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Title of Study: TEACHER BELIEFS, ATTITUDES, AND EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DISORDERS IN THREE SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

Pages in Study: 275 Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Educational Administration

Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the connection between the beliefs, attitudes, and expectations teachers exhibit towards students who have attention challenges in three independent schools in England and the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum as identified by Jordan-Wilson and Silverman (1991), which identifies, along a scale, where teachers' beliefs lie. Teachers' sense of efficacy as they meet individual student needs was also explored as was what educators in these schools, who have limited, if any, recourse to special education assistance, do to support students who display the characteristics of attention deficit. The pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and Bandura's (1977) construct of self-efficacy were the lenses used to focus the research. The study records participants' responses and reflections about the phenomenon under study, describing what it is they do, how they perceive their responsibility towards their students, and how they support each other.

Findings and Conclusions: Data compiled from a sample of 10 teachers and 3 head-teachers, were disaggregated to provide a picture of how participant teachers work with attentionally challenged children in selected English independent schools. The results provide evidence that teachers whose profile identifies them with the interventionist perspective present stronger senses of self-efficacy. They are prepared to undertake prereferral-type activities to determine where the student is experiencing difficulty and are then willing to manipulate the learning environment to meet individual student needs. Teachers in these schools perceive it as their professional obligation to design teaching scenarios to benefit all students. Teacher efficacy, their sense of their ability to positively influence their students' educational performance and achievement, is unrelated to years of experience or educational background, but is related to the beliefs which they hold.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL______________________________________

TEACHER BELIEFS, ATTITUDES, AND EXPECTATIONS

TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DISORDERS

IN THREE SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM'S

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

Dissertation Approved:

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TEACHER BELIEFS, ATTITUDES, AND EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DISORDERS IN THREE SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM'S INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

By

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DEDICATION

For Those Whom I Love

Maggie Jane Buchan Wilson, my mother, who was an inspiring, truly good woman, who guided, encouraged, and never lost faith. I love you. David Wilson, my father, for whom education was a cornerstone of life.

David Charles Buchan Detchon, our beloved son, for whom the sun shone, life sparkled and who had the world at his feet. A life taken from us far too soon, leaving a love that endures.

Alexandra, Annalie, and Douglas, our children who have motivated me and made me look at the world in myriad ways. You have grown into fine people. Thank you for your encouragement, sparking wit, and wholly irreverent comments throughout this course.

Sophie and Isla, our little ones. Your smiles and laughter have inspired your Seanmhair and kept her happy through the whole process.

For my very first teacher, who opened my eyes to the wonder of education, Molly Nesbitt. You have made so much more possible than you could ever have dreamed. Thank you.

My brother and sister, David and Helen, and my cousin, Valerie, for all the good times when we were growing up. You have made my life richer.

For my dear friends, Sharon and Julie, who kept saying, “Just do it, just do it.”

And finally,

For the man who has been at my side in all that I have undertaken, standing stalwart and true, always encouraging and reassuring through joyous times and tragic times, my husband, Terry. Without you this would never have come to fruition. Thank you.

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Thank you to the head-teachers and teachers, with whom I worked during this time of research. Without the welcoming, open cooperation of the schools and their staffs, throughout the many days and hours I spent with them, this dissertation would not have been possible. I enjoyed listening to their insights into what they believe "makes them tick," sharing their bluff good humor, and listening to their good-natured banter. Their magnanimity was heartwarming, exuding the sense that just as it takes a village to raise a child, so it takes a school to educate that child.

There are two other friends to whom I owe heartfelt thanks. My friend, Emma Espinoza, with whom I spent summers sweltering in the heat of Stillwater and so many Wednesday evenings and weekends in Lakenheath, England, that I have lost count. We kept each other going through it all. Thank you, Emma. My friend and colleague, Nancy

Johnson, whose quiet support and help with editing helped me keep my sanity. Thank you Nancy. Graham, for your help and support with technology, thank you. I'm glad you are here. Without everyone mentioned, this journey would never have come to an end. As they say in Scotland, "Here's tae us, wha's like us?"

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CHAPTER I

Design of the Study

> We must ensure that no young person is denied the chance of a decent education. Every passing day, when a child is unable to fulfil their potential is another day lost, not only to that child but also to the whole community.
> *Estelle Morris, Secretary of State for Education and Skills* (2002)

One person's expectation for another person's behavior can quite unwittingly become a more accurate prediction simply for its having been made (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). If individuals are treated as if they are already eager learners, they are more likely to become eager learners and nowhere is this more true than in education, where teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of and for students are crucial (Brophy, 1986; Burden, 1995; Tauber, 1998). Teacher expectations have a powerful effect on student performance, and, if a teacher acts as though she/he expects students to be motivated, hardworking, and interested, they are more likely to be so (Gross-Davis, 1993). Conversely, when students are viewed as lacking in ability or motivation and are not anticipated to make significant progress, they tend to adopt this perception of themselves (Lumsden, 1997; Tauber, 1998).

Teachers must initially convey positively the belief that they presume that all students will fulfil their potential, behaviorally and academically, and design academic programs which cultivate success for all students (Rathvon, 1999; Miller, 2001). Dweck (as cited in Aronson, 2002, p. 37) wrote that, “One of the most important things social psychology has done is to show us how profoundly people’s beliefs affect their behavior.” Pajares and Schunk (as cited in Aronson, 2002, p. 18), said, “It may even be reasonably argued that teachers should pay as much attention to students’ self-beliefs as to actual competence, for it is the belief that may more accurately predict students’ motivation and future academic choices.” They go on to urge caution with regard to the nature of the interventions which are employed to foster academic self-beliefs and advise that positive construction of self-belief be grounded in accomplishment that has true meaning. According to Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 55), “Students can perform extrinsically motivated actions with resentment, resistance, and disinterest or, alternatively, with an attitude of willingness that reflects an inner acceptance of the value or utility of a task.” However, according to Barkley (1998), when undertaking tasks which are mundane or tedious (such as independent practice), the performance of children who have difficulty with focus is often enhanced when reinforcement is introduced.

Expectations are dual-faceted inasmuch as they can raise or lower outcomes dependent on the level conveyed (Schilling & Schilling, 1999; Miller, 2001), and, as students tend to internalize the beliefs and expectations teachers have about their ability, they generally “rise or fall” to that level (Raffini, 1993).

Expectations tend to be self-sustaining. They affect both perception, by causing teachers to be alert for what they expect and less likely to notice what they do not expect, and interpretations, by causing teachers to interpret (and perhaps distort) what they see so that it is consistent with the expectations. Some expectations persist even though they do not coincide with the fact (Good & Brophy, 1990, p. 443).

Expectations for individual students are based on various perceptions - previous report cards, test data, anecdotal records from other teachers, or even initial interactions with the student (Tauber, 1998). According to Willis (1972), teacher expectations of and for students are often formed at the initial contact, or within a short time of that contact, and, once formed, tend to remain constant. She speculated that the significant issues are those of accuracy of expectations and the flexibility with which they are held. If inaccurate and not subsequently corrected, these expectations will do damage, and should instructional decisions be based on them, further damage will be the consequence; so, they ought to be realistic to the individual student, being set at a level which is high enough to motivate, but not to the extent where the student will inevitably experience frustration (Forsyth & McMillan, 1991).

Nearly all schools claim to hold high expectations for all students, because that is a principle of their purpose. The reality is that this is not always put into practice; although there are schools and teachers who subscribe to and believe in this premise, many do not hold to it uniformly (Lumsden, 1997). Often expectations and beliefs about student achievement are limited, dependent on the individual student - high for some students, but narrower and more constricted for certain sectors of school populations, specifically those with learning disabilities (Hallinan & Oakes, 1994). Expectations for students who experience difficulty learning, whether diagnosed as having a learning difficulty or not, but who demonstrate difficulties during their educational careers, are often lowered (McLaughlin, 1995). “Whether you think you can or think you can’t . . . you are right ” (Henry Ford). This aphorism can be extended to thoughts about students' and teachers' perceptions of themselves and their own abilities.

Expectations are closely aligned with teacher beliefs and attitudes, and according to Bandura (1986), teaching, like any other behavior, is governed by both personal beliefs and environmental factors. According to Orton (1996), the relationship between teacher beliefs and student learning is an imperative based on respect for persons. "Teacher beliefs arise from their rich experiences with children's lives, classrooms, and the everyday school routine" (Orton, 1996, p. 139). He wrote that teacher beliefs are related to student learning through what happens in the classroom – activities that are orchestrated by the teacher. Such events might be said to "cause" student learning in the sense that the events in the classroom lead, in the case of effective teaching, to student learning.

Teacher expectations are related to their beliefs about their personal sense of self-efficacy- the higher the level of teacher self-efficacy, the greater the accomplishments of their students (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (1977, 1986), the beliefs that individuals hold about their own abilities and the outcome of the effort they expend have a significant effect on the ways in which they behave. "This view is consistent with that of other theorists who have argued that the potent nature of beliefs makes them a filter through which new phenomena are interpreted and subsequent behavior mediated" (Pajares, 1996, p. 543).

Jordan-Wilson and Silverman (1991) and Jordan, Kircaali-Iftar and Diamond (1993) hold that different teaching beliefs demonstrate a relationship in regard to preference for different kinds of resource support. Those who see the difficulty as being "exclusively within the child" are unwilling to make modifications or accommodations to meet the child's needs and show a clear preference for such needs being met outside the general education classroom. Conversely, teachers who view these students and their needs as challenges, are more likely to modify their teaching methods. They are willing to differentiate teaching and will manipulate the learning environment to meet the students' needs (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan, Lindsay & Stanovich, 1997).

According to Fine (2002), researchers have estimated that the percentage of school-age children with attention deficits ranges from 7.5 to 20%, with the more generally accepted figure hovering between 5% and 9.6%, and the indications are that the student population diagnosed with attention deficit disorders is increasing (McBurnett, Lahey, & Pfiffner 1993; Barkley 1998; Smith 1999; Tomlinson 2001). The critical attribute of attention deficit disorder is "a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development" (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV – TR, 2000, p. 85).

In the United Kingdom, the figure ranges from a conservative 1% who meet the diagnostic criteria for attention deficits to 10%, the diagnosed figure being considerably lower than other estimates (National Institute for Clinical Excellence, 2000). This lower figure might be attributable to two significant factors. First, there has been, and continues to be, on-going general debate as to whether attention deficit is a bona fide medical condition (Smith, 1999). This has been followed by the allegation made by the founder of the International Centre for the Study of Psychiatry and Psychology, Dr. Peter Breggin, that Ritalin (the most commonly used prescription drug) is too extensively prescribed, which could be interpreted as an indication that the condition is more widely acknowledged than is frequently accepted. The second factor is practitioner reluctance to diagnose the condition in the United Kingdom

(Cosgrove, 1997; Kewley, 1998) combined with the more restrictive World Health Organization definition (Kewley, 2001). “In Britain today, underdiagnosis of ADHD is serious and extremely worrying” (Cosgrove, 1997, p. 104). This notion would support the contention that not all students who demonstrate difficulty with attending behaviors have been formally diagnosed as having the condition.

However, by extending earlier findings published by other researchers (McBurnett et al., 1993; Barkley, 1998; Smith, 1999; Tomlinson, 2001), it is reasonable to assume that the population of students who show attentional difficulties is increasing in the United Kingdom. Students with attentional difficulties, as elsewhere, are not specific to any socio-economic, ethnic, or cultural group and are found across the socio-economic spectrum (Barkley, 1997).

In general, independent (private) education is that which is provided in institutions which are largely or solely privately funded, receiving most or all of their income from tuition fees (Euryidice, 2002). The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act of 2001 places the emphasis on educating children with special educational needs alongside their peers in mainstream schools and integration within an ordinary class wherever possible, while receiving extra assistance or attendance at special units or classes within the school in the least restrictive environment (LRE). While independent schools are not obligated to accept students with special needs, they generally state that they will consider accepting children who have difficulties (Independent Schools Council Information Service [ISCis], 2003). Although frequently there is “some external” support for students experiencing learning difficulties in these schools, resources are limited, unless the school has made particular and clear arrangements to accommodate children with specific special needs. In the United Kingdom, composed of Scotland, England, Wales and Northern

Ireland, there is private provision at all levels of education (Eurydice 2002). State schools (public schools) in the United Kingdom educate about 9,461, 200 students (93.7%); mainstream independent schools educate about 635,000 students (6.3%), and independent special schools (those which cater specifically to students with special needs, whether they have a Statement of Special Education Needs or not) educate 5,700 pupils, 0.1 percent of the total British school population (Department of Education and Skills [DfFES] 2003).

Statement of the Problem

In the United Kingdom, independent schools, for which tuition is paid and are financially independent of government subsidy, have the opportunity to accept students or not, based on a variety of issues and concerns (ISCis, 2002). Given that attention deficit disorder is not a disability limited by socio-economic status, intellectual ability, class, culture, or ethnicity (Barkley, 1997), and it is estimated that between 1 and 10 percent of students nationally in the United Kingdom have this condition (Cosgrove, 1997), it seems reasonable that independent schools are admitting and serving this student population.

Resources available to independent schools are often different from those to which state schools have recourse including having limited, if any, access to the Local Education Authorities' (LEA) Special Education Needs Coordinators (ISCis, 2000). Their resources are primarily self-funded and staffing is limited by revenue generated by the school (ISCis, 2000). Additionally, the credentials of teachers in the independent sector do not have to meet the state requirements as must those of their state school colleagues, although, overall, most do have similar qualifications (DfES, 2003).

In sum, teachers in independent schools provide services for students with special needs yet are not necessarily required to have the same credentials as their colleagues in the state sector who perform the same function, nor do they usually have the same level of access to special education specialists as do their state sector colleagues. Despite these drawbacks, it appears that teachers in independent schools are perceived by patrons as being as effective as their state school counterparts given that enrolments in independent schools are increasing (ISCis, 2002; DfES, 2003). But, there remains uncertainty as to what causes the effect they produce.

The ability to facilitate student success with a special student population without additional instructional resources can best be explained by teacher philosophy. This educational philosophy results in classroom practices which focus on meeting the needs of each child, regardless of challenge. This philosophy is consistent with the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al., 1997), and a heightened sense of self-efficacy as described by Bandura (1977, 1986, 1997) and Pajares (1996).

In addition, the influence of independent school teacher philosophies and whole school philosophies, and how those relate to students with attention difficulty must somehow play a significant role, as must teachers' sense of self-efficacy; teachers who have a heightened sense of self efficacy expend greater effort and are more likely to persevere with students who present challenges in the classroom. How teachers view these students, their beliefs about, attitudes toward, and expectations for and of them, and how they motivate and differentiate instruction to accommodate them (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995) would explain (better) service to the ADHD population by schools which are not mandated to serve them.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate and describe the philosophies, as evidenced through the beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of teachers who teach students with attentional difficulties, whether clinically diagnosed or not, in heterogeneous classes in small schools in the English independent school sector. Further, the study investigated the connection between teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and expectations for and of such students and the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al., 1997), and how teachers rate themselves with regard to their sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 1996).

According to Bandura (1986), how individuals create and develop their ability to perceive their capabilities becomes significant in relationship to the goals they undertake and their perception of their personal capabilities is central to what they engage in and the control they are able to affect over their environment; the extent of their self-efficacy. Hence, teachers who could be described as having a strong sense of self-efficacy, will be more confident in their capacity to meet and successfully manage the needs of all students, including those who present challenging behaviors, both academically and behaviorally, one which, in all likelihood impinges on the other.

Bandura defined human actions as being threefold, (1) forceful and reciprocal interaction of personal factors, (2) behavior, and, (3) the environment (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989, 1997). Cognitive processes and the precursor to action, and the consequences of that action are used to form expectations of behavioral outcomes. In other words, teachers determine what they are going to do and how they are going to affect implementation (effective teaching) and the expected results based upon preconceived notions of success individual to the student.

Research Objectives

Using the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al., 1997) and the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997) as analytical lenses, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. In relation to students who have learning difficulties, specifically difficulties with attention, what are the philosophies, as evidenced through beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of head teachers and faculty?
2. In what ways do these philosophies support the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and the concept of self-efficacy?
3. What other realities exist within the teachers and faculty?
4. How useful are the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and the concept of self-efficacy in explaining the phenomenon under review?

Orienting Framework

In 1977, Bandura put forward the construct of self-efficacy. He contended that self-efficacy is the conviction a person holds with regard to their facility to accomplish particular actions successfully, and that the conviction is sustained by the person's beliefs or expectations about his/her ability to do so. He hypothesized that these expectations determine whether or not an action will be tried, the amount of effort expended, and how long perseverance will continue when difficulties arise; that teachers with high self-efficacy persist longer, offer greater academic focus in child-centered classrooms and are willing to provide different types of feedback than do those teachers whose self-efficacy is low. "In general, efficacy is perceived as teachers' beliefs or convictions that they can influence how well students learn, even those who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Gusky & Passaro, 1994, p. 628). Further, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) postulated that there is a clear and positive connection between teacher efficacy and student accomplishment, and such teachers are less likely to refer students with learning difficulties for special education services (Soodak & Podell, 1993).

The concept of self-efficacy emerged from a framework which postulates that human achievement depends on interactions between one's behaviors, personal factors (thoughts, beliefs, attitudes), and environmental conditions, and that subsequent behaviors are exclusively determined by these elements (Bandura, 1977, 1986). This viewpoint espouses the belief that actions are continuously being mediated by cognitive and other personal factors, such as beliefs, movitation, sense of self-efficacy, as well as other environmental influences. Bandura named these interactions "triadic reciprocality." The purpose is to understand and predict behavior and to identify ways in which a behavior or learning can be modified or changed, an integral part what teachers who are interventionist must do in order to ensure student success. Bandura (1986) agrees with the behaviorist idea that consequences mediate behavior, and additionally contends that actions are regulated through foregoing cognitive processes. Hence, response consequences of an action are the base upon which expectations for an outcome are constructed.

In Ajzen's (1985) theory of planned behavior, the main thrust is that the performing of a behavior is determined by three conceptually inter-reliant dynamics; attitude towards the behavior, the subjective norm, and a person's perceived ability to carry out the particular behavior. These beliefs can be conceptualized as teachers' beliefs about students who have certain educational needs and the surrounding educational setting (Stanovich & Jordan, 1998). An extension of these theories can be drawn with the measure of attitudes and beliefs conceptualised by Jordan and colleagues where teacher beliefs and attitudes lie along a continuum (Jordan & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al., 1997). At one end of the continuum, the belief is that any learning or behavioural difficulties experienced by the student exist internally; this set of beliefs have been labelled "pathognomonic" or "restorative" by Jordan et al. (1993). Sarason and Doris (1979) said that the pathognomonic perspective is hypothesized to result in educational practices which can best be characterized by a "search for a pathology" – a medical term meaning the presence of a specific "diseased" entity. Teachers at the pathognomonic end of the continuum are unlikely to make accommodations or modifications, as they believe there is little that can be done for these students in the general education classroom, the alternate being the evaluation and provision of educational experiences for the child by special education teachers, frequently in an alternate setting.

At the other end of the continuum is the "interventionist" or "preventive" perspective. "Interventionist" teachers believe that the learning problems do not exist purely within the child, but result due to a mismatch between the child and the instruction or the educational environment. Teachers on the interventionist end of the continuum would appear to believe that intelligence, however defined, is malleable and they design interventions to facilitate thinking and performance in areas perceived as deficient. These teachers are more likely to be willing to develop and implement interventions and modifications to the meet the individual needs of the child. They see the referral of the child for external assessment and resultant support as the very last resort. Previous research has shown that teachers at this end of the continuum have a stronger sense of self-efficacy and are more willing to accept diversity, and have a sound belief in their ability to affect student performance. Furthermore, their teaching strategies tend to be more effective (Mastropieri, 1989; Rouse & Florian, 1996; Jordan et al., 1997).

According to Ajzen (1991) and Stanovich (1994), there are both teacher and student influences that have an effect on teacher attitudes towards students who exhibit difficulties (Brook et al., 2000). Teacher related influences include how well they know their subject matter and their sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Ajzen, 1991; Stanovich, 1994). Past research has demonstrated that teachers who can be classed "interventionist" have been teaching for a longer length of time and have a stronger sense of self-efficacy. Ashton (1985) asserted that teachers' sense of efficacy is "their belief in their ability to have a positive effect on student learning," (p. 142), and defined efficacy as outcome expectations. Similarly, Bandura (1986) contended that self-efficacy is specific to an explicit set of behaviors; these comprise two components, efficacy expectations, which relates to the belief in one's capacity to affect a behavior, and outcome expectations, the belief that a particular outcome will be the result of the behavior. Teachers who are at the interventionist end of the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum believe that they have the capacity to affect behaviors in students who experience difficulties without the involvement of external personnel or evaluations, ergo, by extension, they have a greater sense of self-efficacy.

Procedures

This study was conducted in three small, co-educational, independent preparatory schools in East Anglia, England. The schools were selected because they have identified students who either have been diagnosed with attention difficulties or present behaviors and characteristics that are indicative of the condition and are being served in general, heterogeneous classrooms, and who do not have daily ready access to special education specialists. The spectrum of ADHD ranges from mild through moderate to severe (Cosgrove, 1997), and the students who became part of this study have symptoms which would be considered mild to moderate. Mainstream independent schools would be unlikely to accept students whose behaviors are so disruptive that they interfere significantly with the functioning of the classroom.

The Researcher

The cumulative total of my teaching experience is 30 years, teaching in various countries on three different continents. I moved from a very conservative city in Scotland to teach for the first time in Sierra Leone, West Africa, in a school in which an European style curriculum, frequently alien to the culture, was taught to a 98% African population. Experiences during my five years in Africa opened my eyes to many inequalities of access to education and inequalities in the educational experience. I erroneously believed that this was peculiar to the third world setting, but later realized that inequalities were practiced in the educational settings of other nations - perhaps not the same inequalities in the same way, but inequalities nevertheless. My sense of this unfairness, and therefore the desirability for equality and equity, has influenced me in all teaching settings in which I have found myself.

Each student has the right to the best learning environment and experience possible as they progress through school. Children need teachers who believe in them, have high expectations for them, and are willing to provide the support and understanding necessary to that ensure they achieve to the maximum. I have held this belief throughout my career, which has been mainly in the general education classroom. During that time, I have taught an extensive range of students in age, from 8 to 30, and ability, from those determined gifted to my present position, where I evaluate students for determination of any need for special education services, liaise with parents and medical service providers, and chair special education meetings of multiple sorts, as well as providing educational services for students.

For the last five years, I have been working with students who have learning disabilities and have found this to be challenging, enlightening, and immensely rewarding. I hold firmly to the belief that, dependent on the severity and intensity of any debilitating condition, students belong in the general education classroom to the maximum extent possible, the notion of inclusion in the least restrictive environment. Acknowledging that the range of disabilities is considerable, I believe that there are those whose needs are best served in a separate environment, for example those who are a danger to themselves or others, or whose disability precludes, for whatever reason, their placement in the general education classroom, making an alternate location the least restrictive setting for them. But, for the vast majority, I contend that with the proper support from all teachers and administration, the most appropriate setting for all students is in the regular education classroom. It is ethically wrong to separate students from their non-disabled peers other than for the reasons already noted. Where I hold the system has failed both students and teachers is in lack of support for classroom teachers in preparation and implementation, in order for them to differentiate and modify instruction so that all students can succeed.

Arguably, my perception of inequality, and that all children have the right to an education which has equity is my bias. According to Maxell (1996), separating your research from other aspects of your life cuts you off from a major source of insights, hypotheses, and validity checks. I would substitute research for teaching. As C. Wright Mills (1959) argued, “The most admirable scholars within the scholarly community . . . do not split their work from their lives . . . and they want to use each for the enrichment of the other” (p. 195).

My husband and I have a wonderful son who was formally diagnosed as having attention deficit disorder when he was in the sixth grade. I have long questioned how teachers perceived him, what their expectations were for him, and how he was taught in school. I have to be honest and say that we were taken aback with some teachers who bordered on being, or were, quite dismissive of him, who were completely unwilling to make any accommodations or modifications to support him. He has upheld the convictions of many that he would be successful, and confounded the expectations of those who felt he would not be able to effectively learn in a university setting. He proved them wrong. For my family and myself, he has been both a challenge and an inspiration.

Data Needs and Sources

Access to co-educational independent schools which have heterogeneous classes that include students with attentional deficits in their school populations, and to teachers who teach these students was needed. Head-teachers and classroom teachers in these settings served as data sources, as did students identified as possessing attention deficiencies. No children were interviewed. Permission to be in classrooms to observe interactions between students and teachers was requested and received.

Data Collection

To understand teachers' philosophies and sense of students with special needs in general and particularly those with attention difficulties, data was collected by several different methods.

Interviews. Taped, structured and semi-structured interviews with teachers were requested, followed by passive-participatory classroom observations (Spradley, 1980; Merriam, 1998). Semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 1998), which took place both prior to and following observations, were used to ask the teachers about their beliefs about and expectations for students generally, and, specifically for those with different needs, about their individual sense of self-efficacy, and about their personal philosophies. Specific follow-up interviews were required for clarity in only a few cases. Interviews ranged from the generally descriptive to focused (Spradley, 1980). The head teachers were interviewed to determine a "sense of the school" and how that relates to focus students.

Questionnaires. A questionnaire based on the Self-Efficacy Surveys formulated by Bandura and Webb was given to teachers. Additionally, teachers were asked to complete questionnaires addressing their knowledge about and understanding of attention deficits. Parents of identified students were asked to complete a questionnaire asking about their children's behaviors at home, to determine whether the same attention difficulties are exhibited both at school and home. This served to confirm that there was clear evidence in two settings so that teacher bias could be eliminated.

Documents. Documents collected included available teacher artefacts supporting their perspectives about the diversity of their students and their instructional behaviors in support of their varied student population. Correspondence from individual teachers and more general school correspondence were examined as were letters sent to teachers from parents.

Observations. Evidence of expectations and efficacy was looked for during classroom observations. Teacher and student interaction should be indicative of the teachers' belief systems. These observations occurred after the administration of the surveys, but, in a few cases, prior to their being returned.

Data Analysis

Data collected from each of the research sources was organized by domain and theme based on concepts as they emerge (Merriam, 1998). I looked for links between teachers' oral responses, responses on pre-collected surveys and questionnaires, and that which was evident during observations. Responses were matched by strand and item and similarities and differences noted. Establishing commonalities among teachers' responses, the information gathered from teacher questionnaires, and classroom observations provided triangulation of data. The categories were compared to the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum framework and links to self-efficacy were examined. Responses to questions were classified.

Significance of the Study

This study was undertaken to meet the three criteria of research: to build upon existing knowledge, to clarify or add to existing theory, and to impact practice (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993).

Theory

The concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989, 1991) and the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum as described by Jordan et al., (1991); Jordan et al., (1993); Jordan et al., (1997), was used to determine how the personal philosophies of teachers affect how they teach the focus students. The concept of self-efficacy and the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum incorporate senses of expectations, beliefs and attitudes.

It is crucial to know how teachers' expectations, beliefs and attitudes, sense of self-efficacy and how willing they are to provide appropriate interventions and modifications, affect the outcome of student achievement. Each of these areas has significant impact, and collectively, they can make the difference between a child's success and failure.

Research

This study has significance for the current research base by analyzing what successful teachers believe, expect, and do when teaching students with attentional deficits and who are at risk for failure. Additionally, the setting for this research was in small schools where resources are limited. As research has shown that student populations are becoming increasingly diverse and numbers of students with attention disorders, who are often difficult to teach, are increasing, teachers are required to serve all students and meet the needs of each (Fine, 2001). Similarly, as it is evident from previous research that many teachers do not feel they have been adequately prepared, or have sufficient knowledge of the condition, or know how best to work with affected students to facilitate learning, it is important to know how teachers' senses of self-efficacy, beliefs, expectations, and willingness to intervene affect that learning.

Practice

If it can be shown that students of average ability, but who have attention deficits, are being served successfully by limited small schools, then the data gained from this study will add to the knowledge base of how students can be served when a full array of support services are not readily available; for example, during times of significant financial cuts, as are currently being implemented. The information gained from this study will add to what is known about practice in the classroom and add to what might be desirable to teach student teachers.

Summary

Students with attention deficits are a feature of almost every classroom. They do not all exhibit processing deficits and, that being the case, may not qualify for additional support. However, in schools where such support is minimal, if available at all, these students will continue to be present, possibly in increasing numbers. The intent of this qualitative study was to examine how attributes of individual teachers impact what they do in the classroom when confronted with students who demonstrate behaviors which can not only negatively impact their own learning, but potentially the climate of the classroom.

Reporting

Chapter II presents reviews of the literature relevant to this study. Methods used are outlined in Chapter III. The data from taped interviews, observations, and perused artifacts is presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V will contain an analysis of the data, and Chapter VI will compromise a summary of the study, conclusions, implications and commentary.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Let me see if Philip can be a little gentleman. Let me see if he is able to sit for once at the table.
Thus Papa bade Phil behave, and Mamma she look'd very grave
But fidgety Phil– he won't sit still; he wriggles and giggles and then, I declare,
swings backwards and forwards and tilts up his chair,
just like any rocking horse. "Philip, I am getting cross!"
See the naughty, restless child growing still more rude and still more wild
till his chair falls over quite. Philip screams with all his might,
Catches at the cloth, but then, that makes matters worse again.
Down on the ground they fall; glasses, plates, knives, forks and all.
How Mamma did fret and frown when she saw them tumbling down!
And Papa, he made such a face! Philip is in sad disgrace.
Where is Philip, where is he? Fairly cover'd up, you see!
Cloth and all are lying on him; he has pull'd down all upon him!
What a terrible to-do, dishes, glasses, snap't in two!
Here a knife and there a fork, Philip, this is cruel work.
Table all so bare and, ah! Poor Papa and poor Mamma
look quite cross, and wonder how they shall make their dinner now.
(Hoffman, 1844)

This entertaining and descriptive piece of verse was written by Dr. Heinrich Hoffman, a physician and writer, who practiced in Germany in the nineteenth century and who recognized that children who have difficulty with impulse control exist. In all probability, those who have challenges with attention and focus have existed through time and across cultures at all socio-economic strata (Barkley, 1998) although, until relatively recently, they have tended to be regarded more as social anomalies than as persons faced with a possible life altering condition.

As educators, working with these children is part of daily life and, as teachers, we are entrusted with the education of all who are placed in our classrooms, including those who are “fidgety,” “dreamy,” or impulsive. Educators are tasked with teaching all children who are placed in their charge, whether or not they have a debilitating condition, and not just those who appeal to us as individuals.

Although over the last decade the issue of ADHD has risen to significant prominence in the United Kingdom, there has been rancorous argument as to whether the condition actually exists as a “discrete identifiable disorder” (Norris & Lloyd, 2000, p. 123). The argument has been brought to prominence primarily through television and the press, and the debate has been deliberated, pondered upon, agreed and disputed in multiple scenarios. The question of whether the condition, as it is currently represented, exists, continues to be queried by some educators, parents, as well as some medical personnel.

Several strands of literature are elemental to this study, and in this chapter, a review of each is provided. The basic precept refers to teachers who work with students with attentional difficulties in a particular type of educational setting. The lenses integral to the study are those of the constructs of the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and self-efficacy, both of which refer to beliefs held and practiced by teachers. Reviews, not only of attention deficits, but also of teachers’ knowledge of attention deficits, teachers’ attitudes, beliefs, and expectations follow. As this study is based on a particular school system in England, the independent, or private school sector, a section reviewing that system is presented, as differences and peculiarities between private and public schools exist.

Education in England

That "schools cannot divorce themselves from their public" (Collinson, 1996, p. 2) is an axiom which applies to all schools. School bodies are comprised of the children of the public and all schools are tasked with the responsibility of providing educational opportunities designed to meet the needs of all those whom they strive to educate.

In the United Kingdom, children are required by law to begin compulsory education at the age of 5 and must have continuing education until the age of 16 (Department of Education and Skills [DfES], 2002). Education in England is divided into four basic components: primary, secondary, further, and higher education. Primary and secondary education is provided by the government in state schools, by religious affiliated schools, by specialist schools, and by independent schools (Eurydice, 2004; Kaidantz, 2000). Children attend pre-preparatory (pre-prep) and preparatory (prep) schools in the independent sector, the equivalent of primary schools in the state system, up to the ages of 11 – 13 (independent schools) or to the age of 11 in state schools. They then go on to senior schools until a minimum age of 16.

Traditionally, teachers throughout the United Kingdom have had much freedom in selecting the courses they teach and in developing their own teaching methods (DfES, 2004). However, increasingly teachers are being guided by the National Curriculum (DfES, 2004; Eurydice, 2003), which controls what curricular areas are offered as well as the range and depth of subject matter taught. While teachers who teach in the state school system are required to earn a degree and attain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), as described in the "qualified teacher" section, Section 218 of the Education Reform Act 1998, dependent on the individual school, teachers at private schools may not be required to have QTS although the vast majority are highly qualified, frequently having the equivalent of Masters Degrees in their subject areas (DfES, 2004). As independent schools are not regulated by the government as state schools are, they have the lassitude to engage as educators, persons whom they perceive as having the skills necessary to provide specific instruction.

Independent Schools

There is an apparent dearth of research literature available on independent schools other than histories of individual schools. Contact with the Senior Assistant Librarian at the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and with a librarian in the Cambridge University College of Education Library confirmed that negligible research has been undertaken within these schools other than published memoirs of individual institutions. This study will provide some insight into the functioning of a few preparatory schools in the system.

In the United Kingdom, independent schools provide education, at a price, for children from the age of 2 to 18. Increasingly, pre-prep and prep schools, which provide education up to the age of 11 to 13, dependent on the school, have expanded and now have nursery departments, which provide care and "education" for younger children (Gabbitas, 2002; Independent Schools Council Information Service [ISCis] 2003).

Generally, pre-prep departments tend for children up to the age of 8, and from 8 to 11 they become part of the prep school.

While it is true that parents are responsible for paying fees to cover the cost of their children's education, parents of children who are in the nursery departments may receive a grant from the government, the Nursery Education Grant, which currently stands at £416 per term, which covers a portion of the fees. There are three terms per year: Autumn – from September to December, Spring – from January to March, and Summer – from April to July. Approximately half way through each term the schools have "half-term" when teachers and students have a one or two-week vacation. In the United Kingdom, schools have a shorter summer break of between six and seven weeks, dependent on the school and the sector.

According to the ISCis (2004), there are currently 2,400 schools in the United Kingdom which are independent of local or central government control and which educate seven percent of the total school population. These schools are often referred to as fee-paying because they charge fees for the education they provide (Independent Schools Council [ISC], 2004). They are also known as private schools or public schools, but both names are somewhat of a misnomer. The general term "private" is ambiguous as the majority of independent schools that are registered with the ISC are not privately owned, but rather have a board of governors and a bursar. The term "public" is generally applied to older schools, many of which were originally founded as early as the early 15th century for the broad provision of education to male children, but which, over the decades, have become independent, requiring fees to be paid for educational services.

Independent schools are not funded by the state and obtain most of their finances from fees and investment income (ISCis, 2002). More than 1,000 of these schools have "charitable status." According to ISCis (2002), the current English law on charities is based on the Statute of Elizabeth, written in 1601, which has been subsequently reinterpreted by case law. This law recognizes four activities as charitable in nature: the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, the advancement of religion, and "other purposes beneficial to the community." This remains the cornerstone of the case for any school to have charitable status. The financial benefits of charitable status fall into three categories: just as all charities do, schools benefit from mandatory relief of 80% on business rates; their incomes from investments are tax free; and they do not pay corporation tax on any surplus. At the end of 2004, the Government published the Draft Charitable Status Bill, which, in short, proposes a continuation of this position (Jepson, 2005).

Relatively recently, one initiative, the Independent – State School Partnership, commonly known as Building Bridges, was introduced by the Labor Government (Smith, Kerr, & Harris, 2003) in response to the expectation of the government that independent schools should meet a new "public benefit" criterion in order to justify their tax concessions. The thrust of the initiative is a partnership between independent and state schools where, after school hours, facilities and other elements can be shared (United Kingdom Government Information Services, 2004). Leisure centers within the schools, playing fields, and information and technology facilities are shared with local schools, and some of the schools offer clubs for the elderly and other community groups (Independent-State Schools Partnership, 2003). In return for participation in the scheme, independent schools receive some remuneration from the government. Several well-known independent schools are currently participating in the scheme and the consensus, as reported through the press, is that it is being favorably received by both sides. The

2003 report, Good Neighbours: ISC Schools and their Local Communities, was published to show the sort of involvement independent schools have with their communities. The report provides descriptions of how individual independent schools engaged with their communities and neighboring, maintained (non-independent) schools.

All independent schools must, by law, be registered with the DfES and, as a condition of registration and continued registration, must reach and maintain standards set out in the Government Regulation, the Education Act (1996). The regulation covers the quality of education provided (United Kingdom Government Information Services, 2004). The Independent Schools Council associations, with the agreement of the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), operate their own inspection systems, the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), adopting standards and frameworks consistent with those of the Government's Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). ISC schools undergo full inspections on a 6-year cycle, concluding with final published report summaries, which are readily available for public scrutiny. In addition, Ofsted monitors ISC schools which have given cause for concern as identified during inspections, and Ofsted retains the right to inspect any ISC school where it judges this to be necessary and inspects all independent schools which are not members of an ISC association.

In the United Kingdom, "League Tables" of how schools perform are available nationally. They are most popularly accessed through newspapers and are avidly discussed in media coverage. Printouts of these tables are also available from the DfEE and are published on their website at www.dfee.gov.uk. These tables offer relatively detailed data showing individual schools' performances across curricular areas and overall examination attainment levels. The tables are of national interest and parents can refer to them when making school choices, regardless of in which sector those choices are to be made.

While it is true that some independent schools are highly selective, the majority admit students who have average ability. Additionally, there are those schools which specialize in teaching children who will benefit from more individual support. Although such schools may have less impressive standings in the league tables, they may still offer an excellent education, supporting and encouraging children to achieve to their full potential (Gabbitas, 2004).

It is a widely held belief that all independent schools are available exclusively to the affluent. While this may have been the case in the past (and does appear to continue to be the case with the most exclusive – and expensive – schools today) this, according to the ISC, is not the reality. In reference to the children who attend these schools, the ISC (2004) stated, "It is certainly not true, and never was, that only rich and privately educated people send their children to independent schools." They state that about half of the children entering independent schools have parents who were educated in the state system, that many of their pupils have parents who do not possess a higher education degree, and further, many families who decide to send their children to these schools are prepared to make domestic sacrifices, and/or have both parents working in order to cover fees. One possible reason that families make such sacrifices are reflected in the 2003 statement from the DfES, in which it was reported that evidence suggested that students of all levels of ability do better in independent schools. In 2002, the Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development (OECD) reported that British independent schools achieved the best results in the world.

There are some, limited, sources of financial aid for pupils who show particular promise, generally in the form of bursaries and scholarships from individual schools. These, it should be noted, are for students who show a definite talent or strength. Prior to 1997, there was a scheme, the Government Assisted Places Scheme, which enabled bright pupils from less affluent backgrounds to attend independent schools, but this was abolished in 1997 and, to date, has not been reinstated by the government.

According to the ISC, very few of their schools are recognized for the placement of “statemented” children by local authorities. This means that if a child has received a “statement of special needs” from the Local Education Authority (LEA), and the parents subsequently want to place that child in an independent school, and further, request financial assistance from the LEA, that authority must apply for consent from the Secretary of State for Education prior to the placement, if the school has not been approved under the 1996 Education Act. Even when a child is entered into an independent school without any financial subsidy from the LEA, the authority retains the right to establish satisfaction with the placement and to monitor the child’s needs and ensure that these are being met (ISC, 2003).

Statementing for Special Needs

The Statementing process, by which a child is declared eligible for special needs support, is a complex procedure. A "statement" means a statement of a child's special educational needs made under Section 324 of the Education Act of 1996, a revision of which is incorporated under the Statutory Instrument 2001, No. 3455, the Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) Regulations 2001, clearly delineating the process, condition, safeguards, categories, and timelines. Once the decision has been made that a child undergo the statementing process, assessors have 10 weeks to complete any agreed and approved evaluation. The process calls on expertise frequently external to the school setting (for example an LEA psychologist) and the specially qualified personnel serve multiple schools, which can cause delays.

The reality is that many independent schools do provide education for children who have special needs, disabilities, or illnesses and make this clear in their prospectuses. The schools state that their concern is that children who have disabilities are not penalized academically as a result of those handicaps (ISC, 2003). However, the stipulation is that the difficulties these children have do not necessitate a statement of special education needs under the Education Act of 1996 (DfES, 2003).

Attention Deficit

> The educational success of children with Attention Deficit Disorder involves not only a well-documented behavioral technology, but also the presence of teachers actively and willingly engaged in the process of working with ADHD students and an administration that supports identification and interventions. (Barkley, 1998, p. 459)

Children with attention deficits attend all categories of available schools. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in children is rapidly becoming one of the most frequently diagnosed and, many would argue, over-prescribed pediatric disorders in the United States and now, increasingly in the United Kingdom. It is certainly one of the most fiercely debated (Baldwin & Cooper, 2000; Norris & Lloyd, 2000; Carey, 2002). Barkley (1990) counseled that in actuality the numbers of children with ADHD might not be increasing, but that the detection and diagnosis may be. Yet, there is a caveat that the generally acknowledged characteristics of the condition may be confused with the characteristics demonstrated by those who have difficulty with behavioral functioning, such as conduct dysfunction (Frick, Kamphaus, Lahey, Loeber, Christ, Hart & Tannenbaum, 1991). Whatever the etiology, students who display commonly recognized attributes of the condition are in evidence in both independent and state school settings in the United Kingdom.

According to Reid, Maag and Vasa (1993), the condition is diagnosed differently in the United States than in Britain and France, to the extent that a child is 50 times more likely to be diagnosed in the United States than in these two other countries. They attribute this inconsistency to differences in orientation to the assumed etiology of the condition, which may have resulted from disparities in perceptions of the underlying root of the condition. Whereas the United States has espoused a medical-disease model, i.e. that the causes are internal to the individual, Britain and France assume the approach that ADHD is a function of the constructed world, that the root causes can be attributable to external factors which exist within the person's environment.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is the diagnosis ascribed to those who demonstrate a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequently displayed and more severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development (American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-IV-TR, 2000). Although there are no completely definitive answers to date, there is research that has demonstrated that ADHD has a very strong neurobiological basis (Barkley, 1997, 1998; Swanberg, Passno & Larimore, 2003). It is described as a neurobiological condition, which, progressively, is being demonstrated to have strong evidence of hereditary (genetic) links and is gradually becoming more recognized in children of varying ethnicities and in countries and cultures other than the United States (McBurnett et al., 1993; Barkley, 1997, 1998; Smith 1999). As the number of students who demonstrate the characteristics of difficulty with exercising sustained attention is increasing at all socio-economic levels and across cultures, questions and dilemmas for those who teach them are posed (Barkley, 1998; Fine, 2001; Meyer, 2005), and children who have attentional difficulties may be differentially viewed, depending on their socio-cultural context (Tripp, Luk, Schaughency, & Singh, 1999; Vance & Luk, 2000).

Inattention is defined as age-inappropriate poor attention span, *hyperactivity* as age-inappropriate increased activity in multiple settings, and *impulsivity* refers to the tendency to act impetuously and thoughtlessly. It should be borne in mind that occasionally most children will present characteristics generally attributed to ADHD and that, "this recognition may account for much of the controversy surrounding the disorder" (Schlozman & Schlozman, 2000, p. 28).

The DSM-IV-TR (2000) provides guidelines to be observed when diagnosing ADHD in childhood. A child must demonstrate six out of nine symptoms of inattention and six out of nine hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms for a minimum of six months prior to the age of seven, and these behaviors must be evident in two or more settings. Barkley (1998) wrote that he believes there are wide variations in the age of onset and that some children do not develop the symptoms until late childhood or adolescence, but why this should be remains uncertain. The caution is that the symptoms must not be attributable to other disorders. However, despite the clarity of the criteria, the diagnosis of ADHD is not always a simple matter (Dobson, 2000). According to Snider, Busch, and Arrowood (2003), there is still much to be understood about the character of attention difficulties and about the implications for how the condition is diagnosed and treated.

Estimates with regard to the percentage of children who demonstrate the condition vary, dependent on the source. Barkley (1998) contends that between 2% and 9.5% of schoolchildren worldwide have ADHD, and that researchers have identified the condition in the populations of every nation and ethnicity studied. Dobson (2000) reported that in England and Wales, the latest guidance from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) reported that an estimated 1% of English and Welsh school aged children aged 6 to 16, approximately 69,000, met the diagnostic criteria for combined type attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Of the number diagnosed, in 2000, about 48,000 were receiving medical remediation. Although the NICE report basically endorsed the use of methylphenidate hydrochloride to address the condition, it also recommended that if improvement of symptoms were not observed within a short time frame, administration of the drug should be discontinued.

Barkley (1998, p. 66) wrote that researchers had found that ADHD may have a genetic underpinning, and that, “ADHD is not a disorder of attention, per se, as had long been assumed. Rather, it arises as a developmental failure in brain circuitry that underlies inhibition and self-control. This loss of self-control in turn impairs other important brain functions crucial for maintaining attention, including the ability to defer immediate rewards for later, greater gain.”

Initially, there were two distinct types of attentional deficit identified: the first being "inattentive type," or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), and the second being "inattentive with hyperactivity," or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). However, currently, it is suggested that there may be as many as six sub-types (Incorvaia, Mark-Goldstein & Tessmer, 1998): quiet; overactive; overfocused; a combination of these three; depressive; anxiety; and explosive, types.

Barkley (1997) stated that ADHD is not intentionally defiant inattentiveness, but is the lack of a sense of time, of problem-solving ability, of the inability to use information to achieve purposeful goals, and is biologically and genetically determined. In short, it is an inability to stay on task or control emotions when alternate, more stimulating, options are available. Those who have ADHD are unable to immediately anticipate hazards or consequences for their actions; they also crave immediate gratification, often to the exclusion of generally held parameters.

He illustrated this claim further by describing an extensive dual study of twins undertaken by researchers at the University of Oslo and the University of Southampton in England. The study involved 526 identical twins who had inherited identical genes and 389 fraternal twins whose genetic similarities were no more similar than that of siblings born at different times. The findings were that ADHD has a heritability approaching 80 percent, which means that up to 80 percent of the differences in attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity between those who have the disorder and those who do not, can be explained by genetic factors.

In contrast to the conclusions of those researchers who adhere to the belief that there is a definite neurological source to which attention deficits can be ascribed, in November 1998, a National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) Consensus Report declared that no totally persuasive evidence that an identifiable neurological biochemical difference exists between children who have been diagnosed as having attention difficulties and other children. The report went on to say that although the prevalence of ADHD in the United States had been described as three to five percent, a wider range of prevalence had been reported across studies.

Although ADHD is one of the most commonly diagnosed behavioral disorders of childhood, claims have been made that the condition is being overdiagnosed and there is overuse of stimulant medication treatment (Breggin, 1999). In contrast, Kewley (1998) disparages this notion and argues that the condition is both underdiagnosed and undertreated in the United Kingdom.

Barkley (1998) wrote that, “The educational success of children with ADHD involves . . . the presence of teachers actively and willingly engaged in the process of working with ADHD students and an administration that supports identification and intervention for ADHD” (p. 459). He elucidated other key factors influencing the hoped for academic success of children with attentional deficits as being how teachers and the home collaborate. He offered that a vital consideration to support the level of effectiveness of school interventions is the relationship that exists between the school and the home. He wrote that when both teachers and parents have realistic goals and are prepared to work with the condition, effective collaborations are to the advantage of the child. However, alternately, when conflicts between the school and the home can significantly compromise a child’s progress.

ADHD and the United Kingdom

In Great Britain, where the condition is gaining in recognition, controversy continues to exist as to the reality of this disorder as well as to the appropriateness of treatment (Baldwin & Anderson, 2000; Norris & Lloyd, 2000; Carey, 2002). To one extreme, there are those who argue that the rise to prominence of attention deficit has been engineered by the psychiatric-pharmaceutical cartel (Baldwin & Anderson 2000; Baughman, 2004) and Baughman has authored a website at http://www.adhdfraud.com which offers links to additional sites supporting this notion and claiming to be able to explode the “myth,” and it was cautioned that the fiscal and global nature of the pharmaceutical industry should not be underestimated when evaluating the dynamics of ADHD diagnosis and treatment. Baldwin and Anderson (2000) claimed that pediatricians and psychologists in the United Kingdom have colluded with the pharmaceutical industry to maintain the fiction that the condition of attention deficit is a biochemical brain dysfunction which is most appropriately treated with amphetamines. Baldwin and Cooper (2000) argued that hyperactivity disorders are reversible, socially constructed conditions and can be optimally treated with psychosocial interventions. They totally rejected the idea of treatment through the use of amphetamines. Kewley (1998) disputes this psychosocial approach which promotes the notion that poor parental discipline is the root cause of most children’s behavioral problems. Disagreement about the condition, its causes and management continues to simmer in Britain with (among others) psychologists, psychiatrists, and general practitioners.

Baldwin and Anderson (2000) further argued that the rate of pharmacological intervention has increased fifteen-fold in the United Kingdom, from 6,000 National

Health Service (NHS) prescriptions per year in 1994, to 92,000 in 1997, increasing to 131,000 by 1999. Since 1999, the number of prescriptions for methylphenidate hydrochloride (Ritalin) has risen to 157,900. The figures, according to Norris and Lloyd (2000) showed a 2,000 per cent increase in prescription issuance from 1991 to 1996, a massive increase. Smith (2000) elaborated by adding that these prescriptions cover some 21,000 children, but that the estimation could be miscalculated as official statistics (based on pharmacy returns) do not include those prescriptions given by private practitioners, young offender centers, or residential homes.

In contrast, a study which was undertaken by Rapport, Denney, DuPaul, and Gardner (1994) concluded that the use of appropriate therapeutic interventions significantly improved or stabilized the classroom behaviors of the majority of students who displayed attentional deficit symptoms. Hence, it could be assumed that appropriate, individualized, therapeutic interventions have a beneficial impact on students whose condition frequently leads to low self perceptions both academically and socially (Tabassam & Grainger, 2002).

Goldman, Genel, Bezman, and Slanetz, (1998), from the Council on Scientific Affairs of the American Medical Association, were charged with researching the National Library of Medicine database to review studies reported from 1975 to March 1997. They presented their findings, saying there existed little evidence of widespread over-diagnosis or misdiagnosis of ADHD. In opposition to the claims of Breggin (1999), who contended after considerable research and deliberation, there exists misdiagnoses, over-diagnoses, and over-prescription of methylphenidate hydrochloride (ritalin) and other medications commonly used to treat the condition, the American Medical Association (AMA, 1998) concluded that this is not the case (in the United States).

At one time, the prevailing belief was that only children were afflicted with the disorder, but according to NIMH (1996), it is a condition that a considerable percentage of the population will carry into their adult lives. Barkley (1998) referenced a 1970s study of 158 children, of whom two-thirds continue to demonstrate the disorder in their adult lives. He added that, although many no longer fitted the clinical description for ADHD, they continued to have significant adjustment difficulties in multiple settings.

Not all children who exhibit the characteristics of ADHD have been given the diagnosis, nor will they, as their symptoms may not be at the level where medical intervention is prudent or sought. There are proponents who advocate that while ADHD is not caused by poor parenting, it can be influenced by both good and poor parenting. The condition can, however, push teachers, just as it can good parents, to cope badly. Barkley (1990) and Arcelus, Munden, McLauchlin, Vickery and Vostanis (2000) discount the suggestion that ADHD could be caused purely by environmental or social conditions, an argument questioned by Ross (1992) who implied that the condition might be brought about by modeling provided by parents and siblings (Davison & Neale, 1994).

Boys are at least three times more likely to develop the condition than girls, and some studies have found males outnumber females at a rate as high as nine to one (Barkley, 1998). This might be attributable to the fact that males are more prone to contract disorders of the nervous system.

Contrary to some beliefs, children who have difficulty with attention are able to pay attention. Their ability to attend can be dependent on the task that they are being asked to undertake as well as the environmental setting. “Their problems have to do with what they are being asked to pay attention to, for how long, and under what circumstances. It’s not enough to say that a child has a problem paying attention. We need to know where the process is breaking down for the child” (Fowler, 2002, p. 3).

Many teachers are convinced that the problematic behaviors demonstrated are simply excuses for inappropriate behaviors and are often unsure of appropriate ways of providing apposite learning experiences (Smith, 1999). However, according to Tabassam and Grainger (2002), those students who have attention and focus impediments, tend to suffer from issues of low academic and non-academic self worth when compared to their peer groups. Barkley (1995) recommends that children who have this disorder are better served in a class with a lower pupil-teacher (PTR) of 12 – 15 and adds that this can be achieved by the engagement of classroom aides, team teaching, and the use of parent volunteers, if the schools are not already geared to low PTRs. Barkley (1998) and other researchers advocate that it is vital for the success of these children that the educators who work with them have an understanding of the condition and the special learning needs associated with it. Behavioral support is a critical, integral part of the learning program.

Scuitto, Terjesen and Frank (2000) suggest that it is vital that teachers be educated with regard to the characteristics of ADHD. For educators, understanding the special learning needs of students with ADHD plays a crucial part in designing appropriate educational programs and in providing needed behavioral support (Brock, 1998). Information on the many instructional practices and accommodations that have proven effective with students with ADHD may also help educators maximize the possibilities for students' academic, social, and behavioral success (DuPaul & Stoner, 1994).

Teachers' Knowledge of ADHD

Attention Deficit Disorder with or without Hyperactivity is the most commonly diagnosed psychiatric disorder of childhood (National Institutes of Health [NIH] Consensus Statement, 1998; Snider et al., 2003) and is pervasive across the educational spectrum (Barkley, 1998). According to Barkley (1995, 1998), the general education teacher is the single most important factor in an ADHD child's success at school. The level of teachers' knowledge of ADHD, which influences and informs their instructional practices, has a significant impact on the education of students with ADHD (West, Taylor, Houghton & Hudyma, 2005).

Once children begin school and the daily demands of the educational setting, such as being able to sit, attend, and engage, are put upon them, difficulties with children's regulatory skills are intensified (Snider et al., 2003) and it is in this setting that the most damaging effects of the condition can be observed (Pfiffner & Barkley, 1998, MTA Cooperative Group, 1999). As problematic behaviors become increasingly apparent at this time and as they interfere with the child's progress in school, this is when such behaviors are most likely to be questioned and the diagnosis of ADHD given (Pelham, Gnagy, Greenslade, & Milch, 1992; Barkley, 1998). Yet, according to Reid, Vasa, Maag, and Wright (1994), there is little information on the effects of this condition within the school setting.

Although there is a reported significant increase in the diagnosis of ADHD, there are a limited number of reported studies that examine how teachers understand the condition, the extent of their knowledge of attentional deficits, and their attitudes towards the education of students who have the disorder (Reid et al., 1994; Frankenberger &

Aspenson, 2000; Snider et al., 2003). Significant factors crucial to the success or failure of students with this disorder are teachers' knowledge of the condition, their perceptions of students who have it, and their ability to affect apposite interventions (Reid et al., 1994; Kos, Richdale & Jackson, 2004). The attitudes, expectations, perceptions, and beliefs of those involved in the education of children with ADHD, have a direct effect on such children. Additionally, teachers' attitudes and knowledge influence classroom practices that, in turn, can affect the performance of students with ADHD (Greene, 1992; DuPaul, Stoner & O'Reilly, 2002; Belke, 2004; Kos et al., 2004). The knowledge of teachers who work with students who have this condition is crucial to their educational success (Pfiffner & Barkley, 1990; Barkley, 1998; DuPaul et al., 2002). Pfiffner and Barkley (1990, p.501) wrote that, "The actual initial target of intervention is the teacher's knowledge of and attitude toward the disorder of ADHD." In a 2002 article, Barkley wrote, "Among the available treatments . . .the education of teachers about the disorder, psychopharmacology, ...classroom behavior modification, methods and academic interventions, and special educational placement appear to have the greatest efficacy or promise of such for dealing with children who have ADHD" (p. 42).

Pfiffner and Barkley (1998), Sciutto, Terjesen and Frank (2000), and Snider, et al., (2003) propounded that by and large, teachers do not have a good understanding of ADHD, its nature, course, causes, or ultimate effects. These findings were echoed in the Brook, Watemberg and Geva (2000) study which found that teachers' knowledge of ADHD is inadequate and that years of teacher experience did not influence the level of knowledge of the disorder. Mastropieri and Scruggs (2000) suggest that general educators receive limited preparation to meet the academic needs of students with special needs, of which, attentional deficits is the most frequently encountered.

Findings of other research (West, Taylor, Houghton, & Hudyma, 2005) indicate that teachers' knowledge of the causes of attentional disorders was greater than their knowledge of the characteristics, which was greater than their knowledge of treatment. Special education teachers appear to have the greatest knowledge and be the most tolerant of the condition, followed by general education teachers, with specialist teachers demonstrating the least tolerance (Brook et al., 2000, Hepperlen, Clay, Henly & Barke, 2002).

Kasten, Coury, and Heron (1992) reported teachers' knowledge of medical interventions as limited and that 96 percent of teachers indicated having received little or no training regarding stimulant medications frequently used as a prophylactic measure for ADHD, 50 percent had no knowledge of possible side effects, and 21 percent believed that taking prescribed medications could result in future drug addiction. The main source of their knowledge was reported as coming from literature dealing with the subject, courses, and talks (Brook et al., 2000). Despite the information from literature and courses, many teachers continue to believe that attention deficit is the result of parental "spoiling" (Brook et al., 2000), inadequate or inappropriate diet, sugar ingestion, or additives. Some do not believe it is biologically based, and ascribe to the belief that most children will outgrow the condition as they approach adulthood (Jerome et al., 1994).

Accurate diagnosis is essential and medical providers require information regarding behaviors from varying sources. Although teachers are not qualified to diagnose the condition (Snider, Frankenberger & Aspensen, 2000), they are in a position to observe student behaviors in a variety of settings within the school, and as such, play a significant role in the provision of diagnostic information to health professionals, which either supports, or does not support, the diagnosis of the disorder (Barkley, 1990; Kasten et. al., 1992; Barkley, 1998; Snider et al., 2003; Kos et al., 2004).

In 1994, Jerome, Gordon, and Hustler conducted a comparative study of Canadian and American teachers' knowledge of, and attitudes towards, students with attention deficits. Results indicated that overall, while teachers have a relatively good basic knowledge of the condition, 89% of American and 99% of Canadian teachers said that they had received little or no training about ADHD prior to taking up their teaching posts, although each group reported they believed it a legitimate special education problem. Only 14% reported that they had dialogue with professionals external to the schools about the condition and/or their students. A similar study was conducted by Sciutto et al., (2000) whose findings regarding teachers' basic knowledge about ADHD indicated a relationship to past experience of working with children with the condition. They asserted that the number of years of teaching experience related positively to knowledge of ADHD, which contrasted with the findings of Brook et al. (2000) who noted that years of experience did not influence their level of knowledge. Kos et al., (2004) indicated mixed results, with teacher average ADHD knowledge scores differing across studies.

It has been reported that generally, teachers have inadequate training to cope with students who have special needs (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000; Salend, 2001) and often lack confidence in their own skills and knowledge, all of which lessens their confidence in implementing appropriate modifications and accommodations for affected children. The combination of lack of training and lack of knowledge of the condition is significant and, arguably, would have a decided impact on the educational opportunities offered to students with attentional difficulties (Schumm & Vaughn, 1992).

Teacher Beliefs, Expectations, and Attitudes

Beliefs

The beliefs that teachers hold are fundamental to what they do (Collinson, 1996; Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991; Pajares, 1992; Jordan, Kircaali-Iftar & Diamond, 1993; Jordan, Lindsay & Stanovich, 1997; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998). The term *beliefs* is, " . . . a term usually used to refer to teachers' pedagogic beliefs, or those beliefs of relevance to an individual's teaching" (Borg, 2001, p.187). She sums beliefs as being, ". . . a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behavior" (p.186). Teachers may have "set" ideas about how students learn presented material that are justified and help with understanding the reality of the classroom, but, existing side by side, are those students who do not learn in the traditionally accepted way of learning (Orton 1996).

Teacher beliefs and expectations govern their preferences and actions and Collinson (1996) found that beliefs can both inhibit and facilitate student achievement. Beliefs must be inferred from what people intend, say, and do (Pajares, 1992) who found "a strong relationship between teachers' educational beliefs and their planning, instructional decisions, and class practices" (p.326) and further, that their preservice beliefs are critical to their acquisition and interpretation of knowledge and their consequent teaching behaviors. He contended that, "beliefs are far more influential than knowledge in determining how individuals organize and define tasks and problems and are stronger predictors of behavior" (p.311).

Teachers' beliefs provide insight into why they act as they do, as held beliefs, whether implicit or explicit, influence behavior (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1995). These beliefs and student learning are related through teacher mediated classroom activities (Orton, 1996). Beliefs affect teacher/student interactions and those teachers who have a stronger sense of personal competency and are more secure in their own knowledge are less apt to criticize students when interacting with them than those who feel less confident (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). It was determined that such positivity leads teachers to hold higher expectations, which, in turn, leads to greater achievement for students whom they teach (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Collinson (1996) wrote that, "Teachers' beliefs are linked to their instructional decisions" (p. 5) and that the beliefs they hold are fundamental to what they do. There are considerable ramifications for teachers' beliefs and attitudes as they have such wide-ranging effects, not only for instructional determinations and interactions (Bandura, 1986; Ashton, 1985), but for their influence on the willingness of teachers to ask for professional support and knowledge, particularly if they believe that the information they are given is not compatible with what they already believe (Collinson, 1996).

When addressing the issue of children with disabilities, some researchers have found that those teachers who have more teaching experience actually have less positive attitudes towards working with them (Forlin, Hattie, & Douglas, 1996; Hastings & Oakford, 2003). In their 1991 research, Jordan-Wilson and Silverman established that teachers differ both in their attitudes and beliefs towards those students who have learning challenges and are "at risk." There are a profusion of studies which have found that teachers are more disposed to work with students whose disabilities are mild (Hastings & Oakford, 2003). Educators show a preference to working with those who have learning disabilities rather than those whose behaviors are problematic and disruptive. As the range of student needs increase, general education teachers have consistently reported that they are not well prepared to serve them (Schumm, Vaughn, Haager, & McDowell, 1995).

All teachers are required to further the learning of subject matter. To promote the internalizing and processing of that which is being and has been taught, it is incumbent upon teachers to devise situations that will foster such growth and development in the learners' minds, regardless of who those learners are (Orton, 1996). If teachers are to provide an education which meets students' needs, they must ensure that they cater to all whose education is in their hands.

There is general agreement that beliefs held by teachers influence their sense of awareness and judgment, and these, in turn, influence how instruction is delivered (Bandura, 1986; Ashton, 1985). Myriad factors have an influence on how beliefs about how to teach are formed, including the teacher's previous personal experiences (Raths, 2001). Nespor (1987) reflected that it was highly possible that past experiences play a role in how teachers execute their teaching practices. He reasoned that teachers' beliefs play a significant part in how they define tasks and select strategies in the classroom because, unlike other forms of knowledge, beliefs can be flexibly applied to new problems. Kennedy's 1997 study (as cited in Raths, 2001) agreed with the idea that, at least in part, teachers' beliefs are brought to teaching from past experiences. Teachers have firm convictions about the role of education, about differences in individual performance, and about what is right and what is wrong. Richards and Lockhart (1996) articulated that, "Teachers' belief systems are founded on the goals, values, and beliefs teachers hold in relation to the content and process of teaching, and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it" (p. 30).

As effective teaching is a critical element of the educational process for all students, it is a requisite of all who teach that the quality of instruction that they provide for their students be of quality. In the process/product model, teachers' beliefs about teaching are justified by examination of students' scores and measuring gains made. However, teachers who are successful believe that students' needs, interests, ideas, and strengths must be factored into classroom planning and instruction design.

Children, who find it difficult to focus, present challenges that are unique to the child and frequently challenging for the teacher. Academic success for these students can be helped or hindered dependent on the beliefs that teachers hold (Bandura, 1986; Ashton, 1985). Teachers, whose students are not performing well regardless of the base cause, may attribute that failure to external dynamics and not to a debatable approach to the student (Raths, 2001). To successfully engage all students, but in particular those who have learning challenges, whatever those may be, the culture of the school and the beliefs it espouses is of great importance. Teachers have to believe that active discussions with colleagues and other professionals, who may be able to shed insight into what is happening and proffer possible solutions, is not detrimental to themselves as educators, but serves to expand their personal repertoire and hopefully facilitate successful engagement of the student (Barkley, 1998).

Raths (2001) suggested that getting a faculty to agree upon a set of beliefs to which they could all subscribe and which each member would be prepared to internalize would be extremely challenging. It was further cautioned that the more important a belief is to an individual, the more difficult it is to change and beliefs are nurtured through the experiences of life. Positive leadership provided by school principals to encourage interactions between professionals is a critical contributing factor for the success of challenged students (Jordan & Stanovich, 1998). As the range of student needs in the general education classroom increase, it is those teachers who cleave to interventionist beliefs who are more accepting of increasingly diverse classroom populations (Stanovich & Jordan, 1998).

Teacher Expectations

"If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas, 1928, p.571).

Teachers' expectations for students could be defined as how teachers believe each student can perform and of what each student is capable (Good, 1987; Good & Brophy, 2003). Teacher beliefs and behaviors and student outcomes are components that comprise expectations, and pedagogical decisions which teachers make and the subsequent learning opportunities which are provided can be influenced by the expectations teachers hold for their students (Good & Brophy, 1997; Rathvon, 1999). "Literature on motivation and school performance in younger children suggests that expectations shape the learning experience very powerfully" (Schilling & Schilling, 1999, p. 5).

Expectations exert great influence on both teacher and student behaviors and can raise or lower outcomes for both teachers and students dependent on the nature of the expectation (Lumsden, 1997; Tauber, 1998; Miller, 2001), and the ways in which teachers interact with their students can be affected by their expectations for them (Good & Brophy, 2000). Generally, teachers' expectations for students reflect the belief that students will behave in particular ways. In short, they affect student learning and these expectations can have an effect in areas other than achievement – motivation, aspiration level, self-concept, and ultimately, life (Brophy, 1983,1986; Wong & Wong, 1991). Yet Goldenberg (1992) cautioned that it appears that expectancies are more the result than the cause of student performance and achievement (p. 520), and that research has shown it to be an area of immense intricacy. He argues “We are long past the point where the simplistic proposition ‘higher expectations will lead to higher achievement’ can be uttered without severe qualification” (p. 521).

Teacher expectations have been studied over the last several decades. Following earlier research undertaken by Merton (1948), who purported that a misleading definition of circumstances encourages a new behavior, culminating in results which endorse the original erroneous claim, Rosenthal & Jacobson (1968) examined how teachers perceived low and high achieving students and what the subsequent expectations were for each child. They found that teacher interactions with students vary dependent on their expectations of and for that child. They theorized that if teachers’ expectancies for students could be raised, how they interacted with individual children would be different, resulting in greater student performance. They devised an experiment to demonstrate their claims which resulted in much controversy. The study was based on providing teachers inaccurate information about the academic potential of certain students. The teachers were told that following IQ tests, the selected students were found to be on the verge of “blooming” academically, or, about to attain rapid intellectual growth. In actuality, students had been randomly selected and were not on the verge of “blooming.” Interestingly, at the end of the study period, the target students were found to have significantly improved test scores which were inconsistent with what would have been expected given their actual level of ability. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) claimed that this increase in test scores was due to teacher behaviors which were tailored to meet the needs of children whom they believed to be on the threshold of intellectual growth.

Rosenthal addresses an “unexpected finding” following his Pygmalion study in his contribution to Aronson’s (2002) book, reflecting on the classroom behaviors of the children in the study. At the conclusion of the study, he wrote that teachers who had participated described the student subjects as “having a better chance of becoming successful in the future, as more interesting, curious, and happy. There was a tendency, too, to see these children as more appealing, adjusted, and affectionate, as less in need of social approval” (p. 32). Children were perceived as being more intellectually alive and experienced and exhibited a greater sense of autonomy. Although the “Pygmalion” study had technical defects and the veracity of its findings have been repeatedly questioned, it did raise the issue of the possible power of expectations. The maxim “students will rise to the level of expectation, or stoop to meet it,” is commonly heard in schools.

According to many researchers, high teacher expectations correlate with higher student achievement and, predictably, lower expectations for students correlate with lower achievement (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Good, 1981; Raffini, 1993; Tucker & Codding, 1998). Goldenberg (1992) and Rhodewalt and Tragakis (2002) reflected that teachers have higher expectations for students who are more academically oriented and motivated than they do for those who do not display such characteristics, in which case, for these children, their expectations are lowered. Low expectations can lead children to believe that their failure is caused by their lack of ability and that there is little that can be done to redress their failure and change it into success (Brophy, 1985).

Research on the relationship between expectations teachers hold for students and student performance indicate that teachers' expectations of student ability influence student performance (Klopott & Martinez, 2004). Yet Alvidrez and Weinstein (1999) caution that there are researchers who suggest that the greatest effects are student, rather than teacher, driven (p. 732), adding that the judgments teachers make about children's cognitive abilities very early in their academic lives have a predictive relationship with their school achievement. Student ability is the main focus of teachers as it is perceived as being the greatest foundation for academic success (Cotton, 1989; Rhodewalt & Tragakis 2002). Good (1981) proposed a model by which teacher expectations can be explored:

- Teachers expect certain behaviors, performance, and achievement from students
- Students are treated based on these expectations
- How the teacher treats the student guides students how they are expected to act (affecting their motivation and self-concept)
- The behavior of the teacher may form the students' future motivation and achievement
- As time goes by, the student is increasingly likely to behave in a fashion delineated by what the teacher demonstrates is expected of them

Good (1981, p. 417) found that, "This differentiating behavior affects and, over time, will shape students' self-concepts, achievement motivation, and levels of aspiration." These expectations can be expressed through variations in learning opportunities, dyadic interaction patterns, and differences in socioemotional climate afforded to students who have different capabilities (Kuklinski & Weinstein, 2001).

Children will incorporate the evaluations they perceive parents and teachers hold about them into their own self-judgmets (Danielson, 1996; Tiedemann, 2000). Expectations have a profound effect on student achievement (Bamburg, 1994), as students internalize the perceived expectations teachers hold for them (Raffini, 1993, Bamburg, 1994, Rathvon, 1999). Hersh and Walker (1983) contended that there are specific, teacher-preferred behaviors; self-control, responsibility, cooperation, and compliance which they termed the "model behavior profile." When students engage in these behaviors, more effective instruction can take place.

Variations in teacher expectations can lead to disparities in what is taught, leading to differences in what the learner does or does not learn (Cotton, 1989), and a commonly held trait of highly effective teachers is their persistence in holding uniformly high expectations for all students (Good, 1981; Omotani & Omotani, 1996). However, holding high academic expectations for students must be accompanied by the provision of educational opportunities which are designed to promote student success. If expectations are in place without a concomitant instructional program, frustration, rather than performance and achievement, is likely to be the result (McLaughlin, 1995; Rathvon, 1999).

Teacher behaviors differ according to their expectations for students, whether teachers are cognizant of their actions or not (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Goldenberg, 1992; Bamburg, 1994). They interact differently with students whom they perceive as bright and those whom they believe to have less ability, thus students are subjected to what Bamburg (1994) describes as "educational predestination," which is that a child's innate ability is believed to be the principal determinant of academic success (Alvridez & Weinstein, 1999). Research has established that information provided to teachers before they have met or worked with students, has an effect on how they perceive their students and, dependent on the content of the information, expectations of them are influenced, either positively or negatively (Rolison & Medway, 1985; Tauber, 1998; Alvidrez & Weinstein, 1999). Bandura (1986) examined the notion of expectations and cautioned that serious limitation of expectation may occur if they are based on previous outcomes. Teachers may fail to consider other factors which are part of who the student is, such as their socio-economic background, their home living arrangements, and the occupation (if any) of their parents.

Ferguson (2003) proposed that biases exist because teachers invariably consider past experiences with students who have similar characteristics, behaviors, and abilities when they regard and evaluate current students. Hence, a “label” makes a difference and such labeling can be particularly detrimental for children who have learning or behavioral difficulties (Rolison & Medway, 1985). A study by Richey and Ysseldyke (1983) examined whether a “label” affects teachers’ expectations of the younger, unknown, unmet, siblings of the students who have been “labeled.” Of concern is that results indicate that teachers do hold lowered expectations for these children, so the implications of “labeling” may have far-reaching results.

Tracking and ability grouping can affect teacher expectations and when students are assigned to different tracks, their self-perceptions and self-judgments are further affected which influences the amount of effort they will put into their academic tasks, their classroom behaviors, and the extent of their achievement (Oakes, 1996; Tucker &

Codding, 1998). A commonly held criticism is that expectations, as well as pace of learning and challenges provided, are lowered for those who are placed in such groups (Bamburg, 1994; Oakes, 1996). Fewer new learning opportunities are provided to those students who are perceived to be less capable, they are called on less frequently, asked questions which are less stimulating and probing, given less time to respond, given less feedback, and what feedback is given is brief, and are praised less for their success (Cotton, 1989; Good & Brophy, 2003).

Teachers have expectations for classes as well as for individual students and explicit teachers' positive expectations for their classes can be the vehicle to provide a focus for wide range of behaviors (Rathvon, 1999). Just as expectations may be shaped by preinformation for individual students, the same may occur for classes as total entities.

Goldenberg (1992) put forward the caveat that quality of teaching is a critical factor which can greatly affect performance outcomes and that poor instruction is likely to have a more detrimental effect on low-achieving students than on others who are higher achieving, and it is unacceptable for teachers to behave in such a way that leads to lack of academic success for students, regardless of ability (Bamburg, 1994). Most research into the area of teacher expectations has focused on the influence of student attributes and characteristics, such as gender, how students have been labeled previously, past achievement, socio-economic status, and on how teachers perceive them and form subsequent expectations for them (Podell & Soodak, 1993). They wrote that educators hold stereotypes for students, and that expectations for students who have some form of disability are far too low. However, there has been little pursuit of how the characteristics of teachers affect their expectations for student success (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Furthermore, teachers' personal beliefs about their own effectiveness and student achievement may be affected by the teachers' attitudes towards the subject being taught (Kolstad & Hughes, 1994; Miller, 2001).

Attitudes

> Because of the importance of attitudes, ability to train thought is not achieved merely by knowledge of the best forms of thought. Moreover, there are no set exercises in correct thinking whose repeated performance will cause one to be a good thinker. . . . Knowledge of the methods alone will not suffice; there must be the desire, the will to employ them. This desire is an affair of personal disposition. (Dewey, 1923, p. 29)

There are large differences in teacher attitudes and how teachers relate to students, both collectively and individually. Attitudes were operationally defined by Gagne (1985) as "a state which influences or modifies the individual choices of personal action" (p. 229) and in 1984, Gibson and Dembo undertook a study examining the relationship of successful student achievement and behavior management to teacher attitudes. They found that teacher efficacy related to teacher effectiveness and those teachers who had a strong sense of self-efficacy demonstrated behaviors that were interventionist like (Jordan,Kircaali-Iftar, & Diamond, 1993; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998).

Whereas there appears to be a significant amount of research addressing teachers' attitudes and inclusion (Schumm & Vaughn, 1992), despite considerable multiple attempts to locate research articles which specifically address the attitudes of teachers towards students with attentional difficulties, who are frequently included in general education classrooms, as opposed to teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, it has been found that a paucity of such investigations appears to exist. It has been generally acknowledged that when students with disabilities are included in general education classrooms, there are “direct implications for the educational opportunities and quality of life for students with and without disabilities” (Cook, Tankersley, Cook & Landrum, 2000, p. 118).

Teaching is a highly complex process which is influenced by both teachers’ thinking and attitudes, which are related to their behaviors (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al., 1997; Jordan et al., 2000; Gibbs, 2003). It has been suggested that anecdotal information provided by teachers implies that they are receptive to the idea of having students with mild disabilities in their classrooms; however, the caution has been raised such findings are inconsistent (Cook, Tankersley, Cook & Landrum, 2000). According to Gibson and Dembo (1984) and later DeBettencourt (1999), the beliefs, attitudes, and expectations which teachers hold influence their actions towards their students, and attitudes are affective judgments as to whether the performance of a behavior is viable or not.

The attitudes held by teachers towards students with attentional difficulties may have long reaching effects on the academic self-efficacy and subsequent success of those students (Greene, 1992; Hepperlen et al., 2002). Teachers have the dynamic ability to exert enormous influence, both positive and negative, over their students, and this ability may be considered more critical for those who have attentional difficulties as theirs is a more fragile population (Barkley, 1990; Greene, 1992). Crucial to the success of such students is the degree of support which teachers are prepared to offer to those who are faced with learning challenges (Salend & Garrick Duhaney, 1999).

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) wrote a meta-analysis of multiple attitudinal studies from 1958 - 1995. They concluded that about two-thirds of general educators support the idea of educating students with educational difficulties in the general education classroom, but this majority decreased to a minority as questions addressed more specific topics. The responses varied dependent on the category of disability and what obligations would be placed on the teacher. When dealing with the issue of teaching such children, it became evident that teachers felt inadequately prepared to work with them and that they did not always have access to adequate material, personnel support, or sufficient time to work with them (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). This was somewhat echoed by Soodak, Podell and Lehman (1998) who found that teacher responses to the topic of full inclusion of all students in heterogeneous classrooms were influenced by teacher attributes, their reaction to various disabilities, and conditions within the school. Vaughn (1999) found that although teachers want to meet the needs of all students, many feel insufficiently prepared to teach those students who have disabilities. According to Soodak et al., (1998), it is vital that the attitudes and beliefs of general education teachers are understood if the inclusion of students with learning difficulties is to be fully successful. They found that studies of these attributes are both ambiguous and open to doubt.

There are inconsistent reports on the effect of number of years of teaching experience has on teacher attitudes (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). However, there is some evidence that exists which supports the notion that teachers with more years of experience have a more negative attitude towards academically challenged students (Forlin, 1998), yet, conversely, there is evidence that this is not the case. Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden (2000) investigated the attitudes of new teachers towards serving all students in the general education classroom and found that generally their attitudes were positive, but that they had greater concerns about students who presented with challenging behaviors.

Notably, Tschannen-Moran and Garreis (2005) reflected that it has been shown that the beliefs held by school leaders, principals, affect the attitudes and performance of teachers. Further, results of a survey of general education teachers undertaken by Bender, Vail, and Scott (1995) suggest that those who have more positive attitudes towards mainstreaming of students with disabilities are more likely to use specialized teaching practices than those whose attitudes are less positive, who are, in turn, less likely to use such practices. Hutchinson and Martin (1999) indicated that there are general education teachers who are unwilling to adapt their teaching styles to meet the needs of students who have disabilities even though such adaptation is essential to the succes of such children.

Pajares (1992) recognized the basic tenet that attitudes and beliefs have to be understood, not only as they relate to each other, but in how they connect to other belief systems. According to the findings of Stanovich and Jordan (1998), the direct connection between school principals and their attitudes as to how the needs of students are addressed in the inclusive setting in heterogeneous classrooms, directly affects teaching behaviors which, in turn affects, either positively or negatively, student achievement and outcomes. They remarked that the vision, or lack of vision, of how a school could be is, in all probability, the single most relevant issue that affects the school norms that teachers subsequently internalize as subjective norms.

Efficacy

Self-Efficacy

Crucial among research reviewed is that which addresses those notions which underpin teaching practices. The construct of self-efficacy has been paid considerable attention by researchers since its initial coining by Bandura in 1977; a construct which evolved from the earlier, overarching social cognitive theory, which resulted from the previous work of Bandura, Rotter, and Mischel (as cited in Gray,1994). Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy beliefs as “people’s judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (p. 2).

Efficacy beliefs, according to Bandura (1977), can be developed from four sources of influence: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal. Mastery experiences are the strongest conduits through which self-efficacy is developed and are those actions which are performed and provide feedback relating to the success of the action. The formation of this efficacy belief is based on the degree of success or failure the person implementing the activity feels, in direct relationship to that which was attempted. This resilient sense of efficacy is developed through perseverant effort. Once people are convinced that they “have what it takes” to succeed in given endeavors, despite obstacles, they emerge stronger and more convinced of their ability.

Vicarious experiences are those provided by learning through watching others. When a person can look at another whom they consider similar to him or herself, undertake tasks and succeed through perseverance, it raises the observer’s belief that s/he can do the same. The caution is that this modeling can be both positive and negative, and just as perseverance and success can encourage increased self-efficacy, so can failure result in lowered self-efficacy.

Verbal persuasion, later referred to as social persuasion, is the third source of increasing a person's belief that they can succeed. This is when a person reacts favorably to being influenced verbally that they have the capacity to master given actions, and they become willing to exert and sustain increased effort to do so. Such persuasive boosts encourage self-efficacy to the extent that a person will try with greater enthusiasm to succeed, thus promoting the development of skills which will strengthen self-efficacy. However, the caveat was provided that verbally, it is more difficult to arouse high beliefs than to undermine them.

Physiological cues are the last source of efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1977) said that somatic and emotional conditions are relied upon when people judge their competencies. How they are feeling informs them of how they are performing on a given task. In relationship to human behavior, Bandura wrote "The stronger their perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goals people set for themselves and the firmer their commitment to them" (1989, p. 1175). Bandura (1991) noted that perceived self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief about their personal ability to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives and is influenced by two types of expectation: an outcome expectation, or, a person's estimation that a particular behavior will lead to a particular outcome, and an efficacy expectation, the belief that they can successfully accomplish the behavior necessary to bring about the outcome. Although the construct aphorized from the earlier theory, Pajares (2002) wrote that self-efficacy beliefs are at the core of social cognitive theory and that self-efficacy profoundly affects a person's decision to behave in a specific manner, affecting the choice of activities made, how much effort s/he is willing to expend, and to what extent s/he is prepared to persist in order to achieve a desired goal. Feedback enables a person to make adjustments regarding efforts and goals in order to make them more achievable. Self-efficacy can be increased by success while failure can produce the opposite effect (Bandura, 1991). Self-efficacy functions in a reciprocal relationship with a particular behavior and the environment in which that behavior occurs (Bandura, 1997). It is not a fixed ability contained by an individual's behavioral repertoire, but rather, is a generative capability in which cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral subskills must be organized and effectively arranged to serve innumerable purposes (Bandura, 1997).

Pajares (1996) suggested that self-efficacy beliefs are transferable to most academic domains and, in 1997, he defined self-efficacy as a judgment of a person's ability to perform a task within a specific domain. He maintained it is essential that individuals acquire adequate self-beliefs to aid them exercise a confident level of control over their personal thoughts, feelings, and actions, "what people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave," (Bandura, 1986, p. 25). He further described this precept as one's belief about personal ability to affect performance (Bandura, 1991) as the self-beliefs one holds affect the thought patterns which may be self-aiding or self-hindering (Bandura, 1989). Those who possess a high sense of self-efficacy are able to visualize themselves as being successful in various situations and remain task oriented even when faced by that which could be judged failure (Bandura, 1989). In short, a person's behavior can best be predicted by the beliefs they hold about their capabilities (Pajares & Schunk, 2001).

Teaching Efficacy and Personal Efficacy

Ashton and Webb (1982) saw teacher efficacy as a multi-dimensional construct within which they identified two dimensions, teaching efficacy and personal efficacy. Gibson and Dembo (1984) echoed that a teacher's personal efficacy is the belief that is held about the level of skills, abilities, and teaching behaviors which the teacher possesses that influence students' learning, which differs from teacher efficacy, which is defined as the belief the teacher holds between teaching and learning (Jordan et al., 1993, Jordan, Lindsay & Stanovich, 1997). While Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) found these notions to be interdependent, Ross (1992) found little correlation to exist between the two. Importantly, according to Dweck (1999), research has repeatedly stated that it is likely that teachers with a heightened sense of efficacy hold a more malleable sense of student ability, which may make them more receptive to working positively with students who face learning and behavioral challenges.

Teacher Efficacy

One recurrent variable highlighted in research is that of teacher efficacy, a type of self-efficacy derived from the construct hypothesized by Bandura in 1977 (Ross, 1992; Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000) and which has been "powerfully related to many meaningful educational outcomes such as teachers' persistence, enthusiasm, commitment and instructional behavior, as well as student outcomes" (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, p. 783). Bandura (1997) asserted that teacher efficacy is a teacher's ability to function at a particular level of competence and how much effort that teacher is prepared to expend getting there. Guskey (1987, p. 41) reflected on an earlier study done by the Rand Corporation, using Rotter's (1966) seminal work on locus of control and their definition of teacher efficacy, and said, "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance." Teacher efficacy can be perceived as being comprised of those beliefs that, either individually or collectively, bring about student learning. A strong link between teacher efficacy and positive teacher attributes, teaching practices, and higher student achievement exists and has been summarized as a teacher's willingness to accept responsibility for the performance of students; in other words, whether the students experience success or otherwise (Guskey, 1987; Ross, 1992; Anderson, Greene & Loewen, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998), a sentiment was echoed in relationship to students who have attentional deficits (Hepperlen et al., 2002). Woolfolk Hoy (2003) cautioned that teacher efficacy is greatly context specific; just because a teacher feels effective when teaching one group of students, does not necessarily mean that they feel the same about instructing another group which has different attributes.

Soodak et al., (1998) contend that teachers with a heightened sense of self-efficacy have more confidence in their ability to instruct and are likely to be more willing to work positively with challenged students in the classroom environment, whereas those with a lower sense of self-efficacy are less likely to be willing to do so; "the higher the sense of self-efficacy, the greater the effort, persistence, and resilience" (Pajares & Schunk, 2001, p. 42). This is of significance when considering students with disabilities as teachers with greater sense of efficacy will show more persistence with such children than those who do not. The latter will be more likely to refer students who are difficult to teach for evaluation and support by resource personnel (Podell & Soodak, 1993).

Due to the dynamic nature of teaching, to be able to practice effectively, an educator requires a sense of efficacy that exceeds straightforward subject knowledge and skills. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2002) examined the notion that teachers who have less than five years experience relate their ability to be successful with students as limited, and, by extension, to those with academic and behavioral challenges, dependent on perceived support available, such as interpersonal support and/or which resources are available.

Collective Efficacy

Collective teacher efficacy is not the same as individual teacher efficacy although they are correlated (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). Collective efficacy was argued by Bandura (1997) to be a powerful notion that varies from school to school and is linked to student achievement. He described it as, “the group’s shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments,” (as cited in Goddard, Hoy and Hoy, 2000, p 482). Goddard, Hoy and Hoy (2000) suggested that collective efficacy beliefs could be explained as teachers’ beliefs that are contributory to shaping the ethos of their schools, the outcome of which has a bearing on student outcomes. They wrote, “Because collective teacher efficacy beliefs shape the normative environment of a school, they have a strong influence over teacher behavior and, consequently, student achievement” (p. 497). Additionally, they put advocated that schools which have a strong sense of collective teaching efficacy will tend to accept increasingly challenging goals, be more persistent, and be willing to expend the effort necessary to increase the performance and achievement of its students, and those schools that demonstrate high collective efficacy show higher overall student achievement (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). The contribution of the educational leaders of schools is of great import as it is they who can lead, inspire, support, or otherwise.

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy and Special Education

Those in the world of education suggest that the beliefs held by teachers may be the singular most significant determinant and predictor of teaching practices (Pajares, 1992). Research suggests that a teacher's sense of efficacy influences myriad teaching behaviors. This is of particular significance when considering instructing students with educational challenges (Brownell & Pajares, 1999). Pajares (1996) advocated that those who research self-efficacy should scrutinize the beliefs that correspond to the "criterial" task of interest as opposed to evaluating generalized beliefs not necessarily related to the outcome, then crafting a connection between the belief examined and the specific practices to which the beliefs are compared. In their 1999 study, Brownell and Pajares hypothesized that efficacy beliefs would mediate the effects of other independent variables on the success levels of general education teachers when working with students with behavioral and learning difficulties. Gibson and Dembo (1984) found that teachers with a heightened sense of efficacy were able to provide such students required additional support to help them achieve success.

A later study by Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) reported that those educators who had a low sense of efficacy viewed challenged students negatively and relied on rigid control and extrinsic inducements to encourage engagement. Results of their study revealed that educators felt more competent teaching these students when supported by appropriate in-service specifically tailored to address students' needs, how to make modifications and accommodations, and appropriate behavioral techniques to promote success for the children. Brownell and Pajares (1999) wrote that it is clearly desirable that general education teachers feel successful when working with this population and that pre-service training in instruction and curriculum which address these issues might increase the sense of efficacy and of subsequent success of teachers when teaching and interacting with special needs populations. To meet the goals of teacher capability and success in teaching students with disabilities, regardless of the specific disability, support from administration when placing students, and with problem-solving situations which may occur, would be beneficial. An on-going sense of collegiality and the ability to dialog and confer with other professionals, particularly special education colleagues "predicts the perceived efficacy and reported success of general education teachers, building administrators will want to specifically foster this type of collegiality in their schools" (Brownell & Pajares, 1999, p. 7). Mutual support has been remarked upon as a significant factor to promote efficacious behaviors particularly when working with students with special needs.

Pathognomonic-Interventionist Continuum

> "Teachers appear to hold consistent and coherent belief systems which differ along an ordinal scale." (Jordan et al., 1993)

Teachers' beliefs have been shown to be at the hub of their instructional practices (Pajares, 1992) and their subsequent pedagogical decisions influence the learning opportunities provided by teachers for all students (Muijs & Reynolds, 2002). Teacher beliefs differ dependent on many variables, effecting different results for the students whom they teach.

"Studies dating from those of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) have suggested that teachers may differentially interact with students according to their expectations of the student's capability to respond," (Cooper, 1985 as cited in Jordan & Lindsay, 1997). Previous research has shown that although, in principle, general education teachers agree with inclusion, they are less willing to have students who exhibit difficulties in their classrooms and are less willing to implement modifications for such students (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Nevertheless, there are teachers who are successful at teaching heterogeneous classes, comprised of students who demonstrate different strengths and weaknesses, including those with special needs (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995). The majority of students who demonstrate disabilities are educated, at least to some extent, in the general education classroom and, due to this and the addition of students with diverse cultural backgrounds, teaching to the middle ground is no longer a viable option (Schumm, Vaughn, Haager & McDowell, 1995).

In 1991, Jordan-Wilson and Silverman undertook a study to examine the beliefs held by general education teachers, resource teachers, and principals with regard to the delivery of services to underachieving students. They speculated that such beliefs lie along an ordinal scale which they named the Restorative-Preventive or Pathognomonic-Interventionist Continuum. One end of this continuum is represented by the notion that any difficulty experienced by the child, exists within the child. This stance was identified as "restorative" or "pathognomonic." Those whose beliefs are consistent with this perspective feel that it is incumbent upon them to refer students who exhibit difficulties and are underachieving, for evaluation by specialist personnel as soon as possible. They perceive that the child is best served by resource personnel in a setting external to the general education classroom. When, and if, the results of the evaluation conclude that the student be found eligible for services, then the teacher's belief that the difficulty the child is experiencing does indeed exist within the child and, subsequently, the child needs specialist support and remediation, is reinforced. "Such a belief system tends to omit complex factors (e.g. instructional and teacher characteristics) which influence student performance in school (Jordan et al., 1993, p. 46). Those who subscribe to such a perspective are described as "restorative" or "pathognomonic."

At the opposite end of this continuum is the alternate belief system, identified as "preventive" or "interventionist." This end of the continuum is represented by a group of beliefs supporting the notion that when students have difficulties, such problems result from interaction between characteristics of the child and the educational environment, including instruction. Teachers whose beliefs are commensurate with this stance adhere to the belief that they are responsible for meeting student needs and are willing to modify both the environment and their instruction to create a setting that is sympathetic in order to positively reach the needs of the student. Interventionist teachers believe that most students can benefit from being educated in the general education classroom if appropriate instruction is devised and implemented (Jordan et al., 1993). Those whose beliefs would be described as "preventive" or "interventionist" are willing to implement significant interventions, accommodations, and modifications to support learner success, prior to considering referral for external evaluation. They work willingly with colleagues using a team-based approach, connect assessment to curriculum and instructional methods to support the student, and view regular communication with parents as critical

(Stanovich & Jordan, 1998). This school/home communication is paramount for students with attentional deficits in terms of behavioral and academic interventions in order that all participants in the child's school life are cognizant of the current status of the child in each setting (DuPaul & Stoner, 1994).

The results of the 1991 study showed that beliefs, about how services should be delivered to students, ranging from restorative to preventative, varied across positions. They found that on the preventative beliefs cluster, principals rated higher than teachers, and special education teachers rated higher than general education teachers. Additionally, the findings of the study showed that although teachers identified as holding restorative beliefs did not convey negative attitudes towards students with difficulties, they believed that, in actuality, these children were already separated from others due to their condition and the problems they were experiencing. This being the case, they did not feel it was incumbent upon them, as educators, to teach them along with their non-disabled classroom population.

Jordan et al. (1993) wrote that, in general, special education practices perceive a disability as innate to the individual and practices consequential to such beliefs have been labeled as medical, clinical, pathology-based or norm-referenced models which have involved a "search for a pathology" (Sarason, 1996). Teachers adhere to different perspectives about their responsibilities for working with students who have difficulties within the classroom setting (Jordan, et al., 1993) and pathognomonic-interventionist scores have been demonstrated to correlate with teacher efficacy.

In their 1997 study, Jordan et al. sought to determine whether teachers who hold different perspectives with regard to students who experience difficulties in heterogeneous classrooms, demonstrate differences in how they interact instructionally with these children, and if the ways in which they interact with them are favorable to the students. They posited that those with pathognomonic beliefs, who attribute student difficulties to inherent student characteristics, would show less interaction with these students than they would with those who were typically achieving, as opposed to those at the interventionist end, who would be likely to adapt their instruction and delivery at levels which would ensure the comprehension of involved students. Their findings upheld their hypothesis and they determined that those teachers who are more accepting of students who have deficits are more likely to address individual needs in the general education setting. "In full cognitive extension, the teacher guides rather than leads the agenda, adjusting the content and complexity of his or her questions and statements to the content and form of the student's replies" (Jordan et al., 1997, p. 91).

Examples of pathognomonic behaviors are characterized by an unwillingness to collaborate with colleagues, implementation of few, if any, interventions, modifications, or accommodations to support the student, and little linking between assessment and curriculum (Stanovich & Jordan, 1998). Additionally, pathognomonic teachers subscribe to the belief that they are obligated to accept heterogeneity in their classrooms and appear to be unwilling to try compromises either to the setting or how they implement their teaching practices and tend to work in isolation. Interventionist teachers implement accommodations and group flexibly to meet the diverse needs of learners (Stanovich & Jordan, 1998). Their findings demonstrate the importance of teacher attitudes when faced with diverse classrooms and they suggested that teaching styles, which are open to accommodate all students, can have an affect on the self-concept of students.

Greene (1995) explored the idea of teacher-student compatibility in relation to the assessment of children with attentional deficits. He described compatibility as a “goodness of fit” and posited that the goodness of fit is not only the compatibility between the child and the classroom environment, but between the classroom and the child. He believes that the notion of incompatibility between the characteristics of the teacher and the child would explain the variance in the acceptance teachers display towards both students and intervention programs.

Stanovich and Jordan (1998) reported that previous research maintained that school principals are of primary importance as the instructional leaders in the schools as it is they who institute and communicate goals and objectives to faculty. This was a further finding of their 1998 study, and they wrote that, “The strongest finding was the significant direct connection between the composite principal behavior and effective teaching behaviors,” (p. 231). They offered that the vision held by principals with regard to what a school could be, is the most important dynamic that affects school norms and these are subsequently internalized by teachers as subjective norms. It is the principal who determines the culture of the school, which may affect how teachers teach in diverse classrooms.

The studies conducted by Jordan and colleagues over the course of the 1990s demonstrated that the stance of teachers, whether pathognomonic or interventionist, pose instructional implications for the interactions between teachers and students, a notion echoed by Soodak et al., (1998), who observed that the beliefs that teachers hold with regard to their own efficacy and the roles that they play, positively affect their instructional practices. “Teachers calibrate the academic content of their interactions to cues in individual student responses which indicate the status of the student’s conceptions and misconceptions,” (Jordan & Stanovich, 2001). These positions have relevance for children who have attentional deficits as, according to Ingersoll and Goldstein (1993), the best place for interventions to take place is in the natural setting of the classroom, for although a significant incidence of children who have attentional deficits have comorbid learning difficulties, ability runs the full gamut of intellectual capacity (Barkley, 1998).

Summary

The incidence of children who display the characteristics of attentional deficits is evident at all socio-economic levels, across cultures, and in different educational settings (Barkley, 1998) and the attitudes, expectations, and beliefs held by teachers can have an effect, either positive or negative, on these students who constitute the most vulnerable section of school populations (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Good, 1981; Raffini, 1993; Tucker & Codding, 1998). Students who display the attributes of attention deficit, whether diagnosed or not, constitute a section of student populations in state (public) schools and in schools which are independent of governmental control. Such students are at risk of academic failure, and their educational success is dependent, in part, on teachers who are prepared to actively engage in working with them and who are willing to employ interventions and accommodations that will support them as they go through their academic journeys (Barkley, 1998).

The stances which teachers adopt have been identified by Jordan-Wilson and Silverman, 1991, Jordan et al., 1993, Jordan et al., 1997, and Stanovich and Jordan, 1998; as lying along a continuum, identified as the restorative-interventionist (Jordan-Wilson and Silverman, 1991) or as the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan et al, 1993, 1997; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998) and, dependent on where on the continuum they stand, teachers lean either towards internal or external approaches to support such children.

Those whose concept of self-efficacy is well developed can be categorized as interventionist, preferring to analyze the child's behaviors and needs and solicit the support of colleagues to devise strategies which will aid the child in the natural setting of the classroom. Their preferred way of business is to develop and implement approaches, modifications, and accommodations within the general education geared to engender success within that setting (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; 1997, and Stanovich & Jordan, 1998).

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy beliefs as "people's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to attain designated types of performance" (p. 2) and those who would subscribe to the interventionist cluster of beliefs on the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum could be described as possessing affirmative self-efficacy beliefs. They view problems and difficulties as challenges to be faced and overcome rather than issues about which to prevaricate or capitulate. By extension, those challenges can be construed as students who pose particular behaviors that may interfere with their engagement in the learning process.

CHAPTER III

Methods

The intent of this qualitative study was to investigate the beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of teachers in the independent (private) education sector in England in relationship to students in heterogeneous classes who display characteristics associated with attentional deficits; difficulty in focusing, undertaking, and in completing tasks in the educational setting. Not all attentional difficulties are severe and although there are students who display these characteristics who have co-morbid conditions, many do not, yet their behaviors are problematic enough to cause difficulty in the classroom. Further, the study will explore how teachers rate themselves with regard to their sense of self-efficacy (Bandura 1977, 1986, 1989, 2000; Pajares, 1996), and how efficacious they perceive themselves to be when dealing with students whose behaviors can range from mildly irritating to clearly challenging.

Two lenses were used to focus this study and view the data; the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998) and the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997, 2000; Pajares, 1996). It was the aim of this research to determine what teachers who teach in independent schools, and may not have ready access to qualified special education specialists, do to ensure that students with such difficulties achieve at a rate commensurate with individual success.

Design of the Study

According to Clough and Nutbrown (2002), "…qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality and look for answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning" (p. 19). The researcher is searching for insight about a specific phenomenon.

> What the fieldworker learns is how to appreciate the world in a different key. Early experiences and understanding of the world studied (and their representation in fieldnotes) are not data per se, but rather primitive approximations of the writer's later knowledge and perspectives of those studied. (Van Maanen, 1988, p. 118)

The number of students who are displaying difficulty with attention is increasing (Barkley, 1998; Fine 2002). However, not all children who have these difficulties have been diagnosed as having attention deficit disorder. Teachers are not universally trained to deal with these students, and not all teachers have recourse to special education trained teachers to work with them in a pull-out setting. This study looked at and endeavored to understand what teachers, who are closely accountable to the parent body who pay their salaries, do to accommodate these children.

According to Yin (2003), a case study is an empirical inquiry which investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (p.13). The qualitative case study method was used for this research because I believe it is the most suitable format for me to collect and consider data gathered in the course of the study. This study will use descriptive, thick, rich data collected from each of the schools; data from observations, interviews, questionnaires, and artifacts.

The Researcher

In toto, I have been teaching for 30 years in school settings in Scotland, England, Sierra Leone, Florida, and currently for the Department of Defense Dependents Schools in England. During my tenure with the latter, I have worked in five schools. I have taught in the middle and elementary settings, both in the general education classroom and as a specialist teacher, and am currently the Case Study Chairperson for my school. My other duties include teaching for part of the week, evaluating students who have been referred for possible special education services by either teachers or parents, liaising with medical services, and conducting eligibility and initial Individual Education Plan meetings.

Prior to my present teaching assignment, I taught a variety of subjects to students, across grade levels and into adult education, teaching students ranging in age from eight to thirty years old. In the course of my professional life, I have experienced curricular innovations, pilot programs, reviews, and changes, some marvelous, some middle of the road, across curricular areas, some short and some long-lived, and some which, upon reflection, I believe to have been exercises in futility. However, significantly lacking I have found, is the provision of on-going opportunities in the form of conferences or in-service which could help teachers to better understand and be able to assist challenged students.

Researcher Bias

Prior to teaching in a third world country, I had a limited (if any) real sense of equality or equity, and naively believed that everyone was provided with a fair and suitable education. I was unaware of what happened to students who had needs different to those of my peers or myself. My sense and interpretation of fairness emerged during the years I taught in West Africa, where it was clear that students who exhibited difficulty learning were simply excluded from the educational process – if not physically, then by being ignored for all but the simplest of tasks and responses. I did not evidence any form of support system for them. As the school in which I taught was the setting for students who had somewhat affluent parents, children were simply expected to 'pass,' and almost all did, but I questioned what life held for them and how successful they would be as they progressed into adulthood.

Initially, I believed that this inequality happened only in the third world setting, but, returning to the United Kingdom, discovered that was not the case. When I taught in a high school, I found there are many ways in which students' needs can be ignored, some subtle and some overt. Such treatment of student has, in my experience, been generally followed by a lack of achievement and been successful only in increasing frustrations and a sense of worthlessness within the student.

Throughout the years I have been teaching, myriad changes have occurred, and the law in the United Kingdom has changed, so that students' rights are protected. Additionally, teachers have become increasingly aware of what is needed to support students and their individual needs, primarily through in-service and discussion, but also via information relayed by journalists (education is always a 'hot topic'). Yet, for all that is deemed correct to happen, students with attention deficits continue to frequently prove to be difficult to engage and manage in the classroom setting, often exhibiting behaviors which are disruptive either for themselves, others, or all. I have experienced colleagues who believe that, ". . . if they can't pay attention and do as they are told, they need to be out of here," and I am conscious of the fact that this is prevalent where students who have any sort of behavioral disorder are concerned.

Inequity is not unique to socio-economic status. Attention deficit is not exclusive to any socio-economic status, but is evidenced at all levels. It is more prevalent in males than females and is a challenging condition for teachers to deal with. Children and adults who have this condition have not willed it upon themselves; it is a condition that exists and must be dealt with. As they mature, children can learn strategies that will help them, either manage or learn to manage to cope with the condition in order to lead lives which are full and complete. I believe the success or failure of students who have difficulty with attention (or exhibit characteristics of it) within the classroom setting are significantly influenced by the teacher, how the teacher interacts with them and modifies and manipulates the classroom setting, and/or curriculum to best meet their needs.

Respondents and Their Context

Several independent preparatory schools were approached and asked whether they would be willing to take part in this study. Of the six asked, five responded that they would, and of the five, three were selected as they were closest in physical proximity and, when compared, their populations were the most similar. The two which were not had single-sex populations.

Setting

This study was conducted in three small, co-educational, independent preparatory schools in the county of Suffolk, East Anglia, England, each of which service the same age-range of students and have similar size student populations. The schools are within a 50-mile radius and all are in rural settings, yet close to small towns. Each school has a main building which was originally a private house and these varied considerably in size. These houses have been added to and surrounding buildings adapted to meet the needs of the schools' expanding populations. Each school has several porta-cabins, a hall (in two schools, the hall did duty as a gym and as a cafeteria as well as serving as a gymnasium), a playground, and a playing field for sports. Parking for parents' cars is extremely limited at all three schools and parents are expected to drop children off and drive on. Each school enforces a strict traffic pattern code to ensure student safety. The principal cities in the area are Bury St. Edmunds, Newmarket, and Cambridge, all about 70 miles north of London.

Participant Sample Selection

To select participants for this study, purposeful sampling was used as the researcher must select a sample that represents the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1998). The sample of schools and teachers selected are 'representative' of the population under observation. These schools were selected as they have comparable size populations, have students in their student body whom the school identified as demonstrating attention difficulties, have similar socio-economic status profiles, and are located in similar environments. Each school is a member of the Independent Schools Council (ISC), is co-educational, and provides a similar range of services, sports, and extra-curricular activities.

Initially, I contacted the Independent Schools Council Information Service (ISCis) to look at school profiles for similarities. Once I had located three schools of approximate size and with similar profiles within the area, I contacted the head-teachers, apprised them of the spirit and rationale of the study which I wished to pursue, and requested an appointment to talk to them. These primary contacts were most helpful as I was able to explain my proposed study. At the outset, it was clarified with each head-teacher that the possible participant teachers had to have students who demonstrated observable attentional deficits as part of their class populations.

All interviews were positive and the head-teachers afforded me the time to discuss the questions I proposed to ask, the content of the questionnaires for both teachers and parents, and the needs I would have, with regard to observations and interviews and access to artifacts. Additionally, head-teachers were given the opportunity to question me about my research and clear up any issues about which they were uncertain. The concern about duty of care with regard to confidentiality was fully discussed and I explained the steps that would be taken to protect the schools and individual participants. I made it clear that initial agreement to participate in the study did not preclude the schools or individuals withdrawing their consent at any time, if they so chose. During the interviews, I gave each head-teacher a copy of the cover letter and questionnaires, which I wanted the teachers to complete, and the cover letter and questionnaire I had for parents. Teachers were given the choice by the heads whether or not they wished to participate in this study. All questionnaires for teachers were given to the schools two weeks prior to observations and interviews taking place.

Both male and female teachers were interviewed, although in one school, all participants were female. The classes were heterogeneous and class sizes were comparable, ranging from 14 to 17 students per class. Teacher experience ranged from five to 30 years; all educators were Caucasian and two of the three school populations were virtually exclusively Caucasian. In one school, the school population was more diverse, with several students from China, Hong Kong, Spain, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. Each of the head-teachers also taught as part of their daily duties.

The following are grade equivalencies in the English school system:

Year 2 or Pre Prep 4	Grade 1
Year 3 or Form I	Grade 2
Year 4 or Form II	Grade 3
Year 5 or Form III	Grade 4
Year 6 or Form IV	Grade 5
Year 7 or Form V	Grade 6
Year 8 or Form VI	Grade 7

The following table, Table 1, illustrates participant information. Fictitious names have been ascribed to each person interviewed as part of the protection owed to each individual. The names identified with an asterisk are head-teachers who also teach at least part time in their schools.

Table 1

Interview Participants

Name Years	Gender	Age Group	Ethnicity	Year/Subject	Experience
*Lydia	Female	55 – 60	Caucasian	Head & Teacher/Year 6	34
*George	Male	50 – 55	Caucasian	Head & Teacher Math and English to Forms V & VI	17
*Sybil	Female	35 – 40	Caucasian	Head & Teacher Year 5	15
Harriet	Female	45 – 50	Caucasian	Year 4	21
Maddy	Female	25 – 30	Caucasian	Year 4	6
James	Male	35 – 40	Caucasian	Year 6	11
John	Male	40 – 45	Caucasian	English to Forms III – V	22
Peter	Male	50 – 55	Caucasian	Science to Forms III – VI	27
Alys	Female	55 – 60	Caucasian	Geography & French to Forms III – VI	32
Ellie	Female	25 – 30	Caucasian	Math & Latin to Forms V & VI	5
Bridget	Female	45 – 50	Caucasian	Years 3 – 6	15
Juliet	Female	25 – 30	Caucasian	Year 3	6
Sue	Female	35 – 40	Caucasian	Year 5	12

Respondents

Each of the respondents is employed solely by the independent school at which they work and have been there for a minimum of two years. Not all are products of the independent education system, nor have all taught exclusively in this system; seven have held posts in the state (public) school system during their careers. Two of the teachers had flats (apartments) within the one of the schools, one being the head-teacher whose home was within the school, and the other was the science teacher because he has an additional duty of being a house-master. Two of the head-teachers are female and one is male. One female head-teacher was appointed to the position by the school's Board of Governors four years ago, after a career teaching in another independent school and the second female head-teacher founded her school 25 years ago. The third, male, head-teacher had a career in the army and latterly was attached to an educational development division. Prior to retirement, he took additional courses in education and management then took over his current school eight years ago. At that time, student numbers were relatively low. He has increased his school population significantly and has enrolled a number of foreign students.

Of the three youngest teachers, none were products of the independent school system, and all had taught in the state (public) school system for at least two years. Of the male teachers, two had been educated in the independent school system, and the other two had been educated in the state system. Three had taught in the both state and independent systems and the third, the head-teacher, had taught for the government when attached to the army, in a sense, in the state system. Two of the remaining six female teachers had been educated independently and one of those had taught exclusively in independent schools. Another two female teachers had also taught only in independent schools. Each of the teachers interviewed indicated that, at the present time, they did not believe they would return to state education.

Data Collection Procedures

Initial demographic information about the schools was provided by the head-teachers (principals). Additional data were gathered from ten teachers (although initially only nine were planned) during the interviews and questionnaires which they were asked to complete. Eighteen parents responded to questionnaires which were sent home. The total number of interviewees was ten teachers and three head teachers/teachers.

Questionnaires

Merriam (1988) noted that a case study can include data gathered by a survey instrument, such as a questionnaire, to ask opinions, and that responses form part of the database for the case study. Clough and Nutbrown (2002) wrote, "Generally speaking, questionnaires allow researchers to survey a population of subject with little or no personal interaction, and with the aim of establishing a broad picture of their experiences or views," (p. 118). Two sets of questionnaires were given to each head teacher for distribution to staff who volunteered to participate in this study. A cover letter requested that names not be written and that completed questionnaires be placed in a box marked 'confidential' in a pre-designated place in the staff room (faculty lounge). The first questionnaire combined was formulated to elicit opinions related to their sense of beliefs about teaching – their perceived individual abilities to meet the needs of students and their sense of efficacy, and elicit opinions related to efficacy (Appendix G). The second was based on the Achenbach questionnaire for teachers and the Test of Knowledge of ADHD (Hepperlen et al., 2002) and designed to determine teachers' levels of understanding about attention deficits (Appendix H).

Parent questionnaires and cover letters were given to teachers to send to parents. The parent questionnaires were included to verify whether the child exhibited similar behaviors out of the school setting as was evidenced within, which hopefully would exclude the possibility that the behaviors were exclusive to the school setting. Parents were asked not to write names on the questionnaires, but to note the year or form, age, and gender of their child.

Observations

Classroom observations were scheduled at least two weeks ahead to time at the teachers' convenience and were non-participatory (Spradley, 1980; Merriam, 1998). Being able to observe in the classroom afforded me the opportunity to watch closely the behaviors exhibited students in the general education setting and by teachers when interacting with students as well as allowing me to record what I had seen. All notes began with a thick, rich description of the physical set up of the classroom, date and beginning times of observations, number of students in the class, the ratio of male to female students, and seating details (for which I drew diagrams). As the observations progressed, I noted individual behaviors among students, wrote descriptions of interactions between teachers and students, and scripted much of the verbal dialog and verbal exchanges as accurately as possible. Non-verbal interactions were additional components of the observations. Classroom management styles and behaviors of teachers during and following direct instruction and notes about effective teaching practices were recorded. Observations lasted between 50 minutes to over an hour. At the end of each observation, I noted the time.

In each school I was provided with a small space in which I could work. As soon as each observation had ended, I went to the room and reviewed my notes, ensuring that I would remember the context of side-notes, being fresh enough to decipher additional scribbles while they were still fresh in my mind.

Interviews

> The purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind. We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. (Patton, 1980, p. 196)

Hughes (2000) said that people's accounts of aspects of their lives can be fascinating, as each respondent is unique. Semi-structured interviews which followed each classroom observation allowed me to listen to what teachers had to say about their beliefs and expectations for the focus children (Appendix A). It gave them the time to explain what they had done and the rationale for their actions and words. As with the observations, the interviews were planned well ahead of time, at a time of the interviewee's choosing.

All interviews took place within the field setting – either in head-teacher's studies or in classrooms, generally after school, and lasted between one and almost two hours (the longest). Each participant gave consent for the use of a small tape recorder which was placed on the desk between the interviewee and myself.

To put interviewees at ease, the first five minutes or so of each interview were used for general exchanges during which time the tape recorder was not switched on. The interview question protocol was used to lead each interview. Questions were guided, but open-ended, and each interviewee elaborated on their responses, giving a richer, more in-depth insight into what they believed. The interviews gave them the opportunity to reflect on what had happened in the classroom and provided to them the opportunity to share anecdotes, successes, and talk about concerns for students both generally and specifically. It was during the interviews that teacher demographic information was collected, including each teacher's age (if they were comfortable revealing it), level of education, previous teaching situations, and number of years teaching. The interview audiotapes were transcribed and copies were provided to each of the participants to check for accuracy. No further copies of either audiotapes or transcripts were made. Data collected were kept in a locked file cabinet at all times other than when being used for transcription.

Documents

Teachers willingly shared form letters they had sent to parents throughout the school year, their marks (grade) books, lesson plans, anecdotal notes about behaviors, and student work samples. I was provided with copies of the prospectus for each school and read their most recent Independent Schools Inspectorate Reports.

Data Analysis

According to Yin (2003, p.109), data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, or otherwise recombining qualitative evidence. During this study initial data analysis was an on-going process of examining and categorizing throughout the observation and interview processes. Data were analyzed, interpreted, and compared to the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and the concept of self-efficacy, as Merriam (1998) describes the strategy as aligning the theory with the data. "Categories and subcategories (or properties) are commonly constructed through the constant comparative method of data analysis" (Merriam, 1998, p.179).

The pathognomonic-interventionist continuum states that teachers can be placed along this continuum dependent on their stance as to whether difficulties lie solely within the child (pathognomonic) or within the environment with which the child interacts (interventionist) (Stanovich & Jordan, 1998). Teachers aligned with the pathognomonic end of the continuum do not employ interventions or modifications to the child's benefit, and do not readily seek collegial support to discuss issues regarding the child's progress or behaviors. On the other hand, those at the interventionist end of the continuum will modify and adjust activities and manipulate the classroom environment to accommodate the child and are prepared to talk to and solicit ideas from colleagues and parents, to the child's advantage. In other words, positive lines of communication are open between the interventionist teacher, colleagues, and parents.

Categories used to identify teachers' alignment on the pathognomonic end of the continuum include:

- Unwillingness to accept child's behaviors
- Lack of willingness to modify or individualize curriculum and/or tasks
- Lack of willingness to confer with colleagues to discuss strategies to support student
- Lack of data on student's progress other than that which is necessary for report cards
- Lack of communication with colleagues or parents

Behaviors which are likely to be exhibited by teachers who are on the interventionist end of the continuum are likely to include:

- Preparedness to accept child
- Willingness to modify, adapt, and individualize curriculum and tasks

- Willing to confer with colleagues to discuss strategies to support students
- Continual monitoring of progress and recording of data of both academic achievement and behavior
- Communication with colleagues
- Communication with parents and student

Bandura has written prolifically about self-efficacy (1977, 1981, 1986, 1997, 2000). He defined self-efficacy as:

> being concerned with judgments about how well one can organize and execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations which contain many ambiguous, unpredictable, and often stressful elements. (1981, p. 200-201)

He states that those who have a low perception of their self-efficacy, will avoid situations which they believe supersede their abilities. Those with a greater sense of self-efficacy will set higher goals and will welcome challenge.

According to Gibson and Dembo (1984), a teacher's sense of self-efficacy has been defined as the teacher's expectations of their own ability to instruct and meet the needs of individual students. Teachers may feel a sense of inadequacy if unable to meet the needs of all their students. There is evidence which suggests that teachers' beliefs in their ability to instruct students may account for the individual differences in teacher effectiveness (Jordan & Stanovich, 1997). Teachers, who believe they are able and capable of orchestrating the conditions within a classroom, will be more efficacious than those who doubt their own abilities, or are unwilling to do so, as their judgment of their self-efficacy will affect the choice of activities and modifications they are willing to make to deal with the increasing diversity of school populations.

Teachers were asked to complete two questionnaires. The first provided information on how teachers regarded their individual abilities to meet the needs of students and their sense of efficacy, and the second related to their current knowledge of attention deficits. Teachers were asked not to spend too long pondering over each question. All questionnaires were returned completed.

Verification

Merriam (1988) wrote that all research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner. To ensure internal validity, I adhered to the tenets and strategies espoused by Merriam (1988, 1998) and Creswell (1994) during this study. All research should have clear procedures as to how data will be gathered and interpreted, and interpretation and reporting must accurately reflect the data (Cresswell, 1994). In this research, ethical considerations, internal validity, triangulation, member checks, peer review, external validity and reliability were in place.

Internal Validity

Merriam (1998, p.201) stated that internal validity deals with the question of how a study's findings match reality and is based on the assumption that what is observed and measured matches reality. She said that data do not speak for themselves, that there is always an interpreter, that reality is a holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing phenomenon and it cannot be matched since it changes over time. Merriam (1988, p.169) and Cresswell (1994) suggested basic strategies which will increase internal validity: triangulation, member checks, long-term observation at the research site, peer examination, and clarifying researcher's biases, all of which have been used in this study.

Triangulation.

According to Yin (2003), multiple methods of collecting data constitute triangulation. He posits that a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence. Merriam (1988) suggests, "relying on one's holistic understanding of the situation to construct plausible explanations about the phenomenon being studied." (p. 169). Triangulation affords the researcher to look for common themes from the multiple sources of data.

Data for this study were collected from three separate but similar schools, through several different methods, observations, interviews, questionnaires, and from documents which the teachers shared with me. These various approaches gave a variety of measures of the same observable facts, allowing me to look for categories and trends across methods and settings.

Member Checks.

Each of the interviews was recorded with the participant's consent and transcribed. During the transcription process, I telephoned four teachers to ask for clarification on exactly what they meant, noted what was said during the conversation on the transcript, with dates. The transcriptions were then given to each interviewee along with the tape so that they could check for accuracy. It was explained to them that they could annotate further comments or delete any comments which they felt did not fully explain their intent or appeared misleading. Six of the transcripts were returned with some short annotations, and three had mild corrections made to ensure clarification, but no deletions were noted.

Peer Review.

Initially, I worked with several members of my group during the course of my research, but latterly more closely with one. We have been a mutual support one to the other, discussing thoughts, offering support, critiquing ideas, and reviewing written text. We have shared panic, clarification, and relief and through discussions, and by doing so, have processed information and charted our courses. Additionally, I have had two close colleagues, not cohort participants, who have been prepared to discuss the topics researched for this paper, shared their thoughts, and reviewed sections as I wrote them.

Long Term Observations.

The research study was made over a period of six-and-a-half months. Observations were made over a period of four and a half months with interviews and reviewing of documents making up the additional eight weeks.

External Validity

According to Yin (2002), external validity is knowing whether a study's findings are generalizable beyond the immediate case study, that is, "the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations" (Merriam, 1998, p. 207). Cresswell (1994) advocated the use of thick, rich descriptions and a detailed trail of data collection and analysis. Merriam (1988) suggested that the researcher can improve the generalizability of findings by providing a rich, thick description (the setting up of an information base which can be used by others), conducting a cross-site or cross-case analysis, and by describing how typical the program, event, or individual is compared to others in the same group.

For this study, I have provided a detailed account of the focus of the study, background information about the schools and individual participants, the rationale for selections, and thick, rich descriptions, which should provide a base for others who might want to replicate the study. A detailed record of data collection and analysis was maintained and can be tracked.

Reliability

Merriam (1998, p.205) says that reliability refers to the extent to which one's findings can be replicated. In other words, if the study is repeated will it yield the same results?

Yin (2002) notes that the objective is to be sure that if a later researcher follows the same procedures as described in an earlier study, and repeated the investigation, it would follow that the findings would prove similar. "The goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study" (Yin, 2002, p. 37). Documentation of each step of the study, observations and notes, increases boy the replicability and the validity of the study (Merriam 1998). According to Merriam, reliability and validity are inextricably linked in the conduct of research. In this study, I researched the theoretical frameworks, collected detailed data and used the frameworks to analyze them, and created an audit trail of all aspects of the research.

Ethical Considerations

Researchers have a duty of care towards human subjects who are the focus of their studies. Although Yin (2002) states, "The most desirable option is to disclose the identities of both the case and the individuals (p. 157), the question has to be asked as to what purpose disclosing identities would serve. Disclosure of identities might have made schools, and could have made individuals reluctant, if not to outright decline to participate in this study. Merriam (1998) states that ethical dilemmas are likely to emerge at two points, when data is being collected and in the dissemination of findings. Participants in research projects are entitled to ethical considerations throughout the research process. I believe that this duty of care involves the ensuring of confidentiality to protect the rights of all participants. At each step of this project, written prior consent was received from head-teachers and from participant teachers. Participants were made aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty and that they had the right to review notes, tapes, and transcripts. Information was kept in a locked file cabinet, or computer password protected. This information is available only to my advisor and myself and will be destroyed after a two-year period.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of teachers towards those students who display characteristics of attention deficits in heterogeneous classrooms in the independent school system in England. I wanted to know what they did, if anything, to accommodate these children and endeavor to make them as successful as they could be. The pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and the concept of self-efficacy were used as theoretical lenses for this study. I researched the phenomenon in three schools in Suffolk, acquiring data from questionnaires, observations, interviews, and artifacts.

The guiding lenses were the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and the concept of self-efficacy. Data were collected from head-teachers, who also acted in the capacity of teachers in their schools, teachers, and questionnaires, three from teachers and one from parents. Data collection was accomplished through semi-structured observations, interviews, questionnaires, and documents. Documents disclosed information regarding students' progresses, how the teachers communicated with each other, with external personnel (a school psychologist), and parents, and gave an overview of the latest school inspections conducted by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. Anecdotal information was related as to how faculty meetings were scheduled on a monthly basis specifically for the purpose of reviewing individual, often problematic cases.

To support internal validity of the study, the following strategies were used: the researcher’s bias was addressed, triangulation established by multiple settings and sources, member checks, peer examination, and long-term observations. External validity and reliability were promoted by the use of thick, rich description and a detailed audit trail created by keeping detailed records of data collected and analyzed. Ethical standards were followed in all stages of this study, in accordance with the guidelines of the Institutional Review Board of Oklahoma State University.

CHAPTER IV

Data Presentation

The incidence of ADHD is not restricted to any specific culture or socio-economic group (McBurnett et al., 1993; Barkley, 1997, 1998; Smith, 1999) and, according to Greene (1992), the attitudes, expectations, perceptions, and beliefs of teachers each have a bearing on how teachers interact with students who have difficulty with attention. Students with the disorder are in many classrooms and teachers are tasked with educating and supporting these children.

In this study I examined what teachers in three schools in the English private school system, who teach heterogeneous classes and who do not have ready access to special education specialists, do to enable students who have difficulty with attention to be successful, and how they modify instruction and interactions to accommodate for and meet individual differences and needs. I wanted to know whether the beliefs of the respondent teachers were commensurate with the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan, Wilson & Silverman, 1991; Jordan, Kircaali-Iftar & Diamond, 1993; Jordan, Lindsay, & Stanovich, 1997) and where on the continuum they fitted. Further, I wanted to ascertain how teachers viewed their sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989, 1997, 2000; Pajares, 1996) and whether their sense of efficacy was reflected in the ways in which they interacted with the study-specific students.

The data for this study were collected through taped interviews, classroom observations, artifacts review, and questionnaires. Teachers responded to items on two questionnaires which sought general information about their knowledge and understanding of ADHD and their sense of self-efficacy. Consenting parents also completed questionnaires (Appendix I) anonymously and the subsequent information was used to compare with teachers' perceptions of the children's behaviors to establish whether the students' behaviors were generally commensurate with the characteristics of ADHD. Out of all the classes observed, only six pupils had been given the diagnosis of ADHD and three were on varying doses of medication, yet according to teacher identification, 22 children presented with behaviors synonymous with the characteristics of attentional deficits. None of the schools had children with severe disabilities although, as reported by each of the head-teachers, there were children with clear academic and attentional challenges.

Participant teachers were willing to share documentation available, among which were class registers, grade books, letters to parents, letters from parents, and general letters home. It was overwhelmingly clear that in each of the schools there is a considerable amount of communication from the school to the parents, with evidence of informational letters going home at least weekly, both school-wide and for individual years.

Setting the Stage

Each school was contacted and initial interviews with head teachers arranged. At these meetings, the purpose of the study was explained and copies of the two teacher questionnaires and the parent questionnaire given. Head teachers were most open to the intent of the study and no restrictions were set. They each agreed that ADHD is a 'hot topic' in the United Kingdom. Interestingly, they also all agreed, to varying degrees, that they believe that the identifying diagnostic criteria need to be "tightened up" as perhaps other conditions are "lumped" into the category of ADHD. Lydia questioned the validity of the diagnosis and went as far as saying she, for one, does not wholeheartedly believe in the existence of the condition. She acknowledges that the behaviors commensurate with the diagnosis exist, but feels that the label is a "cop-out" and that with correct guidance and firm parameters, all children should be able to attend. She does not believe that children should be arbitrarily punished, but that behaviors have to be examined and ways to address them must be found. She said that, in her experience, there are very few children who cannot be reached, but she agreed that the population in her school is perhaps not as wide as would be generally found in most schools in the state school system, a system for which she has respect, despite her misgivings earlier in her career.

Interviews took place in heads' studies and in teachers' classrooms and ranged from 50 minutes to almost two hours. Information from documents was referred to during interviews and many of the documents, notes to and from teachers, school bulletins and general school letters, as well as grade books and information about how students were performing as they worked their way to the various Key Stage (National Curriculum) examinations, were available during the observations. Head-teachers were among those interviewed and observed as they all had teaching responsibilities.

All observations took place in classrooms while teachers were teaching a range of subjects, dependent on their position. The largest group of students was 16 and the least was 10 and all classes were heterogeneous. In School A, each classroom has an interactive whiteboard with which most teachers are comfortable, although some reported that they “had to take the bit between their teeth” in order to come to grips with using them. The other schools have more traditional whiteboards and one classroom has the very traditional chalkboard, which the teacher noted she dislikes intensely and is waiting for a new whiteboard to be delivered. The classrooms had multiple examples of students’ work and themes upon which children were working on display. These themes ranged from “La Belle France” to mathematical algorithms and “What’s my Angle?” to “Mummification at its Most Fascinating” to “Agincourt” and myriad subject areas in between.

In all the schools, classrooms are on the conservative side of standard size. In the majority, children were sitting in groups, twos, threes, and fours, but some classrooms had desks laid out in traditional row formations. In some rooms, teachers’ desks were at the front of the room, but in many they were at the side. Teachers did not sit at their desks while they were teaching.

Observations followed interviews and the majority lasted for approximately one hour. All observations took place in teacher participants’ classrooms. Artifacts, such as kinesthetic tools for teaching and visual aids, were also examined, referred to, and commented upon during observations. Teaching assistants were present in many of the classrooms during the observations. Some did not stay for the duration of lessons, but went between classes.

Teachers appeared to have considered seating arrangements, moving students to alternate places to ensure that their rate and duration of engagement were increased, to maximize students’ involvement while minimizing possible disruption to self and others. There were classes where children who had difficulty sitting still were allowed to be the “book passer” or “paper collector” or allowed to stand when reading. Getting students to verbally interact with the presentation of lessons was evidenced in several settings.

The beliefs, expectations, attitudes, and sense of self-efficacy of teachers when working with students who exhibit difficulty with attention was a focus for this study . The lenses used to examine the data were the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991, Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al., 1997; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998) and the concept of self-efficacy ((Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989, 2000).

Layout of Data

General descriptions of the schools are followed by demographic information relating to each respondent. Individual teacher participant data will be provided on a question-by-question response basis. Data from observations form a separate section. Supplementary information from examining documents (lesson plans, letters to parents, letters from parents, and general information sent to parents), and questionnaires will be incorporated, as appropriate and relevant, into each of these sections followed by an analysis of questionnaires returned by teachers and parents. The final section presents a summary of the chapter.

General Descriptions of the Schools

All the schools in the study are co-educational and pupils are required to wear school uniforms, which, in general, are not a choice in the independent school system. In none of the schools are girls allowed to wear trousers to school, regardless of the weather, other than sweat pants for sports. Sports kits are a requirement and appropriate dress for each sport in which the child participates is required. Watches are the only jewelry allowed for students of either gender.

Each school has nursery departments which cater to the very young. In Schools A and C, these children are no younger than three years old, but in School B, children as young as two can be enrolled. Nursery departments cater to children from two to four, when children enter the initial stages of the Pre-Prep, which means the pre preparatory stage. In Schools B and C a percentage of parents move their children to state schools close to the age of five when state school education can be provided.

In equivalency terms, Pre-Prep begins at age four and continues until age seven. The children then become part of the Prep (Preparatory) school system. Simply put, this means that they are "preparing" for entrance into secondary (middle and high) schools. Two of the schools use the term "year" to delineate grades, and one uses the term "form." Table 1 in Chapter III explains the equivalencies.

The schools have the same religious affiliation, the Church of England, but they all welcome other denominations. They all prepare their students for the Common Entrance Examination and entry to Independent or State Schools at the age of 11 - 12, or other Preparatory Schools. All curricula are based on the National Curriculum with children taking Key Stage examinations at ages 7, 9, and 11.

Montessori methods are used in the nursery departments of all the schools. Head teachers strongly believe that it is critical that young children learn to explore their world and how they fit into it. As Sybil, the head-teacher of School C, explained:

> The Montessori method teaches that not only should we be concerned with making children literate and numerate while extending their knowledge of the world, but also with achieving a child's harmonious social development within

> his or her society. The qualities we aim to develop, as well as eventual academic success, are self-confidence, independence, self-discipline, concentration, obedience, tidiness and to be outgoing and sociable, not introverted and self-centered, but not necessarily in that order. I'm sure you've heard this before, it's pretty much what I call the Montessori line. We recognize that children come to our school from different home backgrounds and with different needs. In the very early years, we work with children to develop qualities that will help them progress into the pre-prep school so that they are comfortable with the concepts of schooling and education, and with themselves.

One precept, which was made clear by each of the head-teachers, is that they have a committed belief that all children want to learn and that when given the freedom and encouragement to investigate the world around them, the children will become active learners. Each head-teacher stresses the value of pastoral care and the importance of the children being allowed to develop, to believe in themselves, and be given the appropriate support to do so. Much emphasis and guidance is placed in this area. They recognize that children pass through sensitive periods in their development and that some will pose greater behavioral and academic challenges than others, and they acknowledge that there are students who do and will demonstrate signs of learning difficulties. Each school has a forum through which they address this concern, primarily staff meetings.

The feeling of invitation and caring was evident in all the schools. There was clear evidence of positive pastoral care and the atmospheres were universally welcoming and friendly, from the head-teachers, teachers, teachers' classroom assistants, secretaries and office staff. Although no children were interviewed, they were clearly curious as to why I was there and chatted freely with me as I sat in the classrooms during the observations. The children appeared happy and the vast majority were very polite.

School A – Description and Impressions of the School Environment

School A is in the county of Suffolk. The school's main building is a very large brick and flint Victorian house which has been significantly extended to the back. Although the entrance foyer of School A is somewhat forbidding with a large, heavy oak and stained glass door and black and white floor tiles, as soon as one gets through the inner doors, the feeling changes to one of warmth, with myriad school photographs on the walls, "welcome" signs, and "happy face" areas with photographs of children on trips, in the classrooms, playing sports, and showing projects.

The extension to the house is considerable and has turned the house into a building large enough to provide accommodation – dormitories for the children who board there. Most boarders remain at the school from Sunday to Friday afternoons, returning home for weekends and school holidays – except for the children who live overseas. They live in the boarding house and go back to their home countries during the longer holidays. The head-teacher and his family have a large apartment inside the house, which is their home. There is a small sick-bay which is a small room with two single beds for children who are unwell, and the head-teacher's wife, who is a qualified nurse, serves as the school's matron. All administration offices are on the ground floor as well as a large reception room for parents, and a room which serves as a staff room. Behind the main building, the science lab is housed in a geriatric porta-cabin, which, from the outside, appears to be extremely dilapidated, with peeling paint and seals, which do not appear to be completely intact. It is on one side of what would have been a back lawn, and looks on to a small, but pretty fountain, although it is devoid of water.

In front of the house, there is a lawned quadrangle and to right-hand side and opposite the house is a long, refurbished stable and an outbuilding. Behind this outbuilding, which faces the house, is yet another Victorian house which has been turned into more classrooms and the youngest of the pre-prep children are taught in the back of this building. Near the "back house," there is a double porta-cabin where the very youngest of the children are introduced to the formal education process. From these rooms, came lots of singing and "happy" noises.

The buildings that skirt the quadrangle have two floors and there are classrooms, a gymnasium, a computer laboratory, a library, and the refectory (cafeteria) in the wing opposite the main house. There is a very welcoming foyer in the "stables" with a statue of three children sitting together, and a "wall of water" behind it. The "wall of water" has been designed so that water continually flows down the wall which is covered in highly polished dark grey granite. On the left wall, there is an interactive board which has school information on a loop, including a "birthday board" where children's birthdays are posted and the school wishes them, and invites students to wish them, a Happy Birthday. Every renovated classroom has an interactive whiteboard, which the teachers really enjoy – until there is a computer glitch. Despite this high-tech equipment, each room sported a chartboard – just in case.

Outside, there are playing fields, which accommodate two tennis courts, and pitches which can be set up for football (soccer) and cricket. There is also a netball court. All children participate in sports of one kind or another during the week as well as gym (physical education) for at least two class periods each week. George has a strong belief in the benefits of organized physical activities for all children and all children participate.

Teachers eat at “high tables” which simply means teacher tables in the refectory. Generally, they do not talk with children during lunch, but children know that they can talk to teachers if they wish to do so. However, there is a clear procedure how children address adults and they are encouraged to approach teachers respectfully and wait for an appropriate “opening” to talk to them.

The school day begins at 8:45a.m. and ends at 4:30p.m. There is an after school program which lasts until 5:45p.m. If students participate in this program, they are encouraged to be in prep, which means they work on their homework under the guidance of one of the teachers. They are provided with a glass of water, milk, or orange juice and a small snack if they wish.

School B – Description and Impressions of the School Environment

School B is also in Suffolk. The school has one main building, which used to be a modest country house, in which are classrooms for three to four year old children, the administrative offices, the head-teacher’s study, the school library, and a sick bay which has two sets of bunk beds where children can go and be supervised if they are feeling ill. The school does not have a fully qualified nurse, but there is a member of the administrative staff who has taken classes from the St. John’s Ambulance Brigade and is fully qualified to administer first-aid and recognize common ailments of children. To get into the school from the car park, which has very limited visitor and parent parking, parents and visitors have to go through two wooden gates then press a buzzer on the door of the main building and identify themselves. In part, this is because the administration offices are on the second floor. When you enter the hallway, before going up a small staircase to the administration offices, you are faced with walls that are covered with pictures of smiling children, grouped in whole school photographs which have been taken over many years, children engaged in school activities, their drama productions, some playing musical instruments, sports, and generally playing on the playground. There is a large 'welcome' sign with directions to the office which faces the visitor as soon as the school is entered.

The largest building, made of red brick, houses a large, high-ceilinged hall, with a small stage area at one end. Assemblies and prayers are held in the hall three times a week, and it also does duty as the both the gymnasium and the cafeteria. All members of staff lunch in the same area as the children. Off of the hall, all the way around it, are eight classrooms. These house students up to Year 3. In one area of the hall, there is a serving counter which fronts the kitchens. Children are given a choice of a hot or buffet luncheon each day. Leading off the hall's vestibule is a short hallway which, at the front, has pegs upon which children hang jackets and coats, and, at the end are toilets, one for boys and one for girls. There is one porta-cabin which is used as the art room and two chalet-like wooden buildings which house classrooms for older children. There are three smaller buildings near the hall, one for two year olds, and the others for children in Years 4 and 5. The youngest of the pupils have their own play area which has an "igloo" for children to sit inside and some climbing equipment is nearby. There is a garden, which is divided into plots, and each class has its own plot. Various classes are responsible for planting and tending to seeds in their individual areas, which are, for the most part, replenished each year. A further play area with some play equipment is near the "sports field" and a small tennis court which is used during better weather. The five-acre field is for sports, which are played outside all year round except in the most inclement weather.

There are before and after-school care programs, where parents can leave children from 8:00a.m. and they will be looked after until 6:00p.m. This school does not have a boarding department on the actual school grounds, as children there do not board on a regular basis. However, in the nearby house occupied by the head-teacher and her family, there are two small dormitories where children may board for a few days should there be a need.

School begins at 8:45a.m. and finishes at 4:00p.m. Students have a 10-minute break in the morning and the same again in the afternoon. Lunch lasts for 45 minutes and teachers eat at teacher tables in the cafeteria. Although there is limited interaction between teachers and children at this time, the teachers are available for children to talk to them should they wish. Children are offered a selection of foods, both hot and cold. They line up, collect what they have chosen to eat, and sit at designated tables by year. Conversation is encouraged, but noise level is carefully checked by class monitors who sit at each table with their peers. Students take turns at being the "table monitors."

School C – Description and Impressions of the School Environment

School C is in the north of the county. The main building is a capacious brick and flint building which has three floors. Partitions have been built in the main building, making the head's study and administration office accommodation somewhat cramped. Cramped as it may be, there are lots of framed photographs of pupils arranged in rows, which have been taken over the last 40 years. There is a tall oak cabinet which houses sports trophies in the main hallway and off of this hallway is the staff lounge, a somewhat shabby, but comfortable room with a conglomeration of furniture, much of which has seen better days, but continues to be functional as well as somewhat comfortable. On the left of the main entrance, is a small sick bay with two beds. One of the secretaries acts as the school nurse. She was a nurse in a local hospital at one time, but resigned her post and now works at this school.

There are three outbuildings which have been remodeled from their original use as storage areas and currently are used as classrooms, arranged on two floors. They have large windows, which make them light and airy, and all overlook a grassed and graveled courtyard. The refectory is in the closest outbuilding to the Vicarage and seats about 70 children at one time. All food is cooked on the premises. There is a hall where pupils congregate each morning before lessons. It doubles as a gym and gym equipment is stored in one large storage area to the side of the hall. Classrooms are distributed throughout the three outbuildings. A science lab, an art room, and an information technology or IT room (computer lab) are housed in a smaller building behind the others. A field to the side of the main school is used for sports and all children participate in various sports throughout the year.

This school also offers pre and after-school care for children. Children are supervised at all times and can be left at the school no earlier than 8:00a.m. They can attend after-care or prep (homework) time after school, which lasts until 6:00p.m. All children who stay after school are encouraged to either complete homework or, as in the other two schools, participate in games on the games field when the weather is good, or in the gym, when it is raw.

As with the other schools, parents have to bring pupils to the school and fetch them at the end of the day. There is a parking lot for staff, visitors, and parents who are dropping off children. Parents are encouraged not to linger due to the shortage of parking.

Differences in Identifying Year of Education

In School A, students are placed in Forms as opposed to Years, as explained in Chapter III. In Schools B and C, they use the term Years, although School B also had names for each year class. School A educates children up to the age of 13, where Schools B and C educate them up to the age of 11. Each school places students into "houses." A "house" is comprised of a group of students from each year. Houses are generally identified by having individual names, such as after a river or area. Different colors are given to various houses and children can identify with other members of their "house." Teachers in the schools said that they believe this builds camaraderie and a further sense of "belonging" for children.

Respondents

The selection of respondents for this study was entirely the prerogative of the head-teachers and their staffs. During the initial interview, the Head of School A said that he would discuss the study at a staff meeting. He did, and read out the interview questions he had been given to the faculty. He said that there was a general discussion about the study and then about classes where children who exhibited attentional deficits were. Eight teachers, who had such students, indicated they were willing to volunteer to help with this study. Ultimately, five teachers became participants.

The Head of School B said she relayed general information about the study to her staff then asked for volunteers, the proviso being that either children who had been diagnosed with attention deficits, whether with or without hyperactivity, or who exhibit ADHD-like behaviors had to be in their classes. Six teachers volunteered, and out of the six, four participated.

The Head of School C observed the same format as the Head of School B. However, rather than ask for volunteers initially, they (Head and teachers), as a group, identified in whose classes students with attentional difficulties were, then these teachers were asked whether or not they wished to participate in the study. Only one declined, leaving four to take part.

As all the teachers who participated in this study did so voluntarily, the data may be skewed towards those who are more confident, willing to participate, experienced, and/or more knowledgeable of the condition or characteristics of attentional deficits. Nevertheless, a wide range of beliefs was observed and reported. There were 9 female and 4 male participants whose experience ranged from 5 to 34 years, giving an average of 15.15 years experience. Each teacher had a minimum of an undergraduate degree and 10 had honors degrees, but none had a special education degree. As one school had a few children who had very specific needs, a teacher who has special education credentials comes one morning per week. One female teacher in School C had taken a course in special education primarily addressing dyslexia, which, in England, is the commonly used term referring to any form of reading disability. When asked about the course, she said:

> Primarily we were learning about how best to work with children who have difficulty reading. We all know how challenging some find reading. We did touch on problematic behaviors and, of course, ADHD came up. You have to feel for the children who really do have it because they have no choice. Mind you, I have reservations about kids who are given that label, but really aren't ADHD at all, but just behaving badly. Mm, choice versus being stuck with the condition.

The course she had taken had been for one day per week for the duration of one academic year and was paid for by her school. Other teachers spoke about "having had a course during training" but reactions to what the course content and the limitations of what had been taught were mild. Four female teachers had Montessori teaching certificates.

Of the 13 teachers interviewed, three are head-teachers who are responsible for the running of their schools as well as for developing and teaching lesson plans, five other respondents teach specific subjects, mathematics and English, English, science, geography and French, and mathematics and Latin. One teaches French to three different years, another science to three different years, and a third, information technology to three years. The remaining six are responsible for teaching general subjects. Those who teach specific subjects work-share classes with other colleagues. In none of the schools are teachers considered or referred to as specialist teachers, as they did not teach in secondary schools, but just as teachers who have teaching responsibilities in various areas.

George

George is the Head of School A and is a whirlwind of energy who gives the appearance of attending to several things at once. He was educated privately and decided to join the army. His dealings with education have been within the independent sector although he has and does iteract with head teachers from state schools as colleagues dealing with students who may transfer either out of or into state schools. Hence, he and is au fait with the system. As described previously, he was in the army prior to taking over his school and has been teaching for 17 years in total. The school is an enterprise which he has nurtured and expanded to include boarding students from overseas. He teaches fifth and sixth form students primarily math and English, and often teaches general subjects and also sponsors various sports and outings at the weekends for boarders. He is proud of his school's records in passing examinations for places in upper schools and the school has a waiting list, primarily for younger students who will stay with the school up to the final year. As with Lydia's school, School B, a healthy percentage of his sixth form students go on to state schools, despite winning places at private upper schools. His belief that all his teachers have something worth saying about how the school is progressing and staff meetings are held weekly. During these meetings, individual students are discussed should any teacher have concerns about how they are doing. Teachers, he believes, should be encouraged to brainstorm their ideas and suggestions to support colleagues both in an open forum and privately. He says that he is always open to suggestions about how the school is functioning; however, he retains the right to make final judgments and, "None have been too controversial," he said.

Lydia

Lydia has been teaching for 34 years and is the Head of School B. She was educated in the state system and began her teaching career in that system. After six years, and having become disillusioned and disgruntled at the education her daughters were being offered in the state system, she made the decision to establish her own school. She began the school in her own home, with just six pupils. After three years, she had a sufficient number of parents request that their children be taught by her and brought in first one and then two colleagues and established her school. The school has continued to prosper and grow, offering a solid education based on the precepts described earlier, many extra curricular activities, and sports for all children.

She believes that, although she reserves the right to have the final say and determine which course the school is going to take, teachers are the keepers of the knowledge about their personal classes, and by extension, their input is vital. She said that teachers have a great sense of ownership and she welcomes and respects that. She feels it is part of her on-going responsibility to encourage this ownership to extend to ownership of all children in the school, and feels she has been successful. Staff meetings are held weekly.

She said the school has a solid sense of connectedness to parents and talked about the considerable amount of communication generated by the school. When asked about why so many, she explained:

> You would be amazed how much parents forget. Everyone lives such a busy life these days. At the beginning of each term we send home an overview of upcoming events, but we know that, eh, parents and guardians forget. As well as the major events of each term, we have lots of things that happen from

> week to week, not to mention day to day. I know it seems an overwhelming amount of letters but believe me, parents do appreciate it, well, nobody has complained otherwise. This way, they are kept abreast of all the goings on at school. As well as these letters, you know, we also have to send individual letters to parents addressing issues that pertain only to their child.

This sentiment was echoed by the other two heads of school and as indicated by Lydia and agreed by teachers this paper exchange is a necessary part of school life. The school has a bursar, an accountant, and the head and her husband act as business managers. There is a deputy head who provides support to the head. There is a healthy waiting list for places and no better advertisement than the fact that the majority of students pass the common entrance examination and gain places at upper schools. Despite the positive examination success rate, about 50 percent of exiting students go on to state secondary schools as their parents can no longer afford school fees, which increase as the children become older.

Sybil

Sybil is the youngest of the head teachers and has been teaching for 15 years. She was educated in the private sector for the first five years of her school life. Thereafter, she attended state schools. After graduating from university, she taught in two state schools until seven years ago when she joined her current school, School C. Three years later, she was appointed as head. When questioned about why she elected to come to her current school, she responded that she felt she would find greater autonomy and a chance to expand her personal beliefs about teaching. She is answerable to the Board of Governors as well as parents. She teaches general subjects to pupils in year four, four days out of five. Every Thursday she attends to administrative duties, including a staff meeting at the end of the day, when all teachers and teaching assistants are expected to attend. For this day, her class is covered by a "roving" teacher, who works exclusively for the school for two days each week.

Each of the head teachers made it clear that they value their staffs and listen to their perspectives. Lydia reported that what she values is the diversity of her staff and how she appreciates all perspectives, from those with less invested time in the profession to those who had spent their adult lives in the role of teacher. Each head teacher reported that collaboration and consultation with each other was a positive feature of the interactions among their faculties.

Harriet

Harriet has been teaching for 21 years. She was educated in the state sector in Sussex, did well at school and university, taught in the state sector for 12 years, and then accepted her current post as she was attracted by smaller class sizes. She said that the large classes in the state sector were becoming increasingly challenging and "a change was as good as a rest." It was not her intention to stay with this school, as the salary is somewhat less than she would be making in the state system, but has decided that the smaller class size is worth the shortfall in salary. She has taught a variety of years in the school and, although she is currently teaching Year 3, she enjoys teaching Year 1 children best and hopes that she will eventually be able to change year levels as teachers do move internally.

Maddy

Maddy is one of the younger group of teachers. She comes from the Lake District in the northwest of England and is the product of the state education system. She began teaching as a supply teacher (substitute) and did that for two years. Although she enjoyed working with the children, she decided, as well as applying to two state schools, to apply for a position in the private sector. She was offered a job in one local authority school as well as in the independent school. The salary given by the local authority was slightly more than by the private school, but she decided that she was going to go to the independent school. When asked why, she responded she made her decision because when she went to the interviews as a nervous, fledgling teacher, she felt the independent school was more welcoming and the head exuded greater interest in her as a person and what she considered her personal teaching philosophy than did the head-teachers of the state schools whom, she felt, were governed by bureaucratic dogma. During the interview with the private school, she felt she was able to express her concerns about her perceived areas of weakness more openly and got the sense she would be encouraged to broaden her horizons more in the independent system. She said she did this as she did not think she, "stood a chance of getting the job." She feels it has been a good decision on her part as she believes that what she says has credence. Although there are times she feels she is on a treadmill, she said it is a treadmill from which she can stop and look around from. She enjoys going to school and enjoys working with her colleagues whom she views as "her work family."

James

James has been teaching for 11 years and is a recent recruit to his current school. He has taught in one state and one private school. He recently moved to Suffolk from Northern Ireland and this was the first school for which he interviewed when he came to the area. He is teaching Year 6 students and also coaches football and cricket. He said he thinks that he would eventually like to move to an upper school and teach science exclusively, but that is somewhere down the road. He spoke extensively about staff meetings and feels that most members of the faculty view these weekly meetings as collegial and productive. He believes that each teacher's viewpoint is valued and that it is important that if teachers are to have a true sense of belonging, then they need to feel that all the students are joint responsibilities.

The observation in James' room was during a science lesson when he was teaching momentum. Rules had been taught and repeated to ensure clear understanding and understanding was checked by having the students tell each other the rules as the teacher walked around listening. Children were put into groups of three and each group had a station with a board from which came a piece of string with a weight. Of each group, one child was responsible for swinging the pendulum, one for measuring, and the one who did the timing also recorded. They took it in turns to be responsible for each activity. Although there were two children in this class who had difficulties when attending, it was difficult to determine who they were as the students were actively involved. Noting James "tracks" as he went around the lab, he did hover over two boys more than the others and, when asked why, he identified them as the two who had difficulties. On reflection, it was evident that these two, who were in different groups, were, perhaps, a little more "antsy" than others, but they were, nevertheless, engrossed in the activity. One's behavior became a little too exuberant, but, the teacher quickly got to his side, engaged him in conversation, then left, and the child continued.

John

John is a convivial, urbane teacher who has been teaching for 22 years. He is the product of a private education and, after leaving school, he entered the army for two years, followed by university, and has taught in both the private and state sectors. He joined his current school three years ago after holding previous posts in both systems. His great loves are Shakespeare and Greek Tragedies, neither of which he is teaching currently in their original forms, although, he said he tries to incorporate what he can, "to acculturate fresh minds." He has "rewritten" Shakespeare to make the works more appealing for pupils and so that they, "can enjoy the plays the way they were meant to be enjoyed." He does not believe that any form of the English language should be forbidding, "as we all have an interest in it." It is clear to sense his passion for his subject. He despises the word 'elitist' as applied to private education. His sense is that this is a choice which many parents make. Clearly, they are within the middling socio-economic range, but he contends that many parents struggle to keep their children at these establishments. He said he will remain in the private system as he feels a greater sense of connectedness to parents, ". . . as they are the ones who are paying the salary." He feels it key to students' success that teachers and parents are in frequent communication. "Otherwise, it is like teaching in a bubble, nothing goes out past the wall."

Peter

Peter has been in education for 27 years and, prior to accepting a post at his current school, was Head of Science in a state comprehensive school. He held that position for 12 years. It is unclear why he is teaching in his school, but he gave the appearance of being somewhat content. He feels that weekly staff meetings are somewhat of an imposition although they do have a purpose – most of the time. He lives in a flat in the school and is on duty one weekend out of three and is "on call" most evenings, which, he said, does not cause him any undue concern although some of the children can be trying. He owns a house in Cornwall which is currently rented out and which he hopes will be paid for when he retires. He is very concerned about the way education is going in the United Kingdom and feels that it is becoming a bit like, "a ship without a captain or rudder," and that too many initiatives are decided upon at levels where education is a political commodity rather than being understood as it works at the grass roots.

Alys

Alys has been teaching for 32 years, is unmarried, and is considering retiring within the next two years or so. She enjoys teaching geography and French, which she has been teaching for six years and teaches the subjects to Forms 3 through 6. As a child she attended state school from primary to the end of school. For 10 years she taught in Tanganyika (as it was then) in a girls' school in Dar es Salaam and when she returned to England, taught initially in a state school. She stayed in the state system for six years, took a two-year absence from teaching before entering the independent system and has been in her current school for 16 years. She said that although she prefers teaching older children, she enjoys working at her current school. Each year she sponsors French children who come to the school for three weeks, finding homes with pupils' parents for the time that they are there. She also organizes a similar exchange in the other direction. She believes that children need to be encouraged/taught to cherish their education and that it is a mistake to believe that everyone can do well, by which she means progress to university and enter some profession. "There are worthwhile occupations out there that need pragmatic people."

Ellie

Ellie is the youngest of the teachers who participated in this study. She hails from Hampshire and attended state schools. She trained to teach high school, but decided to accept a post at her current school as she thought she would prefer teaching where classes are smaller and believes she can achieve more and interact more personally within the smaller class setting. She has a baby who can attend the school where she teaches when old enough, and at much reduced costs as she works there, as does her husband who is the sports coach. She said that she has carefully watched the various education initiatives set in motion by the current government and is sceptical of their aims and feels that many of the plans outlined by the government are ill considered. She finds teaching Latin challenging as she feels its place in schools is little valued. However, math she finds exciting and related that she believes that teaching is a wonderful way to be happy and feel fulfilled.

An observation took place in her math class when she was teaching children how to divide. Mats were laid on the floor and she would call out group numbers and children had to have only that number of children on a mat. When each mat had that appropriate number of children, those who were left over in total were the "remainder." All students were clear in their enjoyment of this exercise and, at the end of the lesson, one noticeably distractible youngster was able to explain how the functions and rationale of division with and without remainders. Ellie spoke about "many ways to get learning over" and said:

> Eh, well, after a while, you get to know which concepts are going to prove somewhat difficult for some children, so, if you can make it so that they are able to learn in a way that will help them remember, then you have made a stride forward. Seems simple, doesn't it? Only, it isn't always. All depends on what you are teaching. This is good for the kids who are attention deficit, it gives them legitimate opportunities to move around, and they are not different, because all the others are doing the same thing.

As with other teachers, Ellie willingly shared the records she keeps on students. She, like her fellow teachers keep records of students' progress in their daily work and how they were meeting the standards as they approached and took Key Stage Tests, also knows as Standard assessment Tasks or SATS, which are taken at ages 7, 11, 14, and 16. Although independent schools do not have to follow the National Curriculum and take these exams, participating schools do. She went on to explain:

> I still get nervous for the children when they take these things. I am always nervous that they won't show themselves as capable as they really are. I always hated tests when I was in school, and I am sure that lots of children feel that way too. I understand about accountability for performance, but, well, you know, sometimes I think we test them to death. It's so important to show

> parents how well they have done in class, and try to be unbiased, you know. Teachers in our school keep portfolios of children's work, and, well, that gives a better picture of what the child is really doing.

Bridget

Bridget is a teacher of 15 years experience who is the product of independent schools. She is responsible for teaching children English for Years 3 – 6. She said that her preference is to teach Year 6 and older children, but is content with her current assignment. She is an intense person who enrolls in various courses to expand her teaching repertoire and is the closest to having special education qualifications as she took a special education course which took one day a week for a year. She enjoys talking with her colleagues and sharing her expertise and said that many teachers in her school talk to her when they perceive students are having difficulties about which they, the teachers, are uncertain. She has had three daughters attend this school and related that she and her husband feel they were given an excellent education.

One of her daughters has "dyslexia" and, although not diagnosed with attention deficit disorder, both Bridget and her husband, are convinced that she has the condition. She spoke about some of the behaviors which her daughter displays and talked about observations teachers had shared with her which would corroborate her suspicions. She believes that almost all teachers in the school were willing to work with her to support her child and were not judgmental, believing that she could do well. Bridget would not identify who was not as cooperative as she felt they should have been as she felt this would break professional ethics.

Juliet

Juliet is another of the younger teachers who had not been in an independent school prior to being appointed to her present position. She has been teaching for six years and has been at this school for just over three. She said she is content and does not anticipate moving in the near future. She is responsible for Year 3 and feels, "They are great fun. Full of energy and challenge – sometimes too much." Additionally, she teaches conversational French to three different year levels for a total of three hours per week. She volunteered to be the Social Secretary for the staff and believes that it is important for the faculty to respect each other's differences as that mutual respect fosters a happy school for everyone – although, realistically, people do that to varying degrees. She has always wanted to be a teacher and is thoroughly enjoying her chosen career.

Sue

Currently, Sue is teaching Year 5 and Information Technology (IT). Over the last several years of her teaching career, she has become increasingly interested in IT, as she has seen it become more and more infused in the school curriculum, and recognizes that all children have to be au fait with this technology in their everyday lives. She has attended weekend in-services to increase her knowledge and facility with technology and encourages students to use it as a learning tool, which, she said, they do throughout the school. Her belief is that the secret of enjoying teaching in the independent school system is the ability to be flexible and embrace whatever comes along as a new challenge.

Sue comes from Newcastle and said that, as her father was in the Army, she and her family traveled a great deal when she was a child, which she did not enjoy. As a result, she attended several state schools then, after passing her final exams, gained admittance to an art college just outside London where she studied for two years. She decided that was not the route for her and transferred to education. She was happy to settle down and eventually chose East Anglia. She has been in the school for eight years and has found contentment there and thinks that the pastoral care extended to the children is an important component of what teachers do for children. She said:

> It's important never to give up. There is always a way around whatever is going wrong, that is if it *is* going wrong. There is always someone else who will point out the good of what is happening. Support is something that we all need and I am just glad that we can all share in this school. You know, it isn't like that in all schools.

While observing in her classroom during an English lesson, when a class of Year 5 children was reviewing a test which had been taken, interaction between teacher and students was clearly evident. The teacher was going over the test, providing feedback to students who had questions. The children were allowed to sit in twos and were clearly helping each other. It was noticed that all answers had to be written in complete sentence format and children were helping each other determine whether or not they had done that. As I looked around the room, I noticed that the teacher had made modifications for four children whereby she had highlighted key words in questions. When asked about this, she responded:

> You know there are children whom you just have to guide that little bit more than others. You know, hopefully this will help them. Of course, when they come to taking their SATS, this can't be done, so they have to understand that.

> I find it a bit difficult to get them to work with consistency. Still, step by step, and, um, I think it helps to have their peers work with them. However, you have to be careful about who is working with whom. You know, you have to try to get the mix right.

One child, who was clearly frustrated and made himself noticeable by his incessant movement, was approached by the teacher who sat by him. She spoke to him very quietly and showed him a paper she was holding, which had correct answers. She again made highlights on the paper and pointed to his paper from time to time. Then, one by one, she had him point to differences. Once he appeared to be "back on track," she quietly moved away from him, leaving the corrected paper with him. He did not entirely settle, but he did begin working through the items on the paper, sharing what he had done with the boy sitting next to him. The two boys worked together until they were called to pay attention to the new part of the lesson, which built on the test of the basics, which the class had just gone over.

When asked about how students' work was graded, if variations in scale were employed, the teacher answered that she was judicious in marking papers, dependent on the level of skill of the student. Again she made reference to the SATS and said: You have to tread cautiously as students shouldn't get the idea that they don't have to try.

Pre-Teaching Preparation

All participants were asked about their initial training. The majority answered that either they were not provided with any, or with minimal, introduction to instructional strategies and rationale for working with students who had difficulty learning, had attentional problems, or other behaviorally manifested challenges, or any combination thereof. Without exception, they felt that courses to address these issues would not only have helped them, but, by extension, made them feel better able to cope with the variations in student population. There was a strong sense of being left in the dark, especially when entering the profession. Those teachers who had been teaching for a greater length of time felt that they had learned what Alys described as "coping skills" as they progressed through their careers. Peter felt that having the ability to be a disciplinarian was key to working with all students and felt that those students who could not cope with the level of instruction presented should be taught in smaller groups along with others at the same level. He did say that he would help "as much as he could," but that was open to interpretation. Maddy, one of the younger teachers said that she had participated in "a couple of courses" which dealt with children who are faced with difficulties, but nothing in-depth. Ellie and Juliet said that "special needs" were discussed, but what they had learned they both described as minimal. Juliet said that she would talk to teachers who had more teaching experience to help her with students whose behavior was problematic. Bridget had taken a one-morning a week course for one academic year. The course centered on students with special needs, primarily dyslexia, but she felt it was relatively wide ranging. She said:

> The course in itself was quite good. It is such a shame that this isn't a mandatory part of every teacher's training. Perhaps things have changed now, but not to any great extent, I don't believe. More and more children are being diagnosed with this inability to read well, and they must be able to read.

When asked about attentional deficits she responded:

> We did get into those children who simply can't pay attention. I have to say that some of the information was quite daunting, but you have to get to grips

> with it. I know that some simply put this down to bad behavior, but it isn't a choice they consciously make, well, not for most of the time, if you know what I mean. I wish everybody could have heard some of the lectures. Mind you, I have shared quite a bit with my peers, you know. When someone asks you for help it's great that you feel you can.

Teachers' Sense of Themselves as Teachers

Each teacher participant presented a perspective that demonstrated both individualities and commonalities. The overriding sense exuded by the teachers was one of enthusiasm for what they were doing and a solid sense of competence. George indicated that his approach to teaching was fairly pragmatic, but with spice, a theme that was echoed by others. He said that:

> One essential is that I enjoy what I am doing. One has to consider multiple facets of the profession. I have to say that my perspectives have been reshaped over the years and, um, well, perhaps that is a crucial component, that we are all prepared to make shifts in what we think. I think my fundamental beliefs are relatively the same, it's just that they, well, you know, really have had to change somewhat, to make sure the children get what they need. We live in a rapidly changing world and if we are to serve our youngsters, em, and the greater community for all that, one had best be prepared to interweave the new with the old. However, I still hold that there is much from tried and tested teaching methods and areas that are totally relevant and pertinent and I'll continue to use them. The tried and true should never be overlooked. In fact, it worries me that this government doesn't seem to know

> which side of the bed to lie on. Seems to me they chop and change far too often to really make positive changes and for people to get a clear idea of what is the best way forward. Perhaps that's what happens when the politicians are making the decisions. Everyone thinks they know how to teach and what's the best way forward.

Ten respondents reported that they continue to have some distance to travel on their teaching journeys and positively anticipate expanding their repertoires. Of those 10, 3 have been teaching for more than 20 years. One of the youngest teachers, Ellie, said that:

> It bothers me when teachers say that they feel that they 'know all there is to know.' I don't know how true that could ever be. I know that I keep my eyes and ears open, not only to what my colleagues have to say, but what I hear teaching friends say too. Oh, and of course, we all read the comments in the papers and listen to what's being said on telly. There are several of us on staff who watch the Teachers' Channel on TV. They cover some really rather good topics about all aspects of teaching. They talk a lot about successful ways to handle pupils who are difficult and I've found that helpful. We talk about it in the staff room. No, I would say, we all need to keep going and keep trying to improve as teachers and as people. You were talking about the attention deficit children. Well, they are not going away, are they? We all need to be aware and handle them properly, or as well as we can.

Twelve teachers reported that they had chosen their career fields wisely, but Peter was clear in his disappointment about how his career has turned out, notwithstanding having been Head of Science in a state school and having served in that position for 10 years prior to joining his current school. He is disgruntled about the profession in general although he stated he appreciates where he is and, overall, likes teaching. However, despite probing, he was reluctant to be fully open as to whether that enjoyment is due to fringe benefits or to job satisfaction.

Three female respondents reported that since becoming mothers, they feel that they have a greater sense of empathy for students who struggle, academically, emotionally, or behaviorally; although, they each agreed that students who display problematic behaviors are the most exigent to work with and can be the most exasperating. Sue related:

> The most exhausting part of working with children who spend a lot of time not paying attention, you know, fiddling around and that sort of thing, is that so often you know they can do the work. It pays to be able to work with them on their own, that way you can ensure, or sort of ensure, that you have their attention. There are some when, even working one to one, you still have, you know, to get them to really look at what they have to do. Well, sometimes touching their arms, or with the little ones, even touching their cheek Still, you have to smile when you do it so that they know they are not being seen as being naughty. And, for the most part, they aren't.
>
> I find it very difficult when children are being absolutely defiant, but I don't know that you can say that when their minds are clearly somewhere else. I find changing the pace of what I am doing helps, and changing the way I teach seems to help as well. Of course, just because they have trouble with paying attention doesn't mean that they are being deliberately obtuse, but there are times when I think they are. I do find them challenging when that happens.

Notwithstanding this caveat, they each went on to state that they felt once they had agreed to “recognize these children could be both difficult and challenging” a more confident and positive approach could be used with them.

Bridget reflected:

> Perhaps going through difficult times with my own children helped to make me a better teacher. Although nobody actually said that Esme (her daughter) was attention deficit, and, well, she was particularly trying, but once I recognized that fighting her would just intensify her unwillingness to do what she was supposed to do, I looked around to find other ways to get her to do what she had to. I can assure you it wasn’t easy. She hated reading, well, she is dyslexic, and didn’t want to even try at times. She could be a nightmare and was all over the place, just wouldn’t listen – or couldn’t. Bill (her husband) and I worked on lots of plans to “keep her on the straight and narrow” – you know, help her get her behavior under control, and I worked with the different teachers who had her in school to sort out plans that we thought would help. Some were better than others. Anyway, I applied a lot of what I learned from Esme to some of the pupils I have who seem to be acting the same way. So, I think she was good for me, not that I can say I enjoyed the struggle at the time. Mind you, you have to work with them a great deal before they hit their teens. Oh, those were very trying years.

This led to the subject of discipline. When asked if discipline matters were dealt with in the same way, without exception, Bridget replied that written formats were used ‘as a final warning’ and that the preferred method of dealing with behavioral issues, following initial teacher intervention, was to telephone parents and talk to them personally which, it was felt, improved communication and trust.

The conversation moved to communication between home and school and her sense is that letters from parents were considerably less than those from the school. The school acknowledged that they did get some negative letters, which voiced complaints, but these were far outweighed by positive exchanges. This was echoed by the other schools.

Understanding of Diverse Learners

Diversity is visible on multiple levels and many facets and diverse learners exist in every learning environment. It follows that the implication is that in order for teachers to reach and teach students successfully, they have to be cognizant of this and have a sense of how to reach students in order to be able to teach them. Eleven teachers spoke with commitment to variations in approach to teaching and learning, but two were more, what can only be described as "more old school," and they felt that, to varying extents, all children should be able to keep up. One of the two said that she was not averse to working privately with a child during her "break." The other held to the precept that he was not an early childhood teacher and, by the time they reach his class age level, children should be able to come into a room and pay attention appropriately. Eleven teachers verbalized their understanding that children are not all "on a level playing field" and that differences in understanding have to be acknowledged prior to addressing them.

The school with the greatest cultural and ethnic diversity is School A. However, each of the others also has children from non-dominant cultures and participants talked positively about their approaches to working with these children. Alys related:

> We are aware that all the children are different and that not all the children come from the same background, however you want to interpret that. In our school, we have children from the four corners of the Earth, it seems. My word, how the world is shrinking. Anyway, clearly, they haven't all had the same experiences, eh, um, mm, and often, when they come in from overseas we don't have anything at all to go on, you know, class reports and so forth. So, you know, we just have to work with them and assess from day one to, eh, well, work out a plan of action, well, you know, to make sure we know what we have to do to get them to move forward. You know, not being able to pay attention isn't just with the local children, em, well, children from other countries can show the same types of behavior. Only, we have to be careful to make sure it isn't just what they are used to when at home. Yes, yes, we all know the adage about teaching to the middle ground. Ha, well, we know better. Anyone worth their salt teaches to different levels. I know that, and so do the rest (teachers), well, almost all of us.

Teachers' Knowledge of Attention Deficits

According to Barkley (1995), the general education teacher is the single most important factor in an ADHD child's success at school. Yet there is evidence from studies that indicates that, in general, teachers' knowledge of attentional deficits is limited (Brook et al., 2000; Pfiffner & Barkley, 1998; Sciutto et al., 2000; and Snider et al., 2003) and that overall knowledge about attention deficits is affected by and related to variables: training, teachers' past teaching experiences, whether or not they have previously taught students with the condition, and educational environment.

Eighteen questionnaires, based on the commonly used Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (Appendix I), were distributed to and returned by parents. None of the questionnaires were named, ensuring anonymity. As the questionnaires were returned, initially, to the teachers, the teachers had an opportunity to scan the information provided by parents. The majority of these indicated that similar behaviors were exhibited in the home or other settings, concurring with the perceptions of teachers. Only six children had been diagnosed with the condition and three were on a medical regime to remediate the condition.

While all participants in the study acknowledge that students who have attentional deficits exist, four, including one head-teacher, believe the condition in itself does not exist but rather, such behaviors are attributable to poor behavior and “possibly indulgent parenting skills” and that the existence of the condition is, at best, questionable. Although the nomenclature of the condition is in question, the behaviors are not.

Questionnaires which elicited information about teachers’ general knowledge of attentional difficulties and sense of efficacy were distributed to each participating teacher. It was explained that responses were voluntary and should be anonymous. Thirteen questionnaires were returned and information from these questionnaires is reported in Appendix G and Appendix H. The results indicate that, during their training, the majority of teachers were not instructed in how to teach children who had difficulty learning or had difficulties with attention. Yet, the majority indicated that they feel capable of teaching all children and that they can be successful with children who demonstrate difficulty with attention, make appropriate accommodations, and make increased effort to ensure all children learn. They also indicated positively that they do not “give up” on students who refuse to engage in the learning process.

One teacher noted that the answers to the questions addressing the teacher's perception of how successfully s/he can teach children with attentional challenges, the limits of how much such a child could be taught, and the limitations the teacher may feel when teaching such students were dependent on the environment. If the children are at Common Entrance Examination standard, the teacher feels that "less success might be experienced due to the depth of the syllabus and the time available to teach it. However, if teaching to only Level 5 of the National Curriculum, more could be done for these children as instruction could go at a lessened pace."

When asked for her reasons as to why difficulty with attention might be denied a name, Lydia responded:

> I contend that over the decades there has been a distinct societal shift and we appear to be enmeshed in a culture where there is, I suggest, too much swing away from personal responsibility. Of course I recognize and acknowledge that there are and probably always have been, em, children who simply find it terribly difficult to pay attention. Why does that need a label? They simply are. I don't think it serves them well to say that they "can't" pay attention because they are whatever. I believe that teachers, and parents, have to note how the children are behaving, um, or otherwise, and simply go from there. Why on earth do we make excuses, because that's what I hear when I listen to these discussions. The child can't "because of ADHD." No matter what it is, you simply have to teach them. It continues to be their right to a decent education. I say, find a way around how they are behaving. Um, well, no, I'm not saying it's easy. Teaching isn't. What I'm saying is, well, these children have always "been" and, well, are we going just too far? I honestly believe it's an excuse for not dealing appropriately with them. Well, um, you know,

> devise a way that will work. I know that you'll hear lots of moaning in the state schools that these children can be too difficult. Well, I say, give them a bad name and that's what they'll do. Mind you, I suppose that I also have to give that we don't appear to have any of these truly dreadfully disruptive children you hear about. But, nevertheless, we do have those who can't pay attention.

Making a Difference with Students

Responses to the question, "How do you feel you make a difference with students?" were diverse. Ten were most positive declaring that by making school an exciting place to be makes a difference and getting pupils to recognize that teachers are interested in them as individuals makes a difference. One teacher was more circumspect and cautious saying that it was difficult to quantify what making a difference means. When pursued, she agreed that attending school makes a difference, but feels that teachers have to try to reach beyond that, and she was uncertain that she was able to make a difference beyond the presentation of material and encouragement to participate in and complete tasks. Her thoughts spilt over into the social interactions that take place in school and she feels that differences could only be successful when supported by the home. She also made evident her view that this parental support is critical to academic progress. Alys and Peter reported that they recognized clear limits with the difference that could be made with students who were unwilling to readily engage in the learning process and comply with what was being asked. James encapsulated the sentiments of other participants when he said:

> Why would you get into a business where you felt you couldn't make a difference? I agree that there is a vast range of differences people can make,

> but any teacher should make a difference. Thinking about the kind of kids we are talking about, I think that when you see them do well, that is a great sense of having made a difference. It comes at a cost, for both the teacher and the pupil, I think. Um, well, you know, the teacher has to be more creative sometimes, and the kid has to make a huge effort, if you know what I mean. Still, working to get the child on your side works wonders. As we are hearing more about this attention problem, people are slowly waking up to the fact that it's not something a child chooses, it just is, and we have to deal with that. How do we see the differences? Well, um, there, of course, is academic performance, but the difference we can help them make with their behaviors and how not to be silly and irritate their peers, I think, is really important. Helping them understand how we have to behave, and that's not easy, is really important. Eh, achieve that, and you really have made a difference. I believe.

Beliefs About Students

According to Collinson (1996) and Pajares (1992), the beliefs held by teachers are elemental to what they do and Bruning et al., (1995) said that held beliefs, whether implicit or explicit, affect behavior. Further, research has shown that the beliefs teachers hold have an effect on what they do in the classroom, how they deliver instruction, their interactions with students (Kagan, 1995) and the attitudes they hold towards their students and, ultimately, the expectations they hold for them.

During the introductory interviews with the head teachers, each expressed their beliefs that their schools are collegial establishments where teachers share the communal belief that all children can and will learn, and are encouraged to perform to the best of their abilities. They were clear in their belief that all students who attend their schools, regardless of ability, gender, ethnicity, or religious persuasion, have the right to be treated as individuals and believe it is their responsibility to guide and support teachers so that students' learning is maximized. They concede that while beliefs cannot be mandated, they can be altered and teachers can be encouraged to espouse the ethos of the school; positive interactions produce positive outcomes.

The heads were realistic and acknowledged that not all teachers hold as firmly to the schools' philosophies as they would care, but they all feel that a significant preponderance do and that, importantly, members of staff are constantly supportive of their colleagues. Encouragement is evident through collegial support, "trading places," where teachers exchange classes/students for short, pre-agreed lengths of time, "to get a sense of the pupil(s)" in order to brainstorm ideas. Internal "day-release" days take place in schools A and B where teacher groups get together to share information under the auspices of a lead teacher. In each school, reference to staff meetings as a forum to exchange and share ideas, was frequently made.

Each of the teachers related a perspective which showed both commonalities and individualities with others regarding what they believe is required in order that students experience success. Every one verbalized their belief that all children can progress and be successful to their individual levels and all acknowledged "ownership" of students within the school.

Harriet was very clear in her belief about children and learning. She talked about some children with whom she had worked who were challenging and who raised questions within her about their ability, or willingness, to learn. Ultimately, she reasoned that all students can learn given the right match, whether that be how work is presented, how children are asked to respond, or even down to environmental issues of seating arrangements. In conclusion, she said:

> I know that it is difficult at times, and these children who just seem unable to follow and do what they are supposed to can be extremely trying, especially when parents want to see results. But, you know the old saying, “Rome wasn’t built in a day.” We aren’t miracle workers, but we are teachers and most of us should be able to do it. You know, what I mean, it’s part of our remit, isn’t it? It’s what we’re all about. I suppose teachers in the state schools look at us and think how lucky we are with smaller classes and many of us have teaching assistants. Well, this works out so very well for the children you are looking at because we can give them more individual time.

Peter, although he appeared to agree in principle, was clear that when children exhibit difficulty with comprehending and applying concepts, it is his opinion that it would be to their benefit if there were a “different setting” available to them. He said that:

> I know there are children who have “a low threshold of possible success.” There is no doubt that if they cannot “keep up with the convoy” then perhaps they ought to be in a different room (meaning not in his classroom for science). I don’t understand why people don’t recognize this. It used to be that there were different streams and it seems to me that that was much more sensible. Then teachers could get on with the job of teaching rather than disciplining all the time.

This belief was not alluded to by any other teacher. Their concurrence was clear, and the overall sense was that they each agree that all children can learn, and that ability to learn increases when children are considered and treated as individuals with individual needs. However, not to the exclusion that in schools there is also a sense of conformity and unity.

Without exception, teachers are aware that their salaries are “paid for” by the monies generated by the fees from parents, and feel that their obligation extends not only towards their pupils, but to pupils’ parents, Peter included. Alys commented:

> Parents have the right to know exactly how well their child is getting along. I don’t mean just academically, um, but, well, how they are fitting in with the others and how well they do, well, shall we say, on the games pitch. You know, there’s a lot more to it than pen and paper. Well, to be honest, we’re not all Einstein then, are we? It is such a shame when parents fall into the trap that their child will set the world on fire in medicine. Well, I mean, there are lots of other areas, aren’t there? Sport, art, IT (information technology), music, and all the rest of it. Being realistic is important. Covering up only buys grief in the end. Em, well, em, I say, show mums and dads what else the child is good at. Of course we have parents who do expect their child to do well, but they just can’t all make the same level. Not to say that there aren’t parents who will just push and push, of course there are. Still, it’s good for them to know that their child can do other things, too. I say sharing positive information is good for everyone. The children who have problems actually paying attention to what is going on, well, it’s important when parents know they are really interested and trying, and when that isn’t happening either. It doesn’t matter which sort of school a child attends, parents need to know what is and what isn’t working.

Engagement of Students in the Learning Process

For students to benefit from the learning process, engagement is a necessary condition. Generally, students who have difficulty with attending find such engagement problematic. Harriet said that she feels that she and her colleagues appreciate how crucial it is that all children are engaged in, and kept in engagement of, the learning process and that implementing strategies to ensure this is, and should be an automatic tactic for all teachers to employ. She also acknowledged that children who find focusing challenging can be both taxing and frustrating to work with, and that strategies to ensure minimalization of disruptive behaviors, whether that disruption is limited to the child or extends to a broader spectrum, is key.

Students Who do not Learn Readily. Given that not all students will learn at the same rate or in the same way, nor will they achieve at the same level, the next question posed was to gain insight into how teachers react towards those who do not learn readily. All teachers agreed that this can be more problematic when children cannot pay attention. Indications from the questionnaire suggest that the majority of teachers believe in their own sense of confidence, to varying degrees, about their ability to engage students in the learning process.

Results from interviews indicate that 12 out of the 13 participants are clear in their belief that all students can succeed and, with the exception of three teachers, each participant believes that they have the ability to support students who exhibit learning challenges and welcome all children into their classrooms. Ten said they would definitely ask for support from colleagues if they were unable to fathom how best to approach and implement strategies which would support the learning process and two said they would do so if they felt their approaches were not being successful or that they were not meeting students' needs. Two responded that they would prefer to talk to "one or two." However, Peter gave clear indication that it is his belief that his school would benefit from the addition of a special education teacher to whom students who exhibit difficulties could and should be sent if lessons were to prove too taxing or had problematic behaviors.

Responses to this question fell into three strands. Seven teachers said that if the way a subject/concept were being taught is not conducive to a successful outcome then alternate ways in which delivery can be made have to be sought. Four believe that students should be encouraged to verbalize what and where the breakdown is happening, if at all possible. They all acknowledge that there are students who simply "don't get it" and they don't know why and cannot pinpoint why or where. However, none of these teachers were defeatist and said that ultimately one has to decide just how crucial that given component of learning is and whether the frustration that can be engendered is worth what is being taught. They expressed that being selective is piece of the puzzle. Two teachers, who have been teaching for some considerable time and are approaching the end of their careers, feel that the convoy should not be slowed down to the rate of the slowest ship. One said that she would see the child on a one-to-one basis and revisit the area, but the other said that, essentially, if a child were unable to grasp a concept due to inattention, he does not feel he is obligated to keep going over material. He would certainly encourage that the child stay in school for the homework hour where, perhaps, someone else could explain what he had failed to do. Juliet, who has been teaching for six years noted:

> Good grief, this is probably as hard for me to say as it is for the children. Learning is what we can all do, but differently. I know some need a lot of encouragement, and when you just want them to 'get it' that can become

> trying. Still, when it gets to that stage, sometimes it's a good idea to, if you know what I mean, to try and imagine when you were smaller and in school and you just 'couldn't grasp it.' Wouldn't life have been better if the teacher could have explained in a better way? Um, I'm not saying that I do that as often as I perhaps should, but, when things get a bit difficult and, let's say three are having difficulties, then Sally (her teaching assistant) and I work as a team. Often she knows without me saying anything, but there are times when I have to tip her the nod. Still, with the ones who don't always pay attention, I say, thank goodness for small classes. At least we can see readily who is not with us. Sometimes, if you send the child on an errand, or even help pass out books or whatever, you know, then that will help them to refocus on what we are trying to do.

Working With Students With Difficulties With Attention and Focus

According to research, the most challenging students with whom teachers work are those with behavioral issues, and students with attentional difficulties are seen as being within this group. The question was asked about what teachers do to facilitate learning for students who have difficulty in paying attention. Teachers initially appeared unsure as to how to respond other than what they had already offered. After probing, answers ranged from eliciting the support of teaching assistants (where possible) to encouraging the students to engage in physical activities (subdued), such as being allowed to walk from one set of tables to another, passing out and collecting papers and books, being a class messenger, personal behavioral contracts, and sitting where the level of possible distraction would be minimal. However, teachers acknowledged that care had to be taken and this had to be monitored carefully to ensure that the child who was moving did not irritate or impede others. Nobody reported that this had been a problem. Teachers said that, with children who are old enough to understand, the first step is to talk to them and explain that they are allowed to move around, but there are rules which need to be followed; a chief one being that they are not allowed to disturb others. General questions about classroom organization were asked, and as was observed, classrooms are well structured and well managed. Juliet, one of the less experienced teachers said:

> When I began teaching I looked at many classroom setups and worked out that although there are always times when a freer, less controlled atmosphere is needed, there needs to be structure and children need to know what is happening and they should know why. Eh, they also, well, you know, need to know what you want them to do, where you want them to go, and em, in short, the outcome for all you are doing. They are part of it all and they need to know that.

John was asked what he believes important to engage students when they find attending problematic. He answered:

> It is clear that these children find sitting and looking at and listening to one person drone on quite a challenge, so one has to consider activities that can be used to physically engage them. You know, I think, em, well, I mean that this holds true for those who tend to be dreaming as well as for those who are pretty antsy. In language, you can do that. Have them get up and read, get up and act out what they are reading, take positions and so forth. I think it's probably easier at our age levels than when they go into upper school where teachers are probably less likely to want to do this.

Behaviors, which are commensurate with attentional deficits, were more noticeable in subjects where students had to sit and/or held less interest for the target students. John, like almost all the participating teachers, were noticed to physically move to be near these children, and many of them sat near the teacher, mostly by teacher invitation or direction, but teachers explained frequently the children sat there by personal choice.

The observation in John's class was during a time when children were sharing poetry they had written, he had them first simply read their poems and then act them out, but only if the children chose to do so. He did not force this on anyone and only two children said they weren't ready to either read or act out their work. Having said that, although one child with diagnosed ADHD was in the class, every child appeared to be engrossed in what was happening and the class clearly enjoyed the activity. Much encouragement was given as the students stood up, one by one.

Seven teachers pinpointed classroom management as a key component. How classrooms are set up and predictability of routines was talked about as being efficacious for students who, as Bridget said:

> When you work with a child who is a bit "over the place" or one whom you are not sure is with you at all, then it is really important that you set it up so that they can help themselves get to where they need to be. It can be easy to overlook the quieter ones. You have to make sure that you "pull them in." Questions have to be directed towards them and they have to answer, whatever that may be. You just know how to tailor what you are going to say, I suppose.

Accommodations and Modifications. When describing what they do to support students with attention challenges, most teachers found it awkward to verbalize in some prescriptive format what they do for students. Questions about modifications were asked and, initially, nobody said that they make any modifications. Then, as what making modifications would look like was discussed, all

13 teachers agreed that they put these into place. The physical modification of preferential seating was common, but that did not always mean sitting next to the teacher. In essence, it was reported as seating the child wherever is most beneficial for a lesson or activity. Maddy said that:

> There are times when children need to be separated for activities, perhaps such as reading. Well, we listen to the children read individually every day, but sometimes it is best for Ben when he can sit by the door for language activities, for example. For some reason, being able to look down the corridor seems to suit him. I can't explain why. Of course, the easiest is to make sure these children are particular helpers. When it comes to marking work, then care has to be taken. It's really important to know whether they have understood what you have asked. If they have and it is clearly slovenly work, then the mark stays, but, if a problem can be discovered, then you have to think about how fair you are being. Then perhaps you need to decide what is most important. Of course, you can always have them redo work or complete what hasn't been completed.Um, yes, I think that's right. They still have to know that they are responsible for something.

When considering this question, Lydia responded:

> I am not thoroughly convinced of the given reasons for this difficulty with paying attention. Um, what I mean is that, think that, if the child knows that he or she absolutely is expected to give of their best, then you are well on the way to getting more than you would have done if they could just say, I can't. The level of requirement can be moved up or down, but, em, well, you see, you always have to be thinking of the Key Stages and how Johnny or Mary is going to perform. That is not just for the school or the parent, but for the child

> too. Just because you are not terribly good at paying attention doesn't mean you don't have the intelligence to do quite well. We just have to keep encouraging and working with them. Sometimes it is good for them to hold them completely to task. You would be surprised what can happen. Of course, you have to be careful not to cause any sort of alienation, but still, reality will hit one day.

All teachers said that their interactions with attentionally challenged children are most important. Sybil remarked:

> These children tend to be sloppy most of the time. I don't think it is intentional, it just is. There are times that I have had to ask children to explain their answers, as they simply didn't seem to make sense. Then, joy of joys, when they talk to me and explain their understanding of what they have tried to write, might make perfect sense. Often in a roundabout way, it must be said, but sense, nevertheless. So then one has to decide how to mark their work. I think that showing them what they need to do is one step because they have to show their work in a particular way when they take exams – and those don't go away. You know, parents still expect the children to do well. It's up to us to help them all.

She then added, and this holds true for all schools:

> Of course we have children who find it hard to pay attention to their work. In our school, 10 have been identified with this ADHD, and that's all good and well. But, and I think this is important, we don't have any who have really bad or antisocial habits or skills, well, not that I can think of really. We do a lot of pastoral work, talking to children privately, and that's probably a good thing. If we were to get a child like that, em, who is fairly out of control and

> we felt we simply couldn’t cope, despite all that we do to make it work, we have the option to suggest a different school might be best. Eh, not that that has happened often. Actually, only once that I can think of over the last 10 years, so that’s quite good. Mm, you have to get them to believe in themselves if you are to get anywhere at all. We try to teach them all to be self-aware.

The issues of pastoral care and the importance of not only talking to children, but getting them to be active participants in conversations, were raised at all three schools. All schools hold the belief that one aspect of getting the child to understand the world and education is to encourage them to participate in it.

George talked about applying modifications which have already been remarked upon, and he saw one form of modification as being continual talking to a child, except when the child is clearly becoming agitated by the exchange. Then, he offered, a respite is good for all. He said that he considers constant and reasonable behavioral expectations to be a critical modification:

> We all have to learn to abide by the rules. Doesn’t mean, you know, that we have to like them, just know what is and what is not. I think that there is a big difference between supporting positively and pandering. Children aren’t foolish, they can recognize when you are just catering to their behaviors. It is imperative that they realize what you are telling them. The only way you can do that is to have them respond. Of course, everything takes time, so you have to know you are in it for the long haul. That’s where everybody talking helps. We are all part of the same group, eh, and um, all out to arrive at the same destination. So, em, do I consider talking a modification? Well, perhaps I do.

All final year students take mock entrance examinations prior to the actual exam which determined their future schooling. George provided a copy of his school's latest School Inspection Reports, as did the other heads. These reports ranged in date from 2000 to 2003 and the reports were favorable. While none of the schools were rated as top performers, they clearly had achieved positive outcomes for their students.

When asked if students who had difficulty with attending were provided with any modifications for these exams, the response from each of the head teachers was that teachers would encourage them to work, and, as George related:

> That is about all we can do. By the time they take the exam, the children have had the importance of what is to happen dinned into them. They all know that we expect them to give it their best go. They know that we have faith in them, and realistically, we know that they are not all going to get into the schools their parents would like, but there it is. We all just have to do our best. Without a doubt some are disappointed, but you just have to show how far they have come and what they are able to do. Don't look at what they can't do. There is a healthy percentage who will go to state schools and, I have to say, they stand shoulder to shoulder with their peers there. Some better than others. We have children who will perform poorly and that is just a fact, but, I contend that our parents know we are all about preparing our children to the best of our ability. Of course, if they don't agree with what we are doing, then they have the option of removing them. I have to say, in my tenure, we haven't had any removed for that reason, well, that we give up easily.

Sources of Support

The issue of support was touched on earlier in this chapter. A strong sense of mutual support was declared in all three schools. In two schools, B and C, there is a teacher who acts in the position of being a support teacher. Of the two, one has had no special education training and the other has attended a course for one day a week during the course of the academic year. In School A, no one acts in this role and teachers are dependent on supporting each other in order to determine courses of action which will support students. It was highly evident in all three schools, that the immediate sources of support are colleagues and administration, although not necessarily in that order. As each of the heads teach, they are seen in both capacities, but, when soliciting support, teachers view them as colleagues first and foremost, and as building administrators secondly. None of the teachers voiced any concerns about approaching the heads for support and did not feel that they would expose themselves as having weak areas which could become targets if they were to do so. As John said:

> You have to be able to rely on each other in this game. We've all been in the classroom as youngsters, and I am sure that many of us wish our teachers had gone a little more out of their ways to help us a little more.

Support in the Schools

Schools B and C each have a teacher who is regarded as a "consultant" teacher and serves as a resource teacher. In School B it is Harriet, who has been teaching the longest in her group. She talked about how she has participated in in-services which addressed special needs and benefited from the information and strategies they suggested. She said that some of her colleagues are not "entirely sold" on the idea that children are not intentionally inattentive, but that they would talk to others whom they perceive as being more successful with such children. Also in School B, a special education specialist is employed for one morning per week to work with a child with cerebral palsy and one with pronounced Tourettes Syndrome. Teachers do not view her as a readily available support, although they said that if a child's behavior or ability to learn should prove to be beyond what they could affect, they might consider approaching her to discuss what they could do to promote desired behaviors and learning.

In School C, Bridget is the teacher who is regarded as the "expert" when dealing with children who have educational challenges, to include those who have difficulty with focus. She senses that there continue to be those educators in school who cling to the belief that children, who do not or can not pay attention in the traditional sense of the word, are the products of permissive and indulgent parenting.

Of all the participant teachers, only two voiced resistance to soliciting help from others with whom they work and being willing to reciprocate and offer support. All teachers made reference to contacting parents with any concerns that are evident within the school, and, at all schools, teachers said that when issues with discipline, and they included aspects of inattention, were "getting out of hand," parents are kept informed and the schools expect, and although they do not always see evidence of parental support, that support is an expected.

All schools said that if issues are too problematic, they have the leeway to call on the Local Education Authority (LEA) to request an appointment with the resident educational psychologist. However, despite time constraints being in place, this can take a considerable length of time given the area and number of schools the LEA has to cover. This had happened in School A twice in the last 10 years and in School B once in the same period. The Head of School C said that to the best of her knowledge, that had not happened in her school.

Collaboration. Each school convenes faculty meetings weekly and at these meetings, among other topics, concerns about individual students are discussed and suggestions to address concerns are brainstormed. On a less formal note, teachers exchange ideas during breaks in the day and before and after school. As already addressed, teachers have formed communication lines through which they exchange ideas and suggestions. They collaborate more with their classroom neighbors than teachers in other buildings, although they do talk to teachers who teach different age levels and subjects. There was agreement that this is advantageous to all. Two teachers were more withdrawn when answering this question. Peter said that he prefers to take care of things himself and believes that teachers should not have to rely on others, saying:

> I have been teaching science for a long time, and I had better know what I am talking about by now. I really don't need to share any of that with anyone else. Now, if you are talking about collaborating about children who have problematical behaviors, then I suppose that what I do is send them to the Head when they get too bad. I don't do that if they are not disrupting, though. Generally I just keep asking the quiet ones questions to keep them on their toes. I need to get on with the business of teaching those who are interested. I hear people talk in the staff room, and I say that if that is what works for them, then good.

Alys said that she is willing to collaborate, but fundamentally, she holds to the conviction that teachers ought to be able to "sort things out within the room" and, like

Peter, she said that if behaviors were too challenging, it is the responsibility of the head to “sort it out.”

Judging Students’ Success

Students are viewed very much as individuals and, with the exception of one teacher, all teachers feel that, in addition to how the students perform on each of the Key Stage examinations (examinations which follow the National Curriculum as suggested by the Government), a key component of success is more personalized, whereby student growth in performance is evaluated in two ways; looking at the child as a component of an individual class and by comparing advances made in performance levels from the beginning of an academic year to the end of that year. Growth is carefully charted and parents informed at various points throughout the year. Harriet is keenly aware of the published Schools’ League Tables. She pointed out:

> The League Table thing is more openly referred to when talking about the state schools, but we have it too. You know, they publish them in the Times, Top 200 Independent Schools and that sort of thing. We do watch which schools are where. Not that I’m saying we are keenly upset if we don’t show up, but we do watch these.

For target children, social gains and how they do or do not achieve them are considered significant and the consensus is that when children are feeling good about themselves as a whole and are experiencing greater social success, then they are more likely to be willing to make attempts to be successful in other areas, academic achievement being prime.

Goals for Students. All teachers, without exception, responded that academic success is key. Nevertheless, gains children make socially were also described as being extremely important, as part of the schools' philosophies is that children must be nurtured socially as well as academically Lydia explained that:

> Hm, well that's what we are all about. Being responsible for helping children gain academic success. However, you know, I also have to say that we, as a staff, are only too aware of the sacrifices many of our parents make to send their children to our school. Not everyone is as affluent as you may think; lots of people hold on to that mistaken belief. They send the children here for a good, solid education, and most people, and yes, em, to be as successful as they can be. You know, although they don't actually come out and say it exactly, our parents want a school that holds consistently high expectations for their children and with those expectations comes the expectation that the children will be within a disciplined environment and will do well academically. To have that environment, children need to be able to understand that this is an expectation that we have for them and they are expected to be able to develop in themselves, em, self-discipline, that is.

When asked about social awareness, she responded:

> I think about it like this, if I don't feel good about who I am, or what I'm doing, or what is happening around me, then I don't do very well. If that is true for me, why should it be different for children? So, well, I think it's true across the board, don't you? So, I would venture, it's the same for our children. If they're not getting along with their classmates, or their teachers, or whomever, then they probably don't feel the best. Children are so vulnerable,

> even if they are a handful. Um, well, they still are. It's really incumbent on us to help.

All three heads spoke of the importance of having high academic goals for children although, as George explained:

> Clearly it is our aim to have our children do their very best academically, after all, that is the main focus of our raison d'etre. Parents want their children to be bright and be able to move forward educationally. Now, we can't all be supremely bright, but we can do our level best to make sure they do as well as they can. Everything has to be tailored to the child. The goals you have for one are not necessarily the goals you have for another, and that is how is ought to be.

Further elucidation from both male and female teachers confirmed that personal and social growths are also key target areas. For children who have attentional challenges, goals may look different to those who have other challenges. All teachers made note that children in each of their schools are clearly cognizant of acceptable behavior in the hallways and classrooms. Sue spoke about how teachers are involved in the pastoral care of children. She related that in her school, the fostering of a healthy self-image is also considered paramount and that teachers actively promote emotional well-being, but not "falsely." Her comments were:

> We don't believe that it is at all healthy to encourage children falsely by encouraging them to believe that everyone can, will, or should be "first." Well, what I mean is children do have to learn that not everyone will win, not everyone can come first, not everyone is "the best." On the other hand, everyone can be the first for themselves, they can achieve to the best that they can, they can "move up" in whatever realm. I am not "pie in the sky" and my

colleagues and I are well aware that we are not going to achieve 100 percent success, but that's not a reason to give up. If we were to do that, parents would soon stop sending their children here.

Additional Information

When teachers were asked if there is anything else about them as educators that they thought I should know, most laughed. The teachers voiced repeatedly their sense of commitment to education, their schools, their pupils, and to their parents. I put to them that for the majority, the likelihood is that there would be greater financial remuneration if teaching in the state system and would that not sway their decision about where best to teach. Without exception, the idea was rejected. Every teacher is content with working in the independent system, fully aware that they are expected to give more time to the schools and are expected to participate in multiple time consuming activities. Class sizes were again pointed out as being a positive. Just as explained by James with agreement echoed by others:

> I have heard it suggested that good teachers can teach well regardless of the size of class. Well, what I say is that that may well be the case if all the children are capable academically and they are all able to follow along. But, you know, we all know that's not how it is, is it, don't we? The human condition is full of so many vagaries. Of course you can do better with a small class. Cuts down on the variations, helps you be able to keep a real handle on what is happening, and helps you offer more to them. That's what I like in this school. I know in the state school I'd have 30 or more likely more kids. That would be a challenge and I often wonder about the overall discipline in some

of the schools. I think we are less and less able to enforce good discipline. (He laughs) I don't suppose I should have used the word, "enforce" should I?

Throughout the observations, over the course of the research period no untoward exchanges were noticed between target students and any teacher either during lesson or afterwards or between target students and their peers. During lessons, there was a considerable amount of interaction between teachers and all students with the exception of one teacher, who lectured more than interacted with his students. Otherwise, it was unmistakable that rules existed in the schools and these were there to be followed, by everyone, as evidenced by levels of voices, how students walked through the hallways, how they filed into the refectory and were able to behave at table.

In 11 out of 13 observations, there was clear evidence that, although teachers did not make specific acknowledgement to implementing accommodations and modifications, they do employ strategies which visibly illustrate such implementations. This was evident when observing during the science lesson which James taught, even though he did not verbalize what he was doing as ensuring these interventions to be in place.

When the question whether parents ask to see marks (grade) books, the answer was negative for each school. However, it was pointed out that these are referred to on Parent Evenings, when parents come and talk to individual teachers, which each school holds once per term. All parents are invited to these each time. Head teachers were clear that should children show any regression or lack of progress, parents were kept informed and nobody waited for parents' evenings to inform parents of progress.

Attitudes, Expectations and Efficacy

These areas of investigation were main focuses of this study. Evidence of each was apparent both during observations and during the course of the interviews. According to the teachers, principals play a key role in supporting them, which keeps the "mood" of the school buoyant and this filters down to the student body. The positivity of the teachers compensated for those who have times of less. On the whole, there was no perceivable sense of "burn out" or friction between colleagues. For clarity of understanding, a general synopsis of findings follows, rather than disperse the findings among the individual teacher responses.

Attitudes

According to Hepperlen et al., (2002), Greene (1992), and McAuley and Johson (1993), the attitudes which teachers exhibit towards students may have long-reaching effects on their students. The act of teaching is influenced by how a teacher thinks and the attitudes demonstrated, which are related to their behaviors (Jordan et al., 1993, 2000; Gibbs, 2003). While teacher participants intimated that behavioral problems were those with which they liked to deal with least, concurring with the research undertaken by Avarmidis et al. (2000), no teacher felt that any student was beyond their reach behaviorally. Although devising and implementing interventions can be time consuming, as behavioral interventions may have to be implemented over extended periods of time and environments may have to be altered, 11 of the 13 participant teachers stated the time invested yielded positive results. Teachers in the participating schools were clear in their attitudes, beliefs, and expectations, that positivity begets more positive results. Ellie observed:

> I have always believed in having a positive mental attitude and I know that there are those who put my positive attitude down to being new at this. You know, I've not been teaching that long compared to some others. Still, I don't think that's the whole story. When you work with people who are upbeat and buoyant, then you are more likely to share in that feeling, and it spills over to the children. So, your upbeat attitude affects the children in a good way. If you are grumpy with them, their effort falls. I simply don't believe in putting children down and expecting them to pull themselves up just to show you. That may be true in some rare cases, but I think most children would just fold over, don't you? I think children who don't pay attention the way they have to can cause you to be a little more, shall we say acerbic, no, that's not a good word. But, you know what I mean, they can push the limits. But, I come back to having a good attitude pays dividends for all of us.

During the time I spent in the schools, there were occasions when a lessened positive attitude was apparent. Some situations were trying, but teachers regained equilibrium quickly, and their sense of fairness was apparent. No teacher made reference to preferring student not to be in their classrooms other than one. During the interviews and as evidenced in observations, the attitudes of teachers toward the children they were responsible for teaching was upbeat.

Expectations

According to Good and Brophy, 2002, mirroring what Good, 1987, had previously advocated, the expectations that teachers hold for students could be defined as how they believe each child can perform and of what each student is capable. As purported by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), Good (1981), and Raffini (1993), high expectations correlate with higher students achievement, and equally the converse holds, then it would appear that the philosophies espoused by the three participating schools would substantiate this assertion. The expectations that teachers hold for students are often communicated during their interactions with them and Good and Brophy (2002) wrote that some teacher behaviors demonstrate different expectations from different students.

Given the findings of the above research, it was interesting to discover that one fundamental and commonly held expectation within the schools was that, with support, all children would maximize their abilities. While the schools recognized that levels of achievement would vary, as did cognitive ability, their aim was to maximize on children's areas of potential. As Bridget reflected:

> Children recognize signals adults exude. They may be young and lacking in life's experiences, but they have an innate ability to know how you feel about them. If they pick up that you don't believe in them or expect much from them, well, what can I say, how can they expect much from themselves? You know what I mean? If they won't get recognition for their effort, they'll simply stop putting forth. So teachers always have to expect the best, whatever that best may be. If they perceive that you really don't have much faith in

> them, then their chances of having faith in themselves is pretty much null and void.

While all teachers recognized, as suggested by Rhodewalt and Tragakis (2002) that student ability is a main focus and that academic results were premier to the success of the schools, they adhered to the concept of the whole child and the success of the whole child is also a main focus. None of the schools denied the fundamental significance of academic success and George volunteered:

> Our parents look to their children doing well academically to set them on the road to be successful people. Still, success comes in many guises. How well we do in the academic stakes is vital. We know that, just as all schools do. Children have to believe in themselves as well as being academically prepared.

Although several teachers had a somewhat novel perspective on expectations. All were in agreement that expectations should be high, but none of them claimed that they should be the same. John observed:

> How can anybody have the same level of expectation for everyone? Don't you think that would be unfair? I think that if one doesn't expect the best from each child then one is being remiss in one's duty. However, that said, if you don't look at the individual child, then again, you are being remiss. Well, what I mean is that the playing field is definitely unlevel if I expect everyone to be able to write the same caliber of essay. Perhaps one child is a budding novelist and the next simply competent at his or her own level. No matter what the level, just do your best, and I, as the teacher, should be able to work that out. If not, then I need to look to myself.

Efficacy

Briefly put, perceived self-efficacy can be defined as a person's confidence in their own ability to achieve a specific goal in a given setting, and, further, according to Bandura (1977, 1997), a more accurate prediction of how a person will behave can be gathered from the beliefs that person holds about his or her own capabilities. Those who have confidence in their own abilities, a healthy sense of self efficacy, tend to welcome difficult tasks and wish to win through them rather than look at them as threats to be avoided (Pajares & Schunk, 2001). Those who do not, avoid such challenges which are viewed as intimidating. They are likely to have a lowered sense of ambition and have less commitment towards the realization of goals, ruminating on their shortfalls and inability to achieve.

Bandura (1993) imparted that self efficacy impacts on three levels, student efficacy, teacher efficacy, and staff efficacy which, collectively are a substantial component of the learning process. Soodak and Podell (1993) found that regular education teachers with high personal efficacy were more likely to believe that the appropriate setting for any child is within the regular education classroom. However, when personal and teaching efficacy was low, the reverse proved true.

Nine teachers indicated that they were more comfortable dealing with "straight academic difficulties," but, with the exception of one, none suggested that they would contemplate having a child removed from their classroom unless behaviors were so negative that other children were being adversely affected reflect. This attitude aligns with the preventive stance as described by Jordan-Wilson and Silverman (1991). which emphasize the importance of teacher/faculty collaboration with the objective being to find solutions to the difficulties students demonstrate rather than look for external solutions. Sybil shared:

> We have to look pragmatically at what we can offer. To date, we have been able to accommodate all children in our school, but as I told you, we don't have any severe behavioral problem children. It could be argued that one of the plusses we have is that we can't marginalize any children; we just don't have anywhere to send them. They are ours and, individually and collectively, we need to, and do, deal with them. Children should never feel marginalized. They have to know that we have faith in them, even when they don't have it in themselves. Of course, from time to time I do have children sent to my study but I like to think, we are able to compromise and develop classroom environments which are supportive of our children. Some are just more of a challenge than others.

Each participant in this study completed an anonymous, 12-item questionnaire (Appendix H) to gain an insight into how teachers perceived their sense of self-efficacy. While most responses were in the moderately agree or disagree categories, it was clear that respondents had a positive sense of self-efficacy. Most teachers believed that heterogeneous classes provided the best learning environment and, with the exception of one teacher, all felt that they could motivate and influence the education of children with attentional deficits. One question read, "When a child has difficulty with focus, I believe I should immediately refer that child for educational intervention (with a special needs teacher). It was explained that I recognized the schools did not have special education departments, but to hypothesize what they would do if they had such access. No teacher indicated that they would follow this course.

During the interview with John, he shared:

> I think that teaching is one of those things where you just have to believe you can. Some children can seem intimidating, oh, at this age I don't mean physically or verbally, but, well, maybe just challenging in their academic skills, whether they can or can't, are progressing or not. That is what we teachers are about. Can we do it? Yes, I believe we can. Still, work at it and you will make differences for them, and should be what makes us feel good about ourselves and what we do. Kids are like a maze, there is a way through, and, well, I suppose you could just say, well, if you are the teacher, you just have to find the way through. Sounds trite, doesn't it, but I don't mean it that way. Well, I know they won't all get top marks, well, just doesn't happen in real life, does it? They can all work and the aim is to get them through. Not everybody will be Einstein, but we, well society, have lots of needs for loads and loads of aptitudes. If you are asking if I can get everyone to get really good results, then I have to ask how you define good results. My job is to get them to reach the farthest they can, you know, "ad altiora tendo."

Summary

All participant teachers were interviewed and observed in their own classroom environments and data gathered from these interviews, observations, and questionnaires serve to provide a picture of what participant teachers in the three subject schools do when working with students who have attentional deficits. Through extensive interviews, interactions within the school, and formal and informal observations, both within classrooms and throughout the schools during the school day, teachers demonstrated a high level of caring for all students and their welfares, both academic and social. What almost all the teachers were doing, regardless of the terminologies they chose, appeared to be to empower their students to achieve to the greatest extent possible both socially and academically by fostering environments, which provided the structure and support crucial to their achievement.

The sense of collegiality was demonstrated by the amount of interactions teachers had with each other and their school leaders as well as the support they gave each other, particularly in relationship to discussing problematic issues regarding students and their achievement. The vast majority of teachers clearly felt that students in their schools who had attention deficits, whether they recognized the condition or not, were best educated with their same-age peers, and in two schools they are able to draw on the expertise of two colleagues who had more experience with understanding the condition. “Passing the buck” was not an option, but maximizing on what was available through communication with parents and guardians as well as colleagues, was.

CHAPTER V

Data Analysis

All pupils have specific needs that must be addressed in the classroom if they are to enjoy success academically, socially, and emotionally. Students who have attentional deficits, learning disorders, and other disabilities, are within this population and they display confounding characteristics that are beyond their control, such as lessened ability to pay attention, increased motor movement, impulsivity, distractibility, and a lack of self control. These children attend independent schools as they do public schools. In England, independent schools populations repeatedly demonstrate that they perform well in standardized National Curriculum examinations at the Key Stages and this success can be generalized across student groups with and without mild disabilities. It must be borne in mind that the schools which agreed to participate in this study do not have any students who could be described as having moderate to severe disabilities or those who have serious emotional and/or behavioral conditions. The number of students who go on to take places at the most prestigious universities in the United Kingdom illustrates the success of independent schools ultimately and by tracking the routes they take post-school. The head-teachers willingly shared school success stories, even describing the difficulties some students had to overcome in order to do so.

Analysis of the data collected was through the lenses of the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991; Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al., 1997; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998) and the construct of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1989, 1997, 2000; Gibson & Dembo, 1984). All data were then organized by domain and theme based on concepts and similarities for comparison against the stages of the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and the construct of self-efficacy.

The Pathognomonic-Interventionist Continuum

Studies reflecting the hypothesis of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) have suggested that teachers interact differently with students dependent on the expectations they hold for them. As asserted by Pajares (1992), they hold different perspectives when dealing with those students who have learning challenges and are consequently at risk and the nature of those beliefs will be reflected in the teacher's actions (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

"At risk" students are to be found in all educational settings and, according to Stanovich and Jordan (1998), "Today's teachers must deal, as never before, with heterogeneity in their classrooms" (p. 221). This diversity can be attributed to multiple causes, but, whatever the cause, those who teach children have beliefs and assumptions which influence how they instruct and interact with their pupils. The beliefs that teachers hold can be viewed as being distributed along a continuum, as described by Jordan-Wilson and Silverman (1991); Jordan etal., (1993); Jordan et al,, (1997), and Stanovich and Jordan (1998) who identified it as the "restorative-preventive" or "pathognomonic-interventionist" continuum.

At one end of this continuum is the perspective identified as “restorative” (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991) or “pathognomonic” (Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al, 1997, Stanovich & Jordan, 1998), characterized by the belief that difficulties encountered and exhibited by the child lie within the child and are not attributable to external causes. These teachers may have an external locus of control and believe that regardless of what they do, they will not be able to help children overcome their difficulties. Subsequently, they implement few, if any interventions, modifications, or accommodations to support the child, tend not to interact with resource (or other) colleagues to consider the child’s difficulties, initiate and sustain limited, if any, parental contact, undertake limited assessments to chart student progress, and demonstrate little linkage between curriculum and assessment. These teachers believe that the child should be evaluated for services as expeditiously as possible in order to identify and confirm an area of deficit, and that services for the child should be provided outside the general education classroom. Pathognomonic teachers do not believe in, and will resist heterogeneity and do not ascribe to making environmental modifications to suit the needs of challenged learners.

Those who espouse the belief cluster at the opposite end of the continuum are identified as being “preventive” (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991) or “interventionist” (Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al, 1997; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998), whereby the belief is that such difficulties exist not within the child, but with the interaction of the child and the environment in which the child functions, in other words, between the child and the instructional environment. Teachers considered interventionist believe that the majority of students profit best from being educated in the general education classroom if appropriate instruction is implemented (Jordan et al, 1997) and not in a divorced setting and show a preference for heterogeneous classrooms. They have an internal locus of control and are willing to assume responsibility for attempting to help solve the student's problems and will institute instructional interventions and task modifications to alleviate student difficulties. These teachers work collaboratively with a resource teacher and colleagues, monitor progress, link assessment to instruction, and communicate regularly with parents. Should a child be referred for evaluation, the information provided by the evaluation serves to inform instruction, interventions, modifications, and accommodations rather than justify removal from the general education setting.

Teachers who declare themselves willing to adapt their instructional behaviors and engage in practices that can be described as effective, but give up rather than persevere when results are not achieved quickly, can be considered to be aligned to the middle of the continuum. Teachers who can be described as being in this middle range, assert beliefs which can be identified with the interventionist perspective, but rather than persist, will refer students for formal assessment, to be sure an identifiable "deficit" does actually exist.

Five basic coding criteria with which to investigate teachers' orientations on the continuum, as identified in the research literature (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991, Jordan et al., 1993; Jordan et al., 1997; and Stanovich and Jordan 1998), were used in this study. These were identified as Stages and range from Stage 1 to Stage 5. The breakdown of the Stages is as follows:

- Stage 1 – Assessment
- Stage 2 – Programming
- Stage 3 – Review
- Stage 4 – Communication with staff
- Stage 5 – Communication with parents

Collected data were disaggregated and put into themes and codes and then compared to Stages 1 – 5 to determine teachers' orientation. Data which does not reflect positive implementation of these stages suggests alignment with the notions identified at the pathognomonic end of the continuum, and data which reflects positive implementation of these stages correlates to the opposite end, the interventionist cluster of beliefs.

Stage 1 – Assessment and Prereferral

Pathognomonic teachers tend not to engage in modifications, accommodations, or assessment of the child prior to referral to a resource teacher, rather they will request evaluations be done by resource personnel as expeditiously as possible. The intent is that the child is referred not only to assess for possible deficits, but also to confirm the teacher's suspicions that a problem exists. Interventionist teachers, on the other hand, initiate activities to elicit as much information as possible which, if the child is ultimately to be assessed, can be given to evaluators to provide a broader picture of the child's daily functioning. Rather than have the child removed from the classroom, interventionist teachers use the information and suggestions from assessments to guide their teaching practices, possible interventions, modifications, and accommodations. They believe that the most efficacious place for a child to learn is in the general education setting with his or her peers.

The issue of prereferral did not really arise as none of the schools have special education departments, but similar gathering of information was referred to. Schools B and C each have a teacher with whom other staff members often confer when challenges arise, but neither is special education qualified although they have taken courses which have addressed some special education issues. In addition, School B has one resource person contracted to work there for one morning per week. As explained by each of the heads, the schools have the capability of calling upon the services of the local authority psychologist, whom, it appears, is a main cog in the referral wheel, but they each voiced their beliefs that with their body of students, they have the capacity to deal with their needs within the school itself.

All participating teachers, bar two, spoke of how they use the forum of the staff meeting and informal conversations to discuss and brainstorm approaches to individual students, strengths and possible weaknesses, and which teaching practices they have found most effective. When talking to Peter about how he works with students who have difficulty with attention, or generally, he responded that, as far as he is concerned, children have clear academic limits and that:

> I don't think children should be pushed on. They ought to be able to follow what is happening. Of course, science isn't everybody's strength, and we all know that. Not that I am saying only bright children can do well, but we all have what we have and just have to make the best of it. Attention – well, if they can't pay attention, how can they learn all that they need to know? Mind you, I have worked with children and have been convinced that they haven't learned a thing due to not paying attention, only to be surprised at how much they have retained. But no, apart from reminding them of how I expect them to behave, I can't say that I would do anything different.

When asked about checking from other sources about how individual children have learned best, he answered that he listened in the staff room, but he did not feel it obligated him to go any further than that. He reiterated similar comments at several junctures throughout the interview:

> Once again, simply put, it would be more expeditious to have pupils who can't cope work with a teacher who can go slower or do whatever it is that they need. I don't see that it is fair to the rest of the class to spend an inordinate amount of time on the one or two. I expect them to be ready and able to learn what I have to teach. Again, not that I'm saying I won't help them, because I will, but they have to be able and ready to listen and understand. George has toyed with the idea of getting a resource person in on a consultative basis, but he's been saying that for years and it hasn't happened yet.

A clear theme to emerge from all other teachers was that they do and will talk to previous teachers when difficulties, whatever those may be, are encountered, and that such talking is beneficial both to teacher and student. Bridget, Juliet, John, Lydia, Maddy, and Sue reflected that as their schools are small and as teachers "virtually know" all the children, intake teachers have a fair idea of children who have attentional difficulties. Asked if they believe this might affect prejudice, each replied in the negative and noted that it is their belief that information from a previous teacher is information to be used as a baseline from which to progress, and not used as an excuse for lack of success. They acknowledged that some children have "reputations" but considered that at times these reputations are linked more to a mismatch of personalities. James commented:

> Well, I've been teaching for about 11 years and there are always a couple of children who are challenging each new year. I don't believe in reinventing the wheel, so to speak, so I go to a child's previous teacher to see what did and didn't work. I also like to tell them what I propose to do to see what they think. Checking like this helps give me a good foundation to build on I don't see it is something to use to a child's detriment. What would parents think if

> they thought for one minute that our talking harmed their child's chances? It's true that not all children get along with teachers just as we don't get necessarily get along with each other all the time. I ask you, who is the adult?

All teachers agreed that they do not perceive the issue of chatting about children as a disservice. Rather, they look at it as widening their knowledge base. Interestingly, with the exception of Peter, no teacher alluded to making use of a resource person to work with target students.

While teaching a math class, Juliet was seen working with one child individually, using counters and number lines. While she was working with this child, the other children were doing independent work following the guided practice she had shared with them. A teaching assistant was walking round the room watching, listening, and talking to children to ensure that they had understood what had been taught and were doing what had been asked. When asked about the child she was working with, Juliet answered:

> Toby is new to our school. He has come from one of the local primaries (elementary schools), but the classes there are pretty substantial – I believe about 32. He has not been doing well and his parents are quite concerned. I need to find out just what he does know and what he doesn't. He seems to be unsure of moving from concrete to abstract, so I am trying to get a real understanding of just where he is. I'll keep a close eye on him and keep a check to make sure he continues to move in the right direction.

When asked how she would do that, she responded that she already had a baseline and she was comparing his progress on a weekly basis by giving him informal tests which are presented in a very low-key way in order not to make the child worried about them. She added that she does let the child know when he is making positive progress which, in turn, boosts his confidence.

The indication is that this is common practice in all three schools when children come from other schools and have not attended their current schools since becoming of school age and also when children are not performing up to expectations. When a child comes into their rooms, teachers are charged with reviewing the files that are sent by other schools and to get in touch with previous teachers should there be any questions about social or academic behaviors.

Although it is understood that these schools do not have identified resource personnel to support them, of the 13 respondents, 11 take responsibility upon themselves to work with children to determine where their challenges lie and comments given by participant teachers were in reference to children with attentional challenges. They talked about looking to each other for support and for ideas to facilitate the delivery of instruction. Of the remaining two teachers, one was undecided. This was Alys. She recounted that she understands that the root of debilitating behaviors must be identified, then added:

> I can only do what I can do. I'll try my best, up to a point, but I can't take responsibility for catering to their needs at all times. The children have to learn to toe the line as well. Fortunately, we have Anna (teaching assistant) who can help. You know, either I can work with one or a few children or she can. Being able to take small groups certainly helps, well, it helps with what they are doing and helps to find out just where the problems lie, I daresay. That's one good thing about our school, we have TAs.

Peter was much more uncompromising when he expressed his conviction about children who cannot pay attention:

> Children who refuse to pay attention should not be pandered to, but made to attend, however that can be achieved. If they have to be detained after class, at lunchtime, during prep, then so be it, as I've already said. This is where a special teacher would clearly be beneficial. I don't have anything against these children, but I do think we need to rethink how much time is consumed. Someone with more time than I do should be there to help. We are fortunate in our school having teaching assistants, but they are not always available to help and that can be difficult.

The remaining teachers collectively responded that unless behaviors are particularly severe, by which the understanding was made apparent that they were referring to behaviors which made the delivery of instruction almost impossible, preferral activities to them meant working out what any given child requires in order to perform more successfully.

Bridget, who is regarded as a resource in her school, described how she used data she had received from the previous school by saying:

> There can be manifold reasons for a child changing from one school to another. In all honesty, when they have started in another school and then come here, mm, yes, well it can be true that the parents simply want them in our school, but when they feel that way, they generally start off in our school and stay. But, if a child is having problems in class and that class is huge, the chances of getting individual help are diminished. That's pretty self evident, isn't it? Sometimes, parents don't give the whole picture, but relatively quickly, we can put it together. As I see it, knowing why is helpful to working out the "what" and "how" that needs to follow.

Stage 2 - Programming

During the interviews, discussion was held with all teachers about how they set goals and evaluate the progress made both for classes and for individual students and whether or not they individualized programs. Tests, it was explained by Sybil, are given so that teachers know how children are doing not only as a group, but also as individuals. The tests serve to determine appropriate "next steps." For example, all participant teachers give tests, such as for spelling, on a weekly basis. How children do guides which sort of words they will study for the next week and none of the classes give only one general spelling list. They all noted that they do not believe in over-testing and prefer to evaluate how children are doing by what their performance is on a daily basis and by making comparisons between what is being done currently, what has been done previously, and what is required, both individually and as members of the total group. That given, other tests, such as for math fluency, reading comprehension, and so on, are given on a less frequent basis, but as needed. George remarked that by giving these "check-ups," it sorts out how individual students are performing and that it is up to each teacher to determine at what level the child needs to be instructed. John explained:

> When tests like spelling and vocabulary are given, they test what the kids have learned. But, there are other "on the spot tests" I suppose you would call them, that are really useful and I give them to check where the kids are "at this time." These tests, if you want to call them that, let me see exactly where kids are in the "now." Here is the rule; nobody gets to know how anybody else has

> done. It's private to the individual, oh, and me. You have to balance the testing *of* what has been learned and the testing *for* learning.

When discussing target students, Ellie, Lydia, Maddy, Sybil, and Bridget said that they are careful to test only that which has been taught so that children are not caught unawares, and thus unsettle them, which may lead to them giving up before they even start. Testing and assignment scores are kept on individual children to formulate what needs to be done to ensure continuing positive achievement. Maddy disclosed that she keeps additional "informal testing" on children, more so on those who demonstrate attentional deficits and/or struggling academically. For these children she also keeps behavioral data. She said that she often implements personal behavior plans as an aid to children. She believes that the visual record of behavior can have a positive effect on encouraging acceptable behaviors. As she imparted:

> The trouble with the attentionally challenged children is that one day they can do quite well and the next can be disastrous. The trick is to be able to strike a balance and see what worked well for them on one day compared to a day when things are more awkward. I know I'm not the only one who does this because we exchange information about how our children are doing. As behavior can be a problem, I keep information on that too. Once I have it recorded, I can share it with others to get ideas on how best to help them, and can let their mums and dads know accurately what's going on.

Sue was in agreement with this statement, although they work in different schools. She said that the most exhausting part of working with attention deficit children is that "so often you know they can do the work." This sentiment was echoed by John, Ellie, George, Sybil, and Harriet who added that, "finding an even keel was a challenge in and of itself."

Teachers were asked about how they set goals for their classes in general and for challenged students in particular. Responses varied, but the general sense was that teachers keep in mind two different sets of criteria. They refer back to tests which have been given and which are used to guide what needs to be addressed next, or what needs to be looked at again. As Lydia articulated:

> In our school we follow the National Curriculum, so we do have to cover clearly delineated topics. However, it's not a race as there's no point in getting to the finishing line if many of the items have been missed out. Children simply won't do well if they haven't "got it." Some children just need to have instruction retaught, perhaps in a different way, to make sure they have grasped the concept. It can mean little steps backwards, I grant you, but the investment is worth it. No point in telling parents that little Johnny didn't do well because we didn't take the time to make sure he at least had some knowledge of what he had to do.

This was added to by Harriet when she referred directly to children who have difficulty focusing on tasks:

> I'll bet that there are children in every class who don't pay proper attention. Still, the ones you are talking about do stand out more because their behaviors go on all the time. I have to say that they can be wearing, and I know that most of us feel that way. Even though, they can be absolute delights – it depends on the day. Not paying attention doesn't mean bad, although sometimes you think it does. With these children, I contend that one has to pace oneself. Take it in little steps and be aware that there will be lots of ups and downs. You probably know that sometimes the slightest thing can take their attention away, so, I think it's fair to say, that we are careful about doing our utmost to make sure

> that they have the stepping stones to get to where we need them to be. Thank goodness for Fliss (her teaching assistant). When a child simply can't or won't settle, she is quite capable of intervening, or even with taking over what I am doing so that I can find out what is going on. There are times these children need to be left alone, but I don't think that should happen too often, otherwise it develops into a really bad habit that they expect.

Monitoring and recording are not the only elements of the Programming Stage. Classroom arrangement must be considered. The sizes of each of the classrooms visited are what can best be described as average to a little smaller than average. However, the fact that the class sizes are small compensates, in some instances, for smaller rooms.

Physical classroom management is a vital component of how students are successfully managed. It appeared that the majority of classrooms are managed similarly, with variations in desk arrangement and placement of teachers' desks. The science labs are traditionally laid out with stools around long wooden benches. John noted:

> In the classroom it's important to establish a climate that is friendly to all students, as they all have to feel and know that they belong.

When talking about physical arrangement of her classroom, Bridget said that she had learned that children who have attentional deficits often have difficulty sitting at a desk or table. By arranging classrooms with enough room for movement, yet by making them orderly at the same times, children could move around without impediment. She commented it was her experience that "making" children sit at desks, allowing limited movement, led to a decline in performance. Peter related that his sense is that the best places for students to sit are as he directs, and that way he feels he can have children “who need an eye kept on them” sit near him. He believes in seating them “as their needs dictate.”

Traffic patterns are clearly established in most of the rooms and students know how they are expected to move with the minimum of disruption for their fellows. Several teachers reported that they have target children who like to stand and move periodically. They accommodate this and believe that it does not cause any disruption to others in their rooms. Throughout the schools, students were seen to sit in different group formations although, in a couple of rooms, sit in more traditional rows, although even there, they are able to turn and talk to their peers without too much disruption. For target children, their seating can be appropriately flexible, as described by James:

> If it takes a bit of physical space to help a child attend, then so be it. Not that the class can be disrupted, that’s not what I am leading to, rather, I allow them to choose, with my supervision, where they feel they will best be able to do their work. Sometimes their choices are not too good, so I have the final say. Then again, it all depends on the day, em, what sort of day the child is having and what the activity is. That helps sort out what is and isn’t possible seating wise. For example, if we are doing something with science and using equipment, I want that child right by me, just to be sure. And, I should have said that I have to be able to “get to” everybody. Some children need to be near the teacher to keep them in line, so to speak, eh, or the teacher needs to be able and go and stand next to them. I need to be able to move around so I can check and encourage.

Maddy has her room arranged in cluster groups. Asked whether these are always the same she answered that they changed dependent on the subject. When asked why she responded:

> Well, some children pay more attention during numeracy, or in literacy, or in history, or in geography, or whatever. It all depends. I know which children are going to have more trouble or perhaps less interest, so I mix the groups up. Look over there (she pointed to charts on the bulletin boards under each major subject heading). The children know where they are to go for each subject, and they know the rules in our room, and they apply all the time. You'll see that a couple of groupings are the same, but some are different. The children don't mind at all. I make sure that I don't have children who don't get along particularly well next to each other. Still, they all know the rule that we are here and are expected to help each other. Anna (teaching assistant) and I have to be able to physically get around them all too.

In several rooms, "quiet" corners were laid out near reading books. These have assortment of lumpy pillows and shabby, well-used beanbags. Children are allowed to go to these spaces as rewards and, as Ellie noted, they are good places for children who just need "some time to collect their thoughts." In two rooms, cardboard study carrels are kept at the back of the classroom and these are open for the use of any child who feels they would benefit from using these space dividers, or as guided by the teacher.

Although not an identified factor of programming, it is evident that rules are key in the schools, and this is worthy of note. Rules were clearly in evidence in the classrooms visited, posted on prominent walls or boards. According to Marzano, Pickering and Pollock (2003), rules in classrooms are generally established for the following areas:

- General expectations for behavior
- Beginning and ending of class
- Transitions and interruptions
- Materials and equipment
- Group work and seat work
- Places for teacher-led activities

The rules generally follow these principles with the exception of “transitions and interruptions” which none of the “rules charts” have noted. Juliet noted:

> Classroom rules change a little from room to room, but each teacher and class have developed them dependent on the needs of both teacher and students. Our children know what goes where and what the expectation is in different areas. Not that they always do it, but we keep working with them.

Courtesy is held in high regard and was evident by students’ behaviors (within school buildings), displayed not only towards adults, but also from one child towards another. Lydia referred me to the importance of explaining rules to children and having them followed. She explained that she encourages teachers to allow children to participate when making up class rules as they are more likely to be observed when children have had input and a well structured room, where everyone knows what is expected and acceptable, is a more effectively managed classroom. When asked about the school rules generally she explained:

> Not that the classroom rules differ much from one room to another, but the children know that they have had a hand in agreeing on them, of course, that is with “subtle” guidance from their teachers. They are relatively similar room to

> room and as our children are generally in school up to Year 6, they really know what is expected of their behavior. It's interesting, how they help each other observe them. Now, please don't think for one minute that they (the children) cannot be mischievous, effervescent, and all the rest of it, because they certainly can, exhaustingly so. But I have to say, on the whole they are pretty good about doing what they should and behaving as they ought. Peer pressure is a wonderful thing too, well, I mean, when applied positively.

Teaching techniques. Teaching techniques is a further constituent of Stage 2. Teachers' ages and teaching experience cover quite a range and teaching philosophies have changed over time and the question arose as to whether there would be significant differences in teaching techniques. There were, but "the sage on the stage" was not strongly evident in any classroom other than two, and that was limited. Teachers were seen engaging in various teaching practices. There was evidence of direct instruction, interactive instruction, group instruction, small group instruction, one-to-one instruction, and peer pairings. In each of the classrooms, children were engaged, and those who were not as fully engaged as would be considered acceptable, were being worked with to encourage more involvement and participation. Written objectives were on boards and, during the observations, teachers explained what the lessons were going to be, what the students were going to do, what they were expected to learn, and what they would know by the end of the lesson.

The teachers spoke about the importance of encouraging children as they participate in activities and how honest praise works well. Several teachers talked about how children can recognize insincere praise and that by praising with little basis for it, children might lower their own expectations for themselves. James said:

> Of course it's important that children are told that they are working well. Praise is something that we all like to hear, but it must be honest. What I mean is that if a child is praised for everything, even when there is little to go on, how long is it going to be before he simply stops putting in much effort? I believe teachers should be with them to ensure that what they are doing is praiseworthy, and so the child knows that there is sincerity in what is said to them. Letting them know that they are doing well encourages more effort, I think. Still, we have to be sure we give them the tools to get there, don't you agree?

The teachers discussed how they adapt their instructional delivery to benefit all children. Strategies such as pre-teaching vocabulary, teaching select vocabulary, adjusting pace of delivery, frequent comprehension checks, ensuring that enough "wait time" is given, ensuring that children who need more time are accommodated, and interspersing verbal lessons with visual aids. Reference was made to the apposite support provided by teaching assistants and to support available during prep time at the end of the day. Lydia explained succinctly:

> As I told you, we are very accountable to our parents and again as I said, we cannot simply say, "Oh, your child just didn't manage to get it. Our parents expect that we work with their children, realistically, may I add, until they do "get it." That's not always easy, but that's where talking to each other helps.

Homework is a practice used by all teachers and Maddy was quick to point out that it is not arbitrarily given, but is matched to provide independent practice of what has been taught. She added that she modifies what she asks of children with attention deficits and for others, depending on their needs, to ensure that their frustration does not interfere with what they do. She said that realistically, sometimes these children would not do it, but that she was prepared to meet them halfway and give them some leeway, after talking to parents. Generally, this was agreed by all participants in each of the schools.

This led her to organization and the problems that lack of organization can cause students. She spoke about this area being extremely problematic for many children with ADHD. She spoke about how she and her TA constantly work to help children get organized.

> We can't always do it for them, but we can teach and teach and teach them what it looks like. I don't believe in giving up, but I often find that there are cleverer ways around what I am trying to teach. Whoever said learning stops? Mm, in our room we make sure that drawers, tubs, book piles, homework drops, and so on do not change. The expectation is that they will follow the rules and we do have classroom helpers, not who do things for them, but remind them of what they need to be doing. This can be an extremely tedious and uphill battle, I promise you, but we don't give ground, well, unless circumstances dictate.

Juliet echoed this organizational approach and indicated that to the best of her knowledge, many of her colleagues do the same. Ellie's response was that she has picked up useful tips about physical organization by observing and talking to her fellow teachers and said that she believes similar organizational stratagems were in use in her school, School A.

Accommodations and Modifications. A further element of Stage 2 is the examination of accommodations and modifications teachers are prepared to make for individual children further aiding the identification of where teachers are on the continuum. Interventions which are applied consistently within the school setting are the most effective to improve educational performance according to Barkley (1998) and implementation of these is commensurate with the interventionist perspective.

Observed modifications included how assignments and requirements for assignments are modified and adjusted according to individual expectations for the child. Yet, without exception, teachers often stated their belief that expectations must be, and remain, high for each child. In all the schools, levels of behavioral expectations are adapted to the individual child and accommodations made as seem fit. “Not that they are all the same, just that they have to be the highest that we believe are fitting to the child,” said Lydia. Visual and verbal prompts were seen to be used in all classrooms, verbal prompts being mainly specific to individual students.

Classroom layouts are arranged to ensure they meet, as much as is possible given the sizes of the rooms, the physical needs of children who are allowed to stand or move should they need to do so, and by having these children be classroom monitors, helping to hand out and take in books and papers and other supplies. Seating arrangements facilitated the teachers’ needs to be in close proximity to target students, and the students’ needs to be close to the teacher. Sue commented:

> When instructional styles and accommodations are used well, it helps students with ADHD, or what have you, to participate actively in whatever is going on. If children have to sit on their derrieres for long spells, their lack of attention and more self-disrupting behaviors will begin to really show.

During observations, all teachers were seen to be very specific when giving directions. They repeated, or had others (students) in the room repeat directions to ensure that “everyone got it.” While lessons were in progress, and when questions were encouraged and asked, teachers provided wait time. Visual instructions, directions, and supports of various kinds were around most rooms and on boards and chart paper so that students could refer to them should they need reminding of what they were to do. When students were working independently, the teachers walked around the room, providing immediate feedback to what they were doing. Alys remarked:

> It really is important that all pupils are given feedback to what they have done as quickly as possible. If they know that they are on the right track, they are more confident about moving on. If there is something wrong, then by letting them know, or explaining where they have gone wrong is really important. And this gives teachers feedback too. You know, what is working and what isn't. It's the same with homework, they need to get that back quickly. Now the children you are looking at can be a little more difficult. They do need more prompting, you know, and there are a couple whose writing is a bit like a drunk hen, but once I can decipher it, I can make sense of it. These children can be a bit wearing, but they like to do well, just like the others. Sometimes it is a little harder to get them there. Still, time to celebrate when they do. That's a good feeling, well, it is for all children.

As well as large group instruction, differentiated instruction, where instruction is provided to meet individual needs and learning styles, was apparent in almost every classroom. This was subtle and, for much of the time, was virtually seamless and teachers were apparent in their willingness to change the pace of instruction delivery and utilization of verbal and visual cues and clues to support learning. Teachers were seen to give students outlines of what was to be presented, pairing children to support each other during activities, helping with reading, questioning, organization, and brainstorming and supporting during writing. John and James were both observed allowing students to respond orally to questions posed in order to demonstrate understanding. This accommodation is of value to students who have aversions to writing information out. John said:

> It's OK when we need to find out their knowledge, but it doesn't preclude them having to be able to write when that's required. It's important to give them feedback as quickly as possible, I think. Nobody wants results dragged out forever, especially kids who need immediate gratification – or otherwise.

Modifications were made in assignments, reduction in number of items that needed to be responded to, or being able to write shortened paragraphs or essays, or in the classroom and in homework and the expectations for finished products, but teachers emphasized that high expectations continued to be the norm. As Sybil reflected:

> High expectations are part of a good education, but they are at adjusted heights to meet the child. Children will not all arrive at the same educational destination, but it is our job to ensure that whichever destination may be theirs, we have prepared them as best we can.

Stage 3 – Review

According to Jordan et al., (1993) and Jordan et al, (1997), review is the stage at which teachers use their school teams to elicit for extra help within the classroom. This is addressed in Stage 4, Communication with Staff, where staffs of all three schools spoke about how they work with each other and see each other as resources with whom to brainstorm, support, and advise.

It is also speaks as to how teachers do or do not review, with any regularity, how students are progressing. This has been addressed in Stage 2, Programming, as it is difficult to split the two.

Both these components were positively evidenced in the schools. The only teacher who somewhat reacted against these was Peter. He adheres to his view that children should have the skill necessary to get on with the work he prescribes and they ought to have the ability to pay attention and follow his instruction. It is Peter's belief that should students be unable to do this, then perhaps being in his room is not a reasonable place. Although Alys recounted her beliefs about children needing to "be ready." She explained:

> Of course I am prepared to work with them. Teachers are about working with children to advance their skills and hone their learning.

Harriet is the teacher with whom many of her colleagues initially confer in School B. With the exception of her, Lydia, and one other teacher, she has taught longest in her school. She acknowledged that teachers often spoke to her about concerns with children, but was at pains to say that teachers are all willing to talk to each other. When asked about the special education specialist who visits the school, she responded:

> Flora (special education specialist) is extremely competent and does a wonderful job with the children she sees. I think that the problem is that she is not here all the time – only once a week, and in actuality, teachers seldom see her. She comes and she goes, although, mind you, I am sure that teachers will talk to her if they are stuck and want some advice. She talks with the teachers of the children she sees to update them on progress, but generally not to

others, which is to be expected. Other than that, I find that people often talk to me when they want to talk through concerns and come up with ideas to try.

During the interview with Bridget, she spoke about how teachers confer with her. She feels that she has a very open mind and enjoys collaboration. She said that she is happy to discuss possible strategies and interventions and shares her thoughts on how best suggestions may be implemented. She added that she is often able to relate her experiences as a mother, which, she contends provides another perspective of which teachers need to be aware:

> While we are concerned with how best to approach needs that the children are showing, be they academic or behavioral, or behavioral that's impacting negatively on their achievement and performance, it's really important to think about how the parents are going to react. We have to get parents on "our side" so to speak and to do that we have to be sensitive to how they feel. Letting parents know we see some deficit area is always hard, so as well as letting them know that, we need to let them know what their child is good at.
>
> Difficulties can be presented in many ways. When children have difficulty paying attention, let's say the parents aren't aware of it, then I think it's important that we also report as many positives as we can while not getting away from the thrust of what we are trying to say. I remember only too well how we felt when we talked to teachers about our own children. Mm, yes, I think I can honestly say that our teachers are aware of this, on the whole anyway. Do they come and talk to me? Often. We talk mainly at lunch times and after school. They know I know about how it feels to be the mother of as well as teaching a child who can't focus, and I did say can't and not won't.

Stage 4 – Communication with Staff

All three schools adhere to the precept that talking with each other is positive and productive and should be used for the advancement of instruction and student performance. Teachers spoke openly of how well they collaborate with, and support each other, and how they look to their head-teachers as both educational leaders and as close and approachable colleagues.They related that they feel fortunate that they work in schools where the climates promote positive and supportive teacher interactions. Sue shared her thoughts by saying “support is something that we all need from time to time and I am just glad that we can share it in this school.”

All participant teachers agreed that they are willing to share what expertise they have and to brainstorm with their colleagues to resolve issues that arise. Ellie explained further:

> As one of the younger teachers, I cannot tell you how important I think it is that I can share my concerns with my colleagues and ask them for ideas. This is a great plus for our school, I can talk to them and, if I am having trouble explaining things clearly, our staff is wonderful at popping into the room to look for troublesome areas I have sometimes only vaguely described and at giving helpful suggestions which are neither demeaning nor patronizing. This is a good place to be.

Although there are no resource specialists with whom to confer, in School C, teachers tend to talk to Bridget. Bridget herself thinks of the “label” of ADHD with caution and discerns between what she sees as clinical manifestations and simply poor behaviors, probably learned. She is willing to help teachers make the “layman’s” distinction between the two and has presented short in-services for her colleagues, "which went down rather well."

Lydia mentioned that when she talks with any of her staff, although they know her stance on the issue of ADHD:

> They will still bounce ideas off me, which is as it should be. Personal prejudices aside, um, well, no, that isn't the right word, perhaps I ought to have said personal perspectives aside, we all have to support each other, don't we? I know we all have different beliefs about this and I respect that. I am sure others know better than I. We don't all have to agree about everything, we just agree to differ, get on with it, and support to the best we can.

During the interviews, Maddy, Ellie, and Juliet spoke about the courses they had taken when in university that related to working with children with various needs, although not specifically geared towards special needs.. They were at pains to point out that these were not considered as part of any special needs qualifications and addressed learning and behavioral needs only superficially. The courses relatively broad spectrumed so that they felt they had a little information related to different problematic areas.

They shared that they enjoy talking with their colleagues, and Juliet shared that she enjoys talking to teachers who have more classroom experience and are sympathetic to working with target students. Reference was made to the Teachers' Channel on television which presents topics on myriad issues, including how to deal positively with students with attentional deficits and these broadcasts had been a source of professional dialog in staff rooms.

Stage 5 – Communication with Parents

Communication encourages the involvement of parents and guardians. Barkley (1998) wrote that communication between school and home is vital. According to head-teachers, communication is encouraged from the home. School to home communication, from the school to parents, was evidenced on various levels; total school level, from individual teachers, from groups of teachers who work with the same classes, and from teachers who teach particular subjects, including sports. Participant teachers agreed that having a good communication system with parents is fundamental to the support of the child and, by extension, the support of programs. George spoke about communication saying:

> We begin communicating with parents before the beginning of the first term of school by sending out general information about the school, uniforms, classes, sports, and so on. Pretty mundane but essential stuff. At the same time parents are given a schedule of major events for the year. Term by term they get more information from administration through our weekly newsletters. I know that teachers also send out information and these days, many of them use e-mail.

Teachers were also asked about communication and they also got in frequent touch with parents. One of the most commonly used vehicles is the communication book, which can be signed by parents, teachers, or both, daily, or as required. These are important for students who have attentional deficits, "when they remember them," John added wryly. Using the books is another way in which parents can be kept apprised of any issues that arise in the classroom and vice versa. Sue recounted:

> We encourage two-way communication. It's important for all children, but for children who can't pay attention, well, you see, it seems that compared to the

others, they get more tickings off. Not that I mean that in a horrid way, but just that they have to be kept being reminded of doing what they need to.

Parents can provide lots of information about their children and can tell us whether any behavior is commonly seen or whether something has just happened and has upset the child. This can change how I approach situations. Children don’t always tell what is happening at home that might be upsetting them. I’d go as far as saying that our teachers have excellent relations with parents. It’s important, I think, to make sure that positive messages go in as well as any other information. If all parents or children hear are negative comments, well, what encouragement is that? I believe that children will probably just rise to meet that negative expectation.

Always look for the good, encourage it, and even more, expect it. I don’t believe by always being on top of children makes them try harder. There are other, better ways to get them to try harder. So, possibly what I am trying to say is that comments have to be tempered. The parents, as well as the children, need to know that their children are doing something well. Now, don’t misunderstand, we believe that all children need discipline and we enforce it, but more with a velvet glove, so to speak. Open communication lines, that’s the key.

Teachers affirmed that they talk with parents frequently, oftentimes impromptu, for example, chatting to parents when they come to leave or collect children at the beginning or end of the day. However, few parent/teacher contacts at the beginning of the day were reported, but many at the “pick-up” time. All participant teachers were in agreement, Peter included, that when parents request a conference, the school sees it as incumbent on themselves to organize a mutually convenient time, and 90% of these conferences take place after the school day. None of the schools appeared keen on any interruption during the instructional day. Each of the heads gave clear understanding that the day ought to be devoted to instruction and, as they all have teaching duties, that is pretty much the priority. Sybil added:

> We have to be realistic and understand that for some parents, they may need to have a meeting during the day. If so, we do accommodate them. Fortunately, we have TAs and, although it isn't always easy to break their routines, we can. We are fortunate and know that our parents are willing to work with us, as we are with them.

It was explained at each school that when potential problems with children are noticed, individual teachers promptly inform parents. The consensus was that teachers feel that when parents are told quickly, teachers are less likely to meet with negativity or defensiveness by parents. Sybil reflected:

> We don't call parents in immediately, unless it is an emergency situation, but when we can say that we are sure there is a problem. This does not mean that we drag our heels, on the contrary. For example, if a child is just being unacceptably cheeky or defiant in any way, parents need to know, because they know that our school expects acceptable behavior, not that we always get it. We just need to be sure that we can be as explicit and articulate exactly what we are seeing. There is no point in just calling parents with unclear thoughts. Mm, well, of course we call them when, well, if children have been having difficulty and then they take a step forward, it's important to let them know that too. Good news is just that, good. With the children who are squirmy or dreamy, well, my gosh, parents do want to know. It's only fair that they know when their child does well. They don't want a daily litany of "Suzy

won't pay attention," that would be so demoralizing, but they do want to know cumulatively what is happening. Mm, yes, I would say quite happily that 95 percent of our parents are pretty solid supporters. After all, they send their children to our school to learn what is acceptable as well. Mm, after all, education isn't just sentences and sums, is it?

Reflecting what had been expressed by the other teachers, Harriet said:

> Once an issue has made itself apparent, I keep parents closely informed of what is happening both academically and socially. The children you are talking about can be a bit of a handful, and ,em, mm, teachers are duty bound to let parents know when behaviors are acceptable and when they are not, when daily participation is acceptable and when it is not, and when quality of work is acceptable and when it is not. Although they (the parents) can be a little tetchy at times, I believe they are glad that we are sharing what is going on. It would come as a hideous shock if parents were to find out that either behavior or academic progress were appalling only on parents' evenings. That would simply not be fair, nor would it meet professional obligations. I think that, quite rightly, parents would be furious.

Parents' evenings are held once a term and thereafter on an "as needed" basis. In each school these are held after school has finished for the day and end between 8:30 and 9:30 p.m. Parents are invited to the schools and, in each school, they meet in the halls and wait to be able to speak to relevant teachers. George noted circumspectly:

> It's all quite civilized. We want the parents to have a good handle on it all and, if we have to, work out what we are going to do next. Quite. The days of teaching children behind closed doors are long since gone, hrumph, or they

> ought to be. Schools either have learned or still have to learn to open up and meet with the consumers, the parents who, I may add, can be quite demanding. We let parents know that their concerns in essence are our concerns. Periodically, one does get parents who are so completely wrapped up in their child that they can't see the wood for the trees. Well, it's up to us to illuminate them as to goings on. I have to say that our children are really terrific for the most part, but realistically, children do have off days, and they need some extra guidance – or a pat on the back. It all depends on the situation, but these days, schools and teachers do not communicate with parents at their peril.

Towards the end of each school year, the schools have "Open Days" where the schools are open to parents of prospective students. The parents of current students are invited to come and talk to new parents informally and older students from the schools are there to act as "guides." These Open Days are advertised in local newspapers and in the Times Educational Supplement. The expectation is that all teachers participate and are available for questions. Parents are encouraged not to use Open Days for Parent/Teacher conferences, but inevitably it does happen, although not on a large scale.

Teachers reported that the most commonly used form of communication is written, in reading logs, homework books, or through notes. However, increasingly e-mail is being used and teachers have ready access to telephones. Many said that they preferred to talk to parents to "avoid misunderstandings." Some children are on individual "behavior plans" which are agreed to by the parents as well as the school. Ellie explained:

> For some children, actually being able to see how they are getting on is worth so many conversations. By seeing marks, numbers, comments, be it what it

> may, they are aware of whether good progress is being made or if they are not doing too well. This way they have to become more responsible and accountable. I have to say that I think we do give lots of encouragement.

Report cards are given twice each year. At the end of the year, an extensive write up on each child for each subject is given to the parents in a booklet format, summarizing the child's progress in each subject area. The rationale for reports being given only twice per year is that parents are kept well informed of individual student progress through direct teacher-parent contact. Whenever a child is perceived to backslide or has difficulty with a subject, the parents are contacted either by individual teachers or by the head-teacher. The clear expectation given by each head-teacher is that, initially this responsibility lies with individual teachers. Should difficulties continue, the heads may become involved. Lydia also noted:

> If our parents have any concerns, believe me, they let us know. We also have so many parent events throughout the year. I have to say that we keep an informal check on who comes and who does not and ensure that we keep in touch with them.

The schools did not report many parent volunteers throughout the school day working in classes. The participants reported that there are "a couple" of parents who will help out when required, or if specifically asked, but "not on a regular basis." However, the majority of classes had at least one teacher assistant. That is not to say that parents never volunteer, on the contrary. In each school, at each year or Form level, two or three parents are designated as contact points for other parents. They help coordinate parent volunteers for various activities such as drama productions, sports events, extra-curricular clubs, and events which are referred to as "social awareness events." These are events where the children are expected to undertake, under supervision, activities such as organizing and carrying out jumble sales to raise monies for various charitable causes. Parents also give much help for sports days.

Confirmatory Questionnaires

In addition to the interviews and observations, all participant teachers were invited to respond anonymously to a questionnaire (Appendix G) which presented items designed to elicit information about how they perceive themselves as approaching and working with students who have attentional and learning challenges. The Likert-like instrument presented 24 questions which they were asked to rate from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.”

Consenting parents completed questionnaires (Appendix I) to provide information about their perceptions of their children’s behaviors in settings other than school. In all, 18 were returned.

Teacher Questionnaires. Results of this questionnaire, Appendix G, show ranges of agreement or disagreement. For the most part, results on this questionnaire show that 12 teachers take, to varying degrees, one stance, and one teacher appears to subscribe to an opposite perspective, giving a range along the continuum.

Compilation of answers from the questionnaire indicate that 10 teachers disagreed that their training had prepared them to teach students who have difficulty learning nor were they taught to work with children with attention/behavior deficits. Twelve teachers indicated that they believe they can teach all children and 11 that they can make a difference to the learning of all students. All teachers believe it is their responsibility to encourage and motivate all students to learn and 12 would not give up on those who are reluctant learners. Thirteen teachers believe that they are able to influence a student's potential for learning and 11 said that, with extra effort, they can engage even the most disinclined student; only 1 indicated that s/he was limited if a child were not motivated to learn. Twelve answered that they make modifications to meet the learning styles of all students and to ensure that all students experience success.

When faced with disruptive behaviors in the classroom, all teachers indicated they have the strategies to address the behaviors. Eleven teachers said that they could work with students whose behaviors get in the way of learning, yet all teachers responded that when students are challenging, they have the capacity to meet that challenge. Three agreed that there are limits to what they can teach to students who demonstrate attentional/behavioral difficulties, although 12 reported they can successfully teach students who have attentional/behavioral difficulties. One noted there is not much they can do when students' behaviors get in the way of learning. Three teachers reported that they believe there is a limited amount they can do when the support from home is inadequate, although all teachers reported that they receive support from parents when they notify them of behavioral challenges.

When asked if, when a child exhibits attention difficulties in class, teachers would first address the behaviors in the classroom, 12 teachers said that they would. All teachers said that they would confer with a learning support person to brainstorm ideas. All teachers took me to task and noted that there are not any learning support persons in their schools other than colleagues who have had "courses" in Schools B and C and thought of colleagues rather than learning support individual. Three teachers said that they would ask for a diagnostic evaluation, and 2, presumably of the 3 said that they would ask for an evaluation, not to have the child removed from the classroom, but to consider best "next steps."

Teachers were also asked to complete a 12-item questionnaire asking about efficacy. Eleven teachers believe that a heterogeneous classroom provides the best learning environment, and that it is a teacher's obligation to ensure that all children make academic progress. Eleven feel they can motivate students who show low interest as well as being able to influence the education of children who have difficulty focusing on lessons and when learning becomes difficult there is a lot they can do to keep students focused. All 12 teachers say they use strategies to enhance children's memory of what has been taught.

Twelve teachers prefer to deal with attentional difficulties either themselves or to confer with a colleague (as opposed to a special needs teacher), and only 1 agreed that should the child have difficulty with focus, they would refer that child for intervention external to the classroom. Finally, as stated earlier, all teachers believe they can ensure that all students follow classroom rules.

Teachers remarked during interviews that they interpreted "influence the education of children who have difficulty focusing on tasks" differently from "feeling limited in how I can teach children who have difficulty focusing on lessons." Influence was more nebulous and teach, they perceived, had a more concrete tone.

According to the questionnaire results overall, dependent on the question asked, 9 to 12 teachers demonstrate that they hold beliefs that are can be interpreted as cleaving to the interventionist end of the continuum. This would be in agreement with a positive sense of self and teacher efficacy and, as it appears that they two conditions are parallel, this again reinforces the sense of where on the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum teachers fit, with 11 of the 13 demonstrating interventionist tendencies. Dependent on the question posed, there is some indication of views that support the mid-range of the continuum, and there is at least one teacher who demonstrates pathognomonic beliefs, almost consistently.

Parent Questionnaires. In the schools, 6 students have been diagnosed as having attention deficits and a further 3 are receiving medical interventions. However, anecdotally, the schools reported that they believe the numbers of students who display the characteristics are higher.

No parent noted that their child was fractious as a baby, but, ranging from "sometimes" to "frequently" all reported that they had seen easy distractibility, difficulty with organization, with making careless mistakes when doing homework or other tasks, and a dislike for undertaking educational tasks requiring sustained effort. All noted that their children lose things easily.

Most parents said that their child had difficulty with organization, with paying attention to homework and other tasks, fidgeting or daydreaming, difficulty with waiting for his or her turn, and the majority said that their children do not appear to listen to what they say. Asked whether their children demand a lot of attention, distribution was relatively even over "not seen," "seen sometimes," and "seen frequently." Looking at the information that parents provided, it would seem that the behaviors exhibited by their children are correspond to those that would be expected to be seen in children who have attentional deficits.

Self Efficacy

Self –efficacy has been described as a person's belief concerning the capability s/he has to achieve a desired objective, and how long that person will persist when facing challenges (Bandura, 1981). It is described as the expectations between action and outcomes (Jordan et al., 1993). Bandura propounded that self-efficacy beliefs are developed from four sources of influence: mastery experiences (previous performance attainment), vicarious experiences (observation of the success or failure of others), verbal persuasion (the influence of others), and physiological arousal, which is when a person experiences the physical manifestations of anxiety, s/he is judging her or his own ability to cope. That perception is then applied to their perception of their future capacity. Those with high self-efficacy set challenging goals to which they are committed and those with low self-efficacy have low aspirations and their commitment towards that which they undertake is fragile. He theorized that a person’s behavior is the result of cumulative consequences rather than just of immediate events (1977, 1997).

As teachers are faced with increasing diversity in classrooms and the challenges posed by these diversities, the values of their individual senses of self-efficacy will have a bearing on how they view students who have difficulty with sustaining attention and the extent to which they are prepared to go to ensure that their students enjoy success during their school experience. In each of the schools, from the head-teachers to the teaching assistants, according to the participant teachers, all children are in the schools to take part in an education which is devised to encourage their achievement to the greatest level possible and, regardless of the challenges in individual children, they are committed to facilitating success for all children. George explained the point when he said:

> Our parents believe in us, otherwise they would not be spending the not inconsiderable amounts of money they do to send their children here. If they believed that we could not reach them, then they would look elsewhere. We

don't turn children away just because they have some difficulties. We believe in a culture of "can do," and we do it to the best of our ability.

George was asked if, when parents enroll their children, they tell him of any difficulties they believe their child might have. He thought about it for a minute and replied:

Some parents do. When we have an interview with parents, we believe it is best that we know as much as we can from their perspective, and I tell them that. That is not to say that parents are always totally honest, but, for the most part, I believe they tell what they know. I have yet to meet a parent who has confided that their child is virtually unteachable, or unreachable, but then again, we don't have children who are facing that sort of difficulty. We have children who present us with challenges, and it is our business to rise to it and sort it out. That's where working together is so important. If one person gets "stuck," then come and talk to others. Someone will come up with a solution.

Lydia and Sybil's reactions were similar to those of George. Lydia said:

Well, parents let us know, let's say, if their child is a bit trying and whether or not he has temper tantrums for whatever reason. We appreciate that because then we are not blindsided. However, if you are asking whether we decline children coming to our school, I would have to say that we haven't to date. Now, I have to be honest with you and say that over the years, we have had a few who have removed their children. The reasons have varied, but I think that when it came right down to it, they disagreed on our philosophy about education and children. Perhaps they felt we were too strict, however they wanted to interpret that. We are not fools and we know that children can be challenging, but as a school, and individually, teachers work with them to

> amend their behaviors if they are causing problems, or at least make them manageable so that children can cope and achieve.
>
> If parents have enrolled children and task us with educating them to the best of our ability, we honor that. We expect children to be able to get along with others, and if they can't, we help them to try to resolve their difficulties. We work with them one-to-one and in small groups, and arrange scenarios so that they can learn to bloom. However, no child should feel threatened in our school. Not by teachers and not by their classmates. We're prepared to do, the proverbial, "whatever it takes," and if parents disagree with our approach, then it is their prerogative to remove their son or daughter. Over that, we have no control.

Of the 13 teachers who participated, 11 demonstrate strong senses of self-efficacy and the schools themselves report a culture of "can do" which, according to head-teachers and interventionist staff, is pervasive throughout the schools. One teacher provided information which would lead to a positive sense of self-efficacy, but whose level of commitment did not show the depth of commitment which were clearly heard and seen with other teachers. One teacher was knowledgeable about his subject, but lacked much tolerance for students who presented behaviors or cognitive abilities which he felt made them less capable in his classroom. According to him and substantiated by the head-teacher, students who had clear ability performed extremely well under his tutelage. However, those who lacked the confidence, his perception of ability, or who faced attentional challenges did not perform as well. George elucidated:

> We strive for the best in our staff and from and for our pupils. Some of us have strengths that lie in other areas. I know we have a couple of members of

> staff who are, shall we say, rooted. That does not necessarily make them poor or incapable teachers. It does seem, I agree, that they may be less flexible, and I keep an eye on what is happening. We don't all react the same way. Education and the business that is called education are totally interdependent and I would not jeopardize either. So, mm, we still do well. I go so far as saying that all our children "come out the other end" with a greater sense of self-worth and how performed as well as we can hope. We educate all-rounders. Academically and socially, both faces need to be positively manipulated. Children need to learn to think and act to their best ability. Give them the tools and teach them to use them and the results can be amazing.

Teachers who possess positive self-efficacy qualities can be described as being those who ascribe to interventionist beliefs, already demonstrated to be strongly present in the schools. Under the leadership of the head-teachers, all educators are encouraged to expect the best from each pupil and to devise educational programs to promote this goal.

As averred by the three head-teachers and their staffs, those children who exhibit attention difficulties, whether they have a confirmed diagnosis or otherwise, are not regarded as misfits whose behaviors must be dealt with by a specialist teacher, but as children who present with particular attributes, needs, and characteristics that must be dealt with by the teachers who teach them in the natural setting of the classroom. When teachers experience particular impediments with delivery of instruction or with other behaviors which present opposition to learning, the support of other staff members is called upon so that expertise can be shared and hopeful positive solutions found to resolve difficulties.

Teacher Efficacy

The concept of teacher efficacy is based on Bandura's theory of self-efficacy and according to Bandura (1993), self-efficacy has an effect on education on three levels: teacher efficacy, faculty collective efficacy, and student self-efficacy. The self-efficacy of a teacher relates to how an individual is able to promote student achievement and the learning environment, echoed by Guskey and Passaro (1994), who asserted teacher efficacy is the belief or conviction that the teacher can influence how well students learn, including those who may be difficult or unmotivated. Teacher efficacy has been consistently linked to teacher attributes, instructional practice, and student outcomes. Rather than an objective measure, it is a self-perception (Ross, 1992) and teachers who expect to achieve set high goals, expect their students to do well, and are committed to persisting despite challenges. According to Ross (1992), over time, teachers' predictions for everyday situation stabilize as expectations that are persistent, but not static.

Gibson and Dembo (1984) asserted that providing teachers with strategies to deal with student failure would enhance their sense of efficacy. They also recommended that they need support to analyze particular areas in their teaching practice to help locate the source of their sense of inefficacy. In each of the schools, a clear stratagem was in place to help teachers who were having difficulty pinpointing, as Ellie said, "where it is going wrong." Teachers did not speak of master teachers, but they did talk about having colleagues come into their classrooms to look "at what they were doing" and to provide feedback to help find where problems may exist, followed by brainstorming conversations where colleagues provided mutual support.

Participant teachers in the independent schools frequently demonstrated instances of high teacher efficacy generally and in relation to attention deficit students. Other than one, and in certain circumstances two teachers, they did not see that the appropriate course of action was to relegate them to receive instruction outside the general education setting. Teachers talked about expecting the best and accommodating to ensure that each child would feel part of the group, were not excluded or relegated to the provision of instruction in a setting external to the general education classroom and participate and produce to the maxim they were able. Ellie remarked:

> With persistency, they (students with attentional deficits) can pretty much learn to behave acceptably. Mind you, you can see that they have different needs just by observing their behaviors, but tolerance goes a long way. I think when I first have a child like that, I have to make the stretch, but, as time goes on, the child becomes more prepared to meet me too. So there's give and take on both sides until we establish a happy medium, more in my favor, I would say.

Teachers recognize that they are strongly accountable to the head-teachers and to parents. They reported varying degrees of cooperation with parents, but high degrees of collegial cooperation and risk taking. They also reported high levels of support from administration.

Both George and Sybil understand the diagnostic label of ADHD, but Lydia does not subscribe to the "label" although she recognizes that the behaviors exist and when students in her school show these behaviors, they are evaluated by teachers and addressed accordingly. She said:

> None of us are special education people, but we are all aware that children do not come with the same abilities. Some progress with speed, some steadily, and others, for whatever reason find comprehending what is taught difficult, process, or daunting, and some struggle to understand because other behaviors get in the way. So, for us, well, let me think, mm, for us, we have to work out what is the best way to work with each child and I think I am safe in saying we do that – at least to the best of our ability. You understand, an important belief we have, and dare I say we all have, is that as we are all responsible for our children then equally are we responsible for helping each other to understand and share what works, or at least might work. Mm, I think that's fair comment.

Summary

Schools which are independent would have to have adopted philosophies that promote success in teaching children otherwise they would become economically unviable. The expectations which teachers hold for individual students form the basis for teachers' planning and instructional decisions and the resultant pedagogical decisions and learning opportunities crafted by teachers profoundly affect students. Differences in expectations may lead to differences in what is taught and what is learned (Brophy, 1982). As they are open to children with attentional deficits, it can be assumed that with the support of their teachers, and by extension the school, these children are successfully achieving in general education classrooms. Once data had been disaggregated, the indication is that 11 of the 13 participant teachers presented clear evidence of beliefs that can be ascribed to those categorized as interventionist.

Effective teaching practices, catering for different learning styles, and effective teaching practices and behavioral interventions, doing the same for the needs of children with attentional deficits, were demonstrated as being part of the fabric of classroom instruction and management. Teachers showed diversity in their teaching styles which strived to accommodate for individual students' needs.

All teachers were careful to explain that they work from baseline data and tune their approaches and define projected levels of attainment working from that initial information, making many checks and adjustments throughout the course of the academic year. Expectations were individualized to each student, yet were maintained to be "possibly on the higher side of truly realistic." Teachers were clear in their sense of "we can,"

Rules were agreed by all schools to be integral to the successful running of the schools and individual classroom. Students are encouraged to contribute to the democratic approach to rule setting, guided and, as John reflected:

> I am relatively easy going, but rules still apply. I think it's important to have the kids contribute so that they can learn somewhat of a democratic principal. To get back to what you were saying, when they (the students) can follow the rules, then life is more pleasant for everyone and kids learn that, mm, and they end up learning more too. Of course there are infringements from time to time, and I have repeat offenders, but those are relatively few. If children have a good grounding and are consistently expected to comply with following rules, it's a solid lesson in life.

Efficacies relate to an individual, teacher, or a collective approach to meeting and being able to rise to challenges. Those who possess heightened senses of self-efficacy welcome challenge and devise ways by which to overcome that challenge.

On reflection of gathered data, it is fair to say that the participant schools espouse a climate of acceptance and willingness to rise to challenges that may or may not be displayed by students. Participant teachers demonstrated confidence in their abilities to reach and teach to individual challenges and needs, and to orchestrate the conditions within the educational setting to maximize the learning environment of students.

Evidence of the interviews, observations and artifacts provide evidence that participant teachers at the schools visited have a solid knowledge of their various subject matters. They have a sense of community and collegiality with their head and co-teachers, and project an attitude of “can do.” They are serious in their approach about setting positive role models, emphasizing their individual senses of integrity and they portrayed themselves as self-possessed educators who have belief in themselves, their schools, and arguably most importantly, in their students.

CHAPTER VI

Summary, Conclusions, Implications, and Commentary

> If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. Thoreau (1854)

Not all children arrive at school able to learn without impediment. They each bring their own strengths and challenges, and children with attentional deficits have needs that pose specific challenges. There is evidence that attention deficit is not restricted to either level of cognitive ability, socio-economic class, culture, or ethnic group. Despite its possible debilitating nature, many continue to remain sceptical about the seriousness of the condition and its implications (Barkley, 2000). Educational success for these children is dependent on the acceptance, understanding and support shown by how their teachers are willing to work with them, and by how administration is prepared to support both teacher and student.

Study Summary

Building on the base of reviewed literature, this study was undertaken to determine a clearer understanding between the relationship of teachers' beliefs, attitudes, expectations, and their individual senses of self-efficacy, and the nature of exceptionality, in this case, attentional deficits, in selected independent schools in England. Answers to how teachers perceive their roles and responsibilities as they guide their students through the educational process and how they are prepared to design instruction and practice to accommodate individual needs were sought.

Attentional deficits present with significant variance. Some students require medical intervention in order to sustain attention so that engagement in learning can take place, others require behavioral modifications, some need a combination of the two, and some require considerably less in the way of intervention, for example, being reminded where their attention should be focused. Positive acceptance of who they are is elemental to their being able to see themselves in a positive light when undertaking tasks. All students require that their individual needs be taken into account by the teacher whose responsibility it is to educate them. Students who present with attentional difficulties attend independent schools, and not all of these schools have ready, if any, access to special education specialists and/or other support personnel. It would appear that the smaller the school, the more limited the immediate resources, yet according to League Tables, which are regularly published in the press and are available on Governmental websites, in the United Kingdom all independent schools perform well across Key Stages of the National Curriculum. As reported by the head-teachers and participant teachers in the schools, for the most part, the specifically targeted children perform at least as well as their non-exceptional peers in these examinations.

Using a qualitative methodology, this study sought an understanding of what it is that these schools do to foster success with particular exceptional students, the beliefs, expectations, and attitudes they show towards their students, and where, on a fixed scale, their assumptions and beliefs fit. All teachers who participated in the study were volunteers, which may bias the results as they may have done so because they felt more confident in their abilities to work with students with attentional deficits, or may have had previous experience working with these children, or perhaps, may have more experience in the provision of educational services.

At the same time, it was clear that not all teachers interact with their students in the same way; there are those who believe that if a student is unable to keep up with the pace of what is happening in the classroom, “in an acceptable way,” placement in an alternate setting may be sought as an option. Such an attitude towards students who do not fit the norm, indicates that teachers are unlikely to be willing to make the level of accommodation essential to enhance the opportunities necessary to ensure student success, as they are unlikely to engage or subscribe to the belief that their teaching practices should be modified or altered to ensure accommodation for all. These teachers may not even necessarily contribute to the belief that all children should be taught in heterogeneous classrooms, showing a preference for other placement as they deem appropriate. Such variations lead to the speculation that differences may be attributable to teacher assumptions, beliefs, and practices.

Jordan-Wilson and Silverman (1991), Jordan et al., (1993), and Stanovich and Jordan (1998) described a five stage scale along which the beliefs and expectations of participant teachers could be examined and compared to establish where on this scale a teacher's beliefs lie. Dependent on beliefs evidenced by teachers, the determination can be made of which end of the continuum, or which place on the continuum, they would fit.

To focus the study, the lenses of the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum as described by Jordan-Wilson and Silverman (1991), Jordan et al., (1993), and Stanovich and Jordan (1998), in conjunction with the construct of self-efficacy as described by (Bandura, 1977, 1997) were used.

Conclusions

Given study findings, multiple conclusions emerged. The first set focus on the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum. The second set focus on relationships. The third set focus on efficacy and attitudes, beliefs and expectations.

The Pathognomonic-Interventionist Continuum

Target students have confounding behaviors which often interfere with their acquisition of learning, but the participant teachers at the three independent schools feel that the combination of school guidance, support, and effective strategies combined with parental support and open communication to ensure that their success is enhanced. Singly, these elements were denoted as insufficient and that the combination is necessary to achieve the desired goals.

The overwhelming sense of stance demonstrated by teachers in the schools is that they share beliefs that correspond to the interventionist beliefs cluster, hence, it might be deduced that it follow that overall, teachers in the independent schools are positive in the belief that they have the capacity to make a difference when working with all students and that includes those who are attentionally challenged. Despite the majority indicating that they have had no formal training to address special needs, they exhibit a strong sense of personal commitment when dealing with all children, regardless of confounding conditions.

Overall, parental responses demonstrated agreement with observed school interpretations of behaviors when determining whether or not their children display attentional deficits.

Stage 1 – Assessment and Prereferral. Whereas teachers who are considered pathognomonic are unlikely to engage in prereferral and assessment activities, those at the other end of the continuum and are interventionist will do so. While prereferral is not an issue in schools as there are no special needs teachers to whom teachers have ready access, 11 of the 13 participant teachers agreed that they do perform prereferral-type activities and the information that is gathered from them is used to understand where problem areas lie for students and to inform subsequent instruction. Teachers in the participating schools are likely to undertake these actions more particularly when new students come into the schools or when a child begins to fall below their expectations for her/him. The rationale provided being that the teachers gauge the progress of students whom they have from an early age. This did not preclude gathering information should difficulties arise and be considered to put the child at risk and jeopardize expected progress.

Although resource specialists are available to be engaged at further parental expense, the schools believe it to be their responsibility, to identify difficulties and devise appropriate remediation to address problematic behaviors. It is important to again note that although there are children with attentional deficits at each of the schools, and although these behaviors are commensurate with the current DSM IV descriptors, none would be considered so severe as to preclude them from participating in all school activities.

Stage 2 – Programming. Programming proved to be a natural next step. Teachers use both formal and informal testing to determine both the level *of* learning that has been achieved and determine where individual students are in their learning and to inform *for* further learning. Head-teachers and staffs were in agreement about the importance of the two elements. While the schools follow the National Curriculum, where prescribed standards and topics are laid out, the teachers also talked about how material which has to be learned can be presented in multiple ways and at various levels using diverse teaching techniques to ascertain that all learning styles are covered, hence improving the success rate of learning. Yet again, with the exception of two teachers, participants responded that they are willing to change lesson delivery to ensure learning occurs.

The teachers are well aware that children learn differently, that they have varying strengths and weaknesses, and they are prepared to set reasonable goals and objectives to ensure that students reach those goals to the best of their ability, or, as Bridget said: "We change them (the goals and objectives) to smaller steps. We just have to make sure they (the students) make it to the end of their journeys."

Of the 13 participants, 11 clearly stated their belief in individualizing for success and being prepared to go take additional measures to encourage their students to get there. Differentiated learning was visible in the majority of classrooms and it appeared that by differentiating, teachers were achieving what they set out to do.

Classrooms are managed physically to maximize movement ability for students and to ensure that educators can move around to check students with a minimum of disruption, which, in some cases, was quite a feat as some of the classrooms are quite small. Orderly classroom management was evident and upbeat although tolerance for children who have a "need to move" is high. Sybil expressed the thought:

> By letting the children you are looking at know they can stand and move if they need to, and by showing them how they can do it without disturbing their classmates, makes it relatively easy. They just follow the rule and all is well, for the most part.

Rules, both school and classroom are held in high regard and the expectation is that all children will follow them. The teachers and head-teachers did report some infringements, but not so many as to cause significant concern, and, should infringements continue, parents are contacted to support the actions proposed by the schools. Juliet quipped:

> We all have rules to follow, it doesn't matter who or where. Our children need to learn that and understand that although they can be ameliorated to accommodate some, the expectation is that we all follow them. We stress that societies are bound by rules, just like in school.

Accommodations and modifications were discussed and evident. Those seen took many and various forms, but the end goal remained constant, to ensure that children learn to the best of their ability. By encouraging and engaging children with attentional deficits, positive progress was being achieved and recorded so that parents could see what was working with their child and what was more difficult.

Stage 3 – Review. Teachers in all three schools engage in meaningful dialog to ascertain that when sought, appropriate support and suggestions are given. As resource teachers are not part of the staffs in Schools A and B, although one does work in School C but only for one morning per week, conferring with them is not an option. This being the case, teachers look to themselves and their various experiences for support and suggestions.

Stage 4 – Communication with Staff. In the schools, there is a healthy sense of community and of the children "belonging to the school as a whole" and not just to individual teachers. Form and classroom teachers not only take steps to help students advance, but also all teachers related that they feel that pastoral care is not the solely the bailiwick of any one teacher, but of the teachers collectively, fostering the feeling of togetherness within the schools.

This sense of community, it was repeatedly stated, is due to people being able to talk to, confide in, and ask their workmates for support. Informal meetings between teachers, staff meetings, apparently of varying levels of formality, act as the conduits for conversations and these conversations go some considerable way to helping resolve what may be perceived as significant obstacles. The sense of collegiality is strong and is a positive feature of each school.

Stage 5 – Communication with Parents. Communication with parents is frequent at each school site and head-teachers and teachers shared the means through which they keep in touch with parents collectively and individually. According to the Pathognomonic-Interventionist Continuum, teachers who are interventionist share frequent communication with parents utilizing sundry modes. Again, individually and collectively, teachers gave their reasons for the need for communication, but the end rationale inevitably concluded as, to support students and enhance their educational achievement and performance. Bandura (1998) provided rationale for school/home communication and the benefits for students.

Relationships

Conclusions can be drawn about teacher relationships with leadership in the schools. In addition, conclusions can be drawn about teachers and their relationship to the Pathognomonic-Interventionist Continuum.

With Leadership. Each of the head-teachers were asked about relationships with their staffs and all responded in the positive. They also addressed the quality of their staffs and when asked what that meant, Sybil's response was representative of what the others had said:

> When teachers apply for positions here, what we see on paper is just a part of it. Clearly, we want the best available, but what one reads on paper does not always really let me know what the person is like. It is so important to wait until you have spoken to the candidate once, perhaps twice, and then talk to them as a professional and as a person, not just as an applicant. One can get a real sense of what a person is all about when you talk. I look for a passion about teaching, and it's often hard to get that on paper. I look for a person who comes across as being flexible, and one who gives me the feeling that being with them in the classroom would be, well, I suppose the word I have to use is "fun." And then I watch their reactions as I show them around the school. Oh yes, I do think is it important that candidate teachers get a feel of what the school is all about. This is our domain and the pair has to match to get and give the best that we can. We have the latitude to be able to select teachers and

equally to let them go without too much trouble should they prove unsuitable. Fortunately, that's not an obstacle I've met with yet.

No sense of "them" and "us" was evident in any of the schools, more the sense was one of "we." The teachers, without exception, recognize the leadership qualities of their administrators and added that head-teachers, whom they acknowledge as being responsible for making decisions with which they might not always agree, but for which they are responsible, are crucial and positive forces in the schools.

All are on first name terms and the feeling is that heads are open and available to talk with as needs arise. All teachers, without exception, intimated that they feel valued and part of a team and that input they offer is listened to and respected. Head-teachers offer support and encourage teachers to implement strategies to which teachers are committed and which they believe is integral to the progress of all students.

In conclusion, as well as being school educational leaders whose expectations for individual teachers are high, head-teachers are perceived as being vital educational colleagues with whom dialog is important as one equal to another. Interactions are frequent and, according to all teachers, personal and professional integrity and worth are recognized and respected by all.

With the Pathognomonic-Interventionist Continuum. In order to determine to which end of the Continuum teachers can be linked, the descriptors of the clustering of belief systems at either end of the continuum were applied to data gathered from the staffs of the three schools which participated. Behaviors which identify teachers as aligning to the pathognomic end of the continuum are:

- Unillingness to accepts a child's behaviors
- Lack of willingness to modify or individualize curriculum and/or tasks

- Lack of willingness to confer with colleagues to discuss strategies to support student
- Lack of data on student's progress other than that which is necessary for report cards
- Lack of communication with colleagues or parents

Peter, one of the older educators, despite some of his indications to the contrary, and his voicing of a few beliefs which one would align to the interventionist view, did not demonstrate the same when interacting with students, and could be described as possessing beliefs akin to the pathognomic cluster. He was seldom prepared to institute practices of any frequency which would ensure his being aware of progress being made or otherwise. He showed a distinct lack of willingness to modifiy or individualize the curriculum taught to meet students' needs and preferred to seat "children who are not so interested" towards the back of his lab. Question/answer exchanges were less and there was less checking of independent work. He made it evident that he believes that not all students are equal, and his demonstrated level of expectation is suspect. He is what could loosely be termed an unbending teacher, who is limited in his ability to be flexible or provide learning experiences which would be profitable for students who have difficulty with paying attention or readily comprehending what is being presented. Overall, the majority of physical and verbal evidence pointed to alignment with the pathognomonic beliefs cluster.

Yet another teacher, who voiced many thoughts that appeared to espouse the interventionist continuum, did not always demonstrate the same in practice. One teacher, vacillated and, though she indicated that she holds beliefs that could be described as interventionist, it appeared that she displayed a lack of willingness to work with the target children with consistency or to any great extent, perhaps not feeling entirely comfortable with the challenges they present. She recounted how she will work with them on a one-to-one basis and in small groups, yet this was not entirely evident. She found their difficulty with cognitive and physical organization demanding, and, as she related, "frustrating." Further, she noted that she felt that often their time consuming and potentially disruptive behaviors upset the "flow" of learning in her classroom. She identified some strategies that she uses with some regularity, but noted that getting students to comply can be problematic and, ultimately, she finds this exasperating. She finds it difficult to be content with what she perceives as performance that is demonstrative of less than that of which a student is perceived capable. As the data unfolded and was compared to the various stages of the continuum, she did not entirely fit either end, verbally espousing beliefs considered interventionist, and periodically engaging in them, yet not putting those beliefs into practice with any consistency; or initiating them for brief, sporadic, periods, and, when they did not produce the level of success expected, giving up.

Behaviors which are associated with teachers whose belief systems indicate an interventionist stance are:

- Preparedness to accept a child
- Willingness to modify, adapt, and individualize curriculum and tasks
- Willingness to confer with colleagues to discuss strategies to support students
- Continual monitoring of progress and recording of data of both academic achievement and behavior
- Communication with colleagues
- Communication with parents and students

Eleven teachers, to include all head-teachers, described classroom and school philosophies which would more readily be identified with the interventionist end of the continuum. The analysis of the disaggregated data points towards 11 teachers who consistently reflected the beliefs associated with the interventionist perspective. These teachers persistently engage in a variety of practices that ensure their awareness of individual student's abilities, needs, and progress. They demonstrated a willingness to devise instructional practices and the physical environment to accommodate students who have attentional deficits, understanding that the child's interaction with the educational environment may not be to the child's advantage. During almost every observation, support was evidenced as being individualized and was provided in various manners, as required to accommodate individual students.

These schools have the advantage of having teaching assistants who are in classrooms to support students who are used to maximize student performances. Teachers work with these TAs as colleagues, but continually provide guidance to facilitate their positive interactions with children. Students who have attentional challenges are not regarded as students who make education difficult, but rather as students who present a set of specific characteristics, which it is the educator's responsibility to help them overcome. The impaired ability to pay attention is not accepted as an excuse not to do well, just as a challenge for which a solution must be striven.

The alignment of the participant staff to the Stages of the Pathognomonic-Interventionist Continuum point to the great majoriy being identifiable with the interventionist perspective. Voiced and demonstrated examples of beliefs, expectations, and attitudes, as well as those which were evidenced during passive observations in classrooms, as well as those which were less formal such as walking through hallways, eating in the refectories, and watching on the playgrounds, are synonymous with the cluster of beliefs inherent to this stance.

The pathgnomonic-interventionist continuum was an appropriate instrument for interpreting data as, in addition to being able to consider placement of the attributes under examination, it relates closely to self and teacher efficacy, inasmuch as teachers who have increased confidence in their capabilities when working with exceptional students, whether or not those students have been evaluated for conformation of exceptionality, are more prepared to rise to challenges which are encountered.

As the behaviors of participant teachers were examined, it was found that the propensity of educators' beliefs leaned towards the interventionist cluster, with one teacher who could clearly be identified with the beliefs associated with the pathognomonic perspective and another who, while verbally cleaving to the interventionist end of the continuum for the most part, was noted not to persist when interventions did not produce immediate or sustainable effects.

It is fair comment to make that the philosophies of these teachers run parallel to those of the schools in which they work, according to inforrmation presented during individual interviews. The point was made when Bridget talked about how the philosophy of the school itself is that the children are in the care of all teachers and that all teachers work together to make their time in the school as positive and productive and as happy an experience as possible academically, socially, and emotionally. She added that in today's climate of choice, schools are anxious to please those who pay the fees.

Self-Efficacy

Since its inception by Bandura, the construct of self-efficacy, followed by teacher efficacy and collective efficacy, has been comprehensively researched for several decades, and various definitions of self efficacy as well as the other efficacies, abound. According to Ross (1992, p.385), “Teachers’ confidence in their ability to perform the actions that lead to student learning is one of the few individual teacher characteristics that reliably predicts teacher practice and student outcomes.” Differing levels of efficacy have been measured and compared to varying levels of student performance and achievement and findings indicate that efficacy beliefs are related to the beliefs, expectations, attitudes, and practices teachers employ that lead to positive student outcomes (Gusky & Passaro, 1994).

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) propounded that there is a clear link between teacher efficacy and student achievement and teachers who have a strong sense of this are less likely to refer students who are underperforming, for whatever reason, for evaluation and instructional provision external to the general education setting (Soodak & Podell, 1993). They prefer to conduct business by setting up opportunities that will engender successes that are real rather than increase a sense of letdown by failing to devise and implement positive approaches and practices.

The great majority of teachers who participated in this study, from the youngest to those who have been teaching for some considerable time, presented profiles which can be described as representative of having strong senses of efficacy. It could be argued that this is innately the sort of persons whom they are, which is probably quite true, but in addition, according to the thoughts shared during interviews, they enjoy sharing a culture of mutual support with head-teachers and colleagues. Their description of the school cultures would advocate a strong sense of collective efficacy.

Teachers recognize that there are children who do not learn in the same way and at the same rate as others and acknowledge that the condition of attention deficit, whether diagnosed or not, can have potentially damaging effects on children. They talked about what they need to do to ensure that they support children in sustaining attention and providing educational opportunities that are powerful and rewarding for all. Teachers did not refer to feeling obligated to engage in practices to ensure that appropriate learning and continual performance occurs across students, but that they actively pursue ways in which they can present instruction to ensure that successful learning takes place. Students were clearly treated as individuals and teachers' levels of awareness of abilities and needs were clear through the interactions evidenced, almost all of which were extremely positive.

Beliefs. Teacher beliefs is a construct that together with expectations, governs their preferences and actions, and can be inferred from what people say and do (Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). They determine the practices in which a teacher engages and the beliefs a teacher holds about a student can influence their perception of the child, and, further, influence the expectations that they hold for that child. Consequently, the beliefs to which a teacher subscribes come into play when that teacher is determining what a child is or is not capable of achieving. Pajares (1992) found that a strong relationship exists between a teacher's educational beliefs and how they plan instruction, how they inform decisions, and how they implement class practices.

The accepted practice in these coeducational schools is that all teachers teach in heterogeneous classrooms. Instruction for all students is delivered within the classrooms where individualized accommodations and modifications are implemented, often after consultation with students' previous teachers and/or other colleagues. As children with attentional deficits are often "driven" to movement, the majority of teachers have instituted the accommodation of "being able to walk" in certain areas in the classrooms and teachers indicated that this was a productive modification which helped the individuals who need it, yet all teachers indicated that they have a great sense of responsibility for the academic progress of their students and they all alluded to the direct accountability they feel towards parents who pay fees for their children, which, in turn, pays for teachers' salaries.

As with the other elements investigated, the knowledge of teachers regarding attention deficit was explored. Teachers showed different levels of understanding of the condition and appreciated the impact it can have, but did not recount that they perseverated on the etiology of the condition and simply recognized that it "is" and make appropriate plans to work with it.

Overall teacher beliefs were noted to be positive, but comments were made indicating that the students with whom teachers have the most reservation are those who have behavioral issues. Attention deficit can be considered having a considerable behavioral impact as impulsivity can produce actions which are negative, yet teachers did not appear to perceive that the behaviors exhibited by these exceptional children caused any significant negative impact in the classrooms. John recounted that it could be that the expectation that all children follow clear rules is made for everyone. He recounted:

> Of course there is the odd breakdown, but kids are pretty good at bouncing back after cooling off and returning to the norm. Well, that's what is expected of all of them, and you know, they comply.

Attitudes. There are significant differences in teacher attitudes and how they relate to students, both collectively and individually and teaching, which is a highly complex process, is influenced by both attitudes and thinking that relate to subsequent behaviors (Jordan-Wilson & Silverman, 1991, Jordan et al., 1993). Inconsistent findings denote that tentatively, teachers are willing to work with exceptional students in the classroom, but that willingness depends on the nature and extent of the disability (Cook, Tankersley, Cook & Landrum, 2000). The attitudes that teachers represent to students with attentional deficits can have long reaching effects on their sense of academic self worth and subsequent success of students (Hepperlen et al., 2002; Greene, 1992; McAuley & Johnson, 1993). The influence that teachers can exert over exceptionality is powerful, and positively applied can have far reaching implications for students.

It is apparent that within the participating schools there is a double set of "attitudes" in that the schools present positive attitudes towards their staffs and that teachers present positive attitudes towards students. Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) reported inconsistent findings of the effect of numbers of years teaching has on teacher attitudes. During this study, this sense of inconclusion is substantiated as the attitudes of all teachers, from the least to most experienced, with the exception of one and periodically of two teachers, who do both belong to the more experienced group, appeared similar when faced with exceptionality, although it should be borne in mind that in these schools the level of exceptionality is not severe.

Expectations. The expectations that teachers have for students may influence how they plan for instruction and formulate instructional choices, and variations in what is taught will invariably lead to variations in what is learned (Brophy, 1982). Expectations have a powerful effect on students' performances (Gross-Davis, 1993) and can raise or lower the level of attainment dependent on the expectation conveyed (Miller, 2001; Schilling & Schilling, 1999). Research has illustrated that expectations produce identifiably different teacher behaviors which impact what and how students learn. It may be that the differences that exist between the two types of beliefs are related to the teacher's assumptions regarding the locus of control for the child; is it internal or external?

According to the head-teachers, in the schools, expectations for teachers are high, as they are for students. Several teachers noted that expectations have to be crafted to relate positively for students who show the types of behaviors usually associated with attentional deficits as their needs are distinctive.Expectancies can be shaped by existing behaviors, and teachers generally expect students to behave in particular ways. Goldenberg (1992) offered that expectancies are more the result than the cause of student performance and achievement which can be positively enhanced by by the initiation and application of appropriate teaching practices may, in some way, facilitate the lessening of off-task behaviors. Clearly in children with attention difficulties, there is a pathological reason for the condition and behaviors will probably occur simply due to that condition. However, it could be that these behaviors are exacerbated by the results of how students have performed academically (and socially) and that poor performance reinforces negative conduct. Overt negative student behaviors were not evident in any of the schools during the research although the characteristics of children with attention deficit were; lack of attention, poor organization, inappropriate talking (to an extent), and motoric movement were seen. All teachers repeated that they believed in and expected the best from their students, regardless of cognitive ability or behavior and that they would "do what it takes" to promote maximum achievement.

Implications for Research, Theory, and Practice

The purpose of any research is to add to a body of knowledge, existing theory, and to inform practice. Little research has been undertaken in independent schools, possibly as the percentage of school-age population that attends them is low, or it could be that the sense of privacy that is perceived to surround them is difficult to breach. It is important to establish what it is that teachers who successfully educate students who have attentional deficits do to foster success and to contemplate how the results can enhance existing research, theory and practice. If the desired outcome of a study is to be able to extend the knowledge base, if data which has been gathered can add some pieces to the puzzle of how individuals construct meaning and implement practices to the enhancement of student achievement, it has worth.

Research

This study has relevance for both researchers and educators. It contributes to the research base because, to the knowledge of this researcher, no research connected to teachers in the English independent school system relevant to either beliefs, attitudes, and expectations in the light of student exceptionality has been undertaken previously, nor how they interact with and provide instruction for students with attentional deficits. The study analyzed, through the previously described lenses, the beliefs, attitudes, and expectations teachers hold about the needs of their students and about their own abilities to successfully impart instruction to a given body of the schools' populations. Exceptional students are in schools where special education teachers are not “on staff,” and, according to reported information, they are achieving successfully at least to their level of ability, despite the detraction of the condition which they have, further research opportunities are open to exploration.

As the schools visited do not have any instituted special education department, teachers can not readily access this expertise and, further, parents expect their children to be able to learn to the best of their abilities, it is possible that the mutual philosophies of teachers and schools can be credited with the purposeful and positive outlook for their students. Consideration should be given to the possibility that it may be that smaller classes, supported by open and constructive collegial interactions, and a positive attitude backed by knowledge of how and when to implement appropriate strategies when working with students who are attentionally challenged, are the attributes that make the difference for these children. Almost every teacher made positive reference to class size and the importance of that when dealing with exceptional children. They additionally considered that having the support of a teaching assistant in the classroom was paramount to how they could make best use of their time when working with students in small groups and/or individual situations.

Teachers are no longer expected to be the “sage on the stage,” but to encourage children to think productively and creatively, opening the door to varying approaches to the delivery of instruction where students are afforded the opportunities to engage in creative thinking in order to make meaning of what they are learning.

Theory

The theoretical lenses through which the data gathered for this study were examined were those of the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum (Jordan-Wilson &

Silverman, 1991, Jordan et al., 1993) and the construct of self-efficacy coined by Bandura (1977, 1997). This study contributes to the understood relevance of the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum and the construct of self-efficacy as applied to teaching practices in which teachers engage in a given situation. It corroborates the usefulness of the stages of the continuum when examining teacher behaviors. The stages, which are outlined in the continuum, provide an appropriate vehicle through which teachers behaviors can be quantified and linked to what is and is not effective for students. Previous studies using the continuum have been conducted in Canada and by using it in a study in England, and in the private school sector, a further contribution to the usefulness of the theory is made.

The study confirms the usefulness of the construct of self efficacy when evaluating how teachers behave towards and exert influence over exceptional students. It also showed how teacher efficacy can be enhanced by beliefs, and how positive collective efficacy enhances the climate and culture of participant schools producing resultant constructive effects. Self-efficacy asserts that those who welcome challenge, and view it as something to be dealt with and positively overcome, are stronger in the perception of their capabilities which, in turn, produce a positive trickle down effect. It affects how they view student competence and how they perceive the appropriateness of their decisions related to how instruction will be delivered.

It is important to understand the effect of teacher belief systems on their students' achievement and performance. The findings of the study, related in Chapter IV and Chapter V, show that the beliefs of individual teachers are critical to their level of willingness to provide educational opportunities to enhance student success through engaging in appropriate practices, modifications, and accommodations.

Although much of the instruction observed was provided directly, education promotes thinking skills and problem solving and students and participants work individually and collaboratively to encourage development of these attributes across the schools' populations. Teachers who collaborate and share expertise help to enhance the performance of others as they learn from each other. The encouragement and learning of practices that are productive enhances, in turn, student skills and outcomes.

Teachers whose assumptions and beliefs about the needs of students align them to the interventionist end of the continuum are those who also demonstrate a vigorous sense of self efficacy. Such traits were demonstrated by almost all the participants in the study and, according to their claims, this is the pervading character of the schools. One, more experienced, teacher appeared to engage almost exclusively in direct instruction although she posited that she espoused interventionist beliefs. One other, again more experienced teacher, provided only direct instruction when delivering science instruction and had limited interaction with what were perceived as students "who are not ready to understand and participate."

Practice

Teachers hold different perceptions of their responsibilities and roles when dealing with students, and more so when students have exceptionality. Such conjectures result in the implementation of various instructional strategies. Students who have attentional deficits require modifications and accommodations that specifically address their inability to consistently focus on tasks if they are to achieve successfully within the general education classroom. Teachers in schools which have limited resources are dependent on the skills of the teachers whom they employ to institute appropriate practices to ensure that all students' needs are met.

The findings of this study show that children who, according to their teachers, have at least average cognitive ability, but are challenged by attentional deficits, are being served successfully in general education classrooms without the support of special education specialists as evidenced by positive results on Key Stage examinations, which all children take. There was no mention of accommodations for these examinations, but teachers voiced that they work with children to prepare them for what they will meet during the examination time by providing guided practice in the skills that they will need, but not by teaching to the test. Ellie mentioned that there are some children who get more stressed than others, but said that she feels that by working with children to prepare them by providing instruction in specific test taking strategies, particularly in such a small class setting, has a positive effect.

Practices in which the teachers engaged, such as individualized instruction, checking what has been learned as well as for learning, meaningful evaluations to share with students to demonstrate progress, flexibility in classroom arrangement and management to accommodate all learners, collaboration with colleagues, frequent communication with parents, maximization of instructional time, and clearly conveying high, but individual expectations for all students, demonstrated the components elemental to the success of teaching that was exhibited in the independent schools visited. These attributes have resulted in the provision of positive learning experiences and outcomes for their students. The sense of community and care displayed by teachers and schools toward their students and each other contributes a positive school culture which, by extension, further positively influences what happens in the classrooms.

Stanovich and Jordan (1998) addressed the issue of the influence exerted by headteachers on the culture and shaping of their schools, which, by extension has an impact on teachers' thoughts and actions. In the participating schools, while the leadership position of each of the head-teachers is clearly recognized, there is also what can be interpreted as a sense of informality which contributes to a feeling of ownership of all the staff and a greater sense of "we." Several teachers made positive comments about the support provided by administration. Whether the strength of the support is due to the fact that each of the head-teachers hold a teaching position and, in all probability experience similar challenges to their colleagues, or whether it is due, either in part or entirely, to their beliefs systems, what is evident is that the sense of benign democracy is paying dividends with reinforcing positive and strong school cultures. Ultimately, the major recipients of such a culture are the students who demonstrate the behaviors which are expected of them.

Clear behavioral conventions are apparent, and the expectation of this positive behavior is extended to both teachers and students. Students and adults alike appear to flourish in the sense of order although, as John alluded:

> It's not always so ordered, you know. Watch everyone have a good time on the playing fields and during school and class activities. You'll see a different picture then. We have our little breakdowns, but teachers are on things pretty quickly and we believe that it is important to support the kids and help them to try to work out differences without coming to blows or with kids trying to "exclude" each other by pretending another doesn't exist.

Sybil noted that, "an orderly ship is a happier ship." Although this saying might appear trite, it is apparent that there is much truth in this.

Commentary

As with other studies, this study concludes that the relationship between student performance and achievement appear to be directly linked to the assumptions and beliefs held by their teachers. Although the sites selected for this study can be perceived as privileged, inasmuch as parents pay for the education of their children privately, the functionings of the schools are similar to schools in the state system. There are clear differences, some of which are physical; uniforms, setting, transportation needs, and the like. There are misconceptions that independent schools are for the exclusive use of the wealthy, but information provided would suggest that many parents incur significant sacrifice to send their children to these schools. It could be argued that parents do so in order to show socio-economic worth. While that appears to be the case for some, it is not for others. There are parents who forfeit "extras" in life to send their children to these schools because their perception is that the state schools are not providing what their children need to become active, engaged learners which ultimately will have an affect on their life chances. Students are encouraged to become self-sufficient and self-reliant, both important attributes as they progress through their educational career into the everyday world.

The beliefs that teachers hold may well be linked to past experience. When opportunities are provided them to enhance their repertoires, their knowledge base is widened, their skills are increased, which in turn may lead to increased success for both teacher and student. However, opportunities have to be carefully crafted to ensure that teachers' needs are met. Guesswork and following the latest bandwagon could well prove counterproductive.

In the state system, students who are found to have obstacles to learning may find their instruction being provided in an alternate setting. To many this is unacceptable in today's climate. Schools that show their commitment to the academic and social advancement of their students by supporting teachers to employ behaviors that are conducive to positive student performance, when they solicit parents as partners in the educational processes of their children, and critically, ensure that teachers have the knowledge base and that they can depend on administrative and collegial support to sustain student achievement, outcomes for all should be enhanced and increased.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Protocol and Interview Questions

Each interview will begin with an introduction of the researcher who will provide an explanation of the research project. Each participant will be asked to sign the consent form, of which a copy will be supplied to the participant.

- How long have you been teaching and in how many schools/types of schools have you taught?
- Tell me about yourself as a teacher.
- How do you feel you make a difference with students?
- What are your beliefs about the students whom you teach?
  - Do you believe all students can learn?
- How do you feel about students who do not learn readily?
- What do you do to engage them in the learning process?
  - How do you work with students who have difficulty with attention and focus?
  - What sort of modifications (if any) do you make for these students?
  - Where do you go for support?
  - What support do you have in the school?
- If you collaborate with colleagues, with whom and how do you do so?
- How do you judge your students' success?
  - the success of students who have difficulty with paying attention to lessons?

- What are your goals for your students?
    - for students you have difficulty paying attention?
- What else do I need to know about you as a teacher working with a diverse student population?

Appendix B

Internal Review Board Approval

Appendix C

Introductory Letter to Head-Teachers

South Farm House
Lower Green
HIGHAM
Suffolk IP28 6NJ

Date: 30 March 2004

Dear ,

Following our telephone conversation, I am writing to invite you to take part in a research project. The purpose of this study is to examine the teacher beliefs, attitudes, and expectations towards students who exhibit attention difficulties in independent schools in East Anglia.

If you agree that your school participate, I shall conduct audio-taped interviews at the convenience of the school, of yourself, and of and teachers. The interviews will last for approximately one hour. The data will be transcribed and analyzed for the purposes of this study. Follow-up observations will be scheduled at mutual convenience.

I am including a consent form for you to sign and a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of the consent form. If you have any questions before agreeing to participate, please feel free to contact me at home: 01284 811256, or e-mail me at: maggie_detchon@eu.odedodea.edu.

Your time is greatly appreciated and I trust that you will find this study to be of interest to you.

Sincerely,

____

Maggie Detchon

Appendix D

Consent Form for Research Study

Teacher Informed Consent

I, ___________________________, hereby authorize Maggie J. D. Detchon to interview me and observe teacher/student interactions in my classroom. This information will be used for research into teacher beliefs, attitudes, and expectations towards students who display attention deficits, whether diagnosed or not. This research is being conducted through Oklahoma State University. The Principal Investigator is Maggie Detchon, a doctoral student, under the guidance of Adrienne E. Hyle PhD, a professor at Oklahoma State University.

The interview will take approximately one hour and the observation will last no longer than 45 minutes. I shall arrange for times that are convenient for you. The interview will be audiotaped to ensure that all responses are recorded and will elicit information which will be used in a scholarly paper.

Your name will not appear on the transcript, the tape, or observational information. You will be assigned a pseudonym to protect your confidentiality. All data collected will be kept in a locked file cabinet and will be shredded after the research is complete. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You may request that the interview/observation be terminated at any time, or, if you reconsider a response, you may contact me to amend that response.

This study does not provide compensation to the subjects neither is there direct benefit to individual participants. There is no risk to any participant. This research will be added to the wider knowledge base of educational practices. For questions about the research, please contact:

Adrienne Hyle, PhD
Professor
Oklahoma State University
106 Willard Hall
Stillwater
Oklahoma 74078
Telephone: (001) 405-744-9893

Maggie Detchon, BA, MEd
South Farm House
Lower Green
HIGHAM
Suffolk IP28 6NJ
Telephone: 01284 811265

I understand that participation is voluntary and that there is no penalty if I choose not to participate and that I am free to withdraw my consent and end my participation in this research at any time without penalty after I notify the dissertation advisor, Dr. Adrienne Hyle, at the address or telephone noted above.

I understand that the interview and observation will be conducted according to commonly accepted research procedures and that information taken from the interview and observation will be recorded in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

I understand that the interview and observation will not cover topics that could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability or deal with sensitive aspects of the subjects' own behavior.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: ______________________________ Time: ____________(a.m./p.m.)

____

Name (Printed) Signature

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject or his/her representative before requesting that it be signed.

Signed: Date:

____

Maggie Detchon

Appendix E

Consent Form

I authorize Maggie Detchon to conduct research at the school site for a research project entitled Teacher Beliefs , Attitudes, and Expectations Towards Students with Attention Disorders in Three Schools in the United Kingdom Independent School System. The study is scheduled to take place over a four month period. During the course of the research, the researcher will use commonly accepted research procedures including observations, interviews, and review of documents.

I understand that participation in this project is voluntary and that there is no penalty for refusal to participate. I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying Maggie Detchon or her advisor.

I understand that the interview will be conducted according to accepted procedures and that information gained from the interview will be recorded in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. Each interview will be recorded and transcribed verbatim. All collected data, including the interview tapes, will be kept in a locked file cabinet. The tapes will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. The researcher will maintain the data in a secure location for a minimum of two years following the study.

I understand that the purpose of the study is to examine the beliefs, attitudes and expectations of teachers towards students in the independent school system specifically when working with pupils who have difficulty with attention and focus.

I may contact the dissertation adviser, Dr. Adrienne Hyle, Assistant Dean, School of Educational Studies, College of Education, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, USA, should I wish further information about the research.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been provided to me.

Date: ____ Time: _________________

Signed: ____

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject before requesting the subject sign the form.

Signed: ____

Appendix F

Research Project

Explanatory Letter for Parents

South Farm House
Lower Green
HIGHAM
Suffolk IP28 6NJ

Dear Parents,

Thank you for agreeing to complete the enclosed questionnaire regarding your child. The information you provide will be used as data for a research paper. All information is confidential and there will be no indication of who parent or child is, or which school is participating in this study (there are more schools than yours).

You will see that there is no space for your name at the top of the questionnaire, but that I have asked that you let me know whether your child is a girl or boy, and which year s/he is in.

Thank you for your support in this educational study.

Sincerely,

____

Maggie Detchon

Appendix G

Information from Teachers

Instructions: Please indicate your personal opinion about each statement by circling the appropriate response.

Key : 1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Moderately Agree 3 = Agree 4 = Moderately Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

	Strongly Agree	Mod Agree	Agree	Mod Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My training prepared me to teach students who have difficulty learning	0	1	2	5	5
During my training, I was taught how to work with students who demonstrate behavioural/attention difficulties	0	1	2	5	5
I can teach all children	4	5	3	1	0
I can successfully teach students who demonstrate attention/behavioural difficulties	3	5	4	1	0
I do not give up on students who refuse to engage in the learning process	6	4	2	1	0
I make modifications to ensure that all students can experience success	5	5	2	1	0
I am limited in what I can do if a student is not motivated to learn	0	1	3	7	2
There is not a lot I can do to help students whose behaviour gets in the way of their learning	0	1	0	7	5
I believe there is a limited amount I can do to help students to learn if there is inadequate support at home	0	2	1	7	3
When a child demonstrates attention difficulties, I increase my effort to ensure learning	5	4	3	1	0
There is a limit to how much I can teach students with attention difficulties	0	1	2	9	1

When students are challenging, I have the capacity to meet that challenge	4	6	3	0	0
With extra effort, I believe I can engage even the most disinclined students	3	4	4	2	0
There are limits to what I can teach students who demonstrate attention/behavioural difficulties	0	1	2	7	3
If a student exhibits disruptive behaviours in my class-room, I have the strategies to address that behaviour	4	6	3	0	0
It is my responsibility to encourage and motivate all students to learn	11	2	0	0	0
I am able to modify lessons to accommodate the learning styles of all students	7	5	1	0	0
If a child exhibits attention difficulties, my first step is to address such difficulties in the classroom	5	6	1	1	0
If a child exhibits attention difficulties, I would confer with a learning support specialist to brainstorm ideas	6	5	2	0	0
If a child exhibits attention difficulties, I would ask for a diagnostic evaluation	0	1	2	9	1
A student's potential for learning is something I can influence	8	4	1	0	0
I know I can successfully teach students who have attention difficulties	3	5	4	1	0
When students are behaviourally challenging, I receive support from parents after I notify them	4	4	5	0	0
I believe I can make a difference to the learning of all students	10	2	1	0	0

*All teachers preferred to substitute 'colleague' for 'special education teacher' and that was how they responded to the questions.

*Teachers said they were confused by the moderate columns. They interpreted the range as 1 – 5 with 3 being Agree and the numbers on either sides slightly stronger.

Appendix H

Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire

	Strongly Agree	Mod Agree	Agree	Mod Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Heterogeneously grouped classes provide the best learning environment	2	5	4	1	1
Homogenously grouped classes provide the best learning environment	1	1	0	9	2
There is much that I can do to influence the education of children who have difficulty focusing on tasks	5	5	1	2	0
I feel limited in how I can teach children who have difficulty focusing on lessons	0	1	1	8	3
I can do a lot to keep students focused when lessons get difficult	3	5	4	1	0
I use strategies to enhance children's memory of what has been taught previously	4	5	4	0	0
I can ensure that all students follow classroom rules	6	6	1	0	0
I can motivate students who demonstrate low interest in lessons	2	5	4	1	1
It is a teacher's obligation to ensure that all children make acadmic progress	8	2	3	0	0
I prefer to initially deal with students who have attention difficulties myself	5	4	3	1	0
When a child has difficulty with focus, I believe I should immediately refer that child for educational intervention (with a special needs teacher)	0	0	1	6	6
I believe that I can help a child with attention difficulties in the classroom provided I can confer with a special needs teacher	4	5	3	1	0

*All teachers preferred to substitute 'colleague' for 'special education teacher' and that was how they responded to the questions.

*Teachers said they were confused by the moderate columns. They interpreted the range as 1 – 5 with 3 being Agree and the numbers on either sides slightly stronger.

Appendix I

Information from Parents

Male Children = 13
Female Children = 5

Question	Not Seen	Sometimes Seen	Frequently Seen
My child was fractious as a baby	2	8	8
My child is readily distracted by other stimuli	0	8	10
My child has difficulty with organization	1	7	10
My child has difficulty paying attention to homework and other tasks	1	5	12
My child often makes careless mistakes when doing homework or other tasks	0	6	12
My child does not like to undertake educational tasks that require sustained effort and concentration (like homework)	0	9	9
My child loses things easily	0	9	9
My child often fidgets/daydreams	1	5	12
My child talks constantly	5	7	6

VITA

Maggie Jane Dickson Detchon

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: TEACHER BELIEFS, ATTITUDES, AND EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DISORDERS IN THREE SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM'S INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Aberdeen, Scotland on November 26, 1945, wife of Terrance Detchon, daughter of Captain David and Mrs. Maggie Wilson, sister of Charles, Ian, Helen, and David, mother of David, Alexandra, Annalie, and Douglas, and seanmhair of Sophie and Isla.

Education: Graduate of Aberdeen Academy, Aberdeen, Scotland, June, 1963; received Bachelor of Arts Degree in Fine Arts from Grays School of Art, Robert Gordons University, Aberdeen, Scotland, June 1968; received Certification in Education (Secondary) from Aberdeen Teachers' Training College, Aberdeen, Scotland, June 1969; received Masters in Special Education Degree from the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, June 1996. Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education Degree with a major in Educational Administration at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, in July 2006.

Experience: Recruited by the Overseas Development Administration in May 1969 to work for the Sierra Leonean Government as a teacher in the Annie Walsh Memorial School for Girls, Freetown, Sierra Leone, West Africa, 1969 to 1973; taught for the Huntingdon Local Education Authority in Longsands Comprehensive School, St. Neots, England, 1973 to 1975; taught English as a Second Language in Pensacola, Florida, 1975 to 1977; taught for City Colleges of Chicago, Rota, Spain, 1977 to 1979; worked at the U.S. Naval Oceanography Command Center, Rota, Spain, from 1979 to 1981; taught in private summer English as a Second Language Schools, Scotland, 1985 to 1991; taught for the Department of Defense Dependents' Schools from 1995 to present in Chicksands, Feltwell, Lakenheath Schools, England. Served as School Improvement Chairs in all three schools at various times. Currently Case Study Committee Chairperson (Special Education) at Liberty Intermediate School, Lakenheath, England.

Memberships: Member of the General Teaching Council for Scotland; Alpha Mu Gamma, Pensacola, Florida; Phi Delta Kappa