GENERAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION CONSULTATION

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of the Requirements for the Degree
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Kinesiology

by
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ABSTRACT

GENERAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION CONSULTATION

by

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This phenomenological study examined general physical education teachers’ perceptions of consultation for the successful inclusion of children with disabilities. Participants included 10 general physical education teachers from Northern California with varying years of teaching experience. Qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interviews on their experiences of consultation with an adapted physical education specialist. Thematic analysis revealed five main themes: teacher relationships during consultation; perceptions of the individualized education plan process; supports provided through consultation by the adapted physical education specialists and accountability for the consultation. Results from this sample of general physical education teachers indicated a desire for a collaborative consultation model; more background information on the included student; and documented information and
instructional strategies from the consultant. Implications for future practice of adapted physical education consultation are suggested.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Consultation in adapted physical education is a process where an adapted physical education (PE) teacher and a general PE teacher collaborate to help students with disabilities successfully participate in a general physical education program. Friend and Cook (2007) define consultation in schools as “…a voluntary process in which one professional assists another to address a problem concerning a third party” (p. 89). “Most students with disabilities (around 96%) are educated in general education schools, and almost half spend the majority of the school day in general education classrooms” (Block & Obrusnikova, 2007, p. 103).

The majority of research in adapted physical education focuses on inclusive instructional settings. Some of this research discussed teachers’ attitudes toward children with disabilities (e.g., Rizzo, 1984; Rizzo & Wright, 1987; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991; Block & Rizzo, 1995; Hodge, Murata, & Kozub, 2002; Hodge, Ammah, Casebolt, LaMaster, & O’Sullivan, 2004), students’ attitudes towards their peers with disabilities (e.g., Block, 1995; Slininger, Sherrill, & Jankowski, 2000), the use of peer tutors to support inclusion (e.g., Houston-Wilson, Dunn, van der Mars, & McCubbin, 1997; Lieberman, Dunn, van der Mars, & McCubbin, 2000), the use of paraeducators to support inclusion (e.g., Lytle, Lieberman, & Aiello, 2007), effective practices for successful inclusion (e.g., LaMaster,
Gall, Kinchin, & Siedentop, 1998), and support from an adapted PE specialist (e.g., Block & Conatser, 1999; Block & Zeman, 1996; Vogler, Koranda, & Romance, 2000). Few studies have examined how adapted PE consultation services are applied in general PE. A few studies have examined the roles of adapted PE consultants (e.g., Lytle & Collier, 2002; Lytle & Hutchinson, 2004) and models of the consultation processes (e.g., Heikinaro-Johansson, Sherrill, French, & Huuhka, 1995). Most research in the area of consultation has been conducted in special education and school psychology (e.g., Cook & Friend, 1990; Heron & Harris, 1993; Gonzalez, Nelson, Gutkin, & Shwery, 2004). While there is discussion in the literature on the general physical educator’s role in the consultation process (Huettig & Roth, 2002; Morley, Bailey, Tan, & Cooke, 2005), to date, no specific research studies have examined the general PE teacher’s role and perceptions in the consultation process as it relates to including students with disabilities in general PE class. The general PE teacher’s voice needs to be heard in order to understand how consultation supports or detracts from successful inclusion of students with disabilities into general PE.

Since the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004), many more students with disabilities have been included in general physical education. Because of this, research must focus on how general physical educators perceive consultation and its role in successful inclusion. Knowing the general physical educator’s perception and needs will guide the adapted physical educator in providing successful consultation services to support students with disabilities.
Statement of the Problem

In order for an adapted PE specialist to provide consultative services in a useful and effect manner, input from general physical educators must be invited and acknowledged. The general PE teacher has the unique perspective of working with both the student and the consultant, and that perspective is an important part of a successful consultation process. Previous research on consultation has focused on the adapted physical educator’s perspective of not only what but how strategies, accommodations, and curricula ideas should be delivered (e.g., Heikinaro-Johansson et al., 1995; Lytle & Collier, 2002). Studies have also examined the general physical educator’s viewpoint on having students with disabilities included in classes (Hodge et al., 2002; Hodge et al., 2004), teacher attitudes toward students with disabilities (e.g., Block & Rizzo, 1995; Hodge et al., 2002; Rizzo, 1984; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991; Rizzo & Wright, 1987), and models of consultation in adapted PE (e.g., Heikinaro-Johansson et al., 1995). To serve students with disabilities better, the consultative processes must be examined and evaluated with both the general PE teacher and adapted PE specialist’s point of view.

It is important to understand what general PE teachers need and want so they can successfully integrate students with disabilities into their classes and benefit from the consultation (Block & Vogler, 1994). Block and Conatser (1999) suggested conducting studies on the roles of adapted PE specialists as consultants to general PE teachers, general PE teachers’ attitudes on consultation, and looking at a variety of consultation models to see which are most effective in general PE for successful inclusion. Block and Obruskinova (2007) state, “more naturalistic observations and discussion with general PE teachers about issues related to inclusion would perhaps yield richer data that would
translate more directly to practice” (p. 120). There is a significant need for research regarding how adapted PE consultants can work together with general physical educators and school districts to provide effective services to students with disabilities participating in general PE classes (Block & Obrusnikova, 2007; Heikinaro-Johansson et al., 1995; Lytle & Collier, 2002).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine general PE teachers’ perceptions on the effectiveness of adapted PE consultation for including students with disabilities into general PE classes. This qualitative study took a phenomenological approach to examining teacher perceptions. Ten general PE teachers were interviewed to answer the following three questions:

1. How do general physical educators describe their current consultation interactions with an adapted physical education teacher?

2. Is the consultation experience in general physical education effective for the success of students with disabilities in inclusive settings?

3. What do general physical educators find valuable from the adapted physical education consultation experience?

A great deal of current research has looked at inclusion of individuals with disabilities in general PE and its benefits for those students. However, few studies have focused on ways an adapted PE specialist can create an effective consultation relationship to make and keep the inclusion setting successful and provide the best education for the student with disabilities.
This study interviewed ten practicing general PE teachers who included students with disabilities in their classes. Additionally, all ten educators were involved in a consultation relationship with an adapted PE specialist. Interview questions were designed to determine the general PE teacher’s perspectives on the consultation process as it related to supporting students with disabilities in their general PE environments.

Limitations of the Study

This study had the following limitations:

- The extent to which the general physical education teachers answered the questions truthfully.
- The potential for multiple interpretations of terminology used throughout the interview process existed (e.g., inclusion, consultation, least restrictive environment, and individualized education plan).
- The general physical education teachers were solicited by the adapted physical education teachers from the Northern California Adapted Physical Education Consortium.
- Those who replied and demonstrated an interest in being part of this study may have a particular interest in the topic; hence, general PE teachers having different opinions and/or did not see the relevance of the service may have been overlooked.

Delimitations of the Study

This study included the following delimitations:

- Ten general PE teachers from Northern California school districts.
• One interview lasting 35-60 minutes.
• General PE teachers had to be within a two-hour drive of the primary researcher.
• Participants must have possessed a California Clear Single Subject Physical Education Credential.

Definition of Terms

Adapted Physical Education (APE)

... Term used to describe services delivered to school-aged individuals from birth through age 21. Services are provided wherever they are needed: in general or mainstream settings, in specially designed classes and programs, and in one-to-one and small-group accommodations. Adapted physical education is a service delivery system, not a placement. (Sherrill, 2004, p. 4)

Adapted Physical Education Specialist

“... Someone who has specific training in APE beyond the undergraduate level and who has been assigned by the strict to provide APE services to students with disabilities” (Block & Obrusnikova, 2007, p. 108).

Collaboration

“Interpersonal collaboration is a style for direct interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal” (Friend & Cook, 2007, p. 7).

Collaborative Consultation

“... Consultants and consultees work closely together to solve problems and the relationship consists of mutual trust, openness and sharing of responsibilities” (Macklem & Kalinsky, 2000, p. 3).
Consultation

“School consultation is a voluntary process in which one professional assists another to address a problem concerning a third party” (Friend & Cook, 2007, p. 89).

Effective Consultation

Effective consultation is defined as positive communicative interactions between the adapted PE specialist and the general PE teacher to meet specific Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives for students with disabilities.

General Physical Education

“A physical education program that includes goals in one of the following areas: physical and motor fitness; fundamental motor skills; and aquatics, dance, and individual and group games” (APENS, 2006, p. 183).

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

“An educational setting in which the individuals can safely and successfully function and meet the goals and objectives prescribed based on assessment results” (APENS, 2006, p. 184).

Inclusion

The placement of an individual with a disability (even a severe disability) into general classes with peers in a neighborhood school. The individual is not an occasional visitor, but a viable member of the class with appropriate support services provided in the general classes. (APENS, 2006, p. 183)

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

A written statement of instruction and services to be provided based on a multidisciplinary assessment of the needs of each child with a disability; includes goals and objectives, evaluation methods, personnel responsible, and dates for initiation and completion of services. (APENS, 2006, p. 183)
Special Education

Specifically designed instruction at no cost to the parents to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability including classroom instruction, instruction in physical education, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. (Adapted Physical Education National Standard [APENS], 2006, p. 187)
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

This study asked general physical educators about their perception of the consultation process and how it relates to supporting students with disabilities in the general physical education (PE) environment. In order to prepare for this study, a review of literature looked at the following:

1. History of special education law.
2. Continuum of service in adapted physical education.
4. Support systems for successful inclusion in general physical education.
5. General physical education teachers’ perceptions of inclusion.
6. Consultation defined and models of consultation.
7. Knowledge of effective and/or ineffective consultation.

History of Special Education Law

Inclusion in general education began with legal and social pressures. In 1954, the historic Brown v. Board of Education ruled that all individuals need to be seen as equal and that educating individuals separately was not treating them equal. Federally funded programs had to allow equal opportunity to those with disabilities when the
Rehabilitation Act (PL 93-112) Section 504 was passed in 1973. It stated that students with and without disabilities must have equal opportunity to any program or activity that receives federal funding and that intercollegiate and intramural sport clubs must provide equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Then in 1975, PL 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA), was passed. It stated that all children ages 5-21 have a right to public education and must be provided special education services if needed. Before the 1970s, states were serving only 50% or less of students with disabilities in the public schools (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996). Special education was defined in PL 94-142 as specially designed instruction that would meet the needs of the child with a disability. This free service to parents would include instruction in the classroom and in physical education, to be provided at home, in hospitals or in institutions. This law made PE a mandated subject area that all students with disabilities would be provided as part of special education services. General physical education programs must be available to all students, including students with disabilities (EHA, 1977).

PL 94-142 specified that children with disabilities needed to be educated in the least restrictive environments (LRE). LRE created the opportunity for children with disabilities to participate with their peers to the maximum extent possible (PL 94-142). The law stated that an individualized education plan (IEP) must be provided for each student with a disability. IEPs collect information to determine educational needs and resources for each individual with a disability. The intent of the law was that an IEP was to be specific to that individual and their needs, and it would be created by a team including the parents, teachers, other service providers, school representative, and when
appropriate, the child. This program plan would be used to find an appropriate LRE placement within the continuum of services in general education or in a separate special education program, or a combination of service placements. Each IEP includes the services and the placement for the student.

PL 94-142 was amended as PL 99-457 the Education of All Handicapped Children’s Act in 1986. This extended free and appropriate public education to preschool children, ages 3-5. In addition, PL 99-457 implemented a discretionary grant program that encouraged states to provide early intervention services to children with disabilities birth to three years of age.

Later in 1990, PL 94-142, and its amendment PL 99-457 (1986), were amended to become PL 101-476 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The law continued to include physical education specifically as an area of instruction for children receiving special education services. LRE, and inclusion, are guided by these directions:

(1) To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled; and, special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (IDEA, 1997, p. 30)

IDEA mandated that if a student is not being educated in the general education environment, documentation and assessment must prove that a separate setting is necessary. PL 101-476 clarified that tests (assessments) must be administered in the child’s native language and preferred mode of communication. Also, those assessments were administered by individuals who were trained and capable of following test
instructions and guidelines. Additionally the selected test must be valid for the purpose it was being used for and that more than one test or measure would be used to determine the placement of the student (Mandlawitz, 2006).

Two court cases, Daniel R.R. v. State Board of Education (1989) and Sacramento City Unified School District v. Rachel H. (1999) clarified that LRE must first be considered a general education class with modifications or supplementary aides to support the child in the LRE, and that the child could spend at least part of his or her day in the general education environment. These cases clarified that all students need the opportunity of a continuum of services, and general education must be considered (Block, 1996).

There were two additional reauthorizations to IDEA, in 1997 (PL 105-17) and then in 2004 (PL 108-446) as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). In 1997, the focus was on students having access to general education curriculum. If placement is other than in a general education environment, written justification must be included in the student’s IEP. Additional changes included a statement in the IEP about the participation in or accommodations of state and district wide testing or an alternative assessment as necessary, improved parent participation in placement and eligibility decisions, and initial evaluation and reevaluation for placement and eligibility decisions (Knoblauch & McLane, 1999). The most recent reauthorization also added specific criteria for highly qualified special education teachers, transition services, and participation in federal and statewide assessments (Mandlawitz, 2006). Because of federal legislation, more students with disabilities are being included in general physical education than in the past.
Continuum of Service in Adapted Physical Education

The continuum of placements for educational services has been described with “full inclusion on one end of the spectrum and placement in separate, specialized settings at the other end” (Block, 1996, p. 128). The federal law states:

(a) Each public agency shall ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.
(b) The continuum ... must –
   i. Include the alternative placements listed in the definition of special education (instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions); and
   ii. Make provisions for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement. (Federal Register, September 29, 1992, p. 44823)

The California State Adapted Physical Education Guidelines (2001) identify possible service options for physical education: general physical education, specially designed physical education, and adapted physical education. These services may be in combination with each other, and they may also be in combination with collaborative consultation services. Indicating the types of physical education services to be implemented on the IEP document helps facilitate the portion of the law which states that necessary supports, services and supplementary aides be used to keep an individual in his/her LRE.

General Physical Education Teacher Preparation for Inclusion in Physical Education

Studies regarding teacher preparation for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in physical education focus on teacher attitudes toward inclusion, as well as the amount of preparation time needed to support general education teachers for student
inclusion. These studies have looked at general educators’ backgrounds. Researchers have compared teachers’ experiences with their preparation programs, and their attitudes toward working with individuals with disabilities.

Rizzo and Vispoel (1991) used the Physical Educators’ Attitude Toward Teaching the Handicapped-II (PEATH-II) to examine general PE teacher attitudes toward teaching individuals with mental retardation, behavior disorders, and/or learning disabilities. They found that teacher perceived ability and competence to teach students with disabilities strongly related to their attitude toward the included students. Academic preparation also correlated with teacher perceived competence. The results emphasized the importance of creating quality teaching experiences with individuals with disabilities in physical education teacher education (PETE) programs. Experience has the greatest impact on a general PE teacher’s attitude toward working with individuals with disabilities (Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991).

Block and Rizzo (1995) surveyed to determine the attitudes and attributes of general PE teachers toward including students with severe and profound disabilities in their general physical education classes. Data were collected from the Physical Educators’ Attitude Toward Teaching Individuals with Disabilities –III (PEATID-III). This study’s purpose was to find the relationship between a general PE teacher’s attitude and his/her teaching attributes. The attributes included years teaching, adapted PE and special education coursework, years teaching individuals with disabilities, and perceived professional competence. Questions focused on whether teachers had completed coursework in adapted physical education or whether they had experience teaching individuals with disabilities in general PE. One hundred fifty teachers were surveyed.
Researchers found 20% did not have any coursework in adapted PE, and 80% had one or more courses. These teachers also rated their own competence in teaching individuals with disabilities and 19% said “not at all competent,” 55% said “somewhat competent,” and 26% said “very competent.” Data showed there were “favorable attitudes toward teaching students with severe disabilities” when teachers had more course work in adapted PE and quality teaching experiences along with the coursework. Results revealed that teacher training and in-service can increase favorable teacher attitudes toward including students with severe and profound disabilities.

Hodge and Jansma (1997) studied the attitude changes among PETE majors enrolled in introductory adapted physical activity coursework. They compared coursework with or without a service-learning component. They questioned participants about attitudes of working with individuals with a variety of disabilities, using a pre- and post-survey in a 15-week course. One finding from this study was that an introduction to adapted physical activity course made a positive impact on attitudes of the enrolled students toward working with students with disabilities. A second finding was that PETE students were “less favorable” toward working with individuals with emotional/behavioral disabilities, and mild-moderate and moderate-severe mental retardation, but “more favorable” to working with individuals with learning disabilities. Another finding was that a 15-week course affected student’s attitudes more positively than a ten-week course. This study suggested that infusing PETE curriculum with inclusion techniques will help general PE teachers develop positive attitudes and be more successful when including students with disabilities in their PE classes.
Hardin (2005) looked at beginning general PE teachers’ perceptions of their preparation for inclusion in their PETE programs. Hardin’s research intended to expand the current knowledge of how PETE programs could create “feelings of competence and confidence when teaching students with disabilities in inclusive environments” (Hardin, 2005, p. 54). Hardin conducted interviews and observations along with a technique termed Q-Sort, using ranking cards with teacher knowledge sources such as coursework, early field experiences, journals and magazines, conferences, and films. Beginning teachers (2-5 years of experience) placed teaching experience as the “most valuable knowledge source” when it came to teaching students with disabilities. For some of the participants, their teaching experience was during service learning opportunities in their adapted physical education coursework. Other participants valued the “trial and error” procedures during their first years of teaching. All participants agreed that teaching experience was the key to their comfort in teaching students with disabilities. Another top “valuable knowledge source” was other teachers. The participants described talking to adapted PE specialists and special education teachers as being very helpful. The third top ranked “valuable knowledge source” came from the one adapted PE course most took during their college coursework. Hardin concluded that coursework might have been viewed as more valuable had the information been “infused” in all their PETE courses. One of the participants had this situation, and it was beneficial to her confidence of including individuals with disabilities in the classroom. Harden suggested that changes in PETE programs and their curriculum “is a step in the right direction” (p. 54).

In summary, all studies supported the need for physical education teacher training programs to include content and early field experiences working with individuals
with disabilities. Training supported the development of positive attitudes and competence toward teaching students with disabilities.

**Support Systems for Successful Inclusion in General Physical Education**

Chandler and Greene’s (1995) survey of adapted PE specialists and general PE teachers looked at four basic areas:

1. The number of students receiving adapted physical education services and descriptive categories of those services.
2. Students’ placement on the LRE continuum.
3. Types of professional development teachers completed focusing on including students with disabilities.
4. General PE curriculum content.

One hundred forty-eight general physical educators and 39 adapted physical educators completed the survey. From this survey researchers found that many of the general PE teachers did not necessarily know the disability categories of the students they had included in their general PE classes. Results showed that 42% of students with mild mental retardation and 68% of students with moderate mental retardation did not attend general PE but received adapted PE services only.

Chandler and Greene found that less than one percent (6/148 surveyed) of general PE teachers surveyed had received specific training on inclusion. The training that was obtained came from attending professional conferences or workshops, not professional development support at their local school or district. Ninety-eight percent of general PE teachers wanted more information about including students with disabilities.
into their classes. Eighty percent of adapted PE specialists believed that general PE teachers needed to know more about legislation regarding inclusion so they would understand the importance of their class as an inclusive setting. This concerned the researchers based on IDEA 1990 and the requirements for inclusion. To the researchers, these numbers seemed high and raised questions about why more of these students were not included in general PE instead of receiving adapted PE services only. Although discussion surrounded the fact that collaborative consultation would help support students who were not included into general PE, demographic data revealed that adapted PE specialist’s time was spread too thinly. The adapted PE specialists served multiple school sites with large caseloads. One adapted PE teacher’s service area “included nine counties with one full time and one half-time APE teacher” (Chandler & Greene, 1995, p. 271). In situations such as this, the adapted PE specialists could only do what time permitted. This article reiterated the need for more training and consultation support for general PE teachers for including individuals with disabilities in their classrooms.

General Physical Education Teachers’ Perceptions of Inclusion

LaMaster, Gall, Kinchin, and Siedentop (1998) studied the “Inclusion Practices of Effective Elementary Specialists.” This study used questionnaires and interviews to collect information. The data from the interviews were transcribed and coded for themes. Four themes developed “(a) multiple teaching styles (b) student outcomes, (c) teacher frustrations and dissatisfactions, and (d) differences in inclusion practices” (LaMaster et al., p. 68). Study participants utilized a variety of teaching strategies including equipment modifications, peer teaching, role assignments, and direct
instruction. All participating teachers stated they had a lack of training. Teachers stated they spent more time with the students that had intellectual and behavioral disabilities because they had to be monitored all the time or given specific roles in the classroom in order not to “pester” the other students. Teachers also stated they needed basic information about learning styles and learning disabilities for specific students in order to maximize the inclusion setting.

Vogler, van der Mars, Cusimano, and Darst (1992) studied 20 teachers: 10 less experienced (4 years or less) and 10 experienced (6 years or more). Teachers were also rated in expertise. The authors categorized the participants as expert or non-expert. The criteria used for expert teachers was (1) state teacher of the year, (2) master or mentor teacher, (3) served as officer in professional organization, (4) presented at conferences, or (5) exemplary evaluations by administration. The teachers taught a class of 20 students. There was one student with an unknown disability in each class. The included student was ambulatory. Researchers videotaped the teacher’s classes and coded the tapes for both student and teacher behaviors. Student behaviors were analyzed based on appropriate and inappropriate motor behaviors and “on and off” task behaviors for both students with and without disabilities. Results of teacher behaviors showed the experienced teachers spent more time in game play, and the less experienced teachers spent more time during transitions of activities. Many of these differences were not statistically significant. Results showed student behavior was similar in each situation. The students with disabilities did show less motor appropriate behavior and more off task behavior than their peers without disabilities. These findings were similar with the non-
expert and expert teachers. Experience and expertise did not seem to be factors for teaching effectiveness in the inclusive PE setting.

Along with perceptions are behaviors and beliefs held by general PE teachers who included students with disabilities into their classroom. A study performed by Hodge, Ammah, Casebolt, LaMaster, and O’Sullivan (2004) interviewed and observed nine high school general PE teachers who taught inclusive classes. Three reoccurring themes emerged from the findings: positive views of inclusion, efficacy on teaching students with disabilities, and the challenges of including students with disabilities in their classes. Teachers stated they didn’t feel they were ready to include students, they wanted more knowledge for accomplishing inclusion successfully, and they felt a lack of support. Seven of the nine teachers in the study stated that they were not prepared effectively to have students with severe disabilities included in their general PE classes. Through observation, three of the nine teachers made adaptations regularly to activities, instruction, or equipment for the successful inclusion of students. It was noted that there was no adapted equipment support available to these participants, yet they held a positive outlook on the inclusion philosophy and taught with the intent of being inclusive through effective teaching practices.

Consultation Defined and Models of Consultation

“School consultation is a voluntary process in which one professional assists another to address a problem concerning a third party” (Friend & Cook, 2007, p. 89). Consultation in education is usually accomplished between two individuals (the consultant and consultee) for services being provided to a third individual (the client). For
consultation in adapted PE the roles are typically the adapted PE specialist as consultant, the general physical educator or the general educator as consultee, and the student as the client. This triadic model of consultation is described by Friend and Cook (2007) and Block and Conatser (1999).

There are multiple models of consultation and many similarities with each. The following are some of the models used in education:

- Behavioral consultation. Most frequently used in American schools (Friend & Cook, 2007; Gutkin, 1996). The method uses a four-step process that includes 1) problem identification 2) problem analysis 3) intervention, and 4) evaluation (Macklem & Kalinsky, 2000). The consultant “must have a thorough understanding of behavioral principles and practices and be able to apply them to their consultees” (Friend & Cook, 2007, p 96). Data collection is a fundamental piece to behavior consultation.

- Mental health consultation. Follows the triadic relationship. Here a consultant works with a consultee to address the issues of a client, but the consultant does not work directly with the client. Friend and Cook stated that the “implementation of this model requires extensive professional training in therapeutic interventions that special educators generally have not had” (2007, p. 97).

- Organizational consultation. Examines a whole program, not an individual. The ‘organization’ is the client. Here the consultant acts as an expert and shares the expertise to help the ‘organization’ run more effectively (Friend & Cook, 2007). A “main focus of organizational consultation is analyzing and changing policies, procedures, group
structure, role responsibilities, and how group members communicate and interact as a means of improving administrative and service delivery” (Block & Conatser 1999, p. 13).

- Clinical Consultation. Identifies a problem situation or challenge with an individual and gives strategies for solving the problem. The consultant’s role is complete once these strategies are shared. The consultant looks at the client, environment, and the interactions of those working with the client. The consultant is not “involved in the ongoing implementation of the intervention or the monitoring of it” (Friend & Cook, 2007, p. 99). Therefore, once the issue is identified, diagnosed, and strategies are provided, the consultant’s job is complete.

- Collaborative consultation. Derives its methodology from mental health, behavioral, and organization models (Conolley & Conolley, 1988). Macklem and Kalinsky (2000) describe it as “consultants and consultees work closely together to solve problems and the relationship consists of mutual trust, openness and sharing of responsibilities” (2000, p. 3). This is an effective way for professionals to ‘give and take’ in the consultation process. The professionals all offer information, but they also leave the consultation process with knowledge from the others in the group.

Consultation has been considered an easier and less expensive way to provide service to children with disabilities than direct service. Cook and Friend (1990) looked at issues of a consultation program with the “intent [to] sensitize readers to the deceptive simplicity of consultation as a service delivery alternative and to suggest strategies for increasing the probability of success” (Cook & Friend, 1990, p. 44). The first step in the process determines the goals of a consultation program. Consultation should be used when the student with a disability will benefit from it. Additionally, the process must
support the general PE teacher in achieving the IEP goals for a student with a disability. This entails looking at desired outcomes, identifying students who are consultation appropriate, and choosing an appropriate program. Cook and Friend (1990) suggested that some school districts might consider consultation as a way to provide general education teachers with more skills in dealing with students with special needs and that the approach and model need to be determined for delivering consultation services. Consultation can be directive (the consultant directs the interaction), or non-directive (consultant is a facilitator during the interactions). Choosing an appropriate model for each program gives structure to the consultation process. Another important consideration is the availability of time and financial support to implement a successful consultation process. Teachers need time to “meet, to discuss students, to experiment with various interventions, and to develop a strong professional relationship . . .” (p. 45). Since development and implementation take time, school administration needs to be supportive by allowing for preparation time, providing substitute teachers, and exploring creative ways of releasing teachers for planning. Consultation should not be viewed as a way to save money (Cook & Friend, 1990). Time is an important factor for effective consultation.

Cook and Friend (1990) believe consultants may have concerns with their own credibility and/or if they have enough professional information to share with the general educator. General educators worry about being told what to do, as well as not being able to do enough to help students be successful. Additionally, teacher-to-teacher collaboration can raise issues of personality or role conflicts and using the special education teacher “demeaningly, as classroom aides” (p. 45) can create challenges. A
special education teacher may be perceived as not understanding the general education classroom and its complexities. These are all examples of barriers from the consultant and consultees perception.

In summary, Friend and Cook (2007) describe consultation as a triadic and indirect relationship utilizing a consultant, consultee, and a client. This indirect consultation relationship means that the consultant does not work directly with the child or student. In order for these relationships to be successful, consultation must be voluntary. All of this is predicated on the general PE teacher’s concern of a perceived problem and viewing the consultant as an expert who can share information for problem solving. However, it is important to note that, “Most professionals who study consultation emphasize that consultants and consultees mutually influence each other and that consultants do not have authority over consultees” (Friend & Cook, 2007, p. 91). Successful consultation depends on the collaboration between professional educators where solving problems and responsibilities are shared by both the consultee and the consultant.

Adapted PE specialists have expertise and training in working with individuals with disabilities. That knowledge can be shared through the consultation relationship. Through the use of these models, the consultation process can support teachers working with students with disabilities.

Knowledge of Effective and/or Ineffective Consultation

Dennis (2004) carried out a small study that focused on the implementation of consultation into schools to promote successful inclusion. In this study, educational
psychologists were used as consultants to a school site, using an organization consultation model. In these cases, the consultation process was school wide, not individually based. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather information from the educational psychologist, individual school personnel, and the school community as a whole. Participants stated that the consultant needed to be “open, honest, supportive and easy to talk to” (Dennis, p. 22). They also stated that the consultee needed “a willingness to try things, take risks and learn from experiences; the ability to view individual differences in terms of whole school development issues; and not being 'precious' about their role” (Dennis, p. 22). The relationship between the consultant and school was essential to the success of the consultation process. Overall, the consultation process proved to be part of the successful inclusion of students with disabilities.

LaMaster et al. (1998) found that teachers labeled as effective elementary physical education specialists felt they needed more consultation time with adapted PE specialists. Through interviews, general PE specialists stated their “frustrations and dissatisfactions” surrounding their own lack of training in the area of teaching students with severe disabilities. Support with strategies for working with individuals with severe disabilities was seen as a need, and this need would be fulfilled with higher frequency of consultations with an adapted PE specialist. The general PE specialists felt there was not enough time or access to adapted PE specialists in order to utilize consultant expertise. Consultation from adapted physical educators was used to support the general PE specialist. The consultation type and time varied between all the participants. They valued this time, but wanted more. Most of the participants were either unfamiliar with the specific needs of the student who had an IEP, or they did not sit in the IEP meeting.
Most of the elementary physical education specialists in the study did not attend and were not involved in the writing of goals and objectives for the physical education portion of the IEP for the inclusion students in their class, even though the participation of a general education teacher was required by IDEA in 1997. It was found that one out of the six general PE teachers wrote the goals and evaluated progress on student’s IEPs.

The perception of the consultation process from the adapted physical educator’s point of view was studied by Lytle and Collier (2002). Their phenomenological study utilized interviews, field observations and focus groups to gather data from six adapted PE specialists. The findings showed ways of defining consultation in an adapted PE setting, contextual factors of providing consultation service, appropriate consultation models as well as, adapted PE specialists own effectiveness in the process and their perceived competency.

Legally, the adapted PE specialist must write the service delivery option on an IEP, but when adapted PE specialists in the study were observed, it was clear that all the specialists used a “multidimensional approach,” no matter what was written on the IEP (Lytle & Collier, 2002). The specialists typically provided consultation and direct service. The specialists had different definitions for what consultation, collaboration, and direct service meant. Some adapted PE specialists provided service within the general PE setting and called that direct service, while other specialists defined similar services as consultation. These two interpretations of consultation created differences in service provisions on the IEP form. Contextual factors that emerged from the conversations with adapted PE specialists to determine the use for consultation services include student’s age, general education teacher’s abilities, and adapted PE specialist’s caseload.
The consultation effectiveness was labeled to show benefits, barriers, and documentation. The adapted PE specialist described six benefits to consultation:

1) students learned in a natural setting, 2) teachers were assisted with curriculum, 3) services were provided beyond direct service, 4) schedules were more flexible, 5) parents and teachers felt a sense of security by the involvement of the adapted PE specialist, and 6) conversations between teacher and specialist were helpful (Lytle & Collier, 2002).

Barriers to consultation also emerged (Lytle & Collier, 2002). One barrier was that consultation was used to “serve more children” (p. 270) with adapted PE consultation being the only placement option instead of LRE. Another barrier was that some general PE teachers and instructional assistants seemed “unwilling” to modify their curriculum. “The participants noted that while some teachers were not receptive to new ideas, others did not have the skills to implement suggestions” (Lytle & Collier, 2002, p. 270). A third barrier was that the adapted PE specialists could not physically be at a school site to help implement the suggestions. This study also examined how adapted PE specialists determined success of consultation interactions. APE specialists reports detailing progress on goals and objectives, consultation suggestions, questions asked by the general PE teacher, and the general PE teacher’s attitude toward the included student were used as measures for determining if consultation was working. Overall, the adapted PE specialists preferred a collaborative consultation model and they felt they needed more training in consultation. These authors suggested future research should focus on the general PE teacher’s perceptions of consultation.
Lytle and Hutchinson (2004) followed six adapted PE specialists working in a variety of settings with a range of schools and caseload numbers. The phenomenological study gathered data through interviews, focus groups, field observations, and document analysis. The adapted PE specialists involved in the study shared the documents they used to track activity in their daily job. This documentation included field notes, annotated goals and objectives, and suggestions for modifications as the methods of documentation in the consultation process. Adapted PE specialists also participated in focus groups, and individual interview responses were analyzed. Findings revealed five roles adapted PE specialists assume when they served as consultants: advocate, educator, courier, supporter/helper, and resource coordinator. These perceived roles of the adapted PE specialist create an understanding of the complexities of the adapted PE specialist’s role in the consultation process.

In 1995, Heikinaro-Johansson, Sherrill, French and Huuhka developed two models of adapted PE consultation in order to provide models for adapted PE service delivery. One model was termed the “intensive consultant approach” (p. 15), in which the “the adapted physical education consultant and an interdisciplinary team worked collaboratively to identify and analyze needs related to successful integration of a student with special needs” (Heikinaro-Johansson et al., 1995, p. 15). The researchers’ desired outcome was to identify tasks to be performed during consultations to support general educators. The consultant would meet with the teacher and paraprofessional a minimum of two times a week. In this model, the adapted PE consultant developed lesson plans and made adaptations as needed for a classroom teacher. These lesson plans were reviewed
collaboratively with the general education teacher. The consultant was available to videotape, observe lessons, and provide feedback as necessary.

The second model was termed the “limited consultant approach” (p. 16) where the consultant visited twice during the trial period. This model was used in communities where the consultant was unable to visit the class twice a week. Lesson plan packages were created for the general education classroom teacher and delivered during the two visitations. In the limited approach, the general education teacher, video taped lessons once a week and wrote a journal on the process. The teacher and paraprofessional continually evaluated their program, but the consultant was not part of these conversations. During the interviews following this study, the general PE teacher involved in the intensive approach learned teaching strategies and felt that the level of consultation service was extremely valuable. The paraprofessional also felt positively, “my work has more meaning now when I can go help whoever needs my help” (p. 23). In the limited approach design, the general PE teacher evaluations of the collaboration process were not as positive. The teacher reported that she struggled with the lesson plans and fitting in all the recommended activities. She learned new skills but she did not feel confident teaching individuals with disabilities. The researcher analyzed videotapes to track teacher and student behavior. Comparisons between the two approaches showed that when the intensive approach was used there was more time on task, less waiting, more activities per lesson, and the teacher was able to give more feedback to the student during the lessons. The researchers felt the success of the intensive model was evident. The researchers stated that there are “limited number of case studies, the present research
provides support for the adapted physical education consultant service model as an effective means of integrating students with special needs” (p. 30).

The previously described studies used empirical research to gather information in the area of consultation. The following literature utilized information from special education and adapted PE research to develop and present ideas, roles, possible models, and suggestions for consultation services.

Maguire (1994) discussed how successful collaborative relationships could be formed between parents, general PE, adapted PE, physical therapy and occupational therapy. In order for a teacher to properly meet all the needs in his or her classroom, there needs to be collaboration. Maguire states the requirement of four “types of skills” for a collaborative team: (a) “exchanging information and skills”; (b) “solving problems as a group”; (c) “making decisions by consensus” and (d) “resolving conflicts” (p. 33). These are important in an effective collaborative relationship so all individuals involved in teaching a student have the ability to provide a fluid program with few gaps between services.

Block, Brodeur and Brady (2001) created a list of steps involved in the consultation process. First, the consultation should include the adapted PE, general physical educator, paraprofessional, parents, and other therapists in the consultation. The next consideration is the “when and where” the consulting will take place. Block et al. believed that if the “when and where” are not determined, then the consultation will not be effective and possibly intermittent. They add that observation time needs to be a well-planned and well-documented process in which all involved know their roles. Block et al. (2001) listed possible roles of the adapted PE specialist. Adapted PE specialists 1)
support a successful program, not provide direct service; 2) label services they can
directly offer; and 3) maintain contact through e-mail, phone, face-to-face, observation
and feedback and possibly demonstrations. The general PE teacher’s role is to provide a
quality general PE program for individuals with disabilities included in general PE by
facilitating the design and assessment of lessons at the beginning of the process. But near
the end, their successes decrease the need for support because of successful inclusion
strategies provided through the consultation interactions.

In 2002, Huettig and Roth’s article stated that because of the laws of
inclusion, general physical educators have been affected and more students with
disabilities are included in general PE, and the general PE teachers must meet the
demands. An adapted PE specialist can provide support through consultation, and the
authors listed ideas for the general PE teacher to maximize the use of adapted PE
consultants. One of the initial points made was that general PE teachers must understand
the time and caseload (constraints) of the adapted PE specialists. But, the general PE
teacher has the right to expect appropriate consultation in the form of knowledge about
the student, assessment, and IEP information. The authors stated the general physical
educator might not realize how to acquire this information therefore it is important that
the adapted PE specialist provide the necessary records and information.

The general physical educator could expect that the adapted PE consultant
will observe the general PE classroom. As part of this process the adapted PE specialists
should share curriculum ideas, and strategies for supporting students included in general
PE.
There is no reason for general physical educators to feel overwhelmed when required to provide physical education instruction to students with disabilities. If they (general PE) take full advantage of the skills and knowledge of the APE consultant, they will find that providing instruction for students with disabilities in the general curriculum will be a rewarding experience for everyone involved. (Huettig & Roth, 2002, p. 35)

Summary

Special education laws passed since 1973 have mandated that students be served in their LRE. PE was included in the laws with language stating it must be offered within the range of special education services. In addition, students with disabilities are included in general PE based on the language in these laws supporting LRE. For inclusion to succeed, general PE teachers need to be prepared to teach all students in their classes. However, studies have shown that general PE teachers have had minimal preparation for inclusion of students with disabilities in their classes. Studies found a semester introduction to adapted PE course introducing PETE students to inclusion, adaptation and modification techniques for PE, while including some type of true teaching experience within that course of study, was considered valuable to teachers with their own inclusive classes. Observational and survey studies have shown that teachers do not feel prepared to teach inclusion and are not receiving in-servicing for inclusion. PE teacher perceptions on inclusion in general PE included challenges, frustrations, and their views of inclusion. Overall, findings from studies show there needs to be more training and support for general PE teachers that have students with disabilities in their PE classes.

Additional research has focused on the role of consultation as a process for effectively including students with disabilities into general PE. Studies performed in the
area of adapted PE consultation have explored models of consultation and perspectives of the adapted PE specialist. Effective consultation in these studies has been defined as collaborative, frequent, and supportive with multiple services. When consultation included these characteristics, it was considered most effective.

Based on Block and Conatser (1999), suggested studies in the area of consultation included the roles of adapted PE specialists as consultants (Lytle & Hutchinson, 2004), general PE teachers “attitudes toward consultation,” and looking at the different consultation models to see which are effective in general PE for successful inclusion. “Teacher effectiveness research in physical education can no longer afford to ignore the impact that inclusion is having on how classes are conducted and how teachers are responding to the new demands and opportunities that inclusion provides” (LaMaster et al., 1998, p. 66). General PE teachers need support. This current study looked at general PE teachers’ perceptions about consultation support received and the ways consultation might improve instruction of students with disabilities. This knowledge will help direct what consultation approach is needed to produce successful learning environments for teachers and students.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine general PE teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of adapted PE consultation for including students with disabilities into general PE classes. This qualitative study took a phenomenological approach to examining teacher perceptions. Interviews were conducted with ten general physical education teachers to answer the following questions:

1. How do general physical educators describe their current consultation interactions with an adapted physical education teacher?

2. Is the consultation experience in general physical education effective for the success of students with disabilities in inclusive settings?

3. What do general physical educators find valuable from the adapted physical education consultation experience?

Participants

The participants for this study included ten general PE teachers who integrated individuals with disabilities into their PE classes. For this research, all participants must have been involved in consultation interactions with an adapted PE specialist.
A purposeful sample was formed by contacting approximately 20 adapted PE specialists through their participation in the Northern California Adapted Physical Education Consortium. The researcher emailed the adapted PE specialists and requested names of possible participants for the study. Forty-five names of general PE teachers participating in adapted PE consultation were received by email from these adapted PE specialists. Once names were gathered, possible participants were contacted by email and United States Postal Service with a letter of request (appendix A) and an informed consent letter (appendix B) requesting their participation in the study. Twenty of these letters were returned with signed informed consents and participant information forms (appendix C). The participant information form provided basic contact information along with school, years experience, credential(s) held, grade levels taught, number of students receiving adapted PE in the class, and number of students receiving consultation services. The information sheet included information that would determine if the participant met all the criteria for this study. Participants had to meet the following criteria:

1. Work in the K-12 setting teaching general physical education.

2. Hold a valid California Clear Single Subject Physical Education Credential or Multiple Subjects credential.

3. Must have worked in consultation with an adapted physical education specialist to serve students with disabilities.

Those selected for this study had to experience the phenomenon being studied. They also needed to meet sampling needs by the researcher to add depth to the sample.

The researcher considered the following needs in the purposeful sample:

1. Cannot have an adapted PE credential.
2. Must have been in consultation with an adapted PE specialists within the previous two years.

3. Gender.

4. Grade levels taught (elementary, middle school, high school).

5. Years of teaching experience.
   a. Beginning 0-2 years, 4-9, 10-15 and experienced 15+ years.

6. Regions or differing adapted PE specialists.

Twenty potential participants were initially put into a grid (appendix G) based on grade levels taught and years of service. Another consideration taken into account when reducing the number of participants with like attributes was the adapted PE specialist serving the teacher. This consideration was used in order to have as many adapted PE specialists represented in this study as possible. If there were more candidates with like attributes than needed, random selection was performed. A purposeful sample is used when the researcher needs “information-rich cases” (Patton, 2002, p. 46, 230) in order to obtain the depth in the phenomenon being researched. Teachers were selected based on all needs of the sampling criteria. Teachers were contacted by the researcher to set up interviews.

Six females and four males were selected based on the purposeful sampling criteria. There were two beginning teachers (less than three years experience), one that taught 4-8 years, four that taught 9-15 years, and three experienced teachers (15+ years). Seven adapted physical education teachers were represented within this sample. Two of the teachers taught K-6th grade, one teacher taught K-8th grade, two of the teachers taught 4th - 8th grade, three teachers taught 7th -8th grade, and two taught 9th -12th grade.
Data Collection

Data collection for this study included a participant information sheet (appendix C) that was completed by the participant. The researcher also designed the questions with help from the thesis committee for appropriate context and relevancy. The questions were both closed and open ended. Practice or pilot interviews were performed to the committee chair and a local elementary physical education teacher to test the questions before performing the interview with the actual participants of the study. Changes were made based on feedback from the practice interviews to ensure the interview questions answered the identified research questions. Revisions included slight wording changes, sample follow-up questions, and the order of questions. Practice interviews also allowed the researcher to practice interviewing techniques such as body language awareness and listening skills for follow-up questions. In-depth interviews were set up with each participant. The researcher performed all interviews in a face-to-face setting at the convenience of the participant. Each interview was audio recorded using an Olympus digital voice recorder (VN-4100PC) as the primary recording device and backup portable micro cassette recorder. Participants were given a clarification of terms form (appendix D) at the beginning of the interview. Interview questions (appendix E) included background information, experience with consultation, perceived roles during the consultation process, and feelings of success with adapted PE students with consultation services included in general PE. The participants were asked if they had any additional questions or comments. The interviews were performed during a four-month time period. Each interview lasted 35-60 minutes. All interviews were transcribed and each one was sent to the participant to review for accuracy (member check). Member
checking is a method of checking the credibility of the findings and interpretations by the researcher in qualitative data (Creswell, 2007).

Qualitative Study

A phenomenological approach was utilized to offer meaningful description and obtain reflective experiences from the participants. To define a phenomenological study Creswell (2007) stated “a phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences about a concept or a phenomenon” (p. 57). A phenomenological study is “... an approach that enables the researcher to understand the meaning of phenomena” (Morse et al., 2002, p. 146). Morse and Richards (2002) add “... phenomenology gives us insights into the meanings or the essences of experiences that we may previously have been unaware of, but can recognize” (p. 47). In a phenomenological study the purpose is to get a perception, or interpretation from a person. There can be reflection, description, and personal interpretation from an open-ended question based interview (Morse & Richards, 2002). In order to answer the questions set out by the researcher, interviews with general PE teachers were necessary. This study used a phenomenological approach to understand general PE teachers’ perceptions and experiences in the adapted PE consultation process. Participants in the interview process had to experience the phenomenon in order to reflect and add perspective.

Analysis of Data

Analysis of phenomenological data is when the researcher makes meaning of the phenomena (Morse & Richards, 2002). It is when the lived experience that was
shared by the participants can be transformed into a “textual expression of its essence” (Morse & Richards, 2002, p. 146). The initial step in using phenomenology is epoche. This is the process of the researcher identifying any bias. In a phenomenological study, one must “... suspend all judgments about what is real - the ‘natural attitude’ - until they are founded on a more certain basis” (Creswell, 2007, p. 59). To bracket the prior knowledge, assumptions and possible expectations of the research project, the researcher must enter the analysis process without prejudgments. The following were a few stated biases from the current researcher:

- Believed that consultation interactions once a month was too infrequent to be effective.
- Believed that the general PE teachers were frustrated with the inclusion of students with disabilities and therefore would seek any support.

Data collection was used in interviews with open-ended questions. Responses were audio recorded and transcribed. Data analysis included specific steps.

a. Narrative transcriptions (data) were first read entirely as a whole.

b. Statements were highlighted and coded.

c. Codes and statements were grouped and themes emerged.

d. Narrative including descriptions and quotes from participants were identified to support the findings (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

Each interview was transcribed on a Dell Inspiron 8000 PC using the Olympus PC transcription kit (AS-2300). Voice recognition software, Dragon Naturally Speaking, version 9.51 was used to aide the typing of the transcripts. A software program by Scientific Software Development titled *Atlas.ti: The knowledge workbench*, version...
4.2, was utilized to assist with data analysis. This computer software allowed the researcher to categorize and re-categorize data as the process of analysis continued. Categories and subcategories emerged and blended throughout the analysis process. When clear categories and subcategories remained, it was assumed that descriptions had brought forth answers to the research questions.

Trustworthiness

Through a series of reflective questions, Creswell (2007) forces the researcher to insure the study’s validity:

1. Did the interviewer influence the contents of the participants’ descriptions in such a way that the descriptions do not truly reflect the participants’ actual experience?
2. Is the transcription accurate, and does it convey the meaning of the oral presentation in the interview?
3. In the analysis of the transcriptions, were there conclusions other than those offered by the researcher that could have been derived? Has the researcher identified these alternatives?
4. Is it possible to go from the general structural description to the transcriptions and to account for the specific contents and connections in the original examples of the experience? (Creswell, 2007, p. 215)

The researcher took all precautions necessary to create a valid study. Interview questions were preformed and guided the interview conversation. A professor familiar with qualitative study reviewed three transcripts to ensure all possible avenues for categorization were exhausted. A transcription machine was used to transcribe with word-for-word accuracy. The analysis process was continual until the set categories emerged. The participants’ experiences were displayed within the narrative results found in this study.

The validity of the interview questions was addressed by the research committee members verifying the questions’ appropriateness for the topic being studied
and that questions were worded in an understandable way. At the beginning of the interview the investigator restated the terminology to be used during the interview process (consultation, individualized education plan, adapted PE, LRE) and the participants had a vocabulary sheet available to them during the interview (appendix E).

Member checks were used for credibility of the participants’ interviews; the transcribed interview was sent to participants to review for accuracy. The dependability and confirmability was tracked by an audit trail. A binder was kept of the process and timeline of the study. A professor, not on the committee, familiar with qualitative research read through transcriptions and findings to ensure the researcher found all necessary conclusions.

Transferability, or the ability for findings from this study to be applicable to other contexts, was created through the rich description of the context for each participant in this study.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Ten general physical education teachers were interviewed to answer questions about adapted physical education (PE) consultation and how adapted PE specialists support inclusion of students with disabilities in general PE. Data from the transcribed interviews and demographic forms were analyzed. Information included demographics, attitudes toward inclusion, and the following categories were derived from the data: consultation interactions, perceptions of the individualized education plan (IEP), perceived relationship of the general PE teacher within the consultation process, types of support the general PE teacher received from the adapted PE specialist, barriers to effective consultation, and accountability. These categories will be presented in detail.

Participant Demographics

All teachers interviewed worked in Northern California. The number of adapted PE specialists per county ranged from one per county to four. All participants (general PE teachers) in this study held a physical education teaching credential. The researcher sought out those who received consultation services from an adapted PE specialist. These general PE teachers represented ten different communities, and the sample received services from seven different adapted PE specialists.
Table 1 displays the participants of the study. The sample was selected based on purposeful sampling and included ten teachers (six females and four males). Pseudonyms were used to protect anonymity. These teachers taught a variety of grade levels and had varying years of experience. Each one had received consultation services in adapted PE. The researcher asked if they had any coursework in adapted PE and if they had received any professional development in the area of inclusion since obtaining their credential. Many of the teachers had experience in a mainstreaming or inclusion class as part of their educational coursework to earn their teaching credential. In-services and/or conferences that pertained to inclusion were considered professional development.

Table 1

*Study Participants*

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<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Grades taught</th>
<th>Years teaching</th>
<th>School size</th>
<th>Average class size</th>
<th>Years receiving consult in APE</th>
<th>Students on consult in APE</th>
<th>College coursework in APE</th>
<th>Professional development in inclusion</th>
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<td>Tracy</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>1-3</td>
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Winnie was a first year teacher. She taught at a K-8 school. She had one student receiving adapted PE service from an itinerant adapted PE specialist who worked for the county. Winnie took an introduction to adapted physical education course and a special education course as part of her credentialing process. She had not completed any professional development in the area of inclusion.

Joanne was in her 11th year teaching at an elementary school. The campus had approximately 420 students. She had 40-50 students in each class. She had two students who received adapted PE consultation services. For six years she consulted with an adapted PE specialist who served multiple school districts. Joanne did not have any courses in adapted PE in her coursework and had no professional development in the area of inclusion.

Lynn taught 3rd to 5th grade for five years at a school of 425 students. Her class sizes ranged from 25-40 students, with one student on consultation service. Lynn consulted with an itinerant adapted PE specialist who served multiple small districts for five years. She earned 12 units in adapted PE in her college coursework and participated in some professional development on inclusion, in the area of autism.

Doug taught for 12 years. His campus had 580 students in grades 4-8. His class sizes ranged from 30-35 with 2-3 students who received consultation services for ten years from an adapted PE specialist from the county. The adapted PE specialist served multiple school districts. He did not take coursework in adapted PE. He attended conferences regularly but had no specific professional development in the area of inclusion.
Brent was in his tenth year teaching. He taught at a campus of 600 students that had 4\textsuperscript{th} – 8\textsuperscript{th} graders. There were about 900 students on the campus. His class sizes were around 35, with a total of 2-5 students with disabilities throughout his classes. Usually two students each year had consultation services with a county adapted PE specialist. Brent had received ten years of adapted PE consultation service with an adapted PE specialist who served multiple school districts. He earned 10-12 units of adapted PE in his college coursework.

Abie was a new teacher. She was in her first year of teaching physical education, and in her second year of teaching. Abie taught one period of physical education, and then taught other subjects on the middle school campus of 750 students. The county itinerant adapted PE specialist consulted with Abie for one student who was included in her general PE class. Abie had no coursework in adapted PE. She had inclusion coursework while she earned her credential.

Jerry was in his 19\textsuperscript{th} year teaching. He taught at a middle school of 7\textsuperscript{th} and 8\textsuperscript{th} graders where class sizes were about 35 students. Four students received adapted PE consultation services. Jerry consulted for 13 years with a district adapted PE specialist. He did not have coursework in adapted PE but pursued his own professional development to research strategies to include students with disabilities in his class.

Scott was in his 25\textsuperscript{th} year of teaching. He taught on a middle school campus. The campus had approximately 830 students. His typical class size was 35 students. He had a variety of students with disabilities in his classroom and those that received consultation services. He did not have an adapted PE student in his class at the time of the interview, but in the recent past, he had two students who received consultation services.
from the county adapted PE specialist. He did not have coursework in adapted PE or professional development in inclusion strategies.

Mary was in her 11th year teaching at a high school of 400 students. She typically taught 20-40 students in her physical education classes and had 2-5 students with disabilities throughout her classes. There were usually three students each year who received adapted PE services. For 11 years Mary consulted with an adapted PE specialist who worked for the county. She had no coursework in adapted PE or professional development in inclusion strategies.

Tracy had been teaching for 30 years. She taught at a high school of approximately 980 students. At the time of the interview she did not have any students with adapted PE consultation, but did in recent years, and throughout her years of teaching. Her class sizes ranged from 35 to 45 students. The adapted PE specialist had consulted with Tracy for about 15 years and was the county employee. Tracy did not take coursework in adapted PE but had attended professional development conferences and multiple sessions on adapted PE and inclusion.

Attitudes

To understand the participants’ frame of reference on inclusion, it was important to understand their attitude toward including students with disabilities into their PE class. Inclusion was defined as, “The placement of an individual with a disability (severe disability) into general classes with peers in a neighborhood school. The individual is not an occasional visitor, but a viable member of the class with appropriate support services provided in the general classes” (APENS, 2006, p. 183). Participants
were asked a series of questions about the inclusion of students with disabilities in their general PE classes. Answers given by participants displayed attitudes toward teaching an inclusive class of students both with disabilities and without. “Attitudes indicate one’s predisposition to either approach or avoid something” (Sherrill 2004, p. 253). Attitudes shared were not only those of the general PE teacher but also the general PE teacher’s perception of the attitudes of the students with and without disabilities.

All participants in the study shared that they enjoyed having individuals with disabilities included in their classrooms. They believed that it brought a challenge to them as teachers. Multiple teachers felt that general PE was the best placement for students with disabilities. Some participants specifically stated there would not be a better place, other than inclusion, for that student to learn motor skills. They believed the social skills the students with disabilities acquired would not be available in any other physical education placement or service. Participants also felt that individuals with disabilities were always going to be part of their students’ lives in work and other social situations. Inclusion created an opportunity for students to learn how to adapt, modify, and include individuals who were different than them. The general physical educators who participated in the study agreed, inclusion was a benefit for all involved in physical education.

The inclusion of students with disabilities created a positive atmosphere in the general PE class. General education students were helpful and part of the process of modifying and accommodating activities for included individuals. Overall, the teachers held a positive attitude toward including students with disabilities in their classes.
Jerry showed his positive desire to include students with disabilities in his junior high school classes.

As I've gone through 19 years it's one of the things that has reenergized myself, my interests, and my passion for being with the kids. I think I find these little things that kind of jumpstart me ... Especially the SH (severely handicapped) kids that we have on our site. And also working with some of the kids that aren't designated, and identifying them and helping out the parent.

Lynn believed that a class with students with disabilities created a positive learning environment for all the students in the class.

There isn't anything that a child with disabilities in my class takes away from at all (referring to the class atmosphere). Sometimes frustration levels are higher (for students and teacher), but that could be with anyone (with disabilities or without). It's just what you choose to do with it.

Abie stated her enjoyment of inclusion in general education as, “Absolutely. I love a diverse classroom. Because I think there’s so many things that everybody can learn from each other, rather than just the subject matter.”

Participants shared how the general PE students’ attitude reflected a positive outcome to inclusion of students with disabilities. The general PE teachers described the student attitudes as accepting, supportive, and patient. All of the general PE teachers felt that the inclusion of students brought a positive atmosphere to the general PE class environment.

Consultation Interactions

The frequency of consultation varied from once a week, to once a month, to 2-3 times a semester. Teachers each described that most of the consultation interactions happened as the adapted PE specialists dropped by the class. Seldom was the consultation held at another time. Sometimes consultation interactions were held on the phone or
through email but most were face-to-face contact. General PE teachers said the meetings were informal, unplanned, not scheduled, mostly verbal, during or after class, unstructured, and very casual. The participants remarked that the adapted PE specialist came during class time when the student with a disability was included into the general PE class. The adapted PE specialist typically observed the student during the class and the adapted PE specialist and general PE teacher talked about the student’s performance before, during or after class. The following are some examples of these consultation interactions.

Joanne described a consultation interaction with her adapted PE specialist:

“It's usually outside walking to and from a class, or after, or on a break. We touch base about what happened [since the last consult]”

Mary mentioned the adapted PE consultant dropped by once a week. Mary’s example of a consultation interaction:

She came in the other day and we sat while they were playing. And she took about five or ten minutes watching what was going on. And then as I was directing traffic; and that kind of thing; the kids were playing so they didn't need me anymore. We sat and we talked. And she goes “this is what I'm seeing. Am I seeing it correctly?” Then we'll talk about what we can do better. What's working what's not working. Any problems I've had and how to deal with it. She watches and then she gives me feedback and I give her feedback. So it's a back-and-forth. It's very nice; relaxing; easy. There is no “this is how you should do it” “Oh my gosh, I'm doing it wrong”. It's - I don't know how else to put it other than it's easy.

Some of the participants explained that they enjoyed the aspect of their consultation being unstructured and easy. The informality worked for them and fit into their schedules.
Brent summarized:

Usually I talk about the observations that I’ve made throughout the week. What might’ve worked and what might not have worked. And then he’ll give me some feedback on that. That’s basically what we do. We don’t sit down formally. Neither one of us have that much time.

Winnie shared her experience with the informality.

It's just the knowledge of it. What you should be working on, and what you're supposed to be doing. I guess our consultations are so informal that I'm having a hard time answering the questions (referring to interview questions on the consultation experience).

These teachers commented on the ease of fitting consultation into their schedule. There seemed to be benefits of the adapted PE consultant stopping by within the general PE class time. The general PE teachers did not have to go out of their way, and the adapted PE consultant had the opportunity to see the student participate and included in the general PE class. The consultations were then an informal conversation prompted by the observation of the adapted PE specialist.

Themes

Perceptions of the Individualized Education Plans

Throughout the interviews with the general PE teachers, their views of the IEP process emerged. They shared their perceptions of IEP goals and objectives and the IEP meetings.

IEP goals and objectives. When the participants were asked if they had the opportunity to view the included students’ IEP goals and objectives there were mixed reactions. Four out of the ten general PE teachers in the study did not receive a copy of the goals after an annual meeting. These four participants reported they could get a copy
if they asked for it. Other teachers always knew the adapted PE goals and objectives because the adapted PE specialist provided the goals. Most teachers did not report knowledge of the adapted PE goals and objectives. An important note is that all teachers knew they could access that information if they asked the adapted PE specialist. The interviewer asked Scott if he appreciated receiving and reviewing the IEP forms. He stated “... It helps to see things that need to be done.”

Prior to the interview, Winnie knew she could ask for a copy but did not think about the importance of knowing the student’s goals and objectives. “No (referring to not knowing the goals and objectives). I would love to know them. I feel horrible. Wow, I feel like I need to be more proactive.”

The general PE teachers may not realize all the information resources that are available to them from special education resources and which ones will be helpful in providing an appropriate program for their students with disabilities.

When the teachers did not know the IEP goals, they were not able to address them on a daily basis. Often the goals may not have related to the teachers curriculum. Lynn shared that she does not always know the student’s IEP goals and if the student was meeting those goals. She stated:

You know, sometimes I may be really focusing on one thing, but what if I don’t know what they are focusing on. … So like with (student), I didn’t have a copy of his specific goals, so (adapted PE specialist) got me them so now we are on the same page. But (adapted PE) says ‘you do such a good job with (students), I forget’ (to get the goals to Lynn).

An area of frustration was when the IEP goals for the included student did not match the curriculum. Tracy commented on how the goals for students in her class typically included a modification to the mile run. The mile was a minimal part of her
curriculum so she was frustrated with the fact that it was the only measurement of that student’s improvement. Another teacher felt as though the written IEP goal was not a priority in his class, and he would like to have a goal or objective that better matched the student’s needs in the class.

Doug stated his point:

My biggest frustration ... the IEP goal a lot of times for our kids seems to be "hey let's just look on our fitness test." They can only do two push-ups so make that their goal, that their going to get whatever push-ups. Which is good, but I just kind of wonder if that's really what we should be focusing on with that student, the testing. Is the most important thing that we are trying to get out of them that they can do a push up? Or is it that they can work with their peers better or raise their hand, speak out in class. Whatever it might be. It seems a lot of times that the IEP thing (referring to goals) is the physical fitness thing because it's easily measurable. ... for instance going to the IEP meeting. If the whole thing is a to talk about "hey, how did they do on a fitness test?" then I don't need to be there to say that Johnny can do a push up ... You don't have to be a credentialed teacher to go to a meeting and explain that piece. So I would like to see a little more time and effort focused on what would be most important as far as growth items for them.

Most participants reported not knowing the student’s IEP goals and objectives, yet knowledge of goals and objectives seemed important. Appropriate goals and objectives to match curriculum should increase the amount of success for students included in general PE.

IEP meetings. The participants said they benefited from the information shared between teachers and parents when they attended the IEP meetings. Information from the IEP meetings that the participants described included strategies other teachers used and meeting with the parent in order to understand the parent perspective. If unable to attend a meeting, general PE teachers shared information about the student’s participation in class with someone who would convey it at the meeting. For example, the general PE teacher would complete a checklist from a school psychologist, or send an
email to the case carrier to be shared at the meeting. The general PE teachers assumed that the consultation interactions were shared by the adapted PE specialist at the IEP meetings.

Eight of the teachers were regularly invited to IEP meetings; the other two teachers did not always receive a meeting notice. Winnie shared “And [adapted PE specialist] has been really good at asking me (to attend) and so has a coordinator of the program. So that's been nice.”

Lynn received IEP notices, but was not always able to make it to IEP meetings. She described:

I don't get a copy of what happened at the meeting. But [special education teacher] does put in advance, a good two weeks in my box of who's having one ... a lot of our students, the IEP is for the academic portion of it. The ones that I need to be at, I do my best to be there.

Mary did not get an IEP notice for all of her special education students, but her adapted PE specialist always made sure she was invited. Mary stated: “Not always. [adapted PE specialist] is really good when it's her kids, to say they’re here (referring to IEP meetings), they’re here. She usually tells me when they are. But they don't plan around my schedule so it's rare that I get to go.”

Participants saw the value in participating in IEP meetings. One main reason was to gain teaching strategies. Abie’s school requested teachers attend IEP meetings and provided substitutes if the meeting was during the school day.

Abie:

I think its part of what our responsibilities are to that student. And I do learn a lot. Because if I’m struggling in my class and the student is doing well in other classes, I can take from them. I can take what strategies they are using in that classroom.
Scott:

Well it’s interesting to see what they’re doing in other classes and how those things are going. And so you can see maybe they’re having problems there and see a strategy. Or maybe someone’s using a strategy that would be good for your class. And maybe you have a strategy you use for [the student] and it might help other teachers.

Another reason to attend IEP meetings was to meet the parents of the student with disabilities and learn what was going on outside of the physical education class. Brent shared “Because then you get to kind of know the parent. ... opening up the lines of communication. So you meet the parents and you see them. And you can develop a connection. I wish we had an IEP for everybody.”

Lynn shared her enthusiasm towards the collaborative IEP process:

It means a lot when there is a lot of support there. It means a lot that people are trying to get on the same page to provide what's best for the child. They are at times, as you know very time-consuming. Sometimes you feel like you maybe can't get anywhere. And sometimes you feel extremely successful. I think it is like with any collaborative meeting that the process is invaluable, the follow-through is invaluable, and the time and energy is invaluable. Because that is what has to be done.

One final note that the researcher found interesting was in respect to the general PE teacher attending an IEP meeting as the “token” general education teacher. By law (IDEA 1997), there must be a general education teacher at the IEP meetings. Sometimes the general PE teachers were requested to attend an IEP meeting so they could be the general education teacher to sign on the line of the IEP form.

Tracy mentioned:

It's always requested of classroom teachers. ... in fact I just got some the other day. So-and-so's IEP is on such-and-such a day. This is the caseload teacher. These are the regular ed. teachers. I need someone to attend. And so they request that you attend.
Doug shared:

Not all. If it's something that I'm certainly concerned about I will make sure I attend that one. Or sometimes when there is a resource teacher or a special ed. teacher might ask you to attend a certain one because they need a general education teacher to be there.

Attendance at IEP meetings was not always seen as a value to the participants. They expressed that it was difficult to make every meeting, but if they had concerns or information they wanted to share they would attempt to attend. They mentioned that most of the topics at the meeting surrounded the student’s other classes and not necessarily physical education. The value in attending the meetings stemmed from sharing their successes and hearing what other teachers were using as strategies for teaching the students.

Perceived relationship of the general PE teacher within the consultation process. The general PE teachers in this study understood their roles in the relationship as assessing, reporting, and identifying issues and concerns about a student with disabilities. They wanted to create an inclusive physical education experience to meet a student’s abilities and to be an advocate for the student.

Desired relationship. Participants in this study wanted more collaborative consultation interactions. They recognized that when they worked together in a more “give and take” manner, they each got more out of the experience.

Jerry shared:

I would like both of us honestly, in a perfect world, both of us to be, both myself and the adapted individual, to be a consultant for the student. I would like the student to take ownership for it. And in most cases they do, invariably there's one or two who really do. Instead of being a person who's assisting them, I’m the person that is having to drive it ... I'm trying to make sure that their inclusion in the everyday population as the way it should be. At my site they feel accepted just as
another student. But yet I also understand their needs and I'm able to help them with it. Where the adapted individual is helping with questions specifically, rather than be a person for me to ask questions specifically. That all three of us are basically three legs of the table. Rather than two people and another one.

Lynn shared how her adapted PE specialist could support her more through collaborative consultation:

Well number one, let me know (in advance so she could plan) when the IEP meetings are going to be. Maybe just to have a sit down informal meeting. When they're doing their paperwork, when they go through and look at paperwork. If I can get a copy of it. If we can sit down and maybe fill it out together. If there were maybe one day a month that when she came she said "hey I'm going to meet you in your room at this time and this is what I want to show you or pass on to you".

The participants recognized the adapted PE specialist had large caseloads, multiple school sites, and little extra time. Yet, the general PE teacher needed this person to be approachable, attentive, knowledgeable, and dependable, as well as a good collaborator.

Doug described how he views collaborative characteristics in the adapted PE consultation relationships.

So that's the toughest part I think for any APE person is to come in as the third party. Who comes in once every three weeks or so as the expert and give that expert advice. Which they truly are. But as a general teacher you are the expert on that kid every single day and you know how that kid is every single day. So as long as it's positive, cooperative, friendly conversation. You know there has to be a relationship that's there first. And I think that's what worked so well in our situation. It’s we're more than just professional colleagues. We’ve become quite friends with the APE person and we've got a nice working relationship. And you can't always expect that, but that's what makes it nice. Most the time it (referring to the consultation interaction) is come in and shoot the breeze and ask how it's going with each other and their families, and then go, by the way “how’s so-and-so doing?” And we focus on them a little bit.

Participants wanted the consultation to be more of a collaborative effort. They listed elements they wanted included in this effort: observations and feedback, time to
talk to each other, goals created together, and a collaborative relationship with the adapted PE specialist.

The descriptions of the general PE teachers’ perceived relationship created some categorizations describing how the general PE teacher currently perceived himself or herself in the consultation process. The three categories of teacher relationships included lead teacher, reciprocal teacher, and novice teacher. Table 2 displays these categories.

**Lead teacher relationship.** Four of the general PE teachers perceived themselves as the lead teacher. They saw the student daily and had information to share with the consultant. They perceived that they were the ones who came up with inclusion strategies to make sure that individuals with disabilities were successful in general PE. These teachers felt it was up to them to give an appropriate assessment, to report observations about the student, and to identify issues or concerns about the student.

Joanne revealed:

You know really [adapted PE specialist] is trying to support me as the lead teacher, as the lead person who's with the person everyday. And so my role I think would be to receive that information and help best assimilate it to the student and make sure that everything is working.

Jerry:

I basically take the lead. In a consultation I become the individual who takes the lead and honestly, I'm not sure how - if I'm perceived as having or are supposed to be doing that, by my district. I think the district perceives in some ways that the adapted person should be the one taking the lead. When in effect though, we are working daily life. I'm the one basically only contacting that person if I am struggling. I'm not sure how people perceive that.

**Novice teacher relationship.** Two teachers fell into the novice category. Both novice teachers described themselves as needing guidance and information in order to
Table 2  
*Teacher Relationships*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Novice Teacher</th>
<th>Reciprocal Teacher</th>
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include students with disabilities into general PE. The novice teacher recognized where to go for information and utilized the guidance received to create the successful inclusion experience.

Abie, a new teacher, understood her perceived relationship:

I don't always anticipate exactly what my needs are going to be since I'm so new at this. It's always nice when you have someone leading along the way, but that doesn't happen much in life ... I'm not an adapted PE teacher. They are. I'm not even going to pretend even though I could modify and stuff, I'm not even going to pretend ... Huge advantages to having somebody who I can turn to and just make
sure that I'm being safe with the kids and not putting them at risk. And having somebody who's an expert there. Even on a consultant basis is huge.

Winnie, another new teacher, explained her perceived relationship:

I think that it's helping and supporting me by giving me more confidence. Knowing that she's doing the same songs the same skills that I am doing ... I am learning from her. I guess.

The novice teachers were both beginning teachers. Both of the teachers made mention that they were not familiar with the adapted PE specialist relationship in the consultation process, and what services the specialist offered for students with disabilities in physical education.

**Reciprocal teacher relationship.** Reciprocal teachers described themselves working in a “give and take” relationship. These teachers found they fit into the consultative relationship between a listener and a reporter. They described talking through suggestions and ultimately perceived the relationship with the adapted PE specialists as a partnership.

Brent explained his collaboration with his adapted PE specialist.

We’ll usually talk after class. He tries to make it once a week for each kid ... He’ll come in and we’ll talk after class. I’ll kind of throw some things I’m seeing his way, and he’ll talk to me about how we can implement or modify. That’s kind of the line of communication.

Doug described his perceived reciprocal teacher relationship and shared how he is comfortable and confident about the consultation relationship.

My role is to report back what I've observed and let them know what I've done. And ask for anything that I might feel that I need. And I would hope that my role would be open to suggestions to something that might make it better . . .

Whenever our APE person comes, if I really feel like I'm struggling with something I always feel comfortable asking if they have any suggestions. But usually by the time they get there they see what I've done and they usually say, "Great, that's appropriate".
Scott experienced differing teaching relationships based on his level of consultation support. When he had two students in his general PE class that he described as high need, he received consultation services three times per week. During that time, he and the team worked closely together creating the feeling of a reciprocal relationship. Yet his typical consultation relationship had been one time per month, and in those cases he perceived himself as the lead teacher. Therefore, the frequency of the consultations seemed to influence the teacher perceptions of their relationship during consultation.

Support

Participants found multiple advantages to adapted PE consultation. They identified particular supportive actions that facilitated their inclusion of students with disabilities into general PE to included observation, verbal support, information, specialized equipment, and direct assistance with a student.

Observation

Results from classroom observations were another form of support the adapted PE specialist provided. The adapted PE specialists observed the student included in the general PE environment. Because of large class sizes the general PE teachers treasured having a second set of eyes looking specifically at that one student. The general PE teachers in the study appreciated having another professional available to observe and provide ideas and feedback. Brent appreciated the observation, “Probably the coming out monitoring. And if he sees something that we can change he'll help me with that. And I like that. I like being able talk to somebody.”
Mary stated how she likes the observation she gets from her adapted PE specialist.

Because I have 40+ kids in my class. So I'm not catching everything. And she'll go, “Why? What's going on?” “Let's do it this way”. “Good idea”. It's very, very nice to have another eye come in and look at those kids specifically ... I really like how we do it. I don’t have a lot of time in my day so I don’t want more meetings. And I like the way she comes when we’re doing things. Because then she can actually see what’s going on.

Doug shared:

Generally when [adapted PE] comes in and they like observing a certain person. Then when we have a moment we like to talk about what’s going on... Most of the time they’ll see everything is fine because they can see that [the student] is involved and their included fully and everything is fine.

These teachers had the overwhelming job of large class sizes and creating a successful inclusion experience. Support offered through observation created the feeling that the included students were getting the service they needed by the adapted PE specialist. The general PE teacher was being supported through the use of the specialist’s observations and, as their words reflected, they appreciated another “set of eyes” to look at the included student and the success of the inclusion process.

Verbal Support

Participants reported that the main means of support provided by adapted PE specialists was verbal. Verbal support was specifically described as oral communication between the general PE teacher and the adapted PE specialist. Verbal support took the form of information, feedback, brainstorming, and teaching suggestions. Typically this verbal support happened during or directly following the observation by the adapted PE specialist. Lynn and Mary shared their interactions with adapted PE specialists.
Lynn:
She offers suggestions; she offers maybe little tactics that will work when needed. But unless I'm really stuck, I don't need to pick her brain about it. But she definitely has answers if I need them. She's in tune.

Mary:
She really, really helps me because sometimes I think, “let's try it this way” and she comes in and "here is a better way, an easier way". Oh wonderful. Why didn't I think of that? ... like one individual I might expect more of him, and she's like "can't do it. You can't work on fitness with him because his muscles are deteriorating. There's nothing we can do about it." So it's good for her to remind me what they can and can't do.

General PE teachers participating in the study shared that the feedback received after an observation from the adapted PE specialist was useful and beneficial to support the students.

Brett shared the benefits of the consultation and resources of the adapted PE specialist, “Probably the coming out monitoring. And if he sees something that we can change he’ll help me with that. And I like that. I like being able to talk to somebody.”

Mary expressed her desires to continue the consultation interactions:
I would not want to do it without it. I would not. There's too many great ideas that she has that - there's just so many kids were dealing with. And it's nice for her to come and say, "I'm just concentrating on these few." And it's very helpful for those kids. Because some of the things I didn't even think about.

Doug summarized how these teachers appreciated the verbal support from the consultation interactions: “Advantages are that you have an opportunity to bounce back ideas with somebody on a regular basis. Get another professional's opinion on ways to be successful.” Verbal communication was clearly an advantage in the consultation process.
Information

Participants felt the adapted PE specialist was a valuable resource. The specialist held knowledge of the individuals with disabilities and specific information about the disability of the included student. The general PE teachers utilized the information the adapted PE specialist provided, to create a successful inclusion experience.

The teachers mentioned they first needed information about the included student as the school year started. Abie mentioned how she went a few weeks in her first year teaching physical education without a consultation interaction with her adapted PE specialist. Then once she met the adapted PE specialists she stated, “That initial conversation was key. And she's checked in several times since then and we just chat. And again, one student who is fairly high functioning, it's made it pretty easy.” From that consultation interaction, she gained information and the knowledge she felt she needed to create a successful inclusion experience for the student.

Mary described how her adapted PE specialist supported her with information about the student as he/she entered Mary’s physical education class.

Mostly it's - if I don't know the child yet, sitting down, here's the paper work, this is what we’re to look for, there is the IEP, these are his goals/her goals. So it's more of a discussion before I even get them. Or if a new student coming in she'll sit with me and say, "okay, here's this. Do you have questions? Read it through. And this is what would be best for this child to be incorporated in the class."

Brent stated:

Helps me to write lessons. Set long-term goals. I can see if its year-to-year things. It's what we did last year and I can pick it up a year later. Like were getting ready to start basketball, looking at things from last year of what worked and didn't work.
Information from the adapted PE specialist was valuable to the general PE teachers. They understood that without some of the key information about the specific student, they could not measure growth and success.

Specialized Equipment

Few teachers realized that when they had a student with a disability, such as a student with a visual impairment or one using a wheelchair, specialized equipment may be available. Some teachers felt they did not need specialized equipment because the equipment the school provided was sufficient. Not all the teachers in this study were familiar with the equipment that adapted PE specialists could provide for them. One participant described how they were able to purchase a specialized piece of equipment for a student to participate in a weekly fitness activity. It was too expensive for his school budget, so the adapted PE specialist helped purchase it through a special education funding source. This kind of support allowed students with disabilities to participate in an activity with their class.

Brent:

He brought weight equipment like dumbbells, a hockey stick that he brought so one of our children could play hockey, floor hockey. But he does. I can't remember everything. In the beginning about three years ago before we were able to get the lowered hoops, he brought one of those for me to use. So we do get some equipment from [Adapted PE specialist] periodically if we need it.

Scott shared, “In fact, I would ask them if you have this kind of ball or that kind of ball? And they would say ‘oh yeah, we will get you equipment.’ We have one special little closet with their equipment in there.”
Tracy:

I think we had a [person with a visual impairments] for a while and she supplied like a ball with the bell in it kind of thing. And if there's something special that we would need for that person I know that I could contact the adapted person and they would supply whatever else I need. They would make it so that person could be successful.

Receiving equipment, especially specialized equipment, was viewed as useful support by general PE teachers. Equipment support created more opportunity for inclusion for students with disabilities in the participants’ classes.

Direct Assistance with Students

Participants considered the direct assistance to a student with disabilities an additional advantage of consultation. Adapted PE specialists worked with students within the class and sometimes off to the side. Participants found this valuable for the student to learn specific tasks in the physical education curriculum.

Joanne appreciated the help the adapted PE added: “She's pretty good about that ... She'll work a little one-on-one with that particular student as well. And I'm not sure if she pulls the student out also at another time and works with them one-on-one.”

Brent described how his adapted PE specialist supports the student directly within the context of the general PE class:

He'll come in once a week and be with the student and help me out. And he'll travel around with the person and kind of watch to make sure they're following the rules, or he'll guide them through practice if he has to. ... not with them away from the class, but he travels with them throughout the class. And he is there so they are included in what we're doing.

Winnie shared how she did not know what helped more, the direct assistance, or the consultation.
I don't know how (consultation is helping). It's good to know what [adapted PE specialist] doing and what's going on. And I can see what she is worked on with [student] because he'll come to class and he'll say to me that "Oh, [adapted PE specialist] and I did this. And I already know how to do this watch". So I don't really know how the consultations are more helping than just what [adapted PE specialist] and I are both observing while each other are teaching. So that's sort of more helpful than us talking together as a consultation.

Participants in this study proposed further elements they felt would benefit the support they received from the adapted PE specialist aligned with the support they were currently receiving. These elements include more information, curriculum, and teaching strategies.

**Desired Support – Information**

The majority of general PE teachers participating in this study wanted more knowledge about the student with a disability in their class. They needed upfront information at the beginning of the school year in order to begin instruction immediately. They wanted more knowledge of the previous year’s instruction and the student’s present level of performance.

Participants believed that if they had more information on a student who was going to enter their class, they would be able to plan better for that individual.

Abie shared:

So ahead of time as I'm getting the schedules I can already start saying - I'll have a much better idea of what I'll need and what I want, and be able to start inquiring about that information ahead of time. And kind of help, and be much more of a partner in driving up front loaded piece instead of like "okay what can you tell me" and sitting back and waiting for somebody to help me out. It'll be much more of a partnership in helping the student.

Teachers discussed the benefit of knowing information from past physical education experiences. What has been tried in the past? What has worked best?
According to participants, this was not information they were getting from the special education staff. Typically, they would show up on the first day of class and find that some individuals with disabilities would be enrolled in their classes, and then they would have to find the information they needed for instructing the student with special needs. There were only two participants in the study who felt as though they received adequate information to successfully start off the school year. General PE teachers wanted to be supplied with information about students included in their classes so they could start the school year successfully.

Scott suggested, “Like I said before I would like to know their history. What has worked and what hasn't worked. Feedback from previous people. Just gathering information about them.”

Abie:

And that's one of the biggest things … You need to know much more than that. I want to know much more than what's on the IEP. Those forms are useful but not with enough detail. So it is very nice when I met the consultant, it was like “okay, this is helpful.” ... I needed information about him. Much more than the name and the diagnosis. The name of the diagnosis is almost irrelevant it is what are his limitations and what are his goals?

Joanne shared her frustration:

Sometimes I have to do quite a bit of inquiry to find out. The information is not forthcoming. That could be something I think could be improved ... I get a class list and they show up and I go, “hmmm, I think that kid might have special needs”. And then I go to the teacher and I say "what can you tell me about this kid?" So there isn't much information given to me ahead of time. And I think that's because - well I don't know why that is, but that's just kind of how it is. And then once I inquire, we figure out what's going on and then once their adapted teacher, like from the county, is assigned to that case then obviously there's a lot of communication with that person.
Beginner teachers did not understand the process, or the informational resources an adapted PE specialist could possibly provide for them.

Abie:

I would still like to know exactly what - I'm not exactly sure how our whole process works in our county. I know it's a county process because she's through [county education office]. But exactly how does it work? What resources are available? You know I pretty much have that down now for special education in general, but not adapted PE services specifically. So that's just a little learning process. A lot of it is just educating me (on the consultation process) and what it's supposed to look like.

Participants expressed the importance of knowing the abilities of the included student. Participants wanted to know what other general PE teachers had tried so they might benefit from other’s experiences. They wanted to know more about the history of the student and feedback from others who had worked with that individual student.

Desired support – Curriculum and Instructional Strategies

The general PE teachers participating in this study overwhelmingly wanted ideas, inclusion strategies, and resources to use in their inclusive classrooms. These might include a list of accommodations, modifications to specific activities or sports, and specific activities or warm-ups for the included student. They wanted hard copies of ideas and strategies that they could use in their class with the student, and specific to the individual needs of the student. Teachers requested this in multiple ways during the interviews.

Jerry described a rubric that he felt would be helpful in his situation. This rubric could include a layout of what the student can work on, the progression of skills for a specific student, and ideas of his next instructional step.
Jerry:

If this is not working, here’s another option. If this is - here is two or three other options at which I can do. And I can check and look at myself and evaluate... okay wait a minute they were able to do this. I can go onto the next thing. That would be huge for me. Most of the time it's - I'm working with my own rubrics based on a common student. And I'm having to take a look back. And I'm spending a lot of time generating my own rather than having somebody bring something to me.

Other teachers also expressed their desires for curriculum and instructional strategies. They wanted equipment modifications, activity modifications, and specific activity ideas for individual students.

Joanne listed her needs:

I think if they could somehow give me, as they came, some curriculum ideas written down. With some equipment ideas or whatever it might be. Just curriculum ideas written down so that I can refer back to it I think would be good. Like us just talking sometimes isn't quite enough. It would be nice if I had something written that said well you try this or this or whatever. Certain type of exercises that might work better for certain types of students.

Scott wanted student specific activities and modifications: “Maybe some different type of activities that they could've done. A different type of drill or activity that they could do. That enabled them to do some of the same movement.”

Many of the participants requested hard copies so they could refer to them as they planned lessons and units. When ideas and strategies were merely stated, the teacher did not have them as a reference; whereas, if a hard copy was available and at the teacher’s fingertips, they could be accessed when necessary.

Jerry:

I wish that I had a little more clearly defined, as far as growth targets [for the students with disabilities]. Whatever they may be having to work with. Maybe growth targets, some type of rubric that would make it easier for me to denote. Things that I can see in growth that I could document and both pass on to the student and to the parent ... I don't have that ... Trying to look for literally
something that is a hard copy that I can take a look at. This is where I need to be and this is what has been done and has been passed on, and this is what I can do. I don't want theory ... We want something hard that we can put in our hands and utilize.

One teacher wanted clarification of physical fitness testing. Physical fitness testing is mandated by the state of California, so teachers were looking for ways to include all students in the testing process.

Abie:

I'm still trying to figure out this whole concept of the whole fitness testing standards. And how do you address that when you have somebody with physical limitations. What is it going to look like? And I'm going to need to know that when we do that. The fall testing was just the baseline. The actual results that we report out are in the spring. And I still don't know what it is going to look like and how do we test and how do we report. Some of these goals are not realistic for him. So is there a modified program that we can put together and utilized for him so he can feel successful with what he does. I suspect like many of the California State standards that there's not, but I don't know that for a fact.

Within the interviews, all teachers suggested curriculum and/or instructional strategies as recommended ways to improve consultation support. Jerry strongly urged that this support should not come as “theory,” but “... something hard that we can put in our hands and utilize.” These teachers wanted ideas that were useful for what they were experiencing in their classes. They wanted the adapted PE specialists to be familiar with the class structure and teaching units so the feedback from the specialist would be current and useful.

Barriers

Multiple barriers emerged as the general PE teachers in the study discussed their perceptions of the consultation interactions. These perceived barriers included the
amount of time the general PE teacher and adapted PE specialist had to talk, the frequency of the consultation interactions, and the numbers of students in class.

**Time**

Eight of the teachers described how they would like more time with the adapted PE consultant. They wanted time outside of class where they could actually sit and talk about specifics regarding the student. These participants were very understanding of the busy adapted PE caseload and how that impacts the amount of time they have. In fact some stated that they did not want to add more to the adapted PE specialist’s schedule because they knew how busy that person was.

Jerry suggested: “If I was able to have time to sit and talk with the person I think it would be advantageous for both the APE and the other individuals. There isn’t enough time. And I'm not truly sure how we would be able to do that. But yeah time.”

The general PE teachers recognize that their own time constraints contribute to the time barrier.

Mary revealed:

The only thing I would say is not enough time ... To actually be able to watch, and sit and talk at the same. That kind of thing. Ideally, even if she would come and watch, then after class we can sit and talk about what happened and that kind of thing. So time wise, would be great if we had a little bit more. But I don't in my class time have the ability to do that. So that's not her, she'd give it to me if I asked for it.

Abie affirmed:

It's probably the time. The time to sit down and do it. I'm not even going to say doing it right. But to probably do it right so it's not just in the class as we're going along. Just five or ten minutes. It's kind of like this, ... you're not focused on a student because you're focused on 40 students.
Participants discussed how they enjoyed the casual and relaxed atmosphere of the adapted PE specialist’s observations. But they recognized that maybe if they had more time to talk, the consultation session could be more effective.


**Frequency**

Another barrier to effective consultation seemed to be the frequency of the consultation interactions. The participants in the study discussed how they had varying lengths and frequencies of their consultation time with their adapted PE specialists. Frequency of service varied from once or twice a month to some weekly visits and some that happened a couple times a semester.

Tracy felt if they happened more often they would be more successful. “I think that probably being able to see them more often and kind of do some ‘give-and-take’ would probably be the best thing in a realistic world.”

Joanne stated what she sees as a barrier. She felt that with more frequency of consultation, the consultant would be familiar with the unit of instruction and the student’s participation in class. This would help with the type of support the general PE teacher received. Joanne described:

> You know it's hard because they'll come and say, "okay well let us know what you're doing", like what kind of unit are you doing. And sometimes we'll do a unit and then we have to switch because of whatever. Because it rains for three days or something. So we can do that, we can say what kind of unit we’re going in but by the time they get back to us we might be - something has changed and it might be different.

Scott added that he felt it is important that the adapted PE specialist show up; otherwise, it is not supporting him. “And if they are going to tell you they are going to do
something and they don't follow through. Yeah. When they were coming once a month, why bother. Just call me on the phone and ask me.”

One finding that cannot be ignored was that three individuals brought up the fact they felt as though the adapted PE specialist was just meeting a minimum legal obligation so consultation services were infrequent. They saw the consultant minimally, and when they did show up, the general PE teachers felt like it was really not adding much to the collaborative relationship to help the student. They felt the adapted PE specialist was just there to meet an obligation and then was gone. The adapted PE teacher would not return until the next month, when they had to return based on their legal obligation. This was very frustrating to these individuals.

Jerry shared his strong feelings that his adapted PE consultant only came out to meet his legal obligations.

I think the individuals (referring to adapted PE specialists) that at this point it is not a priority for success of the student so much as a minimum requirement to meet liability. And I would probably have to say lack of interest at my level for continuation with a consult.

Tracy stated her perception of why this might happen:

Yeah, but I know and you know how it is. I mean there's way too many with too little time. So I think they're functioning on a level that is satisfactory. It's always like the biggest problems get the most amount of attention. The ones that are going okay get the least amount of attention. Whether it's just okay or excellent. And they seem to function okay in this setting, so they get less attention than others who aren't functioning okay.

In these cases, an adapted PE specialist’s knowledge was not valued because of the infrequency of visits. General PE teachers made daily decisions regarding the inclusion of a student with disabilities. If a general PE teacher perceived himself/herself including successfully without support, he or she was unable to determine the value of
the services and support offered by an adapted PE specialist because of the infrequency of visits.

**Number of Students**

The general PE teachers expressed one barrier to effective consultation as their own class size. Each general PE teacher described how he or she did not feel enough support for the individuals with disabilities that were placed in these large classes.

Joanne stated:

But it's a challenge. The challenge basically comes from - because I have such big numbers. Because I have sometimes upwards to 60-4th graders, and I'll have a couple special needs kids in that. And I don't have an aide. It's just me. And so I've always found that challenging to really try to adapt and make it work for them.

Brent described how he wanted to have the students included, but at times, he just felt that he could not get around to all the students to support them in large general PE classes:

One of the things that I'm finding in PE is that our class sizes seem to be ballooning. And with this other young man that I have, the class is huge. It has 41 kids, 39 regular ed. and I have two students that I get from our SDC class. … And I don't always get to them. I can't always be there. And they don't have an aide coming out to help them so sometimes I'm afraid that they get lost. They're not getting the attention they deserve from me. Because I'm having to, you know, I have 39 other students too. And so they're like everybody else, I'm having trouble getting to everybody. And so I really feel bad for those students because they require more of my attention and I'm just not able to give. So that's one of the experiences that I have and I find with big classes.

Mary described the situation:

I would like them maybe to fight more for - I just - I'm not happy this year with so many kids (with disabilities in one class period). This year when I have six - seven of them - they're (referring to general PE students) not as kind (to students with disabilities). They're not as "here make sure this person gets involved." They're like if you can't hit you're not involved. And I have to, you know, really go out of my way to make sure that every rule, make sure there are extra things for those kids to be able to get involved. It's more difficult when you have a bunch of them in a big
class. And I have freshman through seniors and so, boys and girls, and it's just much more difficult to have that many kids.

These teachers made mention of the fact that many of the students included in their classes had paraprofessionals who worked with the students in special education in other class environments, but seldom did these general PE teachers have paraprofessional support in PE. They did not understand why their large class sizes did not warrant a paraprofessional to support the student in general PE, or they felt this added support would create more success for the student.

Accountability

Participants appreciated that a consultation interaction made them stop, think, and evaluate what was going on with the individual student included in their class. They shared that often they did not have time to stop and think. But when they knew that the adapted PE specialist would be coming in and asking them questions, it created the opportunity to reflect. Most of the participants appreciated the consultation interactions, because they might not have created that opportunity to stop and think without being part of the consultation process.

Joanne summarized: “Just maybe focusing special attention on that particular child. To say ‘what are we doing?’ And questioning ‘is what we're doing working?’ and ‘can we do more?’ And making sure that experience for that child is the best that we can make it.”

Doug conveyed:

You know something else I was thinking about, that sometimes you get it going so fast on everything you have to do. And you think "oh yeah I haven't really did anything with that person" I hope I don't do that ... how much did they really get and did they get what they were supposed to get? And what did I do for that
person? When you know that there is someone who will check on you every now and again - I can see a lot of people becoming lazy and saying "well, whatever. They're just that person who does whatever."

Tracy concluded:

Like I said, it makes you evaluate, makes you realize what you're giving to the student or what you're not giving to the student. Makes you maybe even realize, it becomes more apparent if the students had growth, what the growth is. And because I think sometimes we just take it for granted that they are growing and they need to have maybe more credit for the growth they're having than what we are giving them. And maybe again, it makes me see "well, I'm not really serving that student as well I should and I need to do something else to serve them better.

These general PE teachers perceived successful inclusion as: 1) the student participated, 2) they were involved in the physical education class, and 3) they looked like they were successful. When these criteria were met, they felt that consultation was helpful.

Joanne expressed: “I guess if the student is involved. And it is participating. I guess that's really my only indicator. I'm not really sure what my expectations might be of that particular student. They're not real clear. It's like are they participating? 'Yes.' We're successful.”

Mary:

If I'm satisfied. If I come out with better ideas or she sees it and she's just "this is good, this is successful". I mean, I know it's successful because of the kids, ... when I'm thinking it's not successful, I go to her. If she's not dropping in, I'll call her. Right at the beginning of the year, I didn't know these kids as well, so I called her a few times. "Help me out here". So if the child is doing, moving, and getting involved, to me that success.

Doug declared:

I guess you would know it's working if you saw the growth in the student. If you saw them wrestling with the rest of the group in an included way and they weren't separated from the group and they were able to work with everybody else because
of the modifications that you've made on your own or the APE person suggested to you. That's how you would know it is working.

The participants recognized that the consultation was a form of accountability. They had to consider the performance and participation of the child with a disability and their inclusion in the general PE class, and they had to determine what success was to measure how they were being supported by the adapted PE specialist. The general PE teachers appreciated that fact that they would be accountable for their work including the students with disabilities into their classes.

**Documentation**

Participants were asked if there was documentation regarding the consultation sessions. Documentation was described as paperwork or email that might describe what the conversation was about or suggestions that were made during the consultation session. All participants said there was no documentation of what was discussed during these consultation sessions. Lynn kept her own log, and she documented when the adapted PE specialists visited. She wrote notes about all of her kids, not just her special education students.

Another teacher discussed how she received a form at the beginning of the semester that had a checklist of what the student could and could not do. It included some ideas for possible changes, accommodations and modifications that could be used throughout the school year. She found this very helpful as she started off to school year. As far as documentation on the discussions that they had on a regular basis, none of them had any written documentation. Most of them assumed that the adapted PE specialist kept this information documented.
Tracy described:

Sometimes. But not all at time. I mean it depends on the case, and I think it's been a while since we've really had documentation that says, "this student can't do this or this", but most the time it's just a spoken thing. To me. I would assume that [adapted PE specialist] has documentation. That she has everything documented. But there's nothing that I really sign and say lalalalala. I can think of one or two occasions when it's been written but not usually.

Many of them felt as though it would be helpful to have documentation so that they could remember what was said by the adapted PE specialists during the conversations. Typically they talked to them as they were going from one class to the next or during classes when they were teaching. The general PE teachers could not remember some of the ideas that were talked about.

Brent went on to state why it might be a good idea to have this documentation:

I think having a hard copy would be nice so that I - when I'm planning I could look at what we talked about. And the other thing is I think if it's written down it has a tendency to be implemented. Whereas we all have great intentions we talk about something and then maybe it doesn't get implemented.

The general PE teachers needed support through documentation of the consultation interactions. The general PE teachers were teaching or preparing for class during the consultation visits, hence, follow-up with some form of documentation would allow the general PE teachers to better implement recommendations.

Discussion

The participants in this study shared a wide variety of consultation experiences. There was a variety of teaching settings, grade levels taught, years of teaching experiences, and methods of consulting. The researcher was able to see
commonalities emerge from these experiences as expressed by the ten general PE teachers. The consultation experiences that were examined displayed advantages and barriers to the way general PE teachers perceive their relationship in the consultation process for students with disabilities in their classes. These perceptions helped answer the following research questions through the interview and analysis process:

1. How do general physical educators describe their current consultation interactions with an adapted physical education teacher?

2. Is the consultation experience in general physical education effective for the success of students with disabilities in inclusive settings?

3. What do general physical educators find valuable from the adapted physical education consultation experience?

Three categories emerged from the participants based on their responses and perceptions in the areas of how they perceived their relationship in the consultation process. The teachers perceived their relationship in the consultation process as either a lead teacher, novice teacher, or reciprocal teacher. General PE teachers who received consultation with more frequency perceived themselves in a reciprocal teaching relationship. It is possible that teachers could move between these perceived teaching relationship based on frequency of consultation or years of teaching experience. For example, the novice teachers may begin their careers seeking information from all sources, but as they develop strategies, the may move more into the lead teacher or reciprocal (or collaborative) teacher relationship in the consultation process.

One teacher experienced a variety of frequencies. When he had two students in his general PE class that he described as “high need,” he received consultation services
three times per week. During that time, he and the team worked closely together to create the feeling of a reciprocal relationship. Yet his typical consultation relationship had been one time per month, and in those cases, he perceived himself as the lead teacher.

In further examination of the general PE teachers, they reported that the consultation meetings were informal, unplanned, not scheduled, mostly verbal, during or after class, unstructured, and very casual. The researcher noticed that through the casual attitude toward the consultation interactions, the general PE teachers’ needs were not being met. Because of the unscheduled nature, the general PE teachers did not have time to think of questions they might have for the adapted PE specialists. They may not be thinking about the upcoming unit because they were busy teaching or monitoring their class during the consultation session. It is important that the adapted PE specialist keep that casual and approachable attitude, but he or she also needs to meet the general PE teacher’s needs.

When this researcher compared the descriptions of consultation to the models in Friend and Cook (2007) the model most of these scenarios matched was the collaborative consultation model. One model described seemed to align with the mental health model: the triadic model as described by Friend and Cook (2007). However, most general PE teachers who participated in this study desired a collaborative consultation model as described by their needs and desires.

These teachers conveyed the desire for the consultation process to be more collaborative in nature. Lytle and Hutchinson (2004) found the same desire from adapted PE specialists. Block et al. (2002) describe the roles of the adapted PE specialist as: supporting a successful program, not providing direct service; labeling services they can
directly offer; and maintaining contact through email, phone, face-to-face, observation and feedback and possibly demonstrations.

Barriers to effective consultation most often mentioned by the general PE teachers were infrequency and limited time. In LaMaster, Gall, Kinchin, and Siedentop (1998), the elementary physical education specialists “described their needs for more contact and consultation with adapted physical educators” (p. 75). The teachers valued the time with the adapted PE specialist, but wanted more (LaMaster et al., 1998). Most of the participants in this current study stated the same. In the current study, limited frequency created frustration for the general PE teacher. One participant shared that the adapted PE consultant maybe didn't know what was happening in class because they were on campus so infrequently. Once a month may not seem very infrequent for a busy itinerant adapted PE specialist, but it is to a general PE teacher who is working with an individual student in class on a daily basis. Quite a few changes may have happened in the curriculum since the last time the adapted PE teacher showed up for a consulting session. The limited frequency also created the perception of lack of need of the adapted PE specialist’s knowledge and resources. The general PE teachers who did not see their adapted PE specialist often did not have use of the resource because they had to problem solve on their own on a daily basis.

General PE teachers had an understanding of both the general PE teacher and adapted PE specialist’s time constraints. But the general PE teacher felt the consultations would be more beneficial if they could meet at a time where they could focus on the conversation. The general PE teachers stated how finding this time was very difficult, and they did not have practical suggestions for how to make this happen. Suggestions from
previous literature included substitute teachers and continuing conversation on the phone or email (Cook & Friend, 1990). Cook and Friend (1990) wrote that time was an important consideration for collaboration. The teachers need time to “meet, to discuss students, to experiment with various interventions, and to develop a strong professional relationship...” (p. 45). Effective consultation needs time to be successful. General physical educators in this current study expressed their desires for more time with the adapted PE specialist for consultation. Previous studies also support the need for more time in order for consultation to be effective (Heikinaro-Johansson et al., 1995; Lytle & Collier, 2002).

The general PE teachers perceived class size as a barrier to successful inclusion in this current study. Most general PE teachers’ class sizes were 35 to 45 students per class. They also had students with disabilities in their classes without the support to make it successful. The support that they referred to included paraprofessionals, behavior strategies, and teacher support. General PE teachers felt like they could do a better job including a student if their class sizes weren't so large, or if they had more support from paraprofessionals. These participants felt as though they could not get to all the students in their class during a class period. Yet they felt an obligation to make sure that they got to the student who was included. They were frustrated by this seemingly unrealistic challenge.

Support is exactly what adapted PE consultation should provide. Consultation is defined as “a voluntary process in which one professional assists another to address a problem concerning a third party” (Friend & Cook, 2007). That assistance was what the general PE teachers in this study asked for assistance in the form of observation,
feedback, strategies, and collaborative efforts on working with the included student. However, their class sizes were large, and they had students with disabilities in their classes with little support. They were not provided with paraprofessionals to help students, and consultations were infrequent. In addition, they did not feel supported when they were not provided with paperwork or invited to IEP meetings.

Surprisingly, there was no reported documentation during these consultation interactions. General PE teachers did not have any way to reflect on the conversations they had with the consultant during the visit. Since these teachers described that they were typically teaching or preparing for the next class during the consultation interactions, they did not have a chance to revisit the topic. Participants described how they assumed the adapted PE specialist documented the consultations, but they did not see this documentation. In past research, adapted PE teachers described using field notes, annotated goals and objectives, and suggestions for modifications as documentation (Lytle & Collier, 2002; Lytle & Hutchinson 2004). Adapted PE specialists need to provide documentation to the general PE teacher on what was discussed during those consultation sessions. Adapted PE specialists must understand that teachers in the midst of teaching may not be hearing and receiving all the information conveyed during this type of consultation. Adapted PE specialists should provide information as written documentation so that information is available when the teacher is planning lessons and away from the multiple demands/distractions of the class or gym.

Documentation of these casual, verbal conversations may help meet the teacher’s needs. Once the general PE teacher receives the notes from the conversation with possible suggestions, he or she might then have questions. Documentation may help
open up a line of communication. Adapted PE consultants need to make consultations worthwhile for teachers so they understand that they are receiving support. Block, Brodeur, and Brady (2001) stated “to be effective, however, consulting needs to involve more than chance meetings and occasional conversations. It needs to be a well-planned and well-documented process in which all parties clearly know their roles” (Block et al., 2001, p. 52).

The majority of the general PE teachers did not know the IEP goals related to physical education for the students’ included in their class. Only three teachers reported knowing the goals and objectives. How can a general PE teacher know how to monitor success if they do not know what to measure? These teachers had the students included in their classes with the expectation that they would monitor progress and success for the students with disabilities. This will be difficult for teachers without the appropriate tools to do the job. General PE teachers wanted to know the IEP goals and to help ensure the IEP goals matched their curriculum. The intent of and purpose of IDEA is that the goals and objectives match the general education curriculum. Consideration of the general PE curriculum must be taken into consideration when writing a goal for a student who will be included in general PE. None of these general PE teachers were invited to assist with writing goals and objectives. Most expressed an interest in helping determine the student’s goals for the general PE setting. Information needs to be compiled and presented to the general PE teachers, and it needs to be presented in a way that the general PE teacher can put into practice. One strategy would be to write examples of what meeting that goal might look like in different physical education units. Huettig and Roth’s (2002) stated that general PE teachers have a right to expect appropriate
consultation in the form of sharing knowledge about the student, assessment, and IEP information. General PE teachers should be part of the entire IEP process.

The physical educator may be denied access to this critical piece of information, because he or she is not considered a vital part of the professional loop. For this reason, APE consultants must help to ensure that general physical educators have access to the assessment and to appropriate health records (Huettig & Roth, 2002, p. 34).

General PE teachers described successful inclusion in the class with descriptions that follow the “busy, happy, good” philosophy that surrounds physical education. General PE teachers should have more effective ways to measure success in inclusion. This brings up questions surrounding how success for all students is measured in physical education. Success should be much more than dressing down, being on time, and daily participation. General PE teachers need strategies on what success is for the student included in the general PE class. Collaboratively writing goals and objectives is a start. Success could then be measured on the development of the student’s motor abilities rather than participation only.

Most of the general PE teachers in this study were invited to the IEP meetings by either special education staff or an adapted PE specialist, but they did not always see value in attending. They commented that most topics concerned other classes. Only three of the ten teachers had a school expectation that they would attend IEPs and be viable participants. The teachers shared they would attend meetings as they could, especially those where they felt they would have specific input. By law (IDEA, 1997) there must be a general education teacher present at an IEP meeting. Although presence at an IEP meeting happened, often the general PE teachers attended meetings as the “token” general education teacher. General PE teachers were well aware that their purpose for
attending that particular meeting was to sign the IEP document to satisfy IDEA (1997) and not for their expertise and contributions. General education teachers are valued members of the collaborative team, and their input is crucial in determining the choices made for a student’s least restrictive environment.

When the general PE teacher is a viable member of the team, then they will, in turn, make the student a viable member of the inclusive classroom. The purpose for attending an IEP meeting should be to specifically share the needs and the successes from the general PE class. IEP meetings need to be worthwhile for all in attendance. Adapted PE specialists can and should facilitate the connection for the general educator to be a true collaborative team member. Special education teachers need to understand that the general education teacher is a valuable part of a collaborative team. Inviting teachers only to fulfill a legal obligation does not foster a sense of value for collaborative team members.

When the teachers were asked what kind of support they received from the adapted PE specialist they listed verbal support, observation, inclusion strategies and ideas, and equipment. The adapted PE specialists’ knowledge about disability, student’s background, strategies for inclusion, and curricula ideas were all beneficial. Ongoing communication they had with the adapted PE specialists was considered favorable. They felt that ideas, modifications, inclusion techniques, and their professional knowledge from the consultation interactions were valuable. General PE teachers saw the support by the adapted PE specialist as an advantage, but they wanted more frequency, time, information, strategies, and documentation to make the most of the consultation experience.
One invaluable piece of information that the participants wanted from the adapted PE was background information on the student. Background knowledge included the student’s past physical education experiences, necessary medical information, and the student’s abilities. They wanted ideas that had been tried in the past. Some were told what a student could and could not do, but they asked for more than that. General PE teachers felt as though this would give them a kick start to what their program could do for the student with disabilities. A few participants received that information. A study by Hodge, Ammah, Casebolt, LaMaster, and O’Sullivan (2004) noted that general PE teachers wanted more knowledge and support on how to include students with disabilities successfully. In previous research (Lytle & Collier, 2002), participants were adapted PE specialists who felt the general physical educators were not receptive to changes in curriculum or ideas. The findings in the current study showed that general PE teachers did want ideas and strategies to create an inclusive environment.

Few of the general PE teachers in the current study had one or more courses in adapted PE. Only two teachers reported professional development in the area of inclusion in general PE. They still had a need for the adapted PE specialist’s knowledge. Participants in the current study showed that they had an expectation that the adapted PE specialist was the one with that knowledge, and the general PE teachers depended on that. These general PE teachers were aware that, without the consultation, they did not have the knowledge and expertise to include students with disabilities. Without the consultation, the student would still be included, but maybe not with the same amount of success. LaMaster et al. studied elementary physical education specialists and found they were frustrated with their “lack of training during pre-service years, which contributed in
particular to an inability to cope with children with severe needs and handicaps” (p. 74). Other studies showed value in PETE programs that included an introduction to adapted PE activity course infused with experience working with individuals with disabilities (Hodge & Jansma, 1997; Harding, 2005). The general PE teachers in the current study shared their need for the adapted PE specialist, but there is also a need for teacher training in the area of inclusion in PE.

Teachers involved in this study were very willing to share their experiences with consultation and working with students with disabilities in their general PE classes. It was clear from their attitudes that they felt inclusive physical education was the best placement option. They enjoyed having the students with disabilities in their classes and they appreciated the support from the adapted physical education specialist.

Through the interview and analysis process, the current consultation interactions were described through successes and valued supports from consultation service. The following were noteworthy conclusions from this study:

- General PE teachers desired a collaborative consultation model for the adapted PE consultation service. This can be achieved by increasing the frequency of consultations to more than one time per month and making the general PE teacher feeling he or she is a valued member of the IEP team.

- General PE teachers wanted information and inclusion strategies to support students with disabilities in general PE, background information on students before they entered the class, and strategies to include students in activities.
• General PE teachers needed documentation. General PE teachers needed the discussion from a consultation interaction in written format. This would provide more accountability for what was discussed and what should be done.

The general PE teacher is an important player for the successful inclusion experience. They must be invited to play a vital role in creating, presenting, assessing, and implementing a student’s IEP. The collaborative consultation process should continually be evaluated to ensure that it is meeting the purpose of supporting the student with a disability and the general PE teacher for successful inclusion.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine general physical education (PE) teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of adapted PE consultation for including students with disabilities into general PE. This qualitative study took a phenomenological approach to examining general PE teacher perceptions. Interviews with ten (six female and four male) general PE teachers were conducted to determine themes to answer the following questions:

1. How do general physical educators describe their current consultation interactions with an adapted physical education teacher?

2. Is the consultation experience in general physical education effective for the success of students with disabilities in inclusive settings?

3. What do general physical educators find valuable from the adapted physical education consultation experience?

Participants had California Clear Single Subject Physical Education Teaching Credentials, received consultation service from an adapted PE specialist, and filled the need for purposeful sampling. In this study interviews were performed to collect necessary data.
The ten participants in the study stated that most of their consultation interactions were face-to-face informal conversations about students. Typically, the adapted PE specialist visited the school site during the general PE class where the student was included. These conversations took place during their physical education class or while walking to or from class. Some of the consultation interactions were done through email or phone calls. At the time of the study, the general PE teachers were receiving adapted PE consultation from once a week, to once a month, or 2-3 times a semester.

The barriers listed by the general PE teachers included time, number of students, and the frequency of the consultation interactions. First, teachers felt like they did not have enough time to spend with the adapted PE teacher. The general PE teachers felt their time was often rushed, and since it happened during the class time, they just did not have sufficient time to effectively communicate due to the interactive nature of teaching to include evaluation and feedback. The general PE teachers stated they wanted more visitations from the adapted PE specialist. The adapted PE specialist needed to be current with the unit of instruction so the feedback for the general PE teacher was relevant.

The teachers appreciated the support they received from the adapted PE specialist. They saw that they received support in the form of observation, verbal support, information, specialized equipment, and direct assistance with a student. They desired more support in the areas of student’s current abilities, background information, and inclusion strategies. These teachers felt they started out the school year without enough information about the student that was included in the general PE class. They wanted to receive information upon the student’s enrollment into the class. They felt they were
“reinventing the wheel” on curriculum and inclusion strategies. General PE teachers wanted the strategies that had worked in the past from other general PE teachers instead of starting from scratch. Information presented in hard copies was needed so they could reference that information as they were planning for units and lessons.

A collaborative consultation model was described by the participants as the desired model for consultation service. They wanted to be part of the IEP process, such as writing goals and objectives that would match their course activities. They desired an understanding of what an adapted PE specialist could offer for service provisions. They wanted to work as partners with the adapted PE specialist to develop modification ideas, such as how to include the student with disabilities in physical fitness testing. Along with the collaboration, they wanted documentation of the consultation interactions. The teachers struggled to remember the topics covered during their meetings during the general PE teacher’s class time. If those conversations were documented, then the general PE teacher could refer to the suggested strategies and therefore successfully implement the ideas. This documentation could create a path for future collaborative consultation sessions towards greater success for the included student.

Participants in the study appreciated the consultation interactions with adapted PE specialists. They appreciated that the adapted PE specialist observed and offered feedback to what was happening in the general PE class environment. They also appreciated the low key, easygoing approach to the consultation interactions. However, there needed to be increased frequency, regular support, documentation, and a collaborative relationship for consultation to be perceived as successful by the general PE teachers in this study.
Conclusions

The findings from this current study have transferable applications for teachers, in both adapted PE and general PE. The following is a list of the outcomes and possible actions that teachers working in a collaborative consultation relationship could apply to their practice. Since some of the issues brought about during this study included teachers needing more time, more information, more frequency, and concrete strategies, the following list should help teachers and specialists create an effective collaborative consultation model to provide for successful inclusion.

- Start collaborative consultation early. Start before the school year or before the student is placed in the inclusion setting. General PE teachers should help with the assessment, or at the very least, have access to the results. The general PE teachers should have access to the student’s physical education and adapted PE records. The adapted PE teacher should list the services that can be provided to the general PE teacher. General PE teachers may not recognize what they potentially have access to. General PE teachers need to ask; adapted PE teachers need to offer.

- Background information. There is basic information needed by the general PE teachers to start off the year successfully. Packets of information can be created to share some of the past experiences that the included student may have had in their physical education learning. The packets may include: 1) IEP goals and objectives, 2) worthwhile equipment, 3) information from previous general physical education teachers on strategies that worked, or didn’t, 4) strategies to complete physical fitness testing, and 5) overall accommodations, modifications or strategies to create a successful physical education experience.
• Develop goals. The general PE teacher and adapted PE teachers should work together to create appropriate goals to match the general PE curriculum for successful inclusion. This will assist that student participation is not the only measure of successful inclusion.

• Create a consultation plan. This will include information the general PE teacher desires and what the adapted PE teacher will deliver. It will list the “when and how” the consultation interactions will take place.

• Documentation. Ongoing documentation should be used to keep the meetings at a regular interval and document what is discussed and what are the current issues. Copies can be delivered or sent electronically to all involved. This documentation will ensure implementation of strategies discussed during the scheduled consultation interactions.

• Strategies. General PE teachers need ready-to-use strategies for their classes. They want their classes to be inclusive, but they might not always have time or the knowledge to do this on their own. There are two handy resources available for physical educators (Lieberman & Houston-Wilson, 2002; Block, 2007). The adapted PE specialist can give more specific information about the individual student.

• Plan ahead. General PE teachers must provide as detailed information as possible on their units of instruction to the adapted PE specialist. For example, the general PE teacher can provide a unit plan that will discuss the types of skills, drills, activities, and game play for the adapted PE specialist. The adapted PE teacher in return can create appropriate inclusion strategies and rubrics or unit goals for the included student.
• Value roles. Both the general PE teacher and the adapted PE specialist need to feel valued in his or her role in the collaborative consultation process. Adapted PE specialists should ensure the general PE teacher is part of the IEP process including input on goals and objectives. General PE teachers should ask for desired information and give input for goals and objectives.

Recommendations

This study examined general PE teachers’ perceptions on how adapted PE consultation supports including students with disabilities in their class. Some potential examinations for future studies include:

• Additional research for general PE teacher’s perspective on consultation, including in depth questions about what success looks like for inclusion, and how consultation can be measured as a support for that success.

• Comparison between frequency and perceived effectiveness.

• Comparison between perceived teacher role and years in service.

• Administrator’s perspective on the use of consultation in adapted PE. The steps to the successful use of collaborative consultation.

• How general PE teachers measure success for included students.

• The effect of documentation on student skill development.
REFERENCES
REFERENCES


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Heron, T., & Harris, K. (1993). *The educational consultant: Helping professionals, parents, and mainstreamed students* (3rd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.


Dear Physical Educator,

I am currently enrolled in an adapted physical activity masters program at California State University, Chico. I have completed my review of research and I am prepared to start my study and collect data. I am writing this letter to request your permission to be involved in this study. The purpose of this study is to determine teacher’s perceptions of the effectiveness of adapted physical education consultation for children with disabilities in physical education.

If you agree to be part of this study you will be required to participate in one interview. This interview will last about one hour and will be held at a location and time that is convenient for you. These interviews will be audio taped and later transcribed. I will request that you review the typed transcriptions of the interview for accuracy of content. I will mail these to you after the interview. I estimate that the total time involved for this study will be approximately 2 hours.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. The audio tapes will be used for transcription purposes and will only be heard by the research transcribers. Neither first nor last names will be used. When transcriptions are made from interviews, all names will be changed. You will be identified by a pseudonym to provide for consistency in this investigation. Your participation in this study is voluntary and there are no foreseeable risks from your participation. Your help will greatly enhance the value of this research project, and if you consent you may withdraw at any time from the study without penalty or discrimination. Your contribution to this study will increase the
knowledge base consultation in adapted physical education and will be used in research to improve teacher preparation.

Dr. Rebecca Lytle of California State University, Chico will supervise this study. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (530) 343-7535. If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the enclosed informed consent form. It can be returned to me in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. Please return it by Date. Again I sincerely appreciate your cooperation and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Marci Pope
APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT

I have read and understand the purpose of this study.

I give my permission to be a participant:

__________________________  ____________________________
(name)                              (signature)

Statement of Investigator:
I have explained the purpose and procedures of this project to the participant and provided answers to all questions asked. I have given a copy of this informed consent to the participant.

__________________________  ____________
Dr. Rebecca Lytle, Ph.D.                  Date

__________________________  ____________
Marci Pope                          Date
APPENDIX C
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Name:
School Address:
Home Address:
Phone:
Home:
Work:
Mobile:
Email:
Gender: M   F
DOB:
Years teaching:
Credential type:
Campus grade levels:
Number of students on your campus:
Number of students in your physical education courses:
Number of students per class:
Students with disabilities in your physical education classes:
Receive adapted physical education services in your classes:
Receive adapted physical education consultation services:
Consult with an APE specialist about students? (weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly, random)

110
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Do you have any questions?

Demographics
Name
How many years have you been teaching GPE?
When did you get your teaching credential?
What grade levels do you teach?

Working with children with disabilities:
What does a typical day in your class look like?
What types of units do you teach?
Tell me about your experiences working with children with disabilities in physical education?
  Do you know the disabilities?
  Do you know who is responsible for them?
Do you have an opportunity to view the students IEPs?
Do you have the opportunity to attend the student’s IEP meetings?
  Are you invited?
  How do you share information at the IEP if you are not there?
  What happens when you don’t go?
Did you have any classes in special education or adapted physical education in your teacher training?
How comfortable are you with making adaptations for kids with disabilities?
  With or without the APE teacher?
  Does it fit?

Consultation:
Do you have the opportunity to consult?
How many years have you received consultation services from an Adapted physical education specialist?
How many children do you teach that receive APE consultation services?
Tell me about those consultations?
What does the process look like?
  Describe a scenario.
What kinds of services does the APE specialist provide for you?
  How does the APE specialist support you?
What documentation do you and the APE specialist use?
What would make it more effective for you?
Does the consultation process change at all during the year?
Does consultation work for you?
How do you determine if the process is working?
   Why?
What do you perceive your role as in the consultation process?
   What you do in your interactions? With the APE specialist and the child?
If you could create the perfect consultation scenario, what would it look like?
What would you like the APE specialist to do for you?
How effective do you think consultation is in how you serve kids?
   Advantages?
   Disadvantages?

Closure:
Is there anything else you would like to add?
Do you have any questions?
Thank you for participating today. I will be sending you a transcript of our interview next week so you can review it for accuracy. Thank you again.
APPENDIX E
CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

Consultation

“School consultation is a voluntary process in which one professional assists another to address a problem concerning a third party” (Friend & Cook, 2007, p. 89).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

A written statement of instruction and services to be provided based on a multidisciplinary assessment of the needs of each child with a disability; includes goals and objectives, evaluation methods, personnel responsible, and dates for initiation and completion of services. (APENS, 2006, p. 183)

Inclusion

The placement of an individual with a disability (even a severe disability) into general classes with peers in a neighborhood school. The individual is not an occasional visitor, but a viable member of the class with appropriate support services provided in the general classes. (APENS, 2006, p. 183)

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

“An educational setting in which the individuals can safely and successfully function and meet the goals and objectives prescribed based on assessment results” (APENS, 2006, p. 184).
ADDITIONAL READING


APPENDIX G
SAMPLING GRID

Step 1. Removed those with an APE credential or those without an adapted PE consultation within the previous two years.

Step 2. Placed males (M) and females (F) in Grade Levels Grid (Table 1).

Table 1 – *Grade Level Grid*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level Grid (Includes 17 potential participants after step 2)</th>
<th>Elementary/Middle School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>FFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMFFFM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>High Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMMFFM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMFFFM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 3. Random selection of one male and one female was selected from each grade level group, if possible.

Step 4. Selected males and females were placed in years of Teaching Experience Grid (Table 2).

Table 2 – *Years Experience Grid*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Experience Grid (includes 10 final participants)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4 years</td>
<td>5-9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FF</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>15+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFMM</td>
<td>FFM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 5. The desire was to have two participants in each of the Years Experience Grid. After placing the participants selected in Step 3, if there were gaps the researcher returned to the participant information sheets and found all remaining eligible participants. In the case where there were multiple eligible participants to fill a gap, random selection was used.
Step 6. The researcher wanted more than one adapted PE specialist represented within each Grade Level Grid Group. Within each Grade Level Grid Group the adapted PE specialist that provided service to the potential participant was considered. Potential participants were excluded and replaced with random selection.