aliya Sibtain. Please do not hesitate to contact her about any matter. All the correspondence should be directed to her and should be sent to the following address for your convenience: **Ms Aliya Sibtain** aliyasibtain@gmail.com

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME OUT TO READ THIS INFORMATION

SCHOOL CONSENT FORM

Principle Investigator: Aliya Sibtain

(This form should be provided in conjunction with the Information letter. Please make sure that you have read it.)

I.....(name) principalSchool have read and understood the information provided about the survey and agree to my school taking part in the study.

I understand that my school can withdraw from the study at any time without justifying our decision, and without it affecting our children in any way.

Please write your name.....

Please write your school's name.....

SignatureDate.....

Stamp of the school.....

PARENT INFORMATION FORM

Dear Parents,

The study is being conducted by Ms Aliya Sibtain as part of her Master in Inclusive Education research study, under the University of Middlesex, United Kingdom.

The purpose of this study is to obtain an overview of teacher's attitudes and perception regarding the use and benefits of integrated curriculum with SPLD pupils.

In order to help us better understand the use and benefits of integrated curriculum, the study will collect data through interviews and classroom observations. Your child has been selected to take part in this study and will be observed by an experienced researcher for one teaching session.

Please do let us know if you agree to your child being observed, we just want to learn more about your child, helping us to understand children and the use of integrated teaching approaches better.

No one will see the data except the research team. All observed data will be treated as strictly confidential and will not be passed onto anyone. You will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. At the end of the study, a summary of the results will be made available to you.

If you wish to take part, we would be grateful if you would complete the slip below and return it to the school. If you have any questions; please feel free to contact us and we would be happy to discuss any questions you may have.

Many thanks for your help!

Ms Aliya Sibtain

Email: aliyasibtain@gmail.com

PARENT CONSENT FORM

Principle Investigator: Aliya Sibtain

(This form should be provided in conjunction with the Information letter.

Please make sure that you have read it.)

I(name) have read and understood the information provided about the survey and agree to take part in the study.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without justifying my/our decision, and without it affecting my/our child in any way.

I am not currently involved in any other research study.

Please write your name.....

SignatureDate.....

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

I am conducting the above-titled study on teachers, head teachers and principals, in collaboration with Middlesex University, UK. I would request your kind participation in the study by filling in the attached questionnaire. It will take approximately 15 minutes. All the information you provide will be kept confidential. You hold the right to withdraw from the study at any stage of the project. I would like to start with your consent. Yes No

SECTION I: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name (optional):

Gender: Male Female Age: _____

Academic qualification: Matric Intermediate Graduate Postgraduate

Years of teaching experience: Less than 1 1-2 2-5 5-10 10 +

Teaching position: Principal Head teacher Class teacher Assistant

SECTION II: Please indicate on a scale of 1 – 5 to what extent you agree or disagree. Number one will mean you strongly disagree and number five will mean you strongly agree.

	strongly disagree	strongly agree
1. The concept of integrated curriculum is clear to me.	1	2 3 4 5
2. Children need to use connection in various areas.	1	2 3 4 5
3. It is important to emphasize the transfer of knowledge within and across subject areas and in everyday life.	1	2 3 4 5
4. I know how to plan an integrated curriculum.	1	2 3 4 5
5. Common planning time is a critical element in effectively integrating curriculum	1	2 3 4 5
6. I have an awareness of the curriculum content in the grades above and below me.	1	2 3 4 5
7. I am familiar with the special needs area in the curriculum.	1	2 3 4 5
8. I can identify students with learning disabilities (LD) in my classroom.	1	2 3 4 5
9. I can make necessary arrangements for planning for students with LD.	1	2 3 4 5
10. Integrated curriculum makes learning easy for students with LD.	1	2 3 4

TEACHERS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1) What are your concerns regarding the practice of integrated curriculum in your school?

2) What can you say about your current level of professional expertise with regards to designing and integrative curriculum plan?

3) What kinds of support services and resources are available in your schools for promoting integrative curriculum?

