

PHYSICAL EDUCATION, ART, AND MUSIC TEACHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES WITH
STUDENTS WHO HAVE ADHD OR ADHD SYMPTOMS

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to discover the lived experiences of teaching students with ADHD for art, music, and physical education teachers at elementary schools. The theories guiding this study are Zentall's (1975) Optimal Stimulation Theory and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior as they explain how teachers' attitudes and use of stimulation in the classroom affects the central phenomenon. This transcendental phenomenological study was based on actual descriptions of elementary special area teachers' lived experiences with students who have ADHD. The design included a review of the literature, epoche, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of the data (Moustakas, 1994). Research was collected through surveys, interviews, and observations of 12 elementary special area teachers in seven elementary schools located in the same school district in the same county. Through examination of the lived experiences of elementary PE, art, and music teachers with students who display symptoms of ADHD, there will be a better understanding how their attitudes were formed and the influence it has on their teaching experiences.

Keywords: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), elementary special area teachers, physical education (PE), art, music, Theory of Planned Behavior, Optimal Stimulation Theory

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my grandmother, Nellie Herbig. She was a classroom teacher and always taught her children and grandchildren about nature and literature. She inspired me my whole life to be an educator and continue with my education. She passed away in my second year of doctoral school, so I dedicate the completion of this dissertation and my doctorate degree in her memory.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my husband and three children who have supported me in this endeavor. They never complained about the time I had to take away from them to work on my dissertation, attend classes, and complete coursework. I would like to acknowledge one of my best friends, Tammy Meadows. She has faced many challenges in order to continue her education and inspired me to do the same. We both work full time, have three children, and have supported each other for the last six years in all our education and career decisions. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to acknowledge my heavenly Father, who has given me the knowledge, the finances, the time, and the peace to complete my doctoral degree and dissertation. I plan to use the knowledge I have attained to do His work and to glorify Him. Philippians 2:13 says, “For it is God who works in you to will and act according to His good purpose” (NIV). He knows this is my dream and I am eternally grateful that He has given me the resources to make it a reality.

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List of Abbreviation

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Individual Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Physical Education (PE)

Optimal Stimulation Theory (OST)

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Presidential School District (PSD)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

In Chapter One, I will provide the framework for this study which examined the lived experiences of teaching elementary students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms in art, music, and physical education classes. My assumption in discovering the lived experiences of special area teachers who teach students with ADHD is that those teachers have a more positive attitude in teaching students with behavioral disabilities such as ADHD because their instruction offers more stimulation for students with ADHD (Block & Jeong, 2011). The data collection involved a triangulation of open-ended surveys, interviews, and observations (Moustakas, 1994).

Gaps in the literature framed the research questions and purpose of this study. After using exhaustive Boolean operators and key words pertaining to special area teachers and ADHD, only a few pieces of literature explored the lived experiences of special area teachers with students who have ADHD (Buchanan, Hart, Rigler, & St. Charles, 2010). This study was significant because the attitudes and perceptions of teachers have a profound impact on the type of instruction they provide.

Background

Approximately one in 20 students in the United States has been diagnosed with attention disorders. These students have been reported as having three to eight times as many off task behaviors as comparison students (Banda & Kercood, 2012). In recent years, there is no special education category for ADHD or ADHD symptoms alone, but many students with ADHD also qualify to receive special education services because of additional learning disabilities or other health impairments (Carter et al., 2013). Historically, teachers held stigmas related to students who have mental health disorders, such as ADHD (Bagiatis, Goudas, & Theodorakis, 1995). In the last 20 years, the extent of favorable attitudes among PE teachers in teaching students with

disabilities in regular education classes has been a concern (Rizzo, & Vispoel, 1992). Certain variables, including the self-perceptions of teachers, educational training in special education, and experience in teaching students with handicaps played an important role in teacher attitudes (Buchanan et al., 2010). Today, students with special needs are more widely accepted by peers and educators than in previous decades.

Yet, although negative perceptions of students with disabilities have changed, there are still problems associated with negative attitudes towards students with disabilities in elementary specialized education, such as PE, art, and music. Accommodations for students with behavioral disabilities which are provided in the regular education classroom are not always provided in the special area classes (Ahmetoglu & Peduk, 2012). To date, there have not been measurements or clear data to understand the attitudes and knowledge that teachers have of ADHD in the education system (Anderson, Noble, Shanley, & Watt, 2012). Unfortunately, children who have ADHD symptoms are especially sensitive to the negative perceptions held by peers, family, and teachers. Therefore, the perceptions that teachers have of students with ADHD will greatly impact their attitude, their rapport, and their classroom instruction with these students (Bell, Bussing, Garvan, & Long, 2011).

Situation to Self

This study relates to me on a personal level and as the researcher in the study. My philosophical assumptions are that transfer of learning is achieved through constructivist teaching methods. If a student is engaged in constructive learning, then they will be able to internalize the concept and be able to transfer the knowledge to another context. High engagement activities are especially true for students who have ADHD symptoms. I believe that human knowledge is a result of constructing knowledge through trials and revisions, while using moral, imaginative, and reasoning skills to do so (Van Brummelen, 2009). I hold a biblical

worldview that is rooted in God's truth. It is written in Colossians 1:16-17, "All things were created by God and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (NIV). I believe that God created people to have relationships with each other so that we can understand how we are to serve Him in His earthly kingdom.

To understand the phenomenon of this study, I looked at the lived experiences that the special area teachers had of serving God through their role as a PE, art, or music teacher. I examined the relationships between the special area teacher and the students that have been diagnosed with ADHD or had symptoms of ADHD to develop themes and essences of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). This study related to me personally because as an educator for over 21 years, I have experienced teaching many students, ages four through nine with ADHD. I felt unprepared to meet their unique educational and behavioral needs. According to Combs, Elliot, and Whipple (2010), most elementary teachers felt unprepared to teach students with ADHD, especially the PE, art, and music teachers, since their teaching methods differ from regular education teachers. There is currently no instructional support provided by my school system for the students diagnosed with ADHD or who have ADHD symptoms unless they are also diagnosed as having autism, Asperger syndrome, or other health impairments.

I am biased in this research because I have two children of my own who have ADHD. My sons' PE, art, and music teachers used many hands-on activities that kept them on task. The attitudes of those teachers were more positive towards my sons' behavior than the attitudes of their regular classroom teachers. I am also a teacher in the same county as the pilot and the main study. I currently serve as a peer observer for other teachers in the county. I am allowed to observe and evaluate the teachers as they deliver instruction in their natural teaching environment (Appendix I).

My assumptions in this study would be that PE, art, and music teachers hold previous

beliefs about students with disabilities which will directly impact their attitude and intentions in teaching students with ADHD (Block & Jeong, 2011). I would also assume that elementary PE, art, and music teachers who engage students with ADHD in constructive learning activities will have positive experiences and perceptions of teaching students with ADHD (Lee, Miller, & Vostal, 2013).

Problem Statement

The problem is teachers who teach music, PE, and art classes in an elementary school often feel unprepared to teach students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms, which affects their attitude and perception of their lived experiences with these students (Beyer, Flores, & Vargas, 2012). By using exhaustive Boolean operators and databases with the key words of this study to locate peer-reviewed literature to support this problem, no study included research that focused on the lived experiences, beliefs, and perceptions of elementary PE, music, and art teachers with students who have ADHD. Only one dissertation and two articles discuss the attitudes of PE, art, and music teachers towards students with ADHD. None of those explained how the attitudes of the teachers were developed or how the lived experiences of the teachers shaped their attitudes and beliefs (Kain, 2014).

Previous research on teachers' lived experiences with students who have ADHD have focused only on teachers in regular elementary and secondary education classrooms (Clarke, 2014). Kelly-McHale (2013) has focused on the benefits of PE, art, and music class instruction with students who have ADHD. Only two studies have examined how the age and experience levels of the teachers influence their attitudes towards students with ADHD (Buchanan et al., 2010). One study suggested that teachers need to be trained and guided towards an appreciation of student differences in order to engage in effective instruction for all students (Jones, 2011). Teachers that taught a variety of concepts through music have explained that students who have

hidden disabilities, such as ADHD received an optimal level of stimulation, which kept them on task (Gridley & Gordan, 2013). The gaps in the literature revealed the problem that needed to be examined, the research questions to ask, and the theoretical framework for the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to investigate the lived experiences of teaching students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms for art, music, and physical education teachers at elementary schools. At this stage in the research, ADHD or ADHD symptoms will be generally defined as a neurobehavioral disorder that is caused by unbalanced and unregulated levels of norepinephrine and dopamine in the brain causing consistent hyperactivity and off-task behavior (Lenz, 2012). Zentall's (1975) Optimal Stimulation Theory and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior framed the purpose of this study as they explained how teachers' attitudes and use of stimulation in the classroom affected the central phenomenon.

Significance of the Study

This study was significant to the elementary special area teachers who taught students that have been diagnosed with ADHD or who have ADHD symptoms (Jones, 2011). It was significant to those teachers because there was very little research that explored their lived experiences and attitudes of teaching students with ADHD (Clarke, 2014). According to the literature, teachers rated children with ADHD as more stressful to teach than children without ADHD. Teachers have a more negative attitude towards students with ADHD symptoms (Lee, 2014). Therefore, the perception of students who displayed ADHD symptoms or who have been diagnosed with ADHD was potentially significant on the overall impact of ADHD on school settings and instructional practices (Carter et al., 2013).

Similar to studies that revealed the attitudes of regular education teachers with ADHD, in

depth and open ended interviews and surveys were used in this study to better understand teacher attitudes. The teachers' attitudes towards students with ADHD and how those attitudes were formed influenced their teaching experiences (Combs et al., 2010). This was significant because a teacher's feelings and opinions towards their students greatly affected the students' educational success. Therefore, it was important to fill the gap in understanding the feelings and attitudes that a special area teacher had towards students with ADHD (Peduc & Ahmetoglu, 2012).

Other studies about teaching students with ADHD were mostly quantitative. Those studies focused mainly on specific types of activities and strategies and the effects they had on the instruction of students with ADHD (Jones, 2011). This study examined the lived experiences of elementary PE, art, and music teachers as it was and understood it in its own terms (Moustakas, 1994). This study was significant to the participants because it involved a criterion sample of elementary PE, art, and music teachers who had experienced students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. The participants represented a variety teaching experience and knowledge with ADHD. Through this study, they were able to understand their personal attitudes and beliefs about students with ADHD and how it impacted their daily instruction. Overall teaching experience with students who have ADHD has been found to be a significant factor of faculty attitudes (Buchanan et al., 2010).

One area of neglect in most research studies on PE, art, or music teachers was research that discovered the attitudes and interactions of students who had disabilities (Buchanan et al., 2010). Therefore, this study had an impact on the instruction of students with learning and medical disabilities in PE, art, and music classes (Block & Jeong, 2011). According to Beike and Zentall (2012), Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Zentall's (1975) Optimal Learning Theory (OST), and gaps in the literature were vital in understanding how instruction for students with special needs was derived. The theories and the gaps in the literature framed the

research questions by understanding how the special area teachers perceived and described their lived experiences of teaching students with ADHD. Block and Jeong (2012) explained that Ajzen's (1975) TPB explored the intention of special area teachers toward students with disabilities, which was determined by their attitude toward the students' behavior, perceptions of what others wanted, and the perceived ease or difficulty of instruction for students with disabilities. Special area classes provided many stimulating visual, auditory, and physical activities for students with ADHD, which was supported by the OST (Zentall, 1975).

By incorporating optimal stimulation in the classroom, special area teachers had a more positive attitude toward students with ADHD than regular education teachers since the students demonstrated increased on-task behavior (Miller et al., 2013). This study was significant for special area teachers to understand the reasons behind their attitudes and perceptions of students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms.

Research Questions

The research questions provided direction and meaning in order to develop themes that led to inquiry and interest of the experiences. The research questions addressed the gaps in the literature that led to the discovery of the underlying themes of the behavior, attitudes and perceptions of PE, art, and music teachers' lived experiences with students who have ADHD (Moustakas, 1994).

RQ1: How do elementary PE, art, and music teachers perceive and describe their lived experiences teaching students with ADHD? This structural question focuses on describing the lived experiences so that they are as near to the actual nature of the phenomenon as possible (Moustakas, 1994). The perception of a student with ADHD had an impact on how the teacher interacted with the student and their acceptance of ADHD and the challenging behaviors associated with it. Students that have disabilities in behavior, social skills, motor development,

and attention may be ignored or inappropriately disciplined due to the negative perception of their teacher. Examining the lived experiences of special area teachers and their positive or negative perceptions of students with ADHD brought forth an understanding of the essence of the phenomenon (Ahmetoglu & Peduk, 2012).

RQ2: What themes are identified through the perceptions the PE, art, and music teachers' perceptions regarding students with ADHD while planning for classroom instruction? This sub question is derived from the TPB (Ajzen, 1991). Based on the literature, teachers' perception of students with ADHD affected their classroom experiences with students who had ADHD (Jones, 2011). Intentional planning for classroom instruction that accommodated the special needs of students with ADHD negatively or positively affected the teacher's perception of those students (Ahmetoglu & Peduk, 2012).

RQ3: What themes are discovered through elementary PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes during the instruction of students who have ADHD? According to McAllister (2012), using Zentall's (1975) OST supported that if a teacher applied the optimal stimulation needed for ADHD students to stay on task, then their experience greatly differed from the teacher who did not apply theoretically based instruction.

RQ4: How do the PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes towards students with ADHD affect their intentions of individualizing instruction for those students? According to Block and Block (2011), Ajzen's (1991) TPB rationalized that PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes and intentions toward students with disabilities was determined by their attitude toward the students' behavior, perceptions of what others want, and perceived ease or difficulty of instruction for students with disabilities.

RQ5: How do the perceptions that PE, art, and music have of themselves teaching students with any type of disability affect their instruction of students with ADHD? PE, art, and

music teachers must believe they are adequately prepared and supported to include appropriate strategies in the classroom for students with ADHD (Baghurst, 2014). The instructional success of a teacher with students who were diagnosed with ADHD greatly depended on the teachers' perceptions of their own tolerance, acceptance, and intentions towards those students.

Confidence in teaching students with ADHD, knowledge of the disorder, and attitudes towards classroom practices that accommodated students with ADHD determined instructional success (Amonn, Breuer, Doepfner, & Froelich, 2012).

Research Plan

This qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was based on actual descriptions of lived experiences by elementary PE, art, and music teachers with students who have ADHD (Moustakas, 1994). The study utilized a convenience and criterion sample of 12 PE, art, and music teachers who experienced students with ADHD during each school day (Creswell, 2013). The setting of the study was seven different elementary schools within the same county on the coast of North Carolina.

The data collection involved a triangulation of open-ended surveys, interviews, and observations. The interviews included a minimum of 12 elementary PE, art, and music teachers. The interviews were conducted face to face or on the phone, depending on the participant's preference. The observations were conducted through a random sampling of the participants as they were teaching students with ADHD in their classrooms. Randomization occurred by putting all of the participants who volunteered to be observed in an electronic pool. A random selection of four participants was chosen to be observed in the study.

Data analysis involved: epoche, horizontalization, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis that forged and integrated the essences of the teachers' lived experiences as a whole which provided a fundamental textural and structural description of the

phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Gaps in the literature supported this research plan because only one dissertation and two research articles existed on the lived experiences of special area teachers with students who have ADHD (Clarke, 2014). However, that dissertation study was based on the perceptions of high school teachers. The other studies had not included PE, art, and music teachers exclusively. Attitudes of general education toward students with disabilities were often based on popular culture and media, which inhibited their lived experiences of those students (Jones, 2011).

Block and Block (2012) stated that teachers who had developed positive images of themselves in a teaching role with students who have disabilities were more successful in teaching experiences than those who had negative images of themselves. Therefore, I developed themes that explained how the PE, art, and music teachers' perceptions of themselves teaching students with any type of disability affected their instruction of students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. I conducted a review of the professional and research literature that connected with the research topic and questions. I approached the research with a fresh perspective and dismissed any knowledge I had about the teachers' experiences prior to conducting the research. I sought to find underlying themes that led to the emergence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Limitations and Delimitations

One limitation was the generalizability of the study because the participants all taught in the same county and school district. Therefore, their lived experiences might not be generalized for other PE, art, and music teachers in different counties and states. The age, gender, and life experiences of the participants might be a limitation as well. For example, older teachers who have experienced their own children or grandchildren with ADHD will have a different attitude and perception of students with ADHD than a younger teacher who does not have children of

their own. Some studies have shown that female teachers have a more positive attitude towards students with disabilities in general (Buchanan et al., 2010). Another limitation was the participants' previously held assumptions and practices with students who have ADHD (Jones, 2011).

One delimitation was the exploration of PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions toward students who had ADHD in addition to co-morbid disorders. I did not examine the lived experiences of teachers who taught students with autism, sensory processing disorder, and any other co-morbid disorder. Another delimitation was other specialist teachers such as media specialists and technology teachers (Combs et al., 2010). I only examined teachers who taught physical, music, and art education in an elementary school as determined by the gaps in the literature. This was purely a phenomenological study because I only revealed the essences of the lived experiences of elementary special area teachers with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms. This study did not seek to determine causal relationships. This study examined comprehensive and vivid descriptions of the participants' lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

Definitions

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)- A neurobehavioral disorder that is caused by unbalanced and unregulated levels of norepinephrine and dopamine in the brain (Lenz, 2012).

Attitude-. A positive or negative predisposition toward a particular behavior (Bagiatis, Goudas, & Theodorakis, 1995).

Lived experiences- Natural processes from which transcendental places of reflection, understanding, and awareness stem from (Moustakas, 1994).

Optimal Stimulation Theory- A theory that explains how humans and other organisms

maintain an optimal level of stimulation through increased stimulating activity (Zentall, 1975).

Special area teachers- Teachers who teach physical education, art, and music classes in an elementary school, grades kindergarten through 5th (Blatt-Gross, 2013).

Students with special needs- Students with disabilities who require a unique learning plan that is in harmony with their performance and appropriate learning environment (Ahmetoglu & Peduk, 2012).

Theory of Planned Behavior- A theory that explains how behavior is derived from the beliefs that relate to the behavior including intention, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

Summary

Future research should include more qualitative studies to discuss the reasons for the perceptions that PE, art, and music elementary teachers have of students with ADHD and their use of appropriate instructional strategies in the classroom (Clarke, 2014). This study was designed to fill a gap in the literature that pertained to special area faculty attitudes towards students with ADHD and ADHD symptoms. According to Lee (2014), “Teacher factors in school decision-making regarding ADHD remain an important and mostly unexplored area of study” (p. 392). Research was also limited on the attitudes of PE, art, and music teachers concerning all students with disabilities. Therefore, this study was significant to those teachers so that they realized what their attitudes and perceptions were and how it affected their teaching practices. Teaching experience had been found to be a significant predictor of teachers’ attitudes.

Physical education teachers in particular felt more comfortable working with students with hidden disabilities, such as ADHD with the more experience they have had with those students (Buchanan et al., 2010). This study explored the lived experiences of PE, art, and music teachers as it was in its own terms which supported the Optimal Stimulation Theory (Zentall,

1975) and Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Lee, et al. (2013) explained how Zentall's (1975) OST justified why some special area teachers have had more positive attitudes towards students with ADHD because the students were engaged at the optimal stimulation level.

According to Jeong and Block (2013), TPB explained that a person's perceived behavior and attitudes must be assessed in order to understand their intentions of behavior in given situations. Lee (2014) explains that Ajzen's (1975) TPB has been used in predicting a teachers' intentions towards evaluating the symptoms of ADHD. If the teacher is more sensitive and knowledgeable about ADHD, then he or she is more likely to seek appropriate interventions for the child with ADHD to be successful in the classroom. The research focused on elementary special area teachers' level of optimism pertaining to their attitudes and perceptions of inclusion for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. The goal of this transcendental phenomenological study was to add to the literature to explain the behavior, attitudes, perceptions, and intentions of elementary special area teachers who taught students with ADHD (Moustakas, 1994).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Teacher attitudes toward students with disabilities have greatly influenced their willingness and ability to provide for those students' unique individual needs (Gerrity, Hourigan, & Horton, 2013). This study was framed by the Optimal Stimulation Theory, developed by Zentall (1975) and the Theory of Planned Behavior, developed by Ajzen (1991). Zentall's 1975 Optimal Stimulation Theory explained that organisms maintain an optimal level of stimulation through visual, auditory, and physical stimulation activities. By adding stimulation activities such as color, music, and physical activity into routine tasks, the optimal stimulation that students with ADHD required was met and they had improved task performance and reduced disruptive behaviors. Therefore, if elementary PE, art, and music teachers provided optimal stimulation in the classroom, then their attitudes, behavior, and perceptions towards students with ADHD would differ from teachers who failed to provide the same optimal stimulation (Zentall, 1975).

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) explained that Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior included not all human behaviors are under people's volitional control and therefore perceived behavioral control must be assessed to understand the intentions of behavior. PE, art, and music teachers often have preconceived ideas about working with students who have disabilities. Each teacher's schooling and life experiences were different. That is why understandings of full inclusion for students with disabilities through arts and physical education were widely differed (LaJevic, 2013).

The literature review examined the distinct attitudes that special area teachers had towards students with special needs, especially towards students with behavioral or mental disorders, such as ADHD. General education teachers and special area teachers have judged the

actions of these students, which determined their perception and attitude of the student. Attitudes guide the attention and type of interactions the teacher has with the student (Glock & Kovacs, 2013). Throughout the literature review, it was revealed that if long-standing attitudes about students with ADHD are negative or are derived from what the teacher has heard or seen instead of what they experience, then that will affect their perceptions and interactions with students who have ADHD (Jones, 2011). The literature review explored the attitudes of PE, art, and music teachers, their curriculum content, collaboration with other teachers, cultural expectations, and how the training they have had with students who have disabilities greatly impacted their perception of students with ADHD (Kain, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

According to Beike and Zentall (2012), Lev Vygotsky's Constructivism Theory helped shape Zentall's (1975) Optimal Stimulation Theory by providing the conceptual framework of student constructed knowledge. Adding stimulation in the form of color, music, graphics, and physical movement produced optimal stimulation and individual knowledge construction for students with ADHD (Beike & Zentall, 2012). Oppong (2012) explained that Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory supported Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior by portraying how emotional and cognitive responses from a teacher predicted their intentional behavior with students who had ADHD.

Optimal Stimulation Theory

Ismat (1998) explained that through Vygotsky's Constructivism Theory, individuals construct new understandings through previous knowledge, beliefs, and engaging activities, which supports Zentall's (1975) Optimal Stimulation Theory. OST suggested that individuals seek input and engagement from their environment when they are under-stimulated (Zentall, 1975). The stimulation they are seeking related to likes and dislikes from previous knowledge

and experiences (Ismat, 1998). If the P.E., art, and music teachers' classroom activities involved the expectation to sit still and focus for long periods of time, then their experiences with students who had ADHD or ADHD symptoms were going to be very different than the teacher who provided optimal stimulation for those students (Jones, 2011).

Students that exhibit ADHD symptoms retain the skills necessary for academic achievement. However, those students lack the attention needed to persist in the academic tasks, which inhibited their task performance. Therefore, Miller et al. (2013) claimed that increasing levels of stimulation supported Zentall's (1975) OST because the stimulation produced positive effects on the students' achievement and productivity. When auditory, visual distal, and visual proximal stimulation was provided in the classroom for a student with ADHD, then that student had increased time on task and had raised levels of achievement. Students with ADHD might prefer one type of music or art over other types due to the stimulation they were seeking when their stimulation levels were below optimum. For example, if a student preferred music of a moderate complexity and that music was provided for them, then they performed better on non-sequential tasks. If a student preferred straight line work over web-like designs and the student created the straight line art, it provided the optimal stimulation they needed to be more productive in class (Gordon & Gridley, 2013).

In order to understand special area teachers' perceptions of students with ADHD, it was important to discover the types of stimulation they displayed in their classrooms (Beike & Zentall, 2012). Music teachers provided optimal stimulation for students with disabilities through classical piano music and hands-on instruction with instruments (Gordan & Gridley, 2013). Art integration lessons have stimulated higher-level thinking and improved cognitive activities. The lessons increased student's knowledge across domains. The lessons also improved problem solving skills in creative and effective ways (LaJevic, 2013). Art instruction has been

found to increase the average thinking and behavioral skills of students with ADHD (Ahmed & Eman, 2013).

Students who have ADHD engaged in physical movement to generate optimal stimulation. Physical education teachers who recognized the benefits of gross motor activities for students with ADHD had a more positive attitude towards those students (Combs et al., 2010). Shillingford-Butler and Theodore (2013) explained that Zentall's (1975) OST justified why supporting a students' executive functioning was so important during instruction. Executive functions are responsible for organization, planning, working memory, self-regulation of arousal levels, and purposeful control of attention and engagement. Students with ADHD have impairments in executive functioning, thus are unable to sustain attention, have difficulty controlling emotions, and will become easily distracted. That is why it is so important for interventions in all of the student's classrooms and at home be optimally effective in order to improve their executive functions.

Theory of Planned Behavior

Oppong (2014) suggested that Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory explained how a person's cognition and environment predicts their behavior and supports Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned behavior (Oppong, 2014). TBP is the most effective model in understanding a teacher's attitudes and behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991). The way a teacher perceived and attended to a student with ADHD was determined by previous experiences, planned behavior, attitude strength, and role identity (Jeong & Block, 2014). According to Anderson, Shanley, and Watt (2013), "If researchers develop reliable and valid models of how attitude certainty forms, then teacher trainers, school psychologists and others, can assist teachers in developing favorable attitudes toward teaching children who express characteristics of ADHD that are durable, resistant to persuasion and that manifest consistent behaviors" (p. 46).

Students with ADHD had difficulty achieving the same level of stimulation that others do from the same sources and engaged in inappropriate methods of stimulation as a result.

Teacher's perceptions of students with ADHD were often determined by these inappropriate behaviors (McAllister, 2012). The more teachers knew about ADHD and the extent of their experience with students who have ADHD symptoms, the greater the effect on their attitudes and behavior intentions. To predict the behavior of the special area teacher towards students with special needs, such as ADHD, their intention to act must be examined. Human beings have made rational and organized use of the information available to them. Their actions were derived from their past experiences. They also considered the implications of their actions before engaging in specific behaviors. Therefore, in order to understand how and why a teacher interacted with a student who had ADHD in the way that they do, their behavior intentions and previous knowledge about that behavior must be explained (Anderson et al., 2012).

Related Literature

Teachers have experienced more positive interactions with students who have ADHD when they incorporated music, art, and physical activity in the lessons (Jones, 2011). Special area teachers were rarely trained to work with students who have ADHD or other disabilities. Teacher attitudes, training, cultural background, and collaboration with other educators have had a positive or negative consequence on their perceptions of students with ADHD (Wood, 2012).

Attitudes and Perceptions of Teachers

Past experience, knowledge, and training to successfully instruct students with ADHD symptoms impacts a teachers' attitude. A person's attitudes were not inherent at birth, but rather acquired through the environment, education, and socialization. Some teachers viewed the integration of students with special needs and students with ADHD in their classrooms as an optimistic and positive endeavor. Other teachers viewed a child who had special needs or ADHD

as a probable cause for failure (Ahmetoglu & Peduk, 2012). Some teachers who did not have experience or training with students who had ADHD might have overlooked significant behaviors that were necessary for parents and pediatricians to complete a diagnosis. A teacher's personal attitude about ADHD might have influenced the type of teaching strategies or classroom management they implemented. More experience and more objective knowledge leads to stronger and more positive attitudes (Anderson et al., 2012).

According to Bandura's social- cognitive theory (1997), a person's expectation of how they behaved in order to achieve a goal was based on their coping skills, self -efficacy, and previous behavior towards a similar task. Therefore, attitudes towards inclusion of students with special needs in the classroom was determined by attitudes and feelings of efficacy that the teacher acquired by a similar teaching experience in the past. According to Flory, Malone, and Van Eck (2013), "Aggression is a common behavioral problem for children with ADHD symptoms with nearly half of children with ADHD symptoms also displaying aggressive behavior" (p. 614).

In one study, a majority of teachers who were interviewed about their perception of students with ADHD felt that those students' behavior interfered with learning. The teachers viewed those students as a burden to the other students in the classroom. The majority of the teachers described their behavior as naughty, mischievous, less attentive, and curious that resulted from home and other environmental factors instead of biological causes. Many of the teachers felt that the behavior displayed by students with ADHD would improve with age and educational experience (David, 2013).

Students with ADHD were often very challenging for all types of teachers. Those students were more demanding of the teachers' time, had trouble following directions, lacked fine motor control, and had difficulty performing tasks with multiple steps. Due to these types of

behaviors, they were often punished by the teachers and teased by their peers (Mirosevic & Opic, 2011). Disruptive and off task behavior, which was often demonstrated by students who had ADHD or ADHD symptoms caused a high level of stress for special area and regular elementary teachers. Learning behavior management strategies that focused on those particular disruptive behaviors would decrease the teachers' stress and improve their perception of those students. Teachers who were trained to manage behavior disorders and understand their causes were more successful with the inclusion of students with behavioral disabilities (Allen & Bowles, 2014).

Knowledge about ADHD Affects Attitude

Teachers were presented with many favorable and unfavorable sources of information about ADHD. Personal relevance and experience in teaching students with ADHD played a significant role in the acquisition of a positive or negative attitude toward the disorder. One of the most important aspects of person's attitude was attitude certainty, which was the level of confidence a person assigns to their attitude in a situation. Psychological processes were the underlying cause for attitude certainty, prior experiences, and perceived knowledge that teachers had in dealing with students who have ADHD. For example, if a teacher had a favorable attitude towards students with ADHD, then their behaviors and decisions in the classroom were more consistent and effective. Many general education and special area teachers did not view their classrooms as appropriate settings for students with learning problems and maladaptive behaviors. Behavior problems, such as ADHD that required teachers to increase their time spent on behavior management strategies while still trying to provide an appropriate amount of curriculum instruction created negative attitudes toward those students (Anderson et al., 2013).

There was a strong connection between ADHD and anxiety, depression, emotional issues, and lack of social skills. If special area teachers had more insightful information on ADHD and the individual symptoms of the students they teach with the disorder, then their perception of the

student and the student's needs would change (Hasselhorn, Labuhn, & Rietz, 2012). A PE, art, or music teachers' understanding of ADHD and how they supported these students in the classroom affected their perspective of the students' behavior (Jones, 2011). Teachers need to be open to examining and questioning their own habitual practice with a goal to reconstruct what they do in their teaching experiences (Akinbode, 2013). According to Ajzen's TPB, teachers should have identified their intentions of individualizing education for students with special needs and understand how their attitudes affected their daily practices (1991). Students with ADHD who regard an activity with a high level of interest and capability, have an increased level of engagement with that activity (Sheehey & Wells, 2013). Sheehey and Wells stated: "The interaction between the instructional practices in the classroom and the characteristics of the students has been shown to influence their achievement motivation" (p. 74).

It was a challenge for any teacher who worked with students who had ADHD to develop interventions and instructional strategies that addressed the biological deficits that a student with ADHD displayed. Environmental risk factors also played a part in the behavior of a student with ADHD or ADHD symptoms, so a teacher must be proactive in controlling the classroom environment so that it is an effective place for that child to learn. Therefore, negative perceptions of ADHD may stem from the challenges those teachers have had. Their attitudes might also be influenced by national perceptions of ADHD and how it is supported in the United States. There was a widespread belief that inappropriate behavior is immediately diagnosed as ADHD, instead of the understanding that ADHD was a biological disorder (Colley, 2010). Teachers that have had negative perceptions of students with ADHD might have perceived those students as needing their extra time and effort that is already stretched too far. The positive correlation between ADHD type behaviors of students and teachers' psychological distress has been evident in statistical data (Lovell, Moss, & Wetherall, 2015).

School Atmosphere

The school setting could have been a difficult place for students suffering from ADHD, which negatively affected their academic, social, and emotional development (Shillingford-Butler & Theodore, 2013). The philosophy of special education was that all children with special needs, including behavior and medical disorders, be given services to receive the same educational opportunities as non-disabled peers. Teachers who have had experience in working with children who have had learning or behavioral disabilities had higher comfort levels and better attitudes towards inclusion than their less experienced peers.

A supportive school atmosphere was needed to improve the perception of students with ADHD. This atmosphere would include teachers who were trained to teach students with special needs and behavior deficits such as ADHD. In addition, an atmosphere where there was a positive school attitude towards students with special needs would affect a teacher's individual attitudes and behavior. A collective sense of positive attitudes towards inclusion led to a more optimistic and collaborative group effort to include all students, regardless of abilities and disabilities into the regular education classroom (Urton & Wilbert, 2014). If teachers had strong positive attitudes towards students who had ADHD or ADHD symptoms, then those attitudes would have greater influence on their thought processes and would be able to resist opposing viewpoints. Stronger positive attitudes towards ADHD have been linked with teachers' knowledge, training, and experience with the disorder (Anderson et al., 2012).

Shillingford-Butler and Theodore (2013) explained that in order to improve a teachers' attitude and perception of students with special needs, the principal and teaching staff need to be trained on how to cope and manage difficult or new situations with all types of students requiring modified instruction. Staff development can be achieved by providing training for all staff and faculty in the fields of social integrations, remedial education, and special education. Special area

teachers, like all regular education teachers, are expected to implement and evaluate interventions for students with ADHD. They are key players in making decisions regarding the students' educational plans, assessment, and interventions that include social development as well (Anderson et.al, 2012).

Negative Teacher Attitudes

Negative attitudes displayed by the teacher have affected how the other students in the class perceived the student with ADHD. These negative attitudes would explain why ADHD has the highest social rejection rate of all of the mental health disorders (Bell et al., 2011). Studies have also linked ADHD with poor motor ability, a lack of motor responsiveness, and low fitness levels. Therefore, music, PE, and art teachers often had a negative perception of these students' abilities and potential in their classroom tasks (Colombo-Dougovito, 2013).

Students with ADHD rarely qualified for an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) if they have no other learning disabilities, because they did not meet all of the criteria for needing specialized education under the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). However, a student with ADHD may have qualified for a Section 504 plan, which indicated that a mental or physical impairment substantially limited a major life activity. If special area teachers were given a legal document such as an IEP or 504 plan that could be used to help instruct students with ADHD, then their intentions and attitudes providing appropriate and individualized instruction for those students might have improved (Martin & Zirkel, 2011).

The severity of the disabilities also affected the attitudes of teachers towards inclusion. Most teachers displayed less favorable attitudes towards students with sensory and behavior disorders, which are co-morbidities of ADHD. Students with challenging behaviors often presented a variety of problems during instruction that even experienced teachers did not know how to address. Many regular and special area teachers felt that students with behavior disorders

negatively influenced the educational achievement of the other students in the classroom (Haq & Mundia, 2011).

In addition, certain factors were present in a school district so that teacher attitudes and acceptance of students with all types of disabilities were more positive. Those factors included: parental involvement, a school and classroom atmosphere of social acceptance and friendships, collaborative teaching and learning efforts of all stakeholders, and appropriate curriculum adaptations (Haq & Mundia, 2011). In addition, teachers' methods and approaches should focus on student-centered learning where students with disabilities are given the opportunity to think critically and aim to achieve higher cognitive outcomes. Lessons that only involve teachers delivering the information and learners receive it passively should be avoided (Almulla, 2015).

Teachers agreed that prosocial behaviors were important for a students' social status among peers, creating competent responses to stimuli, and understanding social cues. The inattentive, hyperactive, and impulsive actions of a student with ADHD resulted in less than desirable interactions with peers and teachers in all types of elementary classrooms (Eck, Flory, & Malone, 2013).

Special area teachers encountered many students each day of varying ages who had ADHD or display ADHD symptoms. Therefore, if those teachers did not have the knowledge or training of what to expect when they engaged with students who have ADHD, then they were more likely to incorporate ineffective teaching techniques. Many special area teachers were unaware of a students' diagnosis. Sometimes, they were not provided with the information concerning their attention difficulties in the general class. Therefore, the special area teacher became easily frustrated when that student needed multiple redirections, was off task, and disrupted the classroom instructional environment (Carter et al., 2013). Many students with ADHD displayed verbal and physical aggressiveness towards others. While most teachers held a

positive regard for students with learning disabilities, they have held a more negative perception of students with consistent off task and aggressive behavior (Chambers & Forlin, 2011).

According to Ahmetoglu and Peduk, (2012) examination of the teachers' experiences of working with students who had ADHD, the teachers' training on special needs, their gender, educational level, working status, and years of experience was necessary for the themes of the phenomenon to emerge.

Lack of Research within Special Area Teachers

Little research had been developed to understand how elementary special area teachers perceived their ability to work with students who have ADHD. Most of the research had included studies of general education teachers. Many general education teachers did not have much knowledge about ADHD, which attributed to their concerns and frustration in teaching students who display ADHD symptoms (David, 2013). Likewise, if the perceptions and intentions of elementary special area teachers were examined and understood, then the problems with the instruction of students with ADHD they had perceived as barriers would be resolved. An individual's belief concerning an activity is a determining factor in how effectively they perform the activity. In other words, PE, art, and music teachers' confidence in their ability to teach students with ADHD was a determining factor of the quality of their teaching performance (Bandura, 1997).

Special area teachers that reflected positive attitudes towards students with disabilities were more likely to accommodate and facilitate successful class participation (Beyer et al., 2012). Teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards students with special needs were a priority in teacher training that affected educational change (Jones, 2011). Some teachers did not realize that students who had ADHD had emotional and internal struggles. Typically, an elementary PE, art, or music teacher had little involvement of educational planning for students with special

needs. Special area classes were usually used as full inclusion classrooms even though the teachers of those classes might not have had special education training (Gerrity et al., 2013).

Cultural Expectations of ADHD

Cultural contexts about a child's behavior determined how a behavior was interpreted and viewed as developmentally appropriate or not. In many cultures, attention deficit behaviors, such as disruptive and off-task behavior were viewed as inappropriate and abnormal. Cultural contexts also influenced a teacher's tolerance and attitude towards students with attention disorders. Despite the attention that ADHD received in medical and educational settings, there were still low levels of teacher awareness, training, and management of students with ADHD. In turn, this affected the attitudes and perceptions that teachers had toward students with ADHD and ADHD symptoms (David, 2013).

It was important to understand the differences between cultures regarding ADHD in educational systems. For example, in the United States, students with ADHD were eligible for special education services under the "other health impaired" in IDEA. In Korea, students with ADHD were not recognized as having a disability and therefore did not receive special education services to meet their unique educational needs (Lee, 2014). Developing countries have had a general unawareness of the disorder and its symptoms. The unawareness has caused difficulties in diagnosis, providing psycho-stimulants during early development, and accessing public health services. If those countries were able to better document the presence of ADHD among elementary public school children, then specific programs could be developed within the schools and health centers.

Historically, ADHD has been viewed as a disorder that stemmed from a culture's permissiveness and largely a Western cultural phenomenon. However, factor analyses and diverse rating instruments worldwide support a cross-cultural consistency of ADHD symptoms

in a variety of age, gender, and racial groups. School age children in at least 15 countries across the globe supported the model of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity symptoms typical of ADHD. The diverse rating instruments were completed by clinicians, pediatricians, parents, teachers, and the children themselves (Bauermeister, Canino, Polanczyk, & Rhode, 2010). Across cultures, data indicated that negative attitudes and frustration levels were greater in teachers who taught students with conduct, attention, and behavior problems (Lovell, Moss, & Wetherall, 2015). Teachers in all classrooms play a vital role in the academic success of students with ADHD. If they have proper training and understand the disorder better, then they would be able to provide effective instruction. Perceptions and knowledge of ADHD was influenced by cultural contexts, training, and experiences. It is important that teachers receive training on intervention programs to understand the symptoms and treatment of ADHD (Lee, 2014).

Cultural Diagnosis and Treatment of ADHD

ADHD has been accepted across cultures as a medical diagnosis of persistent inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. However, there remains a debate of validity of an ADHD diagnosis among cultures. Cultural factors have been found to decrease the validity of the disorder. The diagnostic criteria, the source of diagnostic information, the ages and gender of the person with the disorder, and geographical location have influenced ADHD research methodology (Ak et al., 2010). There were discrepancies in regards to the dimensions of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity within the constructs of ADHD. However, one study found that hyperactivity was a direct result of ADHD and the most consistent symptom of ADHD regardless of the environmental, socioeconomic, and severity of inattention and impulsivity found in the participants (Breivik et al., 2012).

When left untreated, ADHD can lead to serious social and psychological problems for children throughout their development (Chalhoub, Harpin, Parker, & Wales, 2013). Across

cultures, ADHD has existed as a neurological and behavioral disorder that needs to be addressed in the educational setting. Studies in the Hispanic population have linked sociocultural factors to the presence of ADHD among latino elementary students. Unfortunately, many students in Latin American countries went undiagnosed and therefore did not receive the necessary psychological, medical, or special education interventions that were needed for ADHD (Britton, Sanchez, & Velarde, 2011).

There is a need for more consistent identification of the neuropsychological and genetic correlations for all types of ADHD. In cultures such as Turkey, that perceived ADHD as a correlation with parental discipline, the disorder was a result of environmental factors rather than just medical criteria (Ak et al., 2010). Gender differences among teachers also played a part in the cultural diversity regarding ADHD and special area classrooms. For example, one study found that male PE teachers had more positive attitudes towards teaching students with disabilities, including ADHD in their classes compared to female PE teachers (Evagellinou, Fournidou, & Kudlacek, 2011).

Cultural Attitudes towards ADHD

Regardless of the culture and demographics of a school system, the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of the teacher influenced the classroom practices for children who have ADHD. Consequently, teacher attitudes determined the educational and social performance of the student (Amonn et al., 2012). The quantitative studies showed that attitudes toward ADHD did not have significant differences among cultures. Therefore, it was important to understand parents and teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs toward the disorder despite cultural affiliations so that effective treatment would be provided for the child who has been diagnosed (Ak et al., 2010). Research revealed that many teachers perceived students with ADHD symptoms as being naughty, mischievous, curious, and active (David, 2013). In one study, the students were

interviewed to find out how the teachers treat them in comparison with their peers who did not have ADHD. A majority of the students across different cultures stated that they were often sent to talk to a school counselor or administrator for their behavior in class. In PE, art, or music classes, the teachers would often complain to their classroom teacher about their behavior (Mirosevic & Opic, 2011). Often, the teachers treated the behaviors in the same way that they would treat those behaviors for students without ADHD. According to David (2013), most cultures agreed that classroom contexts, extending to PE, art, and music classrooms presented a challenge for students with ADHD and their teachers.

Personality and Attitude of PE Teachers

The personality of PE teachers has been a widely discussed topic for 40 years. A PE teachers' personality has influenced the physical and emotional development of children through regular physical education classes (Gorny & Valkova, 2013). However, little has been discovered about the personalities of PE teachers and how it has affected the PE teachers' lived experiences with children who have ADHD. The outcomes for inclusive PE for students with disabilities and attention and or behavior disorders, such as ADHD were overwhelmingly positive. At the same time, inclusive physical education was viewed by many PE teachers as a difficult task. The teachers felt strongly that all students should be actively involved in physical tasks. Although, students with ADHD and other behavioral disorders lacked the focus and motor planning abilities that their non-ADHD peers had. The teachers suggested that in addition to adaptive PE training, access to adaptive sports equipment would have enabled them to better teach students with disabilities (Mandich & Simpson, 2012).

In another study that examined PE teachers' attitudes towards special education inclusion, the teachers were asked how confident they felt teaching students with disabilities. The majority of male and female PE teachers felt that they were somewhat confident without

having previous training. When asked the same question after given specific training on including students with disabilities in regular PE classes, the majority responded that they felt very confident in implementing full inclusion (Evagellinou et al., 2011). After receiving an adaptive physical education course, attitudes improved significantly among PE teachers during their instruction of students with ADHD and other disabilities (Baghurst, 2014).

PE teachers who lacked knowledge, training, and administrative support for students with disabilities had a negative attitude towards students with ADHD behaviors. Whereas, PE teachers who had a positive view and felt confident in teaching students with disabilities had more intention to do so and do it appropriately (Baghurst, 2014). PE teachers that had experienced acceptance of students with disabilities from a young age, had more positive attitudes towards their students who had disabilities. Some PE teachers revealed that collaboration from general education teachers was vital to understanding the students' needs and how to support them in the regular physical education environment (Block, Koh, & Park, 2014).

Physical Education Teacher Training with ADHD

Preparation of PE teachers to effectively include students with disabilities such as ADHD in their classrooms determined the success of their instruction. PE teachers who have had academic preparation for teaching students with disabilities had a more positive attitude toward the students and were more willing to adapt their instruction to meet the students' needs (Evagellinou et al., 2011). The key components to successfully including students with special needs in the regular PE classroom were experience and knowledge (Baghurst, 2014).

PE was a critical component in the elementary schools in the education of students on health and physical activity. However, the quality of PE was negatively affected because of PE teachers' lack of knowledge and low expectations of students with disabilities, including ADHD. PE teachers' attitudes and perceptions of students with ADHD were used to predict their

instructional behavior towards inclusion (Gorny & Valkova, 2013).

Many PE teachers have had minimal training or experience working with children who have special needs, which led them to have mixed or negative feelings about the inclusion of these students in regular physical education classes. Inclusion in PE had many benefits for students with all types of disabilities. However, if it was not implemented appropriately and with optimal consideration for all of the students in the class, then it was not effective. The PE teacher and the other students in the class without disabilities had negative attitudes towards the students with disabilities (Evagellinou et al., 2011). Students with ADHD may have lacked the conceptual understanding of the goals and objectives in PE classes. Therefore, behavioral interventions from the PE teacher were recommended for successful inclusion of children with ADHD. Often, students with disabilities have reported negative experiences in PE that included feelings of isolation, limited participation, and low acceptance by the teacher and peers (Baghurst, 2014).

PE teachers in one study described their professional training with inclusion of students with disabilities inadequate to meet the constant demands and behavioral challenges that students with ADHD and other disabilities display. They also felt that their efforts to provide for those students' unique needs were unsuccessful or ineffective. They believed that all students deserved an equal education and an ongoing commitment from teachers to modify instruction to meet their needs. However, the PE teachers felt that continuing education about adaptive physical education practices and an understanding of the different types of learning disorders was vital to their classroom success (Boswell & Ko, 2013).

Theory of Planned Behavior and PE

According to Ajzen's TPB, intentions were a major determinate of behavior. The stronger the intention to engage in a particular behavior, the higher the probability for that behavior to occur, such as engaging students with ADHD in regular PE classes. A PE teachers' positive or

negative behavior towards students with ADHD was already determined by their attitude, which was a result of their knowledge and experience. (Ajzen, 1991). Evagellinou et al. (2011) claimed that within the framework of Ajzen's 1991 TPB and special physical education curriculum, teachers who have positive attitudes towards inclusion have had more behavioral control and were more subjective in their instruction of all students.

Attitudes of Art Teachers

Burdick and Causton-Theoharis (2012) explained that art teachers, like other special area teachers often felt uncomfortable teaching students with ADHD. Their main concerns were classroom management strategies, collaboration with other students, and the ability of those students to sustain attention to art instruction (Evagellinou et al., 2011). However, arts education was an important avenue for students with ADHD. In art classrooms, students who were hyperactive, displayed off-task behavior, and had difficulty focusing on one task at a time, thrived because of the additional stimulation that hands-on art instruction provided (Darrow, 2012). In fact, many famous artists had learning or behavior disabilities themselves and art provided the stimulation they needed to succeed in all areas of life (Ware, 2011).

Arts integration was naturally engaging for students with ADHD. It provided a child suffering from inattentiveness and impulsiveness with many opportunities for individual choice, self-regulation, and collaborative learning experiences with peers. By using visual arts, drama, and media arts, students were allowed alternative means for presenting information. Through art, all students were engaged in a creative process in which students were able to explore, imagine, create, reflect, revise, and share their products with others. These types of engaging activities reduced the negative behaviors displayed by students with ADHD and thus provided a more positive perception of their disability (Robinson, 2013).

Optimal Stimulation Theory and Art

Lee et al. (2013) explained Zentall's 1975 OST supported that in order for students with ADHD to perform to the best of their ability, stimulation needed to be increased to counteract the hyperactivity, inattentiveness, and impulsivity those students exhibit. One study suggested that art and music teachers needed to understand how to best design instruction so that motor skill practice is at the optimal stimulation level. They referred to the stimulation as an external focus of attention, which meant having the student focus on movements that were in reaction to the environment. This produced more effective learning (Bakhiari et al., 2013).

Many art teachers regarded students that had disabilities with fear of failing to teach them what they needed to know. The art teachers felt they were letting the child down because they felt they couldn't provide them with what they needed. They wanted to minimize the negative stigma associated with disabilities and provide the students with the encouragement and support to express themselves through their art work (Ware, 2011).

Most art teachers provided optimal stimulation by applying basic principles of management for children with ADHD. These principles included: stimulating lessons, student involvement, using short sentences, immediate and specific feedback, consistent routines, planning ahead, close proximity to the teacher, organization of materials, and implementing clear rules and consequences. Many art teachers agreed that regardless of techniques that are used in the classroom, interventions that did not take a lot of time away from instruction were most successful (Amonn et al., 2012). If art teachers provided optimal stimulation to increase time on task for students with ADHD, then those teachers would have more positive perceptions of the students (Amonn et al., 2012).

Attitudes of Music Teachers

Many elementary music teachers felt that they were not supported from the principal

regarding the instruction of students with special needs (Gardner, 2010). One study indicated that only 18 music teachers out of 199 that were surveyed gave a competent rating of their skills in teaching students with ADHD. Even though these teachers were expected to provide adaptations for students with ADHD or other behavioral disorders, they were seldom involved in the students' IEP (individualized education plan) or parent and teacher meetings. For music teachers to better serve students with ADHD, then they had to be knowledgeable about the challenges that the particular student experienced (Bell et al., 2011). If a music teacher was more knowledgeable about shared elements of music education and special education, then instruction was more consistent and effective for the students with disabilities (Darrow, 2015).

Under the IDEA 2004 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), music teachers were considered general education teachers. As such, they must respond to the need for accountability and Response to Interventions (RTI). Under the provisions of RTI, students received interventions as soon as they had shown a lack of response to general classroom instruction, including art, PE, and music instruction. The RTI process decreased the possibility of academic failure through appropriate instruction, rather than assessment. Therefore, music teachers were expected to provide interventions to students with all types of disabilities who struggled with the music curriculum. It was important that the current trends, policies, and the basic framework of special education be included in music instruction. Incorporating these special education practices enhanced music instruction for all students and ensured appropriate instruction for students with emotional, behavioral, or learning disabilities (Hammel & Hourigan, 2011).

Optimal Stimulation Theory and Music

Music teachers were likely to have many students in their classes that had ADHD or ADHD symptoms, which were sometimes referred as emotional disorders. A music teacher might seem overwhelmed by the task of instructing students with emotional disorders. However,

much of what a music teacher needs to be successful with these students they already possess. For example, providing opportunities for movement such as dancing or hand motions are a great way to encourage positive behavior (Price, 2012). Many of these students excelled in music because the information was presented in a variety of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic methods, which provided the necessary stimulation for students with ADHD to remain on task (Darrow, 2012). Grenier, Seaman, and Wright (2010) explained that this is an example of Zentall's 1975 OST because academic information is integrated through stimulating and creative learning environment. Students with ADHD were able to move around and construct their own learning, which increased their on task behavior. Because knowledge through music was created and shared through individuals and groups, the constructivist learning theory was applied.

One example was learning through instruments, which was a kinesthetic, auditory, and visual avenue for learning music. Instrumental lessons were typically taught one to one or in small groups, which was beneficial for students with ADHD. The students were also able to create and apply the successful strategies they learned through instruments in non-musical learning contexts (Melago, 2014). Even though music education provided optimal stimulation and a constructivist approach of learning for students with ADHD, many music teachers felt inadequately prepared for teaching students with special needs (Vanweelden & Whipple, 2014). This was similar to the attitudes of PE and art teachers. All special area teachers see the need for more training to successfully adapt instruction to meet the needs of students with ADHD and other disabilities (Jones, 2011).

Theory of Planned Behavior and Music

Ajzen's TPB explained that a person's attitudes, environmental influences, and perceived control beliefs were the driving forces behind a person's intent to act (1991). A music teachers' willingness to modify instruction to meet the needs of students with ADHD is a result of their

previous experiences (Gerrity et al., 2013). One study revealed the need for a change in teacher training so that all students will be able to achieve to the best of their social and academic capabilities. Teacher training is also necessary to fill the gap in research that examines and understands the imbalances in teacher perceptions of students with special needs (Arteaga, Perez, & Reyes, 2014). If a music teacher communicated with the special education teachers on how to be more efficient and productive in providing differentiated instruction for the students who had special needs, then they would have been more successful with those students' learning. Furthermore, the students would be more responsive and engaged in the instruction if they knew that the music teacher was working to provide for their needs (Darrow, 2015). One music teacher explained that she learned how to provide adaptive instruction for students with ADHD through her lived experiences in working with the students, rather than from an extra class or a book (Darrow, 2012).

PE, art, and music teachers have indicated that more training on how to meet the needs of students with disabilities or ADHD will improve their perception of their abilities for inclusion. If their perceptions improve, then their attitudes will improve as well. Therefore, the students will be given a more positive and accepting atmosphere in which to learn (Vanweelden & Whipple, 2014). Professional interventions and training for working with students who have had emotional disorders or ADHD were sometimes available for general education teachers, parents, or psychologists, but seldom for music teachers. Even the most seasoned music teachers questioned the value of their work and the effectiveness of their teaching during the instruction of students with emotional disturbances in their classrooms. Increased attention to classroom management and consistency increased success for all students and especially ones with behavioral and emotional disorders (Price, 2012).

Collaboration with General Education Teachers

PE, music, and art teachers felt strongly that their experiences with students who have ADHD were impacted by the collaboration they had with the students' general education teacher. If they had a positive collaboration relationship with general education teachers and felt supported by those teachers, then their perception and attitude toward students with disabilities or ADHD was more positive (Burdick & Causton-Theoharis, 2012). The social, emotional, attention, and hyperactivity problems that a student with ADHD had exhibited needed to be addressed through collaboration with the classroom teacher in order to develop appropriate classroom accommodations (Darrow, 2012). Instructional success did not occur in isolation of each subject area or classroom. It involved a mutual understanding within society that educational settings would include collaborative approaches towards students with all types of disabilities and diversity (Arteaga et al., 2014).

ADHD and Special Education

ADHD is often a combination of symptomatic behaviors, aggression, social delays, functional impairments, anxiety disorders, and emotional difficulties, which increased the student's risk for school failure and drop out. All of the student's teachers, including special area, general, and special education teachers were the first adults to recognize, assess, and intervene in a timely manner so that problems could be addressed before the student was subjected to academic failure. An implication is that school psychologists must support all teachers who are responsible for the student's educational success. Therefore, psychologists need to advocate for the implementation of evidence based assessment and intervention strategies that are to be used by all teachers to support the school performance of students with ADHD (DuPaul & Jimerson, 2014).

Within most elementary schools, studies have shown that teachers' knowledge, training,

and understanding of the aspects of ADHD was a low priority. It was a widely held expectation that special education teachers had more knowledge about ADHD and had a higher level of sensitivity to the issues experienced by students with ADHD. Therefore, special education teachers should offer suggestions to regular education teachers, including special area teachers, for successful classroom interventions of students with ADHD. This would better prepare all teachers and provide a more positive perception of the disorder (Bell et al., 2011). For example, a successful art classroom included special education para professionals that collaborated with the art teacher to discuss specific art curriculum, materials, modifications, and behavior plans. Time was set aside each day for collaboration meetings, which sometimes included the regular education teachers (Burdick et al., 2012).

General education teachers were often more knowledgeable and supportive of students with challenging behaviors such as ADHD than special area teachers. Some special area teachers who had experienced teaching students with disabilities preferred to include students with physical disabilities rather than students with behavior disorders (Haq & Mundia, 2011). Special area and regular education teachers agreed that a child who displayed ADHD symptoms placed a demand on their time and resources and made managing a class more difficult. If the special area and regular education classroom teachers worked together to implement classroom management strategies and shared resources that improved their instruction for the students with ADHD, then their attitudes and perceptions of those students would improve (David, 2013).

Inclusion Process for Students with ADHD

One of the most important educational components is the inclusion process and the recognition by the teachers of students that require accommodations in the classroom (Arteaga et al., 2014). Collaboration should include: sharing of expertise and experience, cooperating in preparing educational materials, and making decisions regarding the effectiveness of inclusive

education (Haq & Mundia, 2012). Special area teachers were more likely to accommodate students with ADHD in the classroom if they had been trained along with their regular education peers.

If teachers at the same school or district received information about ADHD and successful strategies for inclusion in the classroom, then they were more likely to work together to incorporate those strategies in every classroom. If the special area teachers collaborated with the general education teachers on how to incorporate their instructional practices that enhance motor learning in other subject areas, then the instructional success of the students would have increased. A high level of basic motor skills in students with ADHD would improve executive function in all academic areas (Bakhtiari et al., 2013).

One study indicated that successful inclusive PE, art, and music classrooms were not possible without the collaboration of the regular education teachers and support staff (Block et al., 2014). General and special area teachers who were receptive towards inclusion viewed the inclusion of students with behavioral, emotional, intellectual, and physical disabilities as a basic individual right that benefits students with and without disabilities (Haq & Mundia, 2011). A school district as a whole must be committed to sharing the responsibilities of student education in order to support all students' learning and development (Block et al., 2014).

Teacher Training for ADHD

Teaching is an ongoing process that includes: teacher training, induction of content, and continuing professional development. Connecting theory and hands-on field experiences was believed to be the foundation of effective teacher training (Boswell & Ko, 2013). Successful inclusion for students with ADHD depended on teacher preparation, support services for the teachers and students, and positive attitudes of the special area teachers (Doulkeridou et al., 2011).

One study revealed that there were gaps in teachers' knowledge about ADHD. Universities and other teacher training programs need to include information in their classes about ADHD theoretical knowledge that will better prepare teachers for instructing students with ADHD (Bell et al., 2011). New teacher graduates indicated that their greatest concern in being prepared for the classroom was how to manage behavior difficulties in the classroom, such as addressing students with ADHD or autism. Teacher education programs that focused on changing new teachers' attitude toward inclusive education, as well as the knowledge and skills they needed for classroom management have had a greater impact on their success in the classroom. There is a need for a more collaborative effort between universities and educational systems to ensure that teacher preparation includes effective inclusive education training (Chambers & Forlin, 2011).

One program to train PE, art, and music teachers on the implementation of a successful inclusive classroom included the following factors: additional in-service trainings throughout the school year, positive attitudes towards inclusion, support from staff and parents, modification of instruction, and peer tutoring. The additional in-service trainings were identified as the highest predictor of successful inclusion classrooms. Those trainings provided specific strategies for modifying instruction to meet the behavioral, emotional, and academic demands of students with special needs (Block et al., 2014).

However, training alone would not be enough to sufficiently prepare teachers to meet the diverse needs of students who have ADHD. In addition to training programs, opportunities to work specifically with children who have ADHD is necessary. Veteran teachers whom had many years of teaching experience did not guarantee that the teacher has had adequate exposure to students with ADHD. Practicum placements and volunteer opportunities for working with students who have ADHD should be available for all teachers. This included veteran regular

elementary education teachers, newly hired teachers, teacher assistants, and special area teachers (Bell et al., 2011). A key component of a successful art classroom that included students with ADHD and other disabilities were the training of para professionals. These professionals worked with the art teacher to provide support for students that had physical, behavioral, and cognitive disabilities (Burdick & Causton-Theoharis, 2012).

The Underlying Meaning of ADHD

Surprisingly, many regular education teachers and special area teachers reported that they were not familiar with the term ADHD. They understood what hyperactivity meant from their classroom experiences, but many did not understand the biological meaning of attention deficits and hyperactivity. Understanding the causes for the ADHD type behaviors might change the teachers' perceptions of these students in the classroom setting (David, 2013). Increased knowledge about ADHD predicted different aspects of a teacher's attitude and behavior toward students with ADHD. According to Anderson, Noble, and Watt (2012), "Teachers with average to high knowledge of ADHD reported more helpful behaviors toward children with ADHD and held more favorable beliefs about interventions than did teachers with low knowledge" (p. 514).

In one study, elementary teachers were asked to identify students in their classroom who they thought had ADHD. In all of the cases, the teachers identified more students in their class as having ADHD than were formally diagnosed. These teachers viewed a student's behavioral or inattention problems as being related to ADHD. Therefore, it was important for teachers to be trained on the symptoms of ADHD and how to aid parents and physicians in diagnostic referrals (Carter et al., 2013). Teacher training on ADHD behaviors or similar disorders and their causes were vital for providing appropriate instruction. However, initial teacher training early in their career on ADHD or other disorders was not enough. Continuing, meaningful learning experiences throughout a teacher's career was essential to adequately train an educator who

worked with students with disabilities and disorders (Boswell & Ko, 2013).

Special Area Teacher Training

In recent years, advancements in teacher training have included PE, art, and music teacher training on the inclusion of students with special needs. Teacher trainings on providing for the needs of students with disabilities also improved the teachers' perceptions of their ability to effectively teach students with special needs. Music teachers who had taught over 25 years had a more positive perception of teaching students with disabilities, which was attributed to more training throughout their career on how to incorporate successful inclusion of students with disabilities and disorders (Vanweelden & Whipple, 2014).

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a systematic, behaviorally based approach in which teachers learn how to target and effectively manage difficult behaviors, such as ADHD in the classroom. Since 1976, behavioral techniques such as ABA have been a part of teacher training programs. Specifically, elementary special area teachers who have been trained through ABA or similar programs, have shown more positive attitudes and increased knowledge on implementing behavioral techniques in their classrooms (Allen & Bowles, 2014). After the training on teaching students with ADHD or similar behavioral problems were provided, teachers would need to be open to making changes in the classroom environment or instructional practices to increase success for all students. Students with ADHD have had trouble paying attention even with an experienced and stimulating teacher. Therefore, adaptations and modifications from what a teacher normally does in a music, art, or PE classroom must be made to effectively teach students with ADHD. Successful modifications should include: eliminating distractions, good instructional pacing, engaging lessons, shorter duration of activities, and consistent routines (Melago, 2014).

Behavior disorders, such as ADHD have had a high prevalence in the community and in

the classroom. Teacher training programs should target this disorder and the negative attitudes that surround its diagnosis. Student teachers should especially be trained in educating students with special behavioral needs. In order to increase all teachers' confidence in meeting the needs of students with ADHD, teacher education programs should include: curriculum differentiation, variation of teaching strategies, appropriate test accommodations, and attitude changes towards students with the disorder (Haq & Mundia, 2011). Many PE, art, and music teachers expressed a more positive perception of teaching students with special needs and a higher competence level in their ability to make accommodations following direct training on students with disabilities. After the trainings, they felt more confident and had a more positive attitude in their ability to engage students with special needs in their classrooms (Gerrity et al., 2013).

Summary

ADHD is one of the most common disorders affecting elementary students. More research is needed to understand the perceptions and attitudes of teachers that work with those students in the areas of physical education, art, and music. Students who displayed attention deficit disorders were often the most problematic for PE, art, and music teachers (Vanweelden & Whipple, 2014). Those subjects often involved multi-tasking. Students with attention deficits have had a more difficult time than their non-ADHD peers in attending to more than one task at a time.

However, the research to support this idea is minimal (Colombo-Dougovito, 2013). The literature on teacher's lived experiences with students who have ADHD has mainly focused on teachers in general education classrooms (Clarke, 2014). Elementary art, music, and PE teachers taught the same students and were expected to provide full inclusion for students with ADHD even though many have not been trained how to do so successfully (Combs et al., 2010). Research indicated that when teachers are successfully trained to provide adaptations for students

with behavior disorders and exhibit fluent use of those adaptation practices, then they feel more comfortable and it becomes a natural part of their teaching behaviors (Bell, Briody, Spelman & Thomas, 2015). According to Jeong and Block (2011), many studies have focused on special area teachers' lived experiences with students who have disabilities, but not ADHD alone. Elementary teachers usually have reasonable knowledge of characteristics and causes of ADHD but have limited knowledge of how to accommodate or provide interventions for students with ADHD in the classroom. A teacher's lack of knowledge, training, or experience with students who had ADHD or ADHD symptoms, might have led to a negative perception of the disorder and a decreased intention of providing appropriate instruction (Anderson et al., 2012).

Ajzen's TPB was a strong theoretical framework in the social sciences because it explained beyond a person's attitudes was their controlled beliefs that predicted their behavior (1991). In addition, Jeong and Block (2011) claimed that Ajzen's 1991 theory was vital to understanding the attitudes and perceptions of the itinerant teachers prior to and during the instruction of students with ADHD (Jeong & Block, 2011). According to Ajzen's TPB, negative attitudes were formed when an evaluation of people, events, objects, or issues are regarded as unfavorable (Ajzen, 1991). If special area teachers have unfavorable emotions and attitudes towards teaching students with ADHD, then more training was necessary to raise the teachers' knowledge, understanding, and coping skills of teaching students with the disorder (Anderson et al., 2012). Students with ADHD have benefited physically, mentally, academically, and emotionally from music, art, and physical activity (Kelly-McHale, 2013).

Lee et al. (2013) supported Zentall's (1975) OST because activities within special area classrooms could provide an optimal level of stimulation for students with ADHD. If the students were achieving an optimal level of stimulation in the special area class that resulted in improved on- task behavior, then the teacher of that class would have a more positive attitude

towards the student. However, there were only a few studies that aimed to discover lived experiences of special area teachers with students who have ADHD. This led to the gap in the literature which showed that more research is needed to understand the attitudes and perceptions of PE, art, and music teachers of students with ADHD.

The culture of the community has had an impact on the instruction and inclusion of students with ADHD. In some cultures, examination of parental discipline, classroom management, and environmental factors were more important than the medical criteria when diagnosing a child with ADHD. It was important to understand the cultural perceptions as well as parents and teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs towards the disorder to provide effective treatment for the child who has been diagnosed (Ak et al., 2010). Some teachers in various cultures have had positive attitudes towards teaching students with ADHD, but lacked the support from the school system to provide the students with appropriate services (Lee, 2014). Across the globe, in order for a student with ADHD to receive special education services, cultural, racial, gender, age, and socioeconomic factors played a role in determining the interventions and services that were provided. Therefore, students with ADHD were stigmatized, which affected how teachers and medical professional perceived their disability and treatment (DuPaul & Jimerson, 2014).

Special area teachers felt more confident in teaching students with ADHD behaviors when they collaborated with the students' regular education teachers. Quality inclusion depended on teachers' positive attitudes and perceptions towards inclusion and their belief in their own ability to teach students with special needs (Mandich & Simpson, 2012). Elementary PE, art, and music teachers who teach students with ADHD often lacked training and experience to provide appropriate instruction for those students, which led to anxious or negative attitudes towards the students (LaJevic, 2013).

Often, the time consuming educational preparation needed to help students with ADHD succeed in a special area classroom produced negative attitudes and perceptions of these students (Whipple & Van Wheeldan, 2012). Unfortunately, teachers generally had a low perception of students with ADHD which led to a low occurrence of appropriate teaching strategies in the classrooms (Clarke, 2014). If PE, art, and music teachers were adequately trained along with their general education peers, then they would have a more positive attitude and perception of teaching students with ADHD, which would provide a foundation for effective instruction (Mandich & Simpson, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

This study followed the qualitative transcendental path of phenomenology, which led to knowledge in the absolute sense (Moustakas, 1994). This study was designed to discover the lived experiences of elementary special area teachers with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms. It was a reflective process to gain the full nature and essence of the phenomenon. The central research question focused on describing the lived experiences of the special area teachers, so that they were as near to the actual nature of the phenomenon as possible. The entire design and every procedure of the study were driven by the research questions so that the transcendental phenomenon was understood and reflected upon (Creswell, 2013).

The pilot participants were a criterion sample of 3 elementary PE, art, and music teachers who have all experienced teaching students with ADHD symptoms. The main study participants were a criterion sample of 12 elementary PE, art, and music teachers. Some of the participants taught at the same school and others taught at different schools within the same south eastern North Carolina school district. The research procedures included: establishing a topic and research questions, completing a comprehensive review of the professional and research literature, and securing participants and IRB approval. The procedures that followed were: developing questions for surveys and interviews, reviewing, organizing, and analyzing the data collected from the surveys, interviews, and observations. The final steps involved synthesizing the textural and structural meanings of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

I am the researcher in this study and my role was to complete a review of the literature, select participants for the study, bracket out my own views and biases to examine the participants' experiences as they are in their own terms. I conducted open-ended qualitative surveys (Appendix D) and interviews (Appendix E) that were based on the research questions

and bracketed topic. I analyzed and organized data to develop textural and structural descriptions of the participants' lived experiences. The data collection included surveys and interviews of each participant and observations of a random sample of the participants in their classroom (Moustakas, 1994).

The data analysis included: epoche, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis that forged and integrated the essences of the teachers' lived experiences as a whole to provide a fundamental textural and structural description of the phenomenon. I assessed the relevant studies, designs, methodologies, and theories to specify the new knowledge I expected to obtain. I bracketed out my views and experiences so that I could have a fresh perspective and description of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Trustworthiness included triangulation, which was used to increase credibility, dependability, and transferability of the study. The ethical considerations were confidentiality of the data and participant identity, participants as volunteers, and open-ended data collection methods that could be changed according to the participants' needs for safety, accuracy, and comfort (Silverman, 2011).

Design

The research design was qualitative transcendental phenomenology. A review of the professional and research literature connected with the research topic and questions. Phenomenology was appropriate for this study because phenomenology occurred in everyday living. Transcendental phenomenology was appropriate for this study because the true nature of the lived experiences emerged while pre-judgments, previous knowledge, and beliefs of other teachers' experiences with ADHD were eliminated. This study design was concerned with fresh perspectives of the participants as they experienced the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

The review of the professional and research literature prompted the need for this study to fill the gap of acknowledging and understanding the societal attitudes and perceptions of

elementary students with ADHD. The descriptions of the lived experiences of elementary special area teachers with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms were rooted in the research questions that gave a focus to the themes that emerged in the phenomenon. This design did not seek to determine quantitative causal relationships. Instead, the design was focused on vivid descriptions of the experiences in their purest form. The entire design and every procedure of the study were driven by the research questions so that the transcendental phenomenon was understood and evaluated. A subjective and objective description of the lived experiences were interwoven so that a transcendental and authentic phenomenon was discovered (Moustakas, 1994).

Research Questions

RQ1: How do elementary PE, art, and music teachers perceive and describe their lived experiences teaching students with ADHD? This structural question focused on describing the lived experiences so that they were as near to the actual nature of the phenomenon as possible.

RQ2: What themes are identified through the perceptions the PE, art, and music teachers' perceptions regarding students with ADHD while planning for classroom instruction?

RQ3: What themes are discovered through elementary PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes during the instruction of students who have ADHD?

RQ4: How do the PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes towards students with ADHD affect their intentions of individualizing instruction for those students?

RQ5: How do the perceptions that PE, art, and music have of themselves teaching students with any type of disability affect their instruction of students with ADHD?

Setting

The setting of this study included five different elementary schools located in the same south eastern North Carolina school district. The school district was 869.80 square miles and

stretched between four different rural towns. The county population of elementary students was approximately 9,000. Three of the schools, referred to as Roosevelt Elementary, Kennedy Elementary, and Jefferson Elementary were located in rural, agricultural towns. The other two schools were located on the Atlantic coast and were the largest of the five. They were referred to as Lincoln Elementary and Washington Elementary. Each elementary school employed one PE teacher, one art teacher, and one music teacher. The participants were referred to as pseudonyms. Alan and Carol were participants at Roosevelt Elementary. Don and Evelyn were participants at Kennedy Elementary. Ginger, Hannah, and Fran were participants at Jefferson Elementary. Jane and Katie were participants at Lincoln Elementary. Mary, Ned, and Lisa were participants at Washington Elementary. Each school had approximately 700 students, which included students who had ADHD or displayed symptoms of ADHD. All the students were taught by the special area teachers in their school.

The total county population was 55,334 which included; 79% Caucasian, 17% African-American, 6% Hispanic or Latino, and less than 1% of Asian, American Indian, or other. The high school graduation rate was 86%. The median household income was \$44,524. The median value of a home was \$155, 600. The percent of people living in poverty was 19% (United States Census Bureau, 2014).

This setting was selected as a convenience sample because I, as the researcher, work for the same school district. It also supported the criterion sample of participants because all of the participants have experienced the phenomenon being studied, which is the lived experiences of elementary PE, art, and music teachers who taught students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms.

Access to the research site was a major factor in choosing the site. It was a large geographical county, but each site was within an hour traveling distance from my home. I have developed a rapport with most of the sites' principals and gained their permission as well as the

school board's and superintendent's permission for using their schools as the research site. The superintendent was contacted by a letter that was sent through interoffice mail. The permission response form (Appendix G) and a self-addressed, stamped envelope was included in the letter. The letters to the principals were sent through email. These documents and the responses are included in Appendix A and B. Permission was obtained through the participants and Institutional Review Board (Creswell, 2013).

Participants

For quality assurance, a criterion sample of participants of special area teachers who taught elementary students with ADHD was used. The participants were 12 elementary PE, art, and music teachers who had all experienced teaching students with ADHD symptoms and who were diagnosed with ADHD or displayed ADHD symptoms. Appendix C explains the selection of the participants as well as the random selection of the participants for observation. Some of the participants taught at the same school, and others taught at different schools within the same school district. Both male and female with varying ages, ethnicity, and years of teaching experience were chosen as participants for this study. As a result of their daily experiences with students who have ADHD, they could articulate their lived experiences of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Older teachers who had experienced students with ADHD were found to be more accepting and held a more positive attitude about accommodations in the classroom for students who suffered from the disorder (Buchanan, et al., 2010). Another study discussed how experienced teachers understood that a child who had been diagnosed with ADHD did not lack intelligence. Students with ADHD may exhibit above average intellect and academic skills. Instead, ADHD contributes to problems with time management, attention, regulation of emotions, and strategic planning, which inhibit the student to work to his or her full potential (Astramovich & Hamilton, 2016).

The influences of teaching experience on teachers' perceptions of ADHD were one of the themes I had hoped to discover through the data collection, specifically through the surveys. As the participants engaged in the research process to reveal their lived experiences with students who have ADHD, they uncovered their own beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of students with disabilities. They also recognized the origin of their beliefs and how it influenced their instructional behavior (Jones, 2011). This study focused on the participants' descriptions of their experiences as they were in the purest sense. It was rooted in research questions that gave direction to the themes and meanings of the experiences to reveal the actual nature of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Procedures

The procedures of this study were systematic and sequential so that there was direction and adherence to the research methods. There were not conclusive requirements, but rather an open-ended procedure so that the essence of the phenomenon would emerge. The first step in the procedure of this study was to establish a topic and research questions that induced social meaning and significance (Moustakas, 1994). The topic was the lived experiences of elementary special area teachers; PE, art, and music, who taught students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. A comprehensive review of the professional and research literature provided evidence of how special area teachers were trained and perceived students with ADHD. Low levels of experience and negative attitudes towards students with ADHD prompted the qualitative transcendental phenomenology nature of this study (David, 2013).

The literature also included a study of the theoretical framework which established the structure of the special area teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards students with ADHD behaviors. The next step in the procedure was to secure Institutional Review Board approval. Then, developing criteria to select the participants occurred within the convenient research area

(Appendix C). The participants were instructed on the purpose of the study and were invited to participate through a recruitment email, which also included a survey link using Survey Monkey. The elementary special area teachers who were willing to participate gave their informed consent, which was included as an attachment to the recruitment email and survey link. Their confidentiality was insured throughout the study (Creswell, 2013).

Next, a set of questions was developed for the surveys. The participants were given a open-ended qualitative survey using Survey Monkey as the first data collection (Appendix D). The questions were based on the essences of the research questions and guided the interview conversations and revealed emerging themes. After the data from the surveys was analyzed, the themes that emerged led to the development of the interview questions (Appendix E). The interview questions were used to reveal the full essence of the participants' experiences to expose their behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes towards students with ADHD. The surveys and interviews were bracketed and led to a possible follow up session if needed (Silverman, 2011).

The participants and schools were known as pseudonyms. Alan and Carol were participants at Roosevelt Elementary. Don and Evelyn were participants at Kennedy Elementary. Ginger, Hannah, and Fran were participants at Jefferson Elementary. Jane and Katie were participants at Lincoln Elementary. Mary, Ned, and Lisa were participants at Washington Elementary.

The participants received the first data collection, which was a qualitative online survey obtained through the recruitment email. After the survey data was compiled and organized, the interviews began. The participants chose the date, time, and location of the interviews. Phone interviews were also used. The participants understood that the interviews were lengthy and open ended so that the meanings and themes of the phenomenon would emerge. Following the interview process, a random selection of five participants to be observed in their natural teaching

environment was selected. This selection occurred through invitation emails to determine which interview participants were willing to be observed. A list of the willing teachers was compiled and assigned random numbers. The random numbers were entered into an electronic program that were scrambled, then five numbers were selected randomly. The five teachers chosen were observed for at least one half hour as they engaged with the students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms in their classroom during instructional time.

The surveys, interviews, and observations were reviewed, organized, and analyzed in order to discover the structural and textural descriptions of the phenomenon. The final step was synthesis of the textural and structural meanings and essences of the phenomenon that created a unified conclusion of the lived experiences as a whole (Moustakas, 1994).

The Researcher's Role

My role in this study was the researcher. After discovering the topic through gaps in the professional literature and through its social significance, I conducted a comprehensive review of the research literature (Moustakas, 1994). Using criterion and convenience sampling, I selected appropriate participants. I worked in the same school as the pilot participants. Those teacher participants also taught my own child in their PE, art, and music classes. A bias occurred because I already knew some of those teachers' lived experiences. However, I bracketed my own views and biases to examine the participants' experiences as they were while not relying on my own perceptions (Moustakas, 1994). Their participation was used for the pilot study only.

The main study participants worked in the same school district as I did, but in different schools located in different towns. Therefore, I did not have a prior relationship with them. I provided the participants with a complete understanding of the nature and purpose of the study. I ensured them of confidentiality, informed consent, and ethically consistent principles. The research questions I had developed guided the research process. I conducted open-ended surveys

and interviews (Appendix D and E) that were based on the research questions and bracketed topic. I analyzed and organized data to develop textural and structural descriptions of the participants' lived experiences. I synthesized the data to discover textural and structural essences and meanings of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Data Collection

The participants for the study were drawn from a convenience sample of elementary PE, art, and music teachers in one school district in southeastern North Carolina. Data collection occurred through triangulation including open-ended surveys, interviews, and observations. The surveys and interviews were open ended, informal, bracketed, and interactive with 12 elementary PE, art, and music teachers who had taught at five different elementary schools in the same southeastern North Carolina county.

The first data collection method was open-ended online qualitative surveys sent to the participants' email (Appendix D). This survey was designed by the researcher using an online survey company. The surveys were important to this study because they enabled me to access the participants' factual information and beliefs, including behavior and attitudes about teaching students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. The primary purpose of the surveys was to gain data which was valid and reliable. The surveys were conducted before the interviews so that the facts provided the participants' biographical information as well as attitudes and beliefs, which determined how the interview questions were structured (Silverman, 2011).

The second data collection was interviews. The participants were able to choose face to face interviews or a phone interview. Initial interview questions were constructed based on the research questions (Appendix E). The questions changed after review and organization of the survey data was completed. The questions continued to change as the interview progressed, which accommodated the individual participant's responses. Through the interview process, each

participant was able to express their unique experiences, beliefs, and perceptions of the phenomenon through open discussion (Silverman, 2011).

The third data collection method was observation. This method was used to discover the teachers' lived experiences in their natural teaching environment (Creswell, 2013). The observations occurred at three schools: Roosevelt, Jefferson, and Washington in PSD. One PE teacher, two art teachers, and two music teachers were observed to compare and contrast various classrooms of the same subject area in three different schools. By doing this, the researcher was able to see the participants' experiences in their natural setting and was able to gain a true, textural picture of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

The triangulation data collection process was important in order to examine the phenomenon from all angles and perspectives until the whole essence of the lived experiences were achieved (Moustakas, 1994). The order of the data collection was important because the researcher first examined the phenomenon on an individual basis through online surveys. The data from the open-ended surveys provided a structural foundation for the interview questions. Then, interviews of each participant allowed for a more in-depth study of the participants' experiences, beliefs, perceptions of the phenomenon (Silverman, 2011)

Interview questions were pre-determined based on the research questions (Appendix E), but changed in response to the survey data and descriptions of the participant's experience during the interviews. Conducting interviews after the survey data collection was important because it allowed for intensive study of the participants' perceptions and feelings about their lived experiences. The interviews were conducted face to face and on the phone in order to have an open ended format that would lead to emerging themes during data analysis. After conducting the surveys and the interviews, the data was compared and organized so that themes of the phenomenon began to emerge. Following the review and initial analysis of the surveys and

interviews, observations provided a more live and active textural description of the phenomenon. This was an important last step in data collection so that I could understand how the detailed descriptions of the elementary teachers' participants' intertwined with their actions towards students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms (Silverman, 2011).

Pilot Study

Piloting was used to develop, adapt, and refine research instruments and procedures. The pilot study occurred in the elementary school that I taught at, which was located in the same school district and county of the main study. The pilot school was named using a pseudonym and was referred to as Taft Elementary. The participants were also named using pseudonyms and were referred to as Spencer, Lyla, and Matt. The pilot school and participants had similar demographic data as the main study setting and participants. The pilot participants were a convenient sample of three PE, art, and music teachers that taught students with ADHD at the pilot elementary school.

The pilot participants were volunteers and were included in the review and analysis of the pilot data. After the pilot was approved through IRB, I obtained permission from the pilot elementary school principal prior to contacting the participants (Appendix H). After permission was granted, I contacted the participants through a recruitment email and explained the purpose of the pilot, which included an initial survey for demographic information and to gain insight on their lived experiences with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms. Participation consent was included as an attachment to the recruitment email. The survey questions were sent to the participants using Survey Monkey through email. The questions are listed in Appendix D.

After collecting the survey responses, I conducted phone interviews with the participants individually. I used the interview questions I had included in Appendix E. The interview questions changed according to each participants' responses. Furthermore, the interview

questions and survey questions were refined after the pilot, to include any relevant changes or additions (Creswell, 2013).

According to Simon (2011), the pilot study addressed logistical issues. The following factors were resolved prior to the main study:

- Check that the instructions are comprehensible and effective for data collection.
- Check the wording and appropriateness of the survey questions.
- Check the reliability and validity of results.
- Check the analytical processes to determine if they are feasible and appropriate for the study.
- The pilot survey and interview data was used to determine if these methods yielded the information that was needed for the main study. The pilot study was a small-scale version of the main study to discover the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed study. Surveys were pilot tested to avoid misleading, inappropriate, and repetitive questions. After analyzing the questions and participants' answers to the pilot survey, the main study survey questions were adjusted accordingly (Simon, 2011).

The pilot interview data served as a means to determine if the face to face interview method was reliable and relevant to the main study. The participants' responses were analyzed to understand the common themes in the phenomenon on a smaller-scale than the main study. This provided information as to what interview questions needed to be removed or edited. It also served as an instrument to determine the relevance of the responses and the research questions. The participant information and interview response data from the pilot study are explained further in chapter four of this study. Improvements and other appropriate changes were made to the study design and research process as a result of the pilot findings (Simon, 2011).

Qualitative Surveys

Open-ended qualitative surveys were the first data collection used in order to gain an understanding of the participants' attributes that revealed initial themes in the data. The survey questions were included in Appendix D. The questions were based on the essences of the research questions. They also focused on gaining particular types of knowledge to guide the interview conversations and revealed emerging themes. The first type of knowledge was factual information. Primarily, this included the biographical information regarding their gender, years, of teaching experience, and what subject area they taught. The second type of knowledge was the participants' beliefs about the facts of ADHD and training that they have had on teaching students with ADHD. There were also open-ended and multiple choice questions about their beliefs and attitudes towards teaching students with disabilities.

The third type of knowledge I included were the feelings and motives of the participants. This was gained through open-ended questions about how the participants felt about teaching students with disabilities and ADHD. The fourth type of knowledge was based on standards of action. These questions related to what the participant thought should be done about teaching students with ADHD. The fifth type of knowledge was used to gain information about past and present behavior of the participants while engaging with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms. The last type of knowledge included questions about the conscience reasons that the participants had regarding their attitudes and beliefs toward teaching students with ADHD (Silverman, 2011).

Interviews

The interview questions were prepared using the survey data and the categorization of initial themes. Some of the interview questions (Appendix E) were prepared ahead of time. However, during the interview the researcher aimed to discover the participant's lived experience of the phenomenon by allowing time for social conversation and open discussion.

Therefore, the questions and discussions were led by the participant's explanations of their experience as it was in their own terms. The researcher did not lead the participant away from his or her personal story of teaching students with ADHD. The researcher provided an open, comfortable, and trusting atmosphere with the participant so that the interview brought forth a comprehensive account of the lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

The interviews focused on gaining authentic descriptions of the participants' subjective experiences rather than obtaining objective facts (Silverman, 2011). The purpose of these questions was to understand the elementary special area teachers' lived experiences of teaching students with ADHD as it was described in their own terms. The intention of PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes toward students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms was determined by their experiences of the students' behavior, needs, and individualized instruction (Block & Block, 2011).

According to Ajzen's (1991) TPB, the teachers' intentions towards teaching students with ADHD was predetermined by their past experiences, attitudes, and perceptions (Ajzen, 1991). The participants were interactively interviewed one at a time through open-ended questions that were rooted in the research questions. The interview maintained an open, flexible atmosphere so that a rapport would be developed with the participants. I was an active listener so that I could capture the true nature of the participants' experiences. Using open-ended and flexible questioning and discussion enabled the participant to share a more candid view of their beliefs, perceptions, and experiences (Silverman, 2011).

Observations

Participant observations occurred as a third method of data collection for this study. The transcendental nature of the phenomenon being studied was viewed by the researcher in its natural environment. Therefore, a random sample of five PE, art, or music teachers from the five

school settings was selected to engage in observation by the researcher. The researcher observed the special area teachers in their classrooms teaching a class of elementary students, which included students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. The researcher was a nonparticipant observer of the participants teaching students with ADHD in their classrooms. The researcher did not have direct interaction with the teachers and students. The researcher watched and took notes from a distance in order to understand and describe the teachers' experiences as they occurred in their truest sense (Creswell, 2013). The protocol and permission form to conduct observations at the school settings are included in Appendix F. Appendix I ensures that the researcher was a certified peer observer for the county, so she was able to discuss the observation details with the participants before and after the observations occurred. Discussions included clarification from the participants about which students had ADHD symptoms in their classrooms.

The absence of interaction with the participants during the observations provided the researcher with a way to see the PE, art, and music teachers' intentions and behaviors in action while teaching students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. It was also a way to view the everyday, mundane activities that were present in the lived experiences of elementary PE, art, and music teachers. Observations allowed for phenomenological reduction to describe the textural experience by observing the relationship between the participants and the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher looked for common themes as they emerged that aided in the understanding the essence of the phenomenon (Silverman, 2011).

Data Analysis

The first step in data analysis was organizing the data. This involved categorizing the survey data into initial themes. The interview and survey data was reviewed and coded by someone other than myself to achieve interrater reliability. Then, the interview data was

reviewed while bracketing the topic and questions. I had set aside preconceived ideas, knowledge, and prejudices about teaching students with ADHD to allow the events of the data collection to surface as if for the first time. The lived experiences of the participants were examined in their truest form in a naïve and open manner (Moustakas, 1994).

The next step was to horizontalize the data and cluster the data into themes. The meaning units were listed to include every expression relevant to the experience. I removed overlapping and repetitive statements in the surveys and interviews by using phenomenological reduction. Through this process, I was able grasp the full nature of the phenomenon to reveal the texturally meaningful aspects within. Jeong and Block (2011) study using Ajzen's (1991) TPB, PE teachers' attitudes and perceptions of students with disabilities were the most significant factors in explaining how the teachers interacted with students who have disabilities, such as ADHD. Therefore, the experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of the PE, art, and music teachers had become increasingly clear as I examined them again and again (Moustakas, 1994).

The next step was imaginative variation and the final identification of themes. This process involved developing structural themes from the textural descriptions of the special area teachers' lived experiences after the phenomenological reduction. I approached the phenomenon from different perspectives and roles, such as an elementary teacher and a mother of children that have ADHD. I constructed the meanings and essences of the special area teachers' experiences, while incorporating the themes that were directly related to the research questions. Invariant constituents were identified that supported the common themes. I searched for examples in the interview and observation data that led to the construction of a structural description of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

The final step of the data analysis was the synthesis of the meanings and essences of the phenomenon. For example, the phenomenon of an art teachers' attitudes on teaching students

with ADHD depended on the teaching methods they were implementing (Ahmed & Eman, 2013). Understanding teacher perceptions of students who had ADHD or ADHD symptoms allowed stakeholders to know the teachers' intentions of providing appropriate instruction for those students (Kain, 2014). The synthesis of the data included a description of the experiences which wove the texture and structure together to provide the universal meaning and essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Trustworthiness

The first technique that I used to ensure trustworthiness of the study was to understand and convey the philosophical components of phenomenology. The second technique was substantive validation. This occurred as I came to understand the phenomenon as it was derived from examining the lived experiences of elementary PE, art, and music teachers with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms. Documentation, interpretations, and self-reflection of the data increased the trustworthiness of the meanings of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Triangulation was used to increase credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the study. Triangulation data collection involved surveys and interviews, which had added to the credibility and dependability of the data because the participants' stories were gathered and described as they were in their own terms. Their experiences were described through rich, detailed accounts of their daily experiences. Transferability was enhanced because I was able to transfer the information from the surveys and interviews at one school to other schools and participants that share the same characteristics. After I examined how the participants perceived and explained their lived experiences, I transferred the knowledge from each interview into a comprehensive development of themes (Moustakas, 1994).

Observations were used to confirm the data obtained through the interviews and surveys because observing the participants' lived experiences in action as they occurred in their natural

setting confirmed the participants' descriptions of their experiences. More details became apparent through this movement description and was interwoven into the interviews and survey descriptions of the experiences. The perceptions and experiences that were gathered through the triangulation data collection were linked so that the objective and subjective data were interrelated and increased credibility (Moustakas, 1994).

To enhance transferability and confirmability, I conveyed the overall essence of the lived experiences of the participants as a whole. Member checking was used to increase validity so that the participants were able to read the narrative descriptions of their lived experiences and be able to agree or disagree with the interpretations (Creswell, 2013). Another way that I will increase dependability and credibility was to articulate the phenomenon clearly by using procedures of data analysis in phenomenology that are recommended by Moustakas (1994).

Validation involved a constant exchange of perceptions, feelings, and ideas as the participants described their experiences through surveys, interviews, and through their actions during the observations (Moustakas, 1994). Through each data collection method, I included descriptions of the experiences and the context in which it had occurred (Creswell, 2013). Finally, the research questions were carefully crafted to be the focus of the study and guide the research. Each data collection method related back to the research questions so that the essence of the phenomenon was represented through its rich textures and meanings (Moustakas, 1994).

Ethical Considerations

The first ethical consideration in this study was that the participants would be volunteers. Each participant in the criterion sample was given the research plan that explained the purpose and nature of the study. After reviewing the plan, they were given the opportunity to participate in the study if they chose to do so. Then, data collection included open-ended methods that could be changed and altered depending on the participants' ideas and suggestions. Any alteration that

took place was in regards to the participants' safety, accuracy, and comfort. The data collection procedures were open for discussion or change if necessary. Next, confidentiality of the relevant data was maintained. The identity of the participants was protected and any information that was considered private was removed. The participants were able to review, confirm, and alter the research data to align it with his or her perception of the experience (Moustakas, 1994).

A final ethical consideration was that I worked in the same school district as the participants. Therefore, I had anticipated ethical issues that could have arisen as a result of my employment with the participants and tackled those issues prior to data collection. I had acknowledged my previous perceptions of the participants' experiences and bracketed the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). This allowed me to understand the elementary PE, art, and music teachers' lived experiences with students who had ADHD or ADHD symptoms in a fresh dimension. This was necessary to discover the textures of the experiences as they appeared and be able to describe how the phenomenon was experienced (Moustakas, 1994).

Summary

This study was a reflective process to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of elementary special area teachers with students who have ADHD symptoms or who have been diagnosed with ADHD. The central research question focused on describing the lived experiences of 12 elementary PE, art, and music teachers that taught within the same school district who had all experienced teaching students with ADHD symptoms. The design and procedures of the study were driven by the research questions so that the transcendental phenomenon would be understood and reflected upon (Creswell, 2013).

The research procedures included: establishing a topic and research questions, completing a comprehensive review of the professional and research literature, and securing participants and IRB approval. The next step included developing questions for surveys and

interviews. Reviewing, organizing, and analyzing the data collected from the surveys, interviews, and observations was the next step. The research procedure concluded with synthesizing the textural and structural meanings of the phenomenon. My role as the researcher was to complete a review of the literature, select participants for the study, bracket out my own views and biases to examine the participants' experiences as they were in their own terms. I assessed the relevant studies, designs, methodologies, and theories to specify the new knowledge I expected to obtain. I bracketed out my views and experiences in order to have a fresh perspective and description of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Trustworthiness included triangulation, which was used to increase credibility, dependability, confirmation, and transferability of the study. The ethical considerations were confidentiality of the data and participant identity, participants as volunteers, and open-ended data collection methods that could be changed according to the participants' needs for safety, accuracy, and comfort (Silverman, 2011). Through the integration of the textural and structural descriptions of the participants' lived experiences, the meaning and essence of the phenomenon were discovered (Moustakas, 1994).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

This study was conducted using a qualitative transcendental phenomenological design for the purpose of investigating the lived experiences of PE, art, and music teachers who teach students with ADHD at elementary schools. Findings were discovered through a reflective process to gain the full nature and essence of the phenomenon. The analysis procedures were driven by the research questions so that the transcendental phenomenon could be understood and reflected upon. Data analysis including horizontalation, reduction, and elimination were used to arrive at invariant constitutes, which are the key phrases and themes of the experience. Within each research question the theme(s) is/are identified, along with the key words and phrases that make up the themes. Each theme and its key words and phrases are described in this chapter. Tables have been created to provide their visual representation (Moustakas, 1994).

This chapter is organized using the following sections: an overview, description of the participants, results of the data, and summary of the research. The results of the data were reported by answering each of the five research questions. The survey was conducted online using Survey Monkey. The results were electronically collected and analyzed prior to developing the interview questions. During the interview process, the participants' answers were written down by the researcher because audio recording was not used. The observations were not video recorded. Therefore, notes were taken during the observation process to describe the participants' experiences in their classroom as they were naturally occurring. The data from the interviews of each participant, and the observation data were consistent in revealing common themes. Data analysis in this chapter included: epoche, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, horizontalation, and synthesis to forge and integrate the essences of the participants' lived experiences as a whole that provided a fundamental textural and structural description of the

phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Participants

A detailed description of each participant is included in this section. Three elementary special area teachers in the same school participated in the pilot study. Twelve elementary special area teachers from five different elementary schools participated in the main study. The identities of the participants and the schools were protected by providing them with pseudonyms. All participating teachers were employed in the same school district, which is referred to as President School District (PSD). A criterion sample of elementary special area teachers who taught students with ADHD in the pilot and main study were employed by PSD at the time of each data collection. It is essential in a phenomenological study that all participants are chosen based on having experienced the same phenomena (Creswell, 2013). Teacher participants taught at one of the following PSD schools: Roosevelt Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, Kennedy Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, and Washington Elementary. A summary of completion dates, interview dates, and the interview medium can be viewed in Appendix J.

Pilot Participants

The pilot surveys and interview data were collected at the school where I am employed. The pilot school will be referred to as Taft Elementary, which is in the same PSD as the main study schools. The pilot participants were one male art teacher, one female music teacher, and one male PE teacher.

Matt. Matt had been an elementary art teacher for 22 years. He did not have children of his own. He was also a published artist. He has experienced a lot of changes in elementary students during art instruction over that last two decades. He felt that students today want instruction to be more instantaneous whereas students in the past enjoyed more ongoing projects. Matt felt that most students in the elementary grades today rather have quick projects that could

be completed in a class period. The students in recent years also enjoyed projects that involved technology and construction materials. Matt was happy to provide those types of experiences because he believed in keeping the students engaged and tapped into their current interests. This helped the students who had attention deficit disorders. He rarely had a problem keeping those students on task if they were engaged in technology or construction type activities.

Lyla. Lyla had been a music teacher for 18 years. She did not have children of her own. She was also the school's performing arts director. She enjoyed all types of music and liked to teach using a variety of music in all lessons. She did not like the terms "disability" or "disorders". She felt that those terms were overused to describe children who were just rowdy or active. She preferred to work with students who were more active rather than passive because she believed those types of students were the ones who became better performing artists. She says that she could relate to students who weren't good at pencil and paper tasks and would rather move, sing, or play instruments. She did not have a different attitude toward students with ADHD, but she did modify their instruction so that they were less likely to be off task.

Spencer. Spencer was an elementary PE teacher for eight years. He had a young son who was very athletic like he is. He played three sports in high school and college. He believed that many life lessons and academic lessons could be taught through PE. He tried to limit lecture in his classes, because he believed that the students should be active 98% of the time. He felt that they were more engaged during PE than other classes because they were moving and using their whole body to engage in the instruction. This was especially important for students with ADHD.

Main Study Participants

Survey questions revealed the percentage of male or female teacher participants that taught elementary art, music, and PE with students who have ADHD. It also revealed the years of collective teaching experience in each area. These data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Teacher Participants for Main Study

Special Area Taught	Male	Female	Combined Years Teaching Experience
Art	-	3	30
Music	-	5	92
PE	3	1	54

Alan. Alan taught PE at Roosevelt Elementary School. Alan was observed during instruction of his 3rd grade PE class in addition to engaging in an interview and completing the survey. Alan has taught elementary PE for 23 years. He taught all students with 100% inclusion. In the beginning of his teaching career, he did not feel that he was adequately prepared to teach students with ADHD in PE instruction. The most challenging behaviors he dealt with on a daily basis was the inability to focus and getting easily distracted. He felt that if a student displayed those behaviors then there would be a disruption to the point of having to stop instruction for the whole class or it would cause other students to become off task. He described his experiences with students who had ADHD in several ways. He used a lot of modeling for those students, he paired students with ADHD with children who are able to stay on task, and he limited whole group instruction to eight minutes or less. He believed that most students were kinesthetic learners and needed to move. He planned for lots of movement activities even during wait times so that all students, including ones with ADHD were successful.

Carol. Carol taught music at Roosevelt Elementary School. Carol had been teaching music for three years. Roosevelt Elementary was her first teaching assignment. Carol was

observed during instruction of her one of her first grade music classes as well as being interviewed and completing the survey. She felt that students with ADHD were often impulsive and required constant movement or activity to stay on task. Carol admitted that she struggled with students who had ADHD symptoms, but providing for their needs had become easier with the year of experience she gained. She did not believe that students with ADHD should have been held less accountable for their actions than other students. However, she understood as she gained more experience in teaching them that they were able to be held accountable in a different way. She believed that being fair does not always mean equal. She consistently uses movement in her classroom through music, storytelling, playing instruments, and dance. She did not have assigned seats or even chairs in her classroom, which she felt led to a more movement oriented environment. She felt that all types of children learned music concepts best through play. She explained that in order for someone to understand and perform musical composition, several functions of the brain must work simultaneously. A child's auditory, sensory, visual, and sometimes brain functions team up to complete the task of reading and understanding music. She understood that ADHD was a disease, so she tried to remain calm and consistent during instruction of students affected with the disorder.

Don. Don taught PE at Kennedy Elementary School. Don had a doctorate of education degree in educational leadership. He served as a college professor for seven years after teaching elementary PE in Spain for three years. He returned to teaching elementary PE in the United States last year. He revealed that he did not experience students who struggled with ADHD in Spain, only in the United States, both in higher education and in elementary school. All of his training for teaching students with disabilities or ADHD has been from experience in the United States rather than any formal training. He wanted all children to be life-long activity people. He used quick talks to emphasize two or three main points during instruction with the rest of the

time being an active activity. He tried to keep an open mind about students with ADHD. He felt that their behavior was a distraction, but he did not want to eliminate them. However, he felt that he had mostly a negative attitude toward students with ADHD because he felt that no matter what strategies he used, those students continued to be off task and took a lot of his instructional time. He tried to remain positive and not get frustrated. He felt that because he changed grade levels every hour, he looked at each class period as a fresh start in having a positive attitude toward all students.

Evelyn. Evelyn taught music at Kennedy Elementary School. Evelyn had been teaching elementary music for 25 years. She felt that students with ADHD were better suited for music instruction than students without attention disorders. She reported that she did not have a lot of behavior problems in her classes. She said the key to that was to keep them active and moving. She also incorporated social studies and science lessons in her music activities because the students found that more engaging. If she had problems with a particular student, she would ask the general education teachers for support and suggestions. However, she rather not obtain information about the children with ADHD before she worked them so that she could form her own attitude and developed strategies to meet the unique needs of those students. She felt that teaching music with different age groups was a lot of trial and error. If one activity did not work with a specific group of students, then she would quickly change the course of action to keep the students on task. She felt that she had an overall positive attitude toward students with attention disorders because she was constantly trying to meet their needs. She also strived to tap into their personal interests.

Fran. Fran taught art at Jefferson Elementary School. She has been an elementary art teacher for two years. This was her second year teaching and her first year in PSD. She believed that ADHD was more prevalent in her current school than in the one she taught at in a bigger city

last year. She felt unprepared to teach students with any type of disability, especially ones with violent behavior. She had a little brother with ADHD, so that has helped her understand how to talk to students with ADHD and explain directions to them so that they can better handle themselves in the classroom. She understood the difference between students who choose to act impulsively and off task and the ones who could not help it because they have an attention disorder. She responded to off task behavior by talking to the students quietly about what they needed and what the expectations were. She felt that because there were no right or wrong ways to do things in art, it helped control typical ADHD behaviors and lent itself to more open-ended work.

Ginger. Ginger taught music at Jefferson Elementary School. She had been an educator for ten years. She spent her first four years teaching at the University level. She also played in an orchestra. She believed that music instruction was very important for students with attention disorders. She felt that they were more engaged in learning when they were allowed to play an instrument, dance, and sing. She had an overall positive attitude toward students with ADHD and tried to be very patient and relaxed when addressing their off task behaviors. She explained that she tried to accommodate their needs as much as she could by providing them with lots of movement activities and positive redirection.

Hannah. Hannah taught PE at Jefferson Elementary School. She revealed that she had ADHD herself. Her son also had the disorder, so she was very empathetic to students with ADHD and had a positive attitude toward providing for their needs. She felt that society was not to blame for the recent increase in ADHD diagnosis. She explained that parents were now more aware of the disorder and were seeking adaptation methods and medications for it. She got frustrated with the general education teachers who did not understand the disorder and punish students who displayed ADHD behavior instead of providing them with strategies to cope with

it. She felt that special area classes were especially engaging for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. In all special area classes, the students were moving more and were allowed to express themselves in a more creative way than general education classes. In her PE classes, she redirected off task behavior often, engaged them in whole body activities, used one on one eye contact, and broke down instruction into manageable steps. She incorporated a lot of small group work and very little whole group, which created a more positive and engaging atmosphere for all types of students.

Jane. Jane taught art at Lincoln Elementary School. Jane had been an elementary art teacher for five years. She was previously an elementary assistant principal for ten years and a middle school art teacher for five years prior to that. She felt that her experiences as a teacher and an assistant principal have prepared her to meet the needs of students with ADHD and other behavior disorders. She felt that students in the last few years were more in a hurry to complete activities and projects. They also needed directions to be given one at a time and broke tasks down into steps instead of providing the directions for a project all at once. She felt that she had a positive attitude toward students with ADHD because she developed personal relationships with them in order to understand their individual needs. She remained in close proximity to them during instruction so that she could provide feedback and redirection as needed before off task behaviors escalated. She explained how she strived to keep a positive, calm, and movement oriented classroom, which was especially appropriate for students with ADHD.

Katie. Katie taught music at Lincoln Elementary School. Katie had been an educator for 21 years. She taught music education for the last six years. She previously taught kindergarten, pre-kindergarten, and first grade. Her own son had ADHD, so she had read a lot of literature about the disorder that has helped her understand her son's needs as well as her students. She understood what motivated impulsive and off task behaviors, so she was better able to handle it

in the classroom. Having experience in general education classes and music education classes has helped her see the differences in the types of instruction for students with ADHD. Music education was overall more engaging for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. The activities were more active and hand-on during music instruction than they are in general education classes. She used a lot instruments, hands-on materials, games, and small group activities during all her kindergarten through fifth grade lessons, which helped all students stay on task.

Lisa. Lisa taught music at Washington Elementary School. She taught elementary music for 33 years. She did not feel that there was an increase in students with attention disorders now than in the beginning of her career. She saw more of an increase in autistic behaviors. She felt that the most frustrating behaviors were when students with ADHD got out of their seat and were disruptive to others. She separated those students from others and used eye contact to redirect them and keep them on task. She explained that she did not provide any special accommodations for them. She gave the same type of instruction to all students in grades kindergarten through 5th. Her instruction was generally a lecture and practice model. She adjusted specific tasks so that students with ADHD would have more success, such as giving them one step directions, allowing them to use instruments more often, and by having them be the teacher's helper.

Mary. Mary taught art at Washington Elementary School. She was an elementary art teacher for seven years. She held many students in the last couple of years with ADHD symptoms. She tried to remain positive, patient, calm, and supportive of those students' needs. She felt that the school as a whole was not consistent in providing a positive behavior system so that all students understood the behavior expectations. She felt that this was a great disservice to students with behavior disorders, because there were different expectations in all classrooms. She had not had consistent communication with the students' general education teachers to learn

more about the unique needs of the students diagnosed with ADHD. She believed that is a missing piece in providing the best instruction for those students.

Ned. Ned taught PE at Washington Elementary School. Ned was an elementary teacher for 19 years. He had a special education teaching degree and taught self-contained as well as resource special education for 10 years. He just finished his ninth year teaching elementary PE. He had one son who had been diagnosed with ADHD, so he had lots of knowledge and experience in teaching students with all types of disabilities. He remarked that many of his students with ADHD were often times the best athletes in the class. He believed that due to his special education background, he consistently planned lessons to meet the needs of students with all types of disorders, including ADHD. He also believed that it was important to involve the special education resource teachers in the planning process.

Results

The perceptions of the teachers' experiences with students who have ADHD and the characteristics they have in common with one another were described using themes that were discovered while analyzing the data within the context of the research questions. The special area teachers' responses to the online survey and interview questions are presented in this section. The observation data was integrated into those results as they represented the same theme under the framework of each research question.

The data results from the survey and interview responses, as well as the data results from the observations were analyzed, bracketed, and organized by textural and structural descriptions so that the essences and meanings of the phenomenological experiences could be revealed. Reflection of the data occurred through phenomenological reduction to gain the full nature of the phenomenon while looking again and again at the participants' responses about their lived experiences with students who have ADHD. Imaginative variation was used to describe the

essential structures of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Semi-structured qualitative surveys were the first data collection instrument in order to gain an understanding of the participants' attributes and to reveal initial themes in the data.

The first three questions of the survey were demographic (Table 1). Appendix K shows The structured survey questions and responses are presented in Appendix K. Appendix L shows the survey's open-ended questions and the participants' responses. This section will describe the participants' responses to the interview questions vividly and accurately within invariant constituents that support the common themes. The descriptions of the five special area teachers who were observed during instruction of students with ADHD are included in this section. The observation data was interwoven into the research questions, themes, and invariant constituents. These textural and structural descriptions developed into the meanings and essences of the experience as were represented by the participants as a whole (Moustakas, 1994).

Research Question 1

In research question one, I asked how elementary art, music, and PE teachers perceive and describe their lived experiences teaching students with ADHD. The qualitative survey question responses showed varied answers to questions that pertained to the participants' perceptions and lived experiences with students who have ADHD. Some participants viewed students with ADHD as being disruptive to their instruction and others perceived ADHD behaviors as a strength during art, music, or PE instruction. Two themes emerged; special area teachers' perceptions of students with ADHD and a description of how they react to students who display ADHD behaviors. Examples of the positive and negative attitudes are expressed through the following quotes from the participants.

“Students with ADHD often do not follow directions. They will tell me they won't do a particular task. Some get mad and start throwing things. So, sometimes I have a negative attitude

towards students with ADHD” (Fran).

“I am tolerant of students with ADHD, but often frustrated. I don’t think they are bad kids” (Ginger).

“I have a very positive attitude toward students with ADHD symptoms. I have empathy for them” (Hannah).

“My attitude towards students with ADHD behaviors is mostly negative because no matter what I say, they continue to be off task” (Don).

“I have a very positive attitude towards students who have ADHD or show ADHD symptoms because it’s the same attitude I have for all students. Just because I use more redirection for them doesn’t mean I am being negative” (Ned).

“I find that students with ADHD are highly successful at reading music” (Carol).

Special area teachers’ perceptions. The first theme centered on special area teachers’ perceptions of students who were diagnosed with ADHD or had ADHD symptoms. The five key invariant constituents that formed this theme were a) the teachers have an overall positive perception of students with ADHD, b) belief that students with ADHD are more on task when engaging in special area instruction that involves gross motor movement c) belief that students with ADHD require more redirection than other students d) belief that if proper strategies are in place, students with ADHD will be as successful as other students e) ADHD is more prevalent in today’s classrooms than in the past.

All of the special area teachers believed that they have an overall positive perception of students diagnosed with ADHD or who display ADHD behaviors. During their daily experiences with these students, each of the 12 teachers found that when gross motor movement was involved, such as using instruments in music class, whole body physical movement in PE, and constructing art work in art class, the students with ADHD were able to stay on task better than if

they were not using movement during class activities. During the participant interviews, 10 out of 12 of the participants expressed that students with ADHD required more redirection and visual cues to stay on task than their same age peers who did not have ADHD symptoms.

The 10 participants who used consistent redirection, positive support, small group instruction, step by step directions, and other similar strategies with students who have ADHD, stated that there was no difference in achievement levels or success rates compared to other students. All of the participants explained that for various reasons, ADHD was more prevalent among students in their classrooms in recent years as opposed to their first years of teaching. The following quotes represent the beliefs that ADHD was more prevalent in recent years compared to previous years. The first theme for research question 1 is represented in Table 2.

“In the beginning of my career, I struggled with the term ADHD, but luckily it was rare. Now, I feel like I have a better handle on how to deal with those off task and disruptive behaviors and there is definitely more of those types of students in recent years” (Carol).

“I feel it (ADHD) is more of a problem now because it’s not that there are more of them, but rather the parents are more aware of the disorder. The parents are seeking more adaptations and medication for it than before” (Ginger).

“I feel that in today’s classrooms, students expect more movement and engagement than in the past. Therefore, more ADHD type behaviors are more evident because if the students aren’t allowed to move or change activities often, then they have a hard time staying on task” (Alan).

“In art I have noticed that students get off task more easily now than in the past. Maybe it’s because we use different materials and methods than when I first started teaching. For example, the use of technology has helped students who might have ADHD but when they are required to produce individual work, they get off task pretty regularly” (Fran).

Table 2

Special Area Teachers' Perceptions

Invariant Constituents	Number of participants who offered this experience
Belief that students with ADHD are more on task when engaging in special area instruction that involves gross motor movement.	12
Belief that students with ADHD require more redirection than other students.	10
Belief that if proper strategies are in place, students with ADHD will be as successful as other students.	10
ADHD is more prevalent in today's classrooms than in the past.	9

Description of how special area teachers react to students who display ADHD

behaviors. The second theme focused on how special area teachers react to students who display ADHD behaviors in their classrooms. The three key invariant constituents that formed this theme were 1) Selecting students with ADHD as the teacher's helper during direct instruction prevents off task behavior 2) Remain patient and calm while redirecting the ADHD behaviors 3) The belief that decreased direct instruction is more effective than lecture style instruction.

Eight out of the 12 special area teachers admitted that they felt frustrated with the students who displayed ADHD behaviors. However, they described their reactions to the students as being patient and calm while redirecting the students so that their frustration was not obvious to the student. Another consistent reaction from 9 of the participants was to select the students with ADHD as teacher helpers. By doing this, those students had a task to do while the teacher was explaining directions, modeling instruction, or teaching a lesson. Those students

would set out materials, hold up visual displays, and other tasks to help the teacher during direct instruction.

Eleven out of the 12 special area teachers in this study believed that it was important to minimize direct instruction time. These 11 teachers described their direct instruction or lecture time as being no longer than 15 minutes. They explained that this was important for students who displayed ADHD behaviors because those students were able to listen and learn the material but did not get off task as much as they would with a longer lecture period. According to Lee, Miller, and Vostal (2012), Zentall's Optimal Stimulation Theory (1975) provided the rationale for teachers to engage students who display ADHD behaviors in activities that counteract these behaviors. Rather than reducing stimulation for these students, stimulation needed to be increased in order for them to stay on task, such as being a teacher's helper and reducing the amount of time students had to sit and listen to instruction. The following quotes capture a few of the participants' intention toward minimizing direct instruction time and maximizing stimulation for all students, which was especially beneficial for students with ADHD.

"I really try to limit my whole group lecture time. I quickly give directions, then the students work individually. I use a lot of technology for the students who have been diagnosed with severe ADHD. For example, they draw using electronic tools on drawing apps instead of drawing on paper" (Fran).

"I keep whole group instruction to eight minutes or less in order for those students (ones with ADHD) to stay on task" (Alan).

"I use a lot more visuals for students with ADHD and I don't lecture for more than 15 minutes" (Ned).

The invariant constituents were evident in the reactions to students who displayed ADHD behaviors during the observation of Carol's 2nd-grade music class. Carol used a dramatic story to

introduce their lesson of the day about chickens. Then the students listened to a song about chickens and were able to act out the words of the song. During the song, she selected students with ADHD as her teacher's helper during by handing out instruments. She remained patient and calm while redirecting the ADHD behaviors as the students were playing with the instruments and singing along to the song. The belief that decreased direct instruction was more effective than lecture style instruction was evident as she quickly changed activities throughout the class period. The students sat in places on the carpet for a few minutes while she explained activity directions. The students were instantly engaged in a variety of activities that lasted no more than 5 minutes each. The students were singing and dancing to the chicken song, retelling the story about the chicken using costumes and instruments, and playing a following directions game with bean bags. Then, they were clapping and marching to a new chicken song, a game that reinforced the concepts of right and left, and free style dancing. The second theme for research question 1 is represented in Table 3.

Table 3

Description of How Special Area Teachers React to Students Who Display ADHD Behavior

Invariant Constituents	Number of participants who offered this experience
Selecting students as the teacher's helper prevents off task behavior.	9
Remain patient and calm while redirecting the ADHD behaviors.	10
The belief that decreased direct instruction is more effective than lecture style instruction.	11

Research Question 2

In research question two, I asked what themes were identified through the special area teachers' perceptions regarding students with ADHD while planning for classroom instruction. Throughout the semi-structured interview process, teacher participants often referred to their perceptions of students with ADHD as they planned for classroom instruction. Two themes emerged. First, the special area teachers responded that they perceive students with ADHD as needing a special placement in the classroom during instruction. For example, the teachers kept the students with ADHD close to their desk or the place where they deliver instruction. They also reported that they placed the students with ADHD in a small group with students who helped them stay on task. The second theme was that the teachers communicated with the students' general education teachers to understand the needs of the students with ADHD and how they could best meet those needs in their special area instruction.

Special placement during instruction. The second theme focused on the special area teachers' perception of students with ADHD as needing a special placement in the classroom during instruction. Two key invariant constituents that formed this theme were 1) the teachers positioned the students with ADHD close to the place where they deliver instruction 2) the teachers placed the students with ADHD in a small group with other students who will help them stay on task.

Nine of the 12 special area teachers explained that their perception of the students with ADHD while they are planning lessons called for strategic placement of the students during direct instruction. All of the special area teachers in the current study did not use student desks. All of the PE and music teachers had places for the students to sit, such as a carpet area or a taped area on the floor where the students sat during direct instruction. The art classrooms used tables instead of individual desks. Therefore, the placement of the students with ADHD was

important so that their amount of attention and on task behaviors were increased. Those students were placed in the front of the classroom and near the teacher. In 11 classrooms, the students with ADHD were seated next to students who were responsible in helping them stay on task and who modeled appropriate behavior. Three of the teachers explained how they stood over the students with ADHD so that they were ready to redirect them as often as needed without disturbing instruction for other students. The following quotes capture four of the participants' intentions towards strategic placement for students with ADHD in their classrooms.

“The students with ADHD work better in partners rather than small groups. I pair them with another student who is a good leader and can keep their attention” (Katie).

“I separate the students who show ADHD behaviors from their friends or other students who cause distractions. I seat them next to me, so when I give directions, I can look them in the eyes” (Lisa).

“I use selective seating, such as students with off task behaviors and ADHD symptoms, are seated closer to me and next to someone who is a good role model for staying on task” (Evelyn).

“I tend to stand next to students who exhibit ADHD behaviors. I really don't leave their side during whole group instruction” (Carol).

Nine of the 12 teachers were willing to accommodate the special needs of students with ADHD. The first theme for research question 2 was represented in Table 4. During observations, four of the five teachers positioned the students with ADHD close to them in order to decrease negative ADHD behaviors and increase time on task. In Fran's art classroom, the students with ADHD were placed at the end of each table, close to the center aisle where Fran could easily redirect them and monitor their work as she was walking up and down the aisle that was in the center of the work tables. This also helped the students with ADHD as Fran explained directions

or spoke to the whole class. She stood near the end of the tables to deliver direct instruction, where those students were placed. Fran checked in with each table as the first-grade class worked independently on cutting shapes out of construction paper to create a three-dimensional playground scene on background paper. She redirected the students who displayed negative ADHD behavior, but ignored behaviors that were not causing them to be off task or disrupt others. She allowed them to stand at the table and talked to others quietly as they worked on their project.

In the observation of Carol's music class, the students were placed in small groups for a bean bag game after doing a whole group dancing activity. When one child threw a bean bag at another child, she firmly told the child to stop and had him take a break for a few minutes while she quietly talked with him about his behavior. As she rotated among the groups, she noticed that some students with ADHD were off task, so she quickly redirected her privately off to the side and asked the girl to think about what she should be doing in the group activity and the best way to work nicely with the other group members. After their private discussion, Carol moved her to a new group. She stayed with her until she was displaying more appropriate behaviors.

Table 4

Special Placement during Instruction

Invariant Constituents	Number of participants who offered this experience
The teachers positioned the students with ADHD close to the place where they deliver instruction	9
The teachers placed the students with ADHD in a small group with other students who will help them stay on task.	11

Special area teachers communicate with the students' general education teachers.

The second theme focused on how the special area teachers communicated with the general education teachers in order to understand the special needs of students with ADHD. Two key invariant constituents that formed this theme were 1) belief that getting information from the general education teacher in the beginning of the school year about students who have ADHD is vital to their success 2) belief that consistent weekly communication with the general education teachers is necessary in planning appropriate instruction for students with ADHD.

In the planning for hundreds of students per day, 86% of the teacher participants felt isolated in planning their daily instruction. General education teachers spent more time with the students who have ADHD. Therefore, they had more knowledge and experience with those students that could be shared with the special area teachers in order to meet those students' needs in all classes. Half of the special area teachers reported that by discussing the students weekly or daily with the general education teachers greatly improved the ADHD behaviors. Collaboration among all teachers provided more consistent planning for instruction and rules that supported the special needs of students with ADHD. Unfortunately, the other 50 % the special area teachers reported that adequate support and communication does not usually take place.

However, 10 of the 12 special area teachers believed collaboration is greatly needed and vital to the success of students with special needs. Three of the PE teachers said they liked it when the general education teachers wanted to plan with them in order to incorporate general education classroom topics in the PE classroom. Two of the music teachers consistently asked the general education teachers how the students with ADHD were doing in other classes, so that they could share strategies and make adaptations to lesson planning in order to keep those students on task. When special education, general education teachers, and special area teachers communicated and provided consistent instructional techniques with their students, then a

foundation for effective instruction was established (Jones, 2011). The second theme for research question 2 is represented in Table 5. Five of the participants' quotes about their experiences in communicating with general education teachers are listed below.

"I always ask the teachers how the students behave in the classroom. We share ideas on how to keep the students on task and engaged" (Hannah).

"I know many general education teachers are required to keep detailed notes on their students with ADHD. I find it helpful to discuss with them when a technique doesn't work, or issues that I had. They are with the child every day, and can often provide ideas that have been successful in the classroom" (Carol).

"I talk to general education teachers probably once a week to ask them about particular kids. If they don't approach me first, I will ask them to help me with particular kids" (Evelyn).

"I get together with my special area team as well as some of the regular education teachers to discuss particular students. We try to be consistent with our lessons and how we are instructing students with disabilities" (Ned).

"I try to accommodate the students with ADHD behaviors as much as I can, so I talk to their regular education teachers to get their feedback on a weekly or at least a bi-weekly basis" (Lisa).

Table 5

Special Area Teachers Communicate with the Students' General Education Teachers

Invariant Constituents	Number of participants who offered this experience
Belief that getting information from the general education teacher in the beginning of the school year about students who have ADHD is vital to their success.	10
Belief that consistent weekly communication with the general education teachers is necessary in planning appropriate instruction for students with ADHD.	8

Research Question 3

In research question three, I asked what themes were discovered through elementary art, music, and PE teachers' attitudes during the instruction of students who have ADHD.

Throughout the semi-structured interview process, all of the teacher participants explained their attitudes of students with ADHD as well as other students with disabilities during classroom instruction. Two themes emerged. First, 10 of the 12 teachers had a positive attitude during the instruction of students with ADHD behaviors. Second, six of the teachers were frustrated by the large class sizes in addition to instructing students with ADHD symptoms. Each theme is discussed below.

Teachers' positive attitude during the instruction of students with ADHD behaviors.

The first theme centered on the participants' positive attitude during instruction of students with ADHD behaviors. The two key invariant constituents that formed this theme were 1) belief that they have a positive attitude toward all students, regardless of disabilities 2) belief that if the activities are engaging to increase on task behavior, then their attitude is more positive. The

following quotes capture 10 of the participants' attitudes towards students with ADHD as well as other disabilities.

"I have a positive attitude with all students. Just because I redirect doesn't mean I'm negative" (Ned).

"I have always tried to remain positive with all students. I used to think that if I kept my expectations firm with all students that eventually all of them would fall in line. However, now as I have had more experience with students who have behavior disorders like ADHD, I know that it is appropriate to differ my expectations while still holding the child accountable for their actions. As educators, we cannot expect any child to learn if we do not give them the tools for success" (Carol).

"I have a positive attitude because I try to remain patient. I work with students one on one if they are having difficulty, if they have a particular disability, and redirect as needed" (Ginger).

"I try not to get frustrated and remain positive" (Don).

"I am positive, patient, and caring about their needs. When we are playing sports, the students with ADHD are very engaged. It's like they zero in on it, especially if they love it!" (Hannah).

"I feel sorry for students with ADHD. They can't help it. I try to remain as positive as I can with them because I know they don't mean to be disruptive" (Mary).

"I have a very positive attitude. I use science, literature, social studies etc. in all lessons so that the students are more engaged. That makes learning positive for them and therefore I have a positive attitude toward their behavior" (Evelyn).

"I think I don't really have a positive or negative attitude towards the students but I have a positive attitude about all kids in general. This is because I treat all students as if they were my own child. I would not want an educator to short change my child of a successful experience due

to a disorder so I try to be that teacher that all students enjoy coming to my class” (Alan).

“I usually have a positive attitude, because I can separate the child from the behavior. If they are engaged in something, especially with lots of materials or instruments, then it’s a more positive learning environment for all of us” (Katie).

“I have a positive, relaxed, and controlled attitude during instruction of students with ADHD. I use lots of attention getters to keep them engaged” (Jane).

Frustration of the large class sizes in addition to instructing students with ADHD symptoms. The second theme centered on the participants’ frustration about the large class size they had with each grade level in addition to the challenges that came along in having students with ADHD symptoms. The main invariant constituent that formed this theme was the belief that class sizes were so big that the needs of students with ADHD were overlooked. In PSD, kindergarten through third grade classes held the maximum number of 24 students per class, with several special area classes having to combine a more kids from several classes for scheduling purposes. Therefore, special area classrooms had an average of 33 students in kindergarten through third grade class sessions. Fourth and fifth grade classes were at a maximum of 35 students per class.

The special area teachers did not have a teaching assistant in any of their classes, except for kindergarten. The general education classroom assistant helped with the kindergarten special area classrooms only. The special area teachers were responsible for teaching 35 students in grades first through fifth completely on their own, which led to classroom management challenges. This affected their lived experiences of teaching students with ADHD as well. Disabilities like ADHD that do not require individualized education plans (IEP), were especially challenging since teachers had to develop accommodations without an educational team’s support to meet the student’s needs. This was even more challenging for elementary special area

teachers who taught physical education (PE), art, and music to hundreds of students per day (Anderson et al., 2012). The following quotes captured six of the participants' perceptions and experiences of having large class sizes in addition to teaching students with ADHD symptoms.

"A lot of times disruptive, hyper, or off task behaviors get overlooked because they are so many students in the classroom at once" (Fran).

"The problem for some of these kids and their off-task behavior is that they are only in my classroom for one week out of the month and sometimes they are grouped with kids from other classes. Therefore, it's harder for them to remember rules and routines. They think its playtime" (Jane).

"I go from teaching one class to another with different age groups that have around 34 students in each class, so it's hard to meet all of the students' needs in each class" (Don).

"I am not going to lie, sometimes it's very difficult to teach students with ADHD. Especially when the numbers are high in particular classes" (Ned).

"With so many students in each class, it's impossible to know all of their special needs. I don't know who has ADHD exactly and the ones that show the symptoms behave better when I keep an instrument in their hand!" (Lisa).

"I think the expectations on these kids to be perfectly behaved or do pen and paper work all the time to learn is ridiculous. They are kids and need to play. I have anywhere from 25-35 students in each of my classes, so if I can keep them engaged with active lessons and materials, then I don't have as many behavior problems, but it's a daily challenge" (Evelyn).

Research Question 4

In research question 4, the researcher asked how the elementary art, music, and PE teachers' attitude towards students with ADHD affected their intentions of individualizing instruction for those students. Throughout the semi-structured interview process, 91% of the

teacher participants explained their intentions of providing individualized instruction for students with ADHD. Two themes emerged: the special area teachers used specific strategies for individualizing instruction for students with ADHD and that they were proactive with their intentions of preventing negative ADHD behaviors. These themes are discussed below.

Specific strategies for individualizing instruction for students with ADHD. Eighty-three percent of the participants discussed that they were sympathetic to the behaviors that they students with ADHD displayed. Seventy-five percent of the participants said that they understood it was a disorder and not intentional. This attitude had a positive impact on the type of differentiated instruction they provided for students with ADHD. Quotes from the following participants reflected these attitudes.

“My understanding is that it ADHD is a medical diagnosis of an individual having attention deficits due to hyperactivity. Symptoms include being easily distracted, unable to focus, and the inability to sit still for periods of time” (Alan).

“Parents have become more aware of the disorder and are seeking adaptations and medications for it. This helps all of the child’s teachers because there can be open communication about it and how to best meet the child’s needs at school” (Hannah).

“Students with ADHD can do the same tasks as everyone else, but a teacher’s expectations have to be different for them. They lose attention easily, so teachers must be aware of that and plan accordingly” (Don).

“I have taken it upon myself to learn about ADHD and what causes the disorder. I want to understand what motivates ADHD type behaviors and what I can do to teach students with the disorder effectively” (Katie).

During the observation of Alan’s third grade PE class, it was evident that he was intentional in planning for students who had ADHD Symptoms. Students were observed doing

yoga poses and stretching exercises to begin the class period. Alan stood near the students with ADHD and allowed them to move more than the other students during these exercises. During one pose, a child was jumping up and down instead of staying in the correct position, which Alan ignored as long as the student moved on to the next pose. During the next pose, the same child was off task again, so Alan modeled the correct way to do the pose for him. He proceeded to walk around and monitor the students and offered redirection or help as needed. After that, the class divided into two teams to play hockey with child sized plastic hockey sticks, a rubber ball, and goals. The ADHD students were allowed to pick their positions first so they wouldn't get off task waiting for their turn. Another child with ADHD had trouble with coordination during the game, but remained on task and kept trying his best the whole time. Alan positively praised him every few minutes as he was playing hockey. When it was time to take a break, the two students with ADHD laid down on the gym floor and stretched their arms and legs instead of sitting in their assigned spots as the others were doing, which Alan allowed and the other students seemed used to.

Proactive attitudes and intentions of preventing negative ADHD behaviors. The second theme centered on how the teachers used their positive attitudes towards students with ADHD to be proactive while individualizing instruction for those students. The two key invariant constituents that formed this theme were 1) belief that no matter what the disability is, instruction should be differentiated for all students 2) belief that if effective strategies are used, then negative ADHD behaviors can be prevented. A few quotes from the participants reflected these invariant constituents.

“It is important to talk to the students who usually have off task behaviors before class begins to discuss with them what I expect from them. I talk to them using eye contact and close proximity to hopefully prevent some of the behaviors before they start” (Mary).

“I constantly reflect on what is working and what is not and try a new activity if one isn’t working so that I can stop negative behaviors before they start” (Evelyn).

“I respond to ADHD behaviors by heading off the behaviors before it gets out of hand. I recognize their reactions (let’s say if they are losing a game and I know it will make them upset or have a tantrum) before it happens and pull them over to the side to talk about how to be a good classmate or teammate” (Ned).

All of the teachers that had more than ten years of teaching experience knew what types of behaviors to expect from those students and how to prevent or anticipate the behaviors. The observation of Ginger’s third grade music class held many examples of a veteran teacher knowing what types of behaviors to expect from students with ADHD and preventing those behaviors before they occurred. As Ginger was explaining an activity in which the students had to listen to a song while drawing a picture of the sound pitches in the music, she modeled the activity in front of students with ADHD so that they had a direct visual to remain on task. She also chose the students with ADHD to make up hand motions to a song the class was singing. Ginger used this strategy several times as it was successful in keeping those students on task instead of just singing without movement. To signal the start of a new activity, she played a special set of notes on the piano. The students with ADHD always responded immediately to this and did what they were supposed to do. She also sang directions instead of speaking them, which all of the students responded positively to. Ginger has had experience with students who display ADHD symptoms. She used techniques such as; visual aids, hand motions, singing directions, and using the piano for transition signals to keep the students with ADHD focused on the task at hand.

The 41% of teachers in this study that didn’t have as much experience as the other participants, expressed frustration and experienced feelings of inadequacy when teaching

students who display symptoms of ADHD. Special area teachers were frustrated with their inability to successfully adapt instruction to meet the needs of students with ADHD, which affected their perceptions of these students (Simpson & Mandich, 2012). The second theme for research question 4 is represented in Table 6.

Table 6

Proactive Attitudes and Intentions of Prevention Negative ADHD Behaviors

Invariant Constituents	Number of participants who offered this experience
Belief that no matter what the disability is instruction should be differentiated for all students.	11
Belief that if effective strategies are used, then negative ADHD behaviors can be prevented.	9

Research Question 5

For research question 5, I asked how do the perceptions that PE, art, and music elementary teachers have of themselves teaching students with any type of disability affect their instruction of students with ADHD. Based on the interview responses, 87% of the participants described similar perceptions of themselves and the affect it had on instruction of students with ADHD. Two themes emerged through this research question; teachers had a positive perception of themselves of teaching students with disabilities and that they felt unprepared from their formal teacher training for teaching students with ADHD. These themes are discussed below.

Positive self-perception while teaching students with disabilities. Ninety-two percent of

the elementary special area teachers had positive perceptions of themselves while they engaged in activities and instruction with students who had disabilities. One of the gaps in the literature revealed teachers' perceptions of themselves and their confidence in teaching students with disabilities. Teacher attitudes and the interactions of teachers with students who have disabilities was an integral part of student success. The two key invariant constituents that were being examined within the theme of positive self- perception were 1) a belief that particular types of strategies used with students who have disabilities result in more positive perceptions 2) belief that they do the best they can with students who have disabilities, including ADHD. The following quotes from the participants reflected these invariant constituents.

“I have lots of patience with the students who have disabilities in the kindergarten through third grade classes. Their needs are easier to meet because they are generally more compliant and respectful than fourth or fifth graders. I just remain calm and do the best I can” (Fran).

“My perception of myself when teaching students with any type of disability and ADHD is that I am a patient teacher and understand that kids need to move. The typical set up of a classroom and the students' day in general limits physical movement, which is not beneficial to any child in my opinion. Many students are learners and need to move” (Alan).

“I think I have a positive perception, but the students sometimes think they are in trouble for not doing something correctly. I understand they all have different abilities and needs. I don't want to yell or scare them so that they understand what they are doing and how they can do better. I use lots of positive redirection and repeated directions” (Hannah).

“It is very important to me to remain the adult in the situation. ADHD is a disease and these children are helpless to it. I aim to be calm and consistent. In most cases this is how I perceive myself about 95% of the time” (Carol).

“I try to accommodate all students with special needs as much as I can” (Ginger).

“Sometimes I feel myself getting frustrated. It depends on the time of year. I try to tap into their interests, which motivates them to perform well in my classroom. Overall, I feel like I constantly try to meet their needs” (Evelyn).

“I can separate child from behavior. I feel like I can engage them in something. There are lots of materials and instruments to choose from that meet all types of students’ needs in music” (Katie).

“I have found that students with ADHD and other behavior disorders need directions one step at a time. So, when I do that, I am less frustrated and they are less frustrated. I break assignments into manageable steps. When they complete each step, I praise them, which encourages positive behavior” (Jane).

“My perception of myself is that I am understanding and tolerant because I have a wife and son with the disorder. I focus on the positive things students who are hyperactive do well” (Ned).

“I don’t plan anything special for students with ADHD. My perception of myself is the same as it is when I am teaching all students. I adjust instruction as needed, so I feel confident I am reaching all students’ needs” (Lisa).

“I have a positive perception of myself even though I get frustrated. I feel more confident teaching students with ADHD behaviors now than in the past” (Ginger).

The first theme for research question 5 is represented in Table 7.

Table 7

Positive Self-Perception while Teaching Students with Disabilities

Invariant Constituents	Number of participants who offered this experience
Belief that particular types of strategies used with students who have disabilities create more positive perceptions.	10
Belief that they do the best they can with students who have disabilities, including ADHD.	11

Preparedness from formal teacher training for teaching students with ADHD. All of the elementary special area teachers described the formal training they received in college or teacher training courses that focused on behavior disabilities. The two invariant constituents that support this theme were 1) formal training did not prepare teachers to teach students with ADHD, 2) belief that classroom experience was the preparation they had for the challenging behaviors of ADHD.

All teacher candidates were required to take special education courses in college as a part of the special area teacher preparation programs. Out of the 12 participants, 11 of the teachers said that those classes prepared them to teach students with learning disabilities or physical disabilities. However, 100 % of the participants agreed that these courses did not specifically include training on how to teach students with ADHD. Teaching experience and lived experiences with children who have ADHD symptoms was the most common way that all of the teachers felt prepared to develop appropriate instruction for students with ADHD. The following quotes illustrated the invariant constituents that supported the theme.

“I feel as if we have more experience with ADHD behaviors now than in the past. Teacher training did not prepare me for the ones that have breakdowns or the ones that are always off task and don’t follow directions no matter what I do” (Evelyn).

“We didn’t have formal training for ADHD behaviors. We learn how to handle it through experiences. Some are on medication, so it’s inconsistent” (Mary).

“I learned through reading about ADHD myself. I have read research on health food as it pertains to ADHD. I never took a class about how to teach students with ADHD” (Ginger).

“I don’t think undergraduate courses prepared me to teach students with ADHD. Just experience and reading a lot of literature about it” (Katie).

“I was not prepared for ADHD behaviors at all. Any preparedness that I have is from my own research, experience, or interviews with the classroom teachers” (Jane).

“I was more prepared than most because I have a special education teaching certification. I learned what causes ADHD and the characteristics that are associated with it. However, my colleagues were not formally trained for the disorder like I was” (Ned).

“Coursework didn’t prepare me for ADHD. Formal training included physical limitations and adaptive PE. Experience in the classroom as prepared me” (Don).

“In the beginning of my career, I did not feel prepared at all for students with ADHD. The only class that was taught during my teacher prep program regarding students with special needs was an adaptive PE class, which focused more on how to adjust instruction to meet the needs of children with physical handicaps, not behavior” (Alan).

“I was not prepared to teach students with ADHD early on. Recently I have learned strategies through experience” (Lisa).

“I was not prepared. Any preparedness I had was from my own research or interviews with the classroom teacher and our school’s EC (Exceptional Children) coordinator” (Carol).

Summary

In this chapter, the data from the study were described to reflect the perceptions and lived experiences of elementary special area teachers who taught students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. To supplement the participants' interview data and corroborate their information where appropriate, observation notes from five of the participants' classrooms were utilized, as well as survey response data.

The results of the data were organized by research questions, themes formed within those questions, and the invariant constituents that supported the themes. Data analysis including horizontalization, reduction, and elimination were used to arrive at the invariant constituents, which are the key phrases and themes of the experience. Within each research question the theme(s) were identified, along with the key words and phrases that make up the themes. Each theme and its key words and phrases were described in this chapter.

The following themes were formed from research question 1: special area teachers' perceptions of students with ADHD and a description of how they react to students who display ADHD behaviors. For research question 2, the themes were the following: the special area teachers responded that they perceive students with ADHD as needing a special placement in the classroom during instruction and that they place the students with ADHD in a small group with students who will help them stay on task. Also, that the teachers communicated with the students' general education teachers to understand the needs of the students with ADHD and how they can best meet those needs in their special area instruction.

For research question 3, the following themes were formed: teachers had a positive attitude during the instruction of students with ADHD behaviors and of the teachers were frustrated by the large class sizes in addition to instructing students with ADHD symptoms. Research question 4 had two themes emerge: the special area teachers used specific strategies for

individualizing instruction for students with ADHD and that they were proactive with their intentions of preventing negative ADHD behaviors. For research question 5, the following themes were formed: teachers have a positive perception of themselves of teaching students with disabilities and that they felt unprepared from their formal teacher training for teaching students with ADHD.

Overall, data consistently reflected the participants as having positive attitudes and perceptions of teaching students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. This included positive self-perceptions as well as a positive attitude toward the students with ADHD. The only frustration described through their lived experiences was the large class sizes, which made it difficult to accommodate students with special needs or with ADHD. A majority, 75% of the teacher participants understood what they needed to do in order to keep students that had ADHD behaviors on task and engaged.

Specific strategies which allowed the teachers to interact positively with the students who displayed ADHD behaviors were explained by 87% of the participants. Using effective strategies was important because it enabled students with ADHD to learn to the best of their ability. This included individualizing instruction for those students, strategic physical placement in the classroom, and preventing negative behaviors. Half of the teacher participants described how they communicated with the general education teachers to gain adequate support and communication about students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. Even though this took place in 50% of the PSD schools, 86% of the participants believed it was greatly needed and vital to the success of students with special needs. All of the special area teachers explained that they were not prepared to teach students with ADHD through college courses or other formal training, but rather through classroom experience.

Fortunately for the students affected with ADHD, 75% of the participants understood the

characteristics of the disorder and that it called for classroom and instructional accommodations. These teachers said that they knew the child with ADHD couldn't always help their behavior. Likewise, 83% of the teachers sympathized with those students. Even though the participants had varied teaching experiences, 100% believed that students with ADHD were more on task when engaging in special area instruction that involved gross motor movement and visual aids. This supported Zentall's (1975) OST theoretical framework of this study. According to Lee, Miller, and Vostal, the impact of visual and physical stimulation on academic tasks provided the most academic productivity for students with behaviors related to ADHD (2013). Using movement, visual stimulation, music, and hands-on activities were common strategies among all participants during instruction of students with ADHD. Through the descriptions of the participants' lived experiences, these strategies allowed the students with ADHD to increase on task behavior and provided the teachers with a more positive perception of their disorder.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the lived experiences of elementary special area teachers with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms. Lived experiences were defined as the perceptions, attitudes, and teaching strategies that the special area teachers incorporated during the instruction of students with ADHD symptoms in their elementary classrooms. By gaining insights into the perceptions and educational experiences of elementary special area teachers with students who have ADHD, these educators may have a better understanding of their own attitudes and perceptions and how it affected their teaching practices. A teacher choosing appropriate actions based on positive attitudes was fundamental to the successful performance of individual skill levels with students who have ADHD (Harvey et al., 2014). This chapter will include a summary of the findings, a discussion of the findings, the methodological and practical implications of the study, recommendations for future research and a summary of the study.

Summary of Findings

A phenomenological approach was used to examine the perceptions and lived experiences of elementary PE, art, and music teachers. The triangular data were derived from online surveys, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations. The special area teachers that were a part of this study had varying educational experiences and knowledge about ADHD. However, the descriptions of their classroom experiences with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms were overall positive and consistent among themes that emerged. Their collective perceptions, attitudes, and descriptions of teaching methods revealed common trends as it related to the phenomenon and current literature. Research suggested that if special area teachers had the opportunity to live and participate in activities with people who have

disabilities, then their prejudice against people with disabilities would disappear. In turn, they would be able to foster positive attitudes toward people with disabilities and adapt instruction accordingly (Block, Koh, & Park, 2014). The conclusions from this study should be taken with caution, as more specific coding and descriptions should be used. The results of this study were able to extend current research on elementary special area teachers' attitudes and perceptions of teaching students with ADHD.

Research Question 1: How do elementary PE, art, and music teachers perceive and describe their lived experiences teaching students with ADHD?

The first research question was intended to explore how elementary PE, art, and music teachers perceived and described their lived experiences while teaching students with ADHD. Data from the surveys, interviews, and observations were utilized to answer question one. During the analysis of the data, two themes emerged: special area teachers' perceptions of students with ADHD and a description of how they reacted to students who displayed ADHD behaviors.

Throughout the semi-structured interview process, all of the teacher participants made reference to their perceptions, both negative and positive of students with ADHD, as well describing their day to day experiences with those students. The invariant constituents that formed the first theme were: the teachers had an overall positive perception of students with ADHD, a belief that students with ADHD were more on task when engaging in special area instruction that involved gross motor movement, a belief that students with ADHD required more redirection than other students, a belief that if proper strategies were in place, students with ADHD would be as successful as other students, and ADHD was more prevalent in today's classrooms than in the past. These constituents aligned with the literature about the importance of physical movement instruction for students with ADHD. If a student affected with attention problems was allowed to focus on movements in reaction to the environment during instruction,

then it would have produce more effective learning (Bakhiari et al., 2013).

This first theme aligned with the Theory of Planned Behavior. Block and Jeong (2012) explained that Ajzen's 1975 TPB explored the intention of special area teachers toward students with disabilities, which was determined by their attitude toward the students' behavior, perceptions of what others wanted, and the perceived ease or difficulty of instruction for students with disabilities. The second theme referred to the participants' description of how they reacted to students who displayed ADHD behaviors. Special area classes provided many stimulating visual, auditory, and physical activities for students with ADHD, which was supported by the Optimal Stimulation Theory (Zentall, 1975). The three key invariant constituents that formed this theme were selecting students with ADHD as the teacher's helper during direct instruction prevents off task behavior, remaining patient and calm while redirecting the ADHD behaviors, and having the belief that short direct instruction was more effective than lecture style instruction.

Research Question 2: What themes are identified through the perceptions the PE, art, and music teachers' perceptions regarding students with ADHD while planning for classroom instruction?

Two themes emerged within the framework of the second research question. First, 75% of the special area teachers responded that they perceived students with ADHD as needing a special placement in the classroom during instruction. For example, those teachers kept the students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms close to their desk or to the place where they delivered instruction. Those teachers also explained how they placed the students with ADHD in a small group with students who helped them stay on task. Two key invariant constituents that formed this theme were positioning the students with ADHD close to the place where the teacher delivered instruction and placing the students with ADHD in a small group with other students

who helped them stay on task. Literature supported this theme as it represented general elementary teachers' responses to students displaying ADHD behavior. Common responses were seating arrangements closer to teacher's table or next to a good student (David, 2013). One third of the teachers in the current study sat students with ADHD on the floor near visual aids and they frequently called on the child to answer a question. Another popular response by 86% of the teachers was to provide a range of activities within a period.

The second theme was that the teachers communicated with the students' general education teachers to understand the needs of the students with ADHD and how they can best meet those needs in their special area instruction. The invariant constituents that formed this theme were the belief that getting information about students from the general education teacher in the beginning of the school year was vital to student success. In addition, the belief that consistent weekly communication with the general education teachers was necessary in planning appropriate instruction for students with ADHD. Research has revealed that developing an effective educator partnership is necessary in order to prevent and intervene with students who show ADHD behaviors. For this to be successful, the partners must begin by communicating openly to determine what issues are vital (Conley, 2014).

Research Question 3: What themes are discovered through elementary PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes during the instruction of students who have ADHD?

Throughout the semi-structured interview process, all of the teacher participants explained their attitudes of students with ADHD as well as other students with disabilities during classroom instruction. Two themes emerged. First, 92% of the teachers had a positive attitude during the instruction of students with ADHD behaviors. Second, half of the teachers were frustrated by the large class sizes in addition to instructing students with ADHD symptoms.

The two key invariant constituents that formed the first theme were the teachers' belief

that they have a positive attitude toward all students, regardless of disabilities and the belief that if the activities are engaging to increase on task behavior, then their attitude was more positive. The literature reflected these constituents by stating that the function of special education was to determine students' learning needs and created a harmonious plan for the child's performance and appropriate learning environment (Ahmetoglu & Peduk, 2012). According to Ajzen's 1975 Theory of Planned Behavior, a person's perceived behavior and attitudes must be assessed in order to understand their intentions of behavior in given situations (Jeong & Block, 2013).

The literature supported the second theme of elementary special area teachers being frustrated with teaching large class sizes including students with ADHD and other disabilities. According to Almulla (2015), class size was one of the most important factors to have a great impact on elementary education. Almulla's study concluded that a class size of 15-20 students was optimal to improve the management of student behavior, improve interactive lessons, and to implement of individualized instruction (2015). The main invariant constituent that formed the second theme was the belief that class sizes were so big that the needs of students with ADHD often got overlooked. One participant said, "A lot of times disruptive, hyper, or off task behaviors get overlooked because they are so many students in the classroom at once" (Fran). Research supported this theme by explaining that even if teachers' general attitudes toward students with disabilities were positive, it was difficult to expect an effective inclusive physical education class if the teachers were burdened with large class sizes and heavy workloads (Block, Koh, & Park, 2014).

Research Question 4: How do the PE, art, and music teachers' attitudes towards students with ADHD affect their intentions of individualizing instruction for those students?

Teacher participants explained their intentions of providing individualized instruction for students with ADHD and the following themes emerged: the special area teachers used specific

strategies for individualizing instruction for students with ADHD and that they were proactive with their intentions of preventing negative ADHD behaviors. In fact, 83% of the participants used proactive strategies to prevent negative ADHD behaviors while individualizing instruction. The two key invariant constituents that formed this theme were the belief that no matter what the disability is, instruction should be differentiated for all students and the belief that if effective strategies are used, then negative ADHD behaviors can be prevented. David (2013) states, “Research indicates that classroom contexts are a challenge for children with ADHD and their teachers. A key aspect of improving the behavior of children and young people in schools involves the classroom practice of individual teachers” (p.13).

Confidence in teaching students with ADHD, knowledge of the disorder, and attitudes towards classroom practices that accommodate students with ADHD will determine instructional success (Amonn, Breuer, Doepfner, & Froelich, 2012). Therefore, a teachers’ attitudes and perceptions of ADHD were important in determining their intention of individualizing instruction. This aligned with Ajzen’s (1991) TPB which predicted a teachers’ intentions towards evaluating the symptoms of ADHD. If the teacher was more sensitive and knowledgeable about ADHD, then he or she was more likely to seek appropriate interventions for the child with ADHD to be successful in the classroom (Lee, 2014).

Research Question 5: How do the perceptions that PE, art, and music have of themselves teaching students with any type of disability affect their instruction of students with ADHD?

Two themes emerged through this research question; teachers had a positive perception of themselves of teaching students with disabilities and that they felt unprepared from their formal teacher training for teaching students with ADHD. Elementary special area teachers’ perceptions of themselves while they engaged in activities and instruction with students who had

disabilities were 92% positive. The two key invariant constituents that supported the theme of positive self- perception were the belief that particular types of strategies used with students who have disabilities result in more positive perceptions and the belief that they do the best they can with students who have disabilities, including ADHD. Among the participants, 83% noted similar types of strategies that kept students with ADHD behaviors on task. When those teachers used those strategies during instruction, a higher self- perception of their teaching abilities with those students occurred. These strategies included using gross motor movement activities and visual aids for direct instruction. This supported the Zentall's (1975) OST theoretical framework of this study. Special area classes provided stimulating visual, auditory, and physical activities for students with ADHD, which enhanced instruction, allowed for increased time on task and decreased teacher frustration with ADHD behaviors (Zentall, 1975).

All of the elementary special area teachers commented about the formal training they received in college or teacher training courses that focused on behavior disabilities. The two invariant constituents that supported this theme were formal training did not prepare teachers to teach students with ADHD and the belief that classroom experience was the preparation they had for the challenging behaviors of ADHD. Every participant explained that all teacher candidates in their teacher preparation programs were required to take special education courses in college. In addition, 92% of the teachers stated that these classes prepared them to teach students with learning disabilities or physical disabilities. However, 100 % of the participants agreed that these courses did not specifically include training on how to teach students with ADHD. Research supported this theme by explaining that even in the absence of information obtained from formal training on ADHD behaviors, teachers have good insight into the learning difficulties and problems of children affected with the disorder. This had positive implications in terms of enabling early intervention efforts.

Research has defined the need for a greater appreciation of the cultural complexities and shared belief systems and values that influenced how a condition like ADHD is conceptualized, which would determine appropriate interventions that were designed through formal training (David, 2013). Ajzen's (1991) TPB aligned with this theme as it had been used in predicting a teachers' intentions towards evaluating the symptoms of ADHD. If the teacher was more knowledgeable and had been formally trained on implementing specific strategies for ADHD behaviors, then he or she was more likely to seek appropriate interventions for the child with ADHD to be successful in the classroom (Lee, 2014).

Discussion

At the time of this study, in North Carolina, there were approximately three to five students in each elementary special area classroom within five schools that were diagnosed with ADHD or displayed ADHD symptoms. Three of the elementary schools were located in rural communities with a more diverse cultural and socio-economic make-up than the other two elementary schools in the same school district. The other two schools were located in a coastal community with a majority of middle to upper class citizens. However, these varied demographics within the school district did not have a significant impact on the data analysis in this study. The participants' responses to the semi-structured survey and interviews were consistent in revealing common attitudes, perceptions, and reactions towards students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms.

From the triangulation of the data and the framework of the research questions, central themes were discovered through a reflective process to gain the full nature and essence of the phenomenon. These seven central themes that emerged were the following: 1) special area teachers had an overall positive perception of students with ADHD during instruction and descriptions of how they reacted to students who displayed ADHD behaviors. 2) teacher

frustration of the large classes which included students with ADHD symptoms, 3) special area teachers used specific strategies to individualize instruction for students with ADHD, 4) special area teachers communicated with the students' general education teachers to understand the needs of the students with ADHD, 5) special area teachers were proactive with their intentions of preventing negative ADHD behaviors, 6) special area teachers held a positive perception of themselves when they taught students with disabilities, 7) the teachers felt unprepared from their formal teacher training for teaching students with ADHD.

These themes were consistent with the literature review. According to Block, Koh, and Park (2014), a PE teacher that had more experience with students who had ADHD or other disabilities was more likely to build a positive attitude and inclusive physical education classroom. It was evident through the participants' interview responses and through the classroom observations, that the teachers who used consistent redirection, visual aids, positive support, small group instruction, and step by step directions with students who had ADHD showed no difference in achievement levels compared to other students in the class. This would suggest that these strategies were critical to promote high levels of engagement and on task behavior with students who have ADHD or display ADHD symptoms.

Beike and Zentall (2012) explained that students with ADHD do not possess skill deficits, but rather performance deficits and need to be stimulated in the form of physical activity and movement during lessons in order to sustain attention. Furthermore, ADHD behaviors reduce opportunities to learn, inhibit engagement, and may contribute to high rates of school drop-out. When added stimulation and tasks were experienced through different senses, studies reported beneficial results (DuPaul & Jimerson, 2014). Modifying the classroom environment to provide more hands-on exploration materials and visually appealing displays has been shown to be effective for students with ADHD (Astramovich & Hamilton, 2016). This supported the

theoretical framework of Vygotsky's Constructivism Theory and Zentall's (1975) OST (Lee, Miller, & Vostal, 2013). By incorporating optimal stimulation in the classroom, special area teachers have had a more positive attitude toward students with ADHD (Miller, et al., 2013). OST envelops Vygotsky's theory because individuals seek input and engagement from their environment when they are under-stimulated (Zentall, 1975).

Grizenkob, Harveya, Jooberb, Presse, and Wilkinson (2014) stated

Children with ADHD represent a significant number of students in school systems worldwide who often experience difficulties in performing fundamental movement skills. Physical educators suggested that they are not well-informed about behaviors of children with disabilities, especially attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). (p.205)

This was also similar to the current study, in which the PE teachers' comments about their lack of formal training with students who have ADHD was an important factor in how they planned for individualized instruction. For example, Alan explained how he did not feel prepared at all in the beginning of his teaching career and received formal training on adaptive PE only, not for behavior disorders. As he became an experienced classroom teacher, he felt more prepared to handle the increasing numbers of students with ADHD in his classes. Previous training and experience impacted the type of instruction, personal attitude, and perceptions of students with hidden disabilities, such as ADHD (Ahmed & Eman, 2013).

Block et al. stated (2014), "Many have argued that preparing peers is a critical component for successful inclusion in physical education" (p.241). Research also supported this same attitude in all special area classes. A collective sense of positive attitudes towards inclusion led to a more optimistic and collaborative group effort to include all students, regardless of abilities and disabilities into the special area classrooms as well as the general education classes (Urton & Wilbert, 2014). This research aligned with the participants' attitudes about working with their

general education peers in order to provide a better educational environment for students with ADHD. For example, three of the participants described their collaboration with the general education teachers in their school as vital to understand individual students' needs and how to keep those students engaged and on task. They consistently shared ideas and strategies. This attitude was apparent in the surveys as well. No participant felt they were not supported by general education teachers regarding the instruction of students with all disabilities, including ADHD. In fact, 38.46% reported that they feel they are supported sometimes while 61.54% reported that they felt they were always supported by general education teachers, administration, and special education teachers in regards to working with students who had ADHD or ADHD symptoms.

A teacher's perception of themselves was revealed as an important theme in discovering the lived experiences and attitudes of special area teachers during the instruction of students with ADHD. According to Grizenkob, Harveya, Wilkinson, Presse, and Jooberb (2014) "Disability-specific training produced better perceptions of self-competence for teaching children with ADHD." (p. 205). PE teachers who had a positive view of themselves and felt confident in teaching students with disabilities had more intention to do so and do it appropriately (Baghurst, 2014). This attitude was discovered through interviews and observations of the current study's PE teachers. Alan and Hannah both remained patient and calm while redirecting off task behavior of students with ADHD during classroom instruction. They discussed in their interviews how they consistently used strategies that had proven successful in the past and did not become frustrated with the individual students. This aligned with Ajzen's (1991) TBP, which explained that a person's perceived behavior and attitudes must be known in order to understand their intentions of behavior in given situations (Jeong & Block, 2013). Teachers and students must work together to advocate for the accommodations necessary to meet their needs (Whipple

& VanWeelden, 2014).

As the individual textural and structural descriptions the participants' experiences came to light, the meanings and essences of the phenomenon were revealed (Moustakas, 1994). Attitudes and beliefs towards students should be a priority in educational change. If teachers recognized the particular attitudes they had towards students with disabilities, then they would understand how those attitudes affect their instruction (Jones, 2011). In the current study, it was evident that the special area teacher's positive attitudes and intentions towards students with ADHD while planning and implementing engaging instruction increased the students' on task behavior.

Implications

In this study, I wanted to answer the five research questions regarding elementary special area teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and intentions of teaching students with ADHD. This section offers implications for improving educational practices for elementary PE, art, and music teachers, support staff, and administration to increase time on task for students with ADHD in the special area classrooms.

Elementary Special Area Teachers

A key implication for elementary special area teachers was having appropriate knowledge of ADHD and how to best support students affected with the disorder in the classroom. Unfortunately, there are still low levels of teacher awareness, training, and management of students with ADHD. In turn, this affected the attitudes and perceptions that teachers had toward students with ADHD and ADHD symptoms (David, 2013). Specific training for special area teachers on effective strategies to use with students who displayed ADHD behaviors in the classroom would allow them to have consistent methods in place that would lessen teacher frustration and increase student engagement.

Early intervention training for teachers who teach students with behavioral disabilities was important due to the complexity of the movement skill problems experienced by children with ADHD in art, music, and PE. This was compounded by a lack of understanding of the disorder by their teachers (Harvey, et. al 2014). Therefore, teacher training that would occur every school year to address ADHD specific problems would help the entire elementary staff better meet the needs of students with ADHD.

Elementary Support Staff

Teacher training on the instructional challenges of ADHD would need to be taught by support staff such as; behavioral specialists, psychologists, or peer educators who consistently have had success in keeping students with ADHD on task and engaged in classroom instruction. According to the research, psychologists need to advocate for the implementation of evidence based assessment and intervention strategies that are to be used by all teachers to support the school performance of students with ADHD (DuPaul & Jimerson, 2014). Astramovich and Hamilton (2016) stated, “Teachers may specifically collaborate with school counselors to help identify and implement conflict resolution interventions and improved communication strategies for students with ADHD” (p.458).

Research also explained that the additional in-service trainings were identified as the highest predictor of successful inclusion classrooms. Those trainings provided specific strategies for modifying instruction to meet the behavioral, emotional, and academic demands of students with special needs (Block et al., 2014). A supportive school atmosphere among support staff, administration, and all types of teachers were needed to improve the perception of students with ADHD. Teachers who were formally trained to teach students with special needs and behavior deficits such as ADHD were vital in providing training for their staff (Urton & Wilbert, 2014).

Elementary Administrative Staff

There were implications for the administrative staff of elementary schools in regards to class sizes and scheduling of special area classes. The findings of this study have shown that 50% of the elementary special area participants felt that their class sizes were too large to effectively teach students with disabilities, including students with ADHD. In PSD, special area classes were larger than general education classes due to scheduling conflicts. One third of the elementary special area teachers in PSD were required to teach combined classes in one class period due to time constraints to offer their class each day to each grade level. While 83% of the PE teacher participants said that they try to do their best to provide strategies and instruction that were appropriate and engaging for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms, the large classes restricted their efforts.

The implication that was communicated through the PE, art, and music teacher participants in this study was that creating smaller class sizes were necessary to provide the most effective instruction for all students and especially ones with special needs, such as ADHD. This could be achieved through the administrative staff by hiring more special area teachers for one school. The administrative staff could also limit class sizes to fewer than 25 at one time. Elementary PE, art, and music teachers teach hundreds of students each day in sometimes overcrowded classrooms. Therefore, the classroom environment and their instruction had a great influence on students with ADHD (Kelly-McHale, 2013).

Limitations

Despite the insights gained in the textural and structural descriptions of the participants' lived experiences in teaching students with ADHD, limitations were evident in this study. Moustakas (1994) explained that methods of reflection occur throughout the phenomenological process that lead to the analysis and synthesis of the essential descriptions of experience.

Essential descriptions of the elementary special area teachers' experiences were achieved in this study, even though the sample was small. The findings and implications were based on only 12 elementary special area teachers. A majority of the participants were female. While there was an equal representation of PE, art, and music teachers in the study, there were varying years of teaching experience represented. Furthermore, all of the teachers taught in the same south eastern North Carolina school district. This limited the collection of data to a small geographic area. The findings might not have been representative of a larger population, especially in a larger school district in North Carolina or another state. Phenomenological research is a method to describe common themes among individuals experiencing the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Common themes were revealed in this study. However, with a larger sampling among several school districts, different themes may have emerged, which would affect the composite meaning and essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Another limitation to this study related to the researcher's experience with ADHD herself. Epoche was used to set aside pre- conceived notions, prejudices, and predispositions, but it did not eliminate the reality of everything (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher was a teacher in the same school district as the participants, although not in the same school. She had two sons diagnosed with ADHD and knew a lot about the disorder as a parent as well as a teacher. This might have altered the nature of reality for the researcher during the reflection process. As the participants articulated their feelings, attitudes, perceptions, and experiences, the researcher reflected on the descriptions just as they were without incorporating her own experiences and knowledge about ADHD. However, given the open-ended nature of the interviews with the participants, the researcher engaged in social conversations which involved an exchange of ideas, thoughts, and perceptions. This led to rich conversations, steeped in authentic descriptions and an expression of beliefs, which aided in the accounting of the participants' lived experiences. It also

presented a challenge to the researcher in bracketing her own attitudes and intentions regarding instruction of students with ADHD. According to Moustakas (1994), “In the back and forth of social interaction, the challenge is to discover what is really true of the phenomena of interpersonal knowledge and experience” (p. 57).

Recommendations for Future Research

This current study focused on the perceptions of elementary special area teachers’ lived experiences with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms. Further studies are recommended to understand their attitudes and intentions of teaching students with ADHD. This would include how elementary special area teachers perceive their ability to work with students who have ADHD and their intentions of providing individualized instruction for those students. One such study may include the expansion of the number of participants and geographical area. This study was based on data gathered from 12 elementary special area teachers in five elementary schools in one school district in south eastern North Carolina. Therefore, expanding the research to include a wider range of school districts throughout the state of North Carolina may provide more reliable data that is representative of the state’s special area teachers’ population.

Further research should also include criterion samples of an equal number of male and female teachers. A sample that includes similar lengths of teaching experience would further validate the study. This would shed light on the attitudes from teachers who have all experienced instruction with students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms for about the same length of time. The current study showed that 41% of the inexperienced teachers did not realize that students who have ADHD have emotional as well as behavioral struggles. Typically, a novice elementary PE, art, or music teacher had little intention of educational planning for students with ADHD, as they might not have seen it as a medical disorder (Gerrity et al., 2013).

A final recommendation for future research consists of modifying and expanding this study to include middle school grades: sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. Students in those grades that have ADHD symptoms or who were diagnosed at a younger age with ADHD still struggle with the disorder. These struggles are especially apparent with the higher demands of art and music instruction in middle school grades. Based on Zentall's (1991) OST, Lee, Miller, and Vostal (2013) suggested that middle schools were not well prepared to address the needs of children with ADHD. They felt that the Optimal Stimulation Theory could provide some direction for school-based interventions. Current research had included studies of general education teachers, either in elementary or middle school classrooms. General education teachers attributed their concerns and frustration in teaching students who displayed ADHD symptoms to a lack of knowledge and training about the disorder (David, 2013). If the perceptions and intentions of elementary or middle school special area teachers were examined and understood, then the problems they perceived as barriers to the effective instruction of students with ADHD could be resolved (Beyer et al., 2012).

All of the elementary special area teachers in this study discussed that when they have positive attitudes towards students with disabilities they are more likely to accommodate and facilitate successful class participation. For future research, it would be beneficial to students who have ADHD to explore the attitudes, perceptions, and intentions of their middle school special area teachers. Research showed that running a successful inclusive PE, art, or music program should consider not only the teachers' positive attitudes about inclusive education but also improvement of prejudice and discriminatory stance (Block et al., 2014). If further research could discover the attitudes and perceptions of all kindergarten through eighth grade teachers with students who have ADHD, then more training, collaboration, and effective teaching practices could evolve.

Summary

This study sought to gain a better understanding of elementary special area teachers' lived experiences of teaching students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms. The findings for this study were based on the participants' perceptions and attitudes of planning for and implementing instruction of students with ADHD and ADHD symptoms. Although data was taken from a small sample of 12 elementary special area teachers in one school district, the consistencies in how they described their perceived lived experiences were very similar to one another, which led to key findings in several areas.

Embedded throughout the participants' interviews and observations, as well as the Zentall's (1975) OST theoretical framework of this study was the belief that no matter what the disability is, instruction should be engaging and differentiated for all students. Therefore, if effective strategies were used, then negative ADHD behaviors could be prevented. Research supported this belief as it explained the incorporation of optimal stimulation in the instruction of students with ADHD as the basic principal for increasing on task behavior. If art teachers provided optimal stimulation to increase time on task for students with ADHD, then those teachers would have more positive perceptions of the students (Amonn et al., 2012). Music teachers were likely to have many students in their classes that had ADHD or ADHD symptoms and much of what a music teacher needed to be successful with those students they already possessed. For example, providing opportunities for movement such as dancing or hand motions were a great way to encourage positive behavior (Price, 2012).

During the interviews and observations, the participants described the movement activities and visual aids they used to engage students with ADHD, which increased the students' time on task. For example, students with ADHD and ADHD symptoms excelled in music because the information was presented in a variety of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic methods,

which provided the necessary stimulation for those students to remain on task (Darrow, 2012). This not only improved the behavior of the students with ADHD, but the attitude and perception of the special area teacher towards those students was improved as well. This supported Ajzen's TPB because a person's attitudes, environmental influences, and perceived control beliefs were the driving forces behind a person's intent to act (1991).

One common theme among 86% of the participants centered on the belief that getting information from the general education teacher about students who have ADHD was vital the students' success. These special area teachers reported that discussing the students weekly or daily with the general education teachers greatly improved the ADHD behaviors. Collaboration among all teachers provided more consistent planning for instruction that supported the special needs of students with ADHD. Special education teachers should offer suggestions to general education teachers, including special area teachers, for successful classroom interventions of students with ADHD. This would better prepare all teachers and provide a more positive perception of the disorder (Bell et al., 2011).

The implications of this study for elementary special area teachers included the need for specific teacher training to manage the classroom behavior of students with ADHD. This reflected the research that called for a change in teacher training so that all students will be able to achieve to the best of their social and academic capabilities (Arteaga, Perez, & Reyes, 2014).

Despite the need for training on the management of ADHD behaviors, 100% of the special area teacher participants reported that their classroom experiences were the best preparation they had for providing appropriate and engaging instruction for students with ADHD. The literature explained that teachers learned how to provide adaptive instruction for students with ADHD through their lived experiences in working with the students, rather than from formal training (Darrow, 2012). This was similar to 100 % of the participants' responses in

this study because college courses did not specifically include training on how to teach students with ADHD. Teaching experience and lived experiences with children who have ADHD symptoms was the most common way that the teacher participants felt prepared to develop appropriate instruction for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms.

The findings of this study showed that elementary special area teachers had positive perceptions of themselves while they engaged in activities and instruction with students who had ADHD. One of the gaps in the literature revealed teachers' perceptions of themselves and their confidence in teaching students with disabilities. Teacher attitudes and the interactions of teachers with students who have disabilities was an integral part of student success (Whipple & VanWeelden, 2014). The common belief among 92% of the participants was that effective types of strategies used with students who have disabilities resulted in more positive attitudes towards the students.

It is necessary to fill the gap in research that examines the imbalances in special area teacher perceptions of students with ADHD. Similar to studies that have revealed the attitudes of general education teachers with ADHD, this study used in depth and open ended interviews and natural observations to better understand the attitudes and lived experiences that PE, art, and music teachers have about students with ADHD. It examined how the teacher participant attitudes and perceptions were formed and the influence it had on their teaching experiences. This was significant because a teacher's feelings and opinions towards their students greatly affected the students' educational and behavioral success (Peduc & Ahmetoglu, 2012). If we are to increase the academic and behavioral success of students with ADHD, then the intentions of all teachers, including PE, art, and music need to be examined to understand how to induce positive educational change.

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Appendix A: Letter to Superintendent's Designee and Response

RE: Permission to Conduct Research

Dear _____,

I am writing to request permission to conduct a study the elementary schools in your school district. I am currently enrolled in the Educational Curriculum and Instruction program at Liberty University and am in the process of writing my Doctoral Dissertation. The study is to understand the phenomenon of special area teachers and their lived experiences with students who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

I plan to survey elementary special area teachers who teach kindergarten through 5th grade using qualitative open-ended and multiple choice questions through an online survey tool. I will conduct open-ended interviews with elementary special area teachers who teach students with ADHD in kindergarten through 5th grade. I will observe a random sample of the special area teachers that I interviewed in their natural classroom settings. Teachers will not be identified with their specific names, rather they will be identified using pseudonyms.

Interested participants will be asked to sign a letter of consent for participation. There is no cost to the school district, the school, or the individuals in order to participate in the study. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes of the teachers' time. The face to face or phone interviews should not last longer than 20 minutes and will be conducted at the time and place of the participant's choosing. I will observe the teachers in their classroom while remaining out of view from the students. I will not speak to the teachers during the observations.

The results of the survey will be pooled for the dissertation report and individual's opinions of the study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. Should the study be published as a manuscript, only the pooled results will be published.

The time I devote to this dissertation process will take place during personal hours and

not during the school day. The interviews will be conducted after school at a convenient time determined by the participants. When I observe the participants in their classroom, I will use no more than 2 school days to complete the observations. I will use my personal leave time to do so.

Your approval to conduct this research will be greatly appreciated. I will follow up with a telephone call next week, and I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. You may contact me at my Liberty University email. If you grant permission to conduct the research, please sign and return the signed form in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Sincerely,

Kellie Henry

Liberty University Doctoral Candidate

(Superintendent designee) preliminary permission response on 11/4/2015:

Pending IRB approval, I grant permission to conduct the study to discover PE, art, and music teachers' lived experiences in_____County.

Appendix B: Email Sent to Principals and Responses

RE: Permission to Conduct Research in Elementary Schools

Dear Elementary Principals,

I am writing to request permission to conduct a study in the elementary schools. I am currently enrolled in the Educational Curriculum and Instruction program at Liberty University and am in the process of writing my Doctoral Dissertation. The study is to understand the phenomenon of special area teachers (PE, music, and art) and their lived experiences with students who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

The data collection won't begin until I receive approval from the superintendent and the Institutional Review Board, but I need your permission to contact your special area teachers (PE, music, and art) through email. If you grant permission, I will contact you to obtain the email addresses of the potential participants. The data collection will begin when I survey the interested special area teachers with open-ended online questions through an online survey no later than January 2016. I would like to conduct open-ended interviews with your special area teachers no later than February, 2016. I would like to observe a random sample of the special area teachers that I interviewed in their natural classroom settings no later than March, 2016.

Teachers will not be identified with their specific names, rather they will be identified using pseudonyms. Interested participants will be asked to sign a letter of consent for participation. There is no cost to the school district, the school, or the individuals in order to participate in the study. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes of the teachers' time. The face to face or phone interviews should not last longer than 20 minutes and will be conducted at the time and place of the participant's choosing. I will observe the teachers in their classroom while remaining out of view from the students. I will not speak to the teachers during the observations. The observations will not be video recorded.

The results of the survey will be pooled for the dissertation report and individual's opinions of the study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. Should the study be published as a manuscript, only the pooled results will be published.

The time I devote to this dissertation process will take place during personal hours and not during the school day. The interviews will be conducted after school at a convenient time determined by the participants. When I observe the participants in their classroom, I will use no more than 2 school days to complete all of the observations. I will use my personal leave time to do so. Your permission to conduct this research will be greatly appreciated. I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. You may contact me at my Liberty University email. I appreciate your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Kellie Henry

This form will be sent to each school principal to conduct the observations.

I _____ (print name) the principal of _____ elementary school grant permission for Kellie Henry to conduct observations of the special area teachers who are volunteer participants of her dissertation study during classroom instruction on _____ (date and time). I understand that the researcher will be a nonparticipant observer of the participants teaching students with ADHD in their classrooms. The researcher will not have direct interaction with the teachers and students. The data collected from the observations will be shared with the participants only and will be kept confidential. The participants' feedback of the observation data will be considered in the data analysis.

(signature of principal)

(date)

I, Kellie Henry, the researcher in this study state that the above information is correct and “PSD” protocol for collecting research data will be followed.’

(signature)

(date)

Responses of Principals in October, 2015:

Responses of Principals since October, 2015:

Principal of “Roosevelt” Elementary: Permission is granted and emails of participants were provided.

Principal of “Kennedy” Elementary: Permission is granted but more information about the study will be necessary before I contact the special area teachers.

Principal of “Jefferson” Elementary: No response. A second email was sent on November 6, 2015. This principal responded on January 5, 2016 and granted permission.

Principal of “Lincoln” Elementary: Permission is granted. Names and emails of participants were provided.

Principal of “Washington”: Permission is granted and emails of participants were provided.

Appendix C: Selection of Participants

The participants for the study will be drawn from a convenience sample of elementary PE, art, and music teachers in one school district in southeastern North Carolina. The special area teachers will be contacted using an introduction email and short survey through an online survey website. A consent form will be included in the opening page of the survey. This initial contact email will include delivery and read receipt. A follow up email will be sent out in 10 days to the teachers I have not heard from. A second follow up email will be sent 10 days from that point if I have not heard from all of the teachers.

Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time. Consents will be compiled and organized by schools. The participants and schools will be known as pseudonyms. Alan, Bev, and Carol are participants at Roosevelt Elementary. Don, Evelyn, and Fran are participants at Kennedy Elementary. Greg, Hannah, and Isaac are participants at Jefferson Elementary. Jack, Katie, and Lisa are participants at Lincoln Elementary. Mary, Ned, and Oscar are participants at Washington Elementary.

The participants will receive the first data collection, the qualitative survey through an online survey website link located in the recruitment email. After the survey data has been compiled and organized, the interviews will begin. The participants will choose the date, time, and location of the interviews. Phone interviews will also be an option for the participants to choose. After the interview data has been compiled and analyzed, observations will begin. Randomization will be used to select participants for the observation in this study. This will be performed by assigning random numbers to the participants. The numbers will be entered into an electronic program that will scramble the numbers and select four of the numbers as the observation participants. The participants who are chosen will be observed for at least one half

hour as they are engaged with the students who have ADHD in their classroom during instructional time. If a selected participant does not want to be observed, then another participant will be selected through the same random process. I will use a personal leave day to visit the four participants at their school setting on a school day that the participants consent to.

Appendix D: Surveys

The multiple choice and open-ended Pilot survey questions are as follows:

1. What special area do you teach?
2. How long have you been a classroom teacher?
3. Have you been trained on how to teach students with special needs, including emotional and behavioral disorders in your content area? If yes, please explain the type of training you have had.
4. Was the training for inclusion of students with special needs beneficial for your instructional practices? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain what could have made it better.
5. Has teaching students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms has become more of an issue in the last few years of your teaching career? If you are a beginning teacher, are you surprised at the number of students who display attention deficit behaviors?
6. Are the students who have ADHD or symptoms of ADHD a disruption to your instructional time? Why or not?
7. Do the students in your classroom with ADHD or ADHD symptoms stay on task or do they need constant redirection? Explain.
8. Are the students who have ADHD or symptoms of ADHD capable of staying on task and completing activities at the same level of engagement as their peers?
9. What instructional techniques, materials, or activities do you feel are most effective for students with ADHD in your content area?
10. What is your overall perception of students with ADHD related behaviors?
11. Is your content area engaging for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms?
12. Are you confident in teaching students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms?
13. What do you think needs to be done in order to increase time on task for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms in your content area?
14. Do you receive support from the regular education teachers, administration, or special education teachers in regards to working with the students who have ADHD or ADHD symptoms?
15. These questions will be edited according to the Pilot study results.

Appendix E: Interviews

The initial open-ended interview questions based on the Research Questions are listed here. The questions will change according to the Pilot study participants' responses. The interview conversations during the main study interview will prompt changes in the questions.

1. What is your understanding of the term ADHD or ADHD symptoms?
2. Please describe your teaching experiences in the past and present with students who have ADHD or who display ADHD symptoms.
3. In what ways were you prepared or unprepared to teach students with ADHD?
4. What ADHD behaviors do you feel are challenging?
5. How do you respond to those behaviors?
6. Please describe your perceptions of students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms when they are participating in class activities.
7. Do you have a positive or negative attitude towards students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms during instruction? Why do you think you have that attitude?
8. What is your intention of providing for the individual needs of students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms?
9. What is your perception of yourself during instruction of students with other types of disabilities? How does this affect your teaching of students with ADHD?
10. How do you plan for instruction for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms?

Appendix F: Protocol for Research within the Setting

In order to conduct research within the school district that will serve as the setting of the study permission must be obtained from the school superintendent and the University's IRB. The following form must be completed and returned to the Superintendent for approval:

Name: _____
 Are you a current
 employee? _____
 Reason for
 Research: _____

Statement of Problem: _____

Describe Methodology in Detail:

Describe Management Plan:

Attach copies of all surveys, parent letters, and/or release forms to be utilized in the research. Also, attach a copy of the institutional review board's approval, if appropriate. If a copy of the institutional review board's letter is not appropriate, explain why.

For the purpose of these procedures, research is defined as any data collection from the participating school district or staff, including, but not limited to, interviews, videotaping, data review, and/or surveys of staff or students. While selected data is available through DPI, the staff cannot be responsible for collecting, analyzing, or compiling data for the purpose of individual or agency data research. These procedures do not include data collected by the school staff as a part of job responsibilities.

Appendix G: Designee of Superintendent's Permission Form

This signed permission form will be included in the letter to the designee to the superintendent for her to mail to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.

I, _____ Designee to the Superintendent of "PSD"

Schools grant permission for Kellie Henry to conduct doctoral dissertation research using volunteer participants that teach PE, art, and music classes at five elementary schools within the district. I understand that the results of the survey will be pooled for the dissertation report and individual's opinions of the study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. Should the study be published as a manuscript, only the pooled results will be published.

Signature of Superintendent's Designee

Appendix H: Letter Sent to Pilot Principals and Responses

RE: Permission to Conduct Pilot Research in Elementary Schools

Dear Elementary Principals,

I am a 3rd grade teacher. I understand that you know my principal. I am writing to request permission to conduct a pilot study in the elementary schools that you serve. I am currently enrolled in the Educational Curriculum and Instruction program at Liberty University and am in the process of writing my Doctoral Dissertation. The study is to understand the phenomenon of special area teachers (PE, music, and art) and their lived experiences with students who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

I need your permission to contact your special area teachers (PE, music, and art). The data collection will begin after securing International Review Board Approval. The first data collection will be a survey that I will send to the special area teachers with open-ended online questions and consent form through an online survey website. Next, I will conduct open-ended phone interviews with your special area teachers.

Teachers will not be identified with their specific names, rather they will be identified based on their content, gender, the school's geographical location- rural, urban, and suburban, and the school's Title 1 and non-Title 1 designation. Interested participants will be asked to sign a letter of consent for participation. There is no cost to the school district, the school, or the individuals in order to participate in the study. The survey should take no more than 15 minutes of the teachers' time. The phone interviews should not last longer than 30 minutes and will be conducted at the time of the participant's choosing.

The results of the survey will be pooled for the dissertation report and individual's opinions of the study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. Should the study be published as a manuscript, only the pooled results will be published.

The time I devote to this dissertation process will take place during personal hours and not during the school day. The interviews will be conducted after school at a convenient time determined by the participants.

Your permission to conduct this pilot research will be greatly appreciated. I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. You may contact me at my Liberty University email. I appreciate your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Kellie Henry

Appendix I: Peer Observer Documentation

In order to interview teachers and obtain their disclosure in identifying how many students they have in their classroom with ADHD symptoms, the following statement is provided. The statement is from the researcher's principal which serves as documentation of her role as a peer observer for the county. The researcher will interview teachers and inquire as to how many students in their classrooms have ADHD symptoms. She will observe teachers in their natural teaching environment with students who have ADHD symptoms.

I, _____, a principal for "PSD" school district acknowledges that Kellie Henry, the researcher in this dissertation study is a certified peer observer for the county. She is allowed to observe and evaluate teachers as they are delivering instruction in their natural teaching environment.

Signature of Principal

Appendix J Summary of Data Collection

Participants	Survey Completed	Date of Interview	Interview Medium	Date of Observation
April	6/9/2016	6/29/2016	phone	
Alan	5/24/2016	5/25/2016	In person	5/25/2016
Carol	6/6/2016	6/7/2016	In person	6/7/2016
Don	5/26/2016	5/26/2016	phone	
Evelyn	5/24/2016	6/10/2016	phone	
Fran	5/19/2016	5/31/2016	In person	5/31/2016
Ginger	5/19/2016	5/24/2016	In person	5/24/2016
Hannah	5/20/2016	5/31/16	In person	
Jane	5/24/2016	5/25/2016	phone	
Katie	5/24/2016	5/26/2016	phone	
Lisa	5/19/2016	5/31/2016	In person	
Lyla	5/9/2016	5/13/2016	In person	
Mary	6/10/2016	5/31/2016	In person	5/31/2016
Matt	5/9/2016	5/13/2016	In person	
Ned	5/20/2016	6/10/2016	phone	
Spencer	5/9/2016	5/13/2016	In person	

Appendix K: Structured Qualitative Survey Questions and Responses

Structured Survey Questions and Percentage of Responses

- Q4) What is your overall perception of students with ADHD related behaviors?
 7% negative
 93% positive
- Q7) Is your content area engaging for students with ADHD symptoms?
 100% very engaging
- Q9). Are you confident in teaching students with ADHD symptoms?
 84% very confident,
 16% slightly confident
- Q11).Have you been trained on how to teach students with special needs, including emotional and behavioral disorders in your content area?
 46.15% yes
 7.69% no
 46.15% very little
- Q12)..Has teaching students with ADHD become more of an issue in the last few years of your teaching career?
 39% yes
 61% no
- Q13) Are the students who have ADHD symptoms capable of staying on task and completing activities at the same level of engagement as their peers?
 15.38% most of the time,
 7.69% no, hardly ever,
 76.92% varies, depending on activity
- Q15)..Do you feel that you are supported by the regular education teachers, administration, or special education teachers in regards to working with the students who have ADHD symptoms?
 62% yes,
 38% no
-

Appendix L: Open-Ended Survey Responses

Q5) Was the training for inclusion of students with special needs was beneficial for your instructional practices? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain what would have made it better.

“Yes, it was beneficial as it made me aware of symptoms and best practices when working with students with special needs. At the same time, more training on a larger variety of special needs would have been even more beneficial”.

“YES! In college : Adaptive equipment and Modification of activities Workshops: Peer to peer coaching activities (high levels lifting up lower levels)”

“No...I have asked for specific training in the county for years, as it relates to the arts. When I graduated with my BA in 1975, Special Needs-There was no formal training. There were few resources if any. Over the years I have had to ask/collaborate/read/find resources that would make me a better teacher and help meet the needs EC students. The EC students that push-in with regular ed. are students I know of and can modify the projects. But very often they are able to grasp the lesson and produce art to the best of their ability. I have art buddies that help. The EC teachers need to keep us informed and meet with us quarterly; need to understand the disability; need to understand the behaviors and how to manage the student...”

“no”

“No, I have learned through experience”

“Yes, there was a lot of accommodations given for various special needs”.

“While I have not had training, it was not in my content area. It would be nice to have follow-up training with ideas and challenges specific to Music”.

“Yes the training was beneficial. The last training I received was in an undergrad college course. It educated me on the importance of scaffolding/differentiating lessons to include

children of all abilities”.

“Yes, because I would not have known how to relate to them if I had not been taught.”

“Yes, for small group settings or Adapted PE only”.

“I believe it was beneficial when it relates to specific students, but when dealing with general needs, not as effective”.

“Years ago when I began teaching (early 1980's), the special needs coordinator in NHC came to my junior high, at the time and worked with me one on one so that I could teach the special needs children at that school. As far as classes, if I chose to take a class it was on my own time”.

Q6) Are the students who have ADHD or symptoms of ADHD a disruption to your instructional time? Please explain why or why not in one sentence.

“In my opinion, they can be if you allow them to be in your classroom. In my classroom, they were not as I made sure to develop positive rapport with all my students and plan as well as teach my lessons in order for students with ADHD not to get bored with too much verbal instruction”.

“Students that show restlessness can be used during the visual and physical instructional time for examples / helpers to get them involved while being on task”.

“Yes, they get off task very easily. Have to stay on them to keep up.”

“Not all the time, depends on the day”

“Not really, they just fidget a little more or need to stand while working. Sometimes they have a need for more information because their brains are working a little over time.”

“Yes, they disrupt demonstrations when I am trying to give cues.”

“Sometimes they need verbal redirections to continue the group activity”.

“Yes, at times they are. Students are aware of behavioral expectations and when those

expectations are not met, intentionally or unintentionally, the teachers attention is taken away from the greater goal of classroom learning”.

“For the most part yes. Very disruptive. But as a specialist, unless we asked specific questions to the classroom teacher, such as "does such and such have ADHD?", we can only guess that is what is the problem as his/her behaviors exhibit those signs. Many students who exhibit ADHD behaviors have NOT been diagnosed. Parents have not, won't”.

“Absolutely. Especially those that cannot control themselves (perhaps not on medication, forgot to take medication or it's worn off) and do not respond to strategies that will allow me to continue to teach and work with all students. Sadly the other students are aware of the student's behavior and sometimes tell me how the classroom teacher handles the student.”

“No, rowdy kids are a normal part of my day. Very often the rowdy ones are performing artists and I am glad to have them in my program”.

“No because we are always moving and I feel that helps with their attention.”

“Yes because I spend valuable instructional time dealing with the student situation and it takes away from the other students.”

Q8) Do the students in your classroom with ADHD or ADHD symptoms stay on task?
(answer yes or no) If not, do they need constant redirection? (answer yes or no) If yes, indicate how often during a class period they need redirection.

“Yes, they stay on task. The only times I found them needing any redirection was when whole group instruction took longer than planned”.

“No, depending on the activity but redirection can occur during transitional periods when new instruction is needed for the activity”.

“No. The activity and level of engagement may help. But if I am doing art history/art analysis, it may be a lost cause. I will ask the student to verbally answer my questions and then

get them to write the response. If the projects involve clay or other material there is usually fewer problems but then they cannot manage their time, clean-up and put tools away without repeating each task one at a time”.

“They do not need constant redirection, but they do need some.”

“No, they need redirection several times during a lesson.”

“For the most part, yes they stay on task with little or no redirection.”

“Yes, for a bit. It helps to have quick transitions between short bursts of instruction and activity.”

“Most of the time they are on task if they are required to do so and if I keep them reminded. There is no set number of times to remind. I just stay on them.”

“No, Yes. Depends on the class, the number of students, probably every four to five minutes.”

“Yes they can stay on task if they are required to do so and if I keep them reminded. There is no set number of times to remind. I just stay on them”.

“Yes to NOT staying on task for long. Redirected all the time. Very short attention span. Often looking around or moving around when asked to stay in on spot- almost impossible. I frequently just let the student stay in the activity because sitting them in timeout is worse”.

Q10) What instructional techniques, materials, or activities do you feel are most effective for students with ADHD in your content area?

“Instructional techniques such as small group instruction, minimizing whole group instruction, involving those particular students as helpers in the modeling of skills in the beginning of the lessons and strategic pairing are all effective. Other techniques that are effective with regards to assessments are hands-on activities rather than paper/pencil activities”.

“Music while moving and partner peer to peer learning”

“Instruction that constantly changes, they constantly move to different task”

“Hands on activities, like percussion instruments, keyboards, bells, and recorders”

“Engaging lessons with many parts, lessons that require detail and attention, brain breaks for younger students and timers”.

“Short instructional and activity periods, full demonstrations with just a few major cues, quick transitions, ignoring problem behavior”.

“Listening to music, singing with music, physically moving to the music”

“I am fortunate that I get to get the kids up and moving around as I am a PE instructor. The hardest part is getting ADHD students to be able to comprehend the lesson before we get started. Often not happening”.

“Hands on projects, video, and activity.”

“The first 15 minutes of my class is always the same. Running and dynamic warm-ups that gets them moving and a little bit of the anxious energy out. I also limit myself to only 1 minute of talking before getting into the next activity.”

“Anything that is tactile such as clay, pain, glue”

“I tend to change activities frequently. Providing multiple activities that focus on the same objective keeps students from becoming complacent. I also encourage students who have severe symptoms to bring a "fidget" to my class. A small object that they can use to remain focused on the task, ex. stress ball, silly putty, key chain. I consistently offer students with ADHD symptoms a choice to "take a break" or remove themselves from a situation that may be making them uncomfortable. Some students need to be reminded to take a break while others feel completely comfortable making the choice on their own”.

“Knowing if there have been any triggers prior to getting to my class helps. I stand next

to the student, use my finger to point to the task, give student a "job" to keep them more focused, if I know that they like a particular sport or character or place, I use that to connect, always say good morning or afternoon, try to compliment the student (which I do with all students-just good practice).”

Q14) What do you think needs to be done in order to increase time on task for students with ADHD or ADHD symptoms in your content area?

“Teachers need to focus in students interests in order to make instruction more aligned with their interest. Additionally things that need to be done are allowing students breaks after completing a task in order for them to take a brain break or use items such as putty at the completion of activities and differentiate their instruction in order to meet the students' needs”.

“Smaller class sizes (20-25)”

“no idea”

“It helps getting to know the student individually”

“I don’t have suggestions at this time”.

“Often we don’t even know which students have been diagnosed!”

“It helps when I have several shorter activities rather than one extended activity”

“I’d like to have specific content training on techniques to increase student time on task”

“Parental guidance. Don’t allow them to use ADHD as an excuse. Require them to meet their goals”.

“In elementary PE, I try to keep the activities simple (limit the rules) while making the games enaging and active for all students.”

“One on one, or working with smaller groups instead of whole instruction.”

“Teachers should be able to address these issues with every parent. There is so much that can be done to help students with ADHD. Why wouldn't a parent want their child to learn plus be

sure that the behaviors of your child doesn't keep the other students from learning?? If medication would work for my child, then why not try?? I am a mother of an ADHD child as well as I have ADHD. I understand fairly well. I want what is best for all - my child and those around him”.

“They seem to require immediate engagement, which is not always possible. They also need to be given one instruction at a time and watch for impassivity which can lead to distraction, incomplete work or wrong outcome”.