Classroom Teachers' Perceptions of Response to Intervention Implementation: a Qualitative Interview Study

Adhwaa Ali Alahmari

Assistant Professor at King Khalid University – Abha

adahmari@kku.edu.sa

Abstract

The purpose of this interview study was to explore teachers' perceptions of Response to Intervention (RtI) implementation in their school. Particularly, the study explored teachers' knowledge of RtI, teachers' perceptions of RtI their intervention/instruction in school, and teachers' suggestions of RtI implementation in their school. The study design was a qualitative interview in nature and data were collected from face-to-face interviews with four teachers in one school. The findings revealed that RtI means to identify students' problems; the positive teachers' perceptions of their implementation included: (a) students who demonstrate progress through RtI are those who receive private education services, (b) progress monitoring helps to keep teachers on track. (c) Factors pertaining to context included: (a) School training, (b) Confidence of RtI practice, (c) Collaboration with schools' teacher. The following factors lead to a negative perception of the RtI process: (a) Planning is difficult, (b) RtI is confusing, (c) Insufficient time for implementation, (d) Excessive RtI paperwork, and (e) Delay of identification for special education services. The study findings also indicated to the teachers' suggestions to improve RtI implementation in their school through staff support. The findings of study have significant implications on higher and professional education in the field.

Keywords: teachers, perceptions, RtI tiers, implementation, special education services

نصورات المعلمين حول نطبيق نموذج الاستجابة للتدخل دراسة مقابلة نوعية

أضواء بنت علي الأحمري / أستاذ مساعد جامعة الملك خالد

الملخص

الغرض من هذه الدراسة استكشاف تصورات المعلمين في تطبيق أنموذج الاستجابة للتدخل (RtI) في مدارسهم. وعلى وجه الخصوص، اكتشفت الدراسة معرفة المعلمين بأ نموذج RtI، وتصوراتهم، واقتراحاتهم حول تنفيذ RtI. كان تصميم الدراسة عبارة عن دراسة نوعية منهج المقابلة وتم جمع البيانات من المقابلات الشخصية مع أربعة معلمين في مدرسة واحدة. كشفت النتائج أن RtI يهدف إلى تحديد مشاكل الطلاب. تضمنت تصورات المعلمين الإيجابية عن تنفيذه ما يأتي: (أ) الطلاب الذين يظهرون تقدمًا من خلالRtI ، (ب) الطلاب الذين يتلقون خدمات التعليم الخاص، (ج) تساعد مراقبة التقدم في الحفاظ على المسار الصحيح للمعلمين. وشملت العوامل المتعلقة بالسياق ما يلي: (أ) التدريب المهني، (ب) الثقة في ممارسةRtI ، (ج) التعاون مع العاملين بالمدرسة.

ومن العوامل التي تؤدي إلى تصور سلبي على أنموذج RtI: (أ) أن التخطيط معقد، (ب) RtI غير واضح، (ج) عدم كفاية الوقت للتنفيذ، (د) أوراق ونماذج RtI كثيرة، و (هـ) تأخير الطلاب لخدمات التعليم الخاص. أشارت نتائج الدراسة أيضًا إلى اقتراحات المعلمين لتحسين تنفيذ RtI في مدرستهم من خلال دعم الموظفين. النتائج التي توصلت إليها هذه الدراسة لها آثار على التعليم العالي والمهني في هذا المجال.

الكلمات المفتاحية : (تصورات المعلمين ، نموذج الاستجابة ، مقابلة نوعية)

INTRODUCTION

Response to Intervention (RtI) has been an important subject for research in special and general education disciplines (Fuchs & Deshler, 2007). The response to intervention (RtI) model utilizes high quality research-based interventions as well as a continuum of multiple assessments to measure students' progress toward tiered intervention (Richards, Pavri, Golez, Canges, & Murphy, 2007).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) discontinued the use of Intellectual Quotient (IQ)-achievement discrepancy formulas as the only tool for identifying students with learning disabilities (LD) (Bradley, Danielson, & Doolittle, 2005; Klingner & Edwards, 2006). Implementing RtI effectively requires a shift in how school administrators and teachers collaborate with each other to support the RtI process, especially when it comes to the collaboration between special and general education teachers (Richards et al., 2007).Pyle, Wade-Woolley, and Hutchinson (2011) stressed the essentiality of further studies related to RtI in order to investigate the contextual factors that impact teachers' perceptions of RtI.

Significance of the Study

Dunn, Cole, and Estrada (2009) indicated that more studies should integrate the perspective of all stakeholders throughout the special education referral process. Teachers' perspectives play a critical role in the delivery of high quality instruction in the classroom and provide insight for the referral to special education if interventions did not improve the student's outcomes (Dunn et al., 2009). In particular, it is necessary that the general educators who implement RtI demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the multi-tiered model. "The teacher's knowledge of RtI can help guide administrators and professional development personnel as they plan for future trainings and implementation of new procedures" (Ringlaben & Griffith, 2013, p. 12).

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore elementary general education teachers' perceptions of RtI implementation in their school through the lens of situativity theory.

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1-What is general educators' knowledge of Response to Intervention (RtI)?

2- How do general educators describe their experiences of RtI implementation in tiers intervention/instruction in their school?

3- What are general educators' suggestions for the implementation of RtI in their school?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that supported this study is rooted in the situativity theory. The situative perspective describes how experiences influence learning and perceptions (Putnam & Borko, 2000). Therefore, teachers' experiences in various settings influence their knowledge and perceptions of RtI. This study explored teachers' perceptions based on the ways they developed their understanding of RtI. The situative perspective was chosen specifically to justify analyzing each participant as an individual unit within the social context related to RtI as teachers develop knowledge of their practices (Borko, 2004; Putnam & Borko, 2000).

From a situative perspective, teacher learning "is usefully understood as a process of increasing participation in the practice of teaching, and through this participation, a process of becoming knowledgeable in and about teaching" (Adler, 2000, p. 37). Therefore, social and contextual factors related to teachers' implementation of RtI will be identified in order to determine the kind of social activities and support that influences teachers perceptions of RtI.

Historical Context of RtI

In 2004, U.S federal law changes, with the reauthorization of IDEIA and previously with the 2001 NCLB legislation, resulted in rapid RtI implementation in the American schools (Castro –Villarreal, Rodriguez, & Moore, 2014). Fuchs, Fuchs and Stecker

(2010) explained that IDEIA of 2004 and NCLB share a common goal in RtI initiative, which is using research-based interventions to support students in general education settings. Stuart, Rinaldi, and Higgins- Averill (2011) stated that RtI's approaches are included in IDEIA regulation that suggests a systematic process of monitoring, intervention, and screening to determine the response of a child to research, scientific-based intervention.

The NCLB views RtI as part of the general education system, asserts that students with disabilities have the right to be educated in general education classrooms and are involved in state assessments, and mandates that states, districts, and schools are accountable for students' performances (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). The NCLB requires high-quality teachers for this reason. The NCLB supports services for students with disabilities in general
 education classrooms through tiered support (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006).

RtI Tiers and Implementation

There is no standard procedure of implementing RtI (Fuchs & Deshler, 2007; Werts et al., 2009). RtI is a framework that ensures high-quality instruction and ongoing assessments in general education classrooms (Berkeley, Bender, Peaster, & Saunders, 2009; Richards et al., 2007; Werts et al., 2009).

Few qualitative and quantitative studies have examined or explored general education teacher perceptions to RtI model. Cowan and Maxwell (2015) conducted a qualitative study to explore elementary general education teachers' perception of RtI program implementation. Participants demonstrated inability in understanding the RtI process in tiers and evidence-based interventions, learning about RtI paperwork that is not consistent, feeling overwhelmed and stressed out about the RtI implementation. Participants demonstrated positive attitude toward RtI in tracking students' progress, so they were able to see the log behind classroom benchmark. The study suggested school personnel should support teachers and evaluate of fidelity of RtI components.

Another in-depth qualitative interview conducted by Tillery, Varjas, Meyers, and

Collins (2010) indicated that most elementary general education teachers did not demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of RtI components, struggled to demonstrate a clear understanding of the real purpose RtI, and viewed it simply as an additional block to referral for special education evaluation.

Castro-Villarreal et al. (2014) conducted a qualitative study using computer-based text search program to explore teachers' (who were directly involved in RtI) perceptions. The majority of teachers demonstrated poor knowledge of RtI, lacked adequate training in evidence- based intervention, had confusion about the procedures of implementing RtI tiers, and lacked time and resources to implement RtI. They also complained about RtI paperwork that is lengthy and duplicate. Another survey study was conducted to examine elementary teachers' knowledge of the implementation of RtI model in reading (Spear-swerling & Chesman, 2012). The study results revealed that most teachers were not familiar with research-based instruction approach and intervention. However, teachers who had an effective PD were likely to know more about certain interventions. The study suggested that professional development is a critical factor that enables teachers to effectively implement RtI.

Greenfield, Rinaldi, Proctor, and Cardarell (2010) conducted a qualitative study exploring teachers' views after one year of RtI implementation. The majority of teachers indicted that RtI is a valuable program because it provides them with the data needed to inform their decision and students' progress in order to measure the efficiency of intervention. Teachers suggested that they need more time to analyze and interpret the data and intervention.

Researchers who have examined teacher perceptions of educational research are Hargreaves (2005) and LaRocco & Murdica, (2009). Hargreaves indicated the factors that affect teacher's perceptions of education change because of age, personal development, and career stage (2005). Finding their perceptions is significant on knowing their challenges and their positive experiences on RtI reform, which contributes to supports teachers in RtI reform (Darling-Hammond, 2009).

LaRocco & Murdica (2009) found that teachers' concerns related to RtI focused on individual learning reducing anxiety. Thus, my study will focus particularly in general education knowledge and implementation of RtI and determine what social and contextual activities they engage in that inform their perceptions and practices of RtI.

METHOD

Research Design

Qualitative interview approach was used to examine teachers' perceptions of RtI implementation, and analyzed the reality constructed by participants. Interviews provide interviewees with the context to express their reality. An interview methodology is recommended to understand how individuals construct meaning of reality and the various social experiences (Punch, 2009).

Participants

In qualitative research, sampling relies on small numbers because the focus is to get in− depth details of individuals' experiences
 (Miles & Huberman 1994; Patton 1990).

In the current situation, four early childhood general education teachers volunteered to participate in my study. The teachers were from one elementary school in a large metropolitan school district in Southeastern United States. These teachers were early childhood general educators who have been implementing RtI between two to three years in their current school. Three teachers were from first grade and one teacher from second grade. All teachers were female, three of them were White and one was Black.

School Context

Participants are working in Southwest Florida elementary school located in a large metropolitan city.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews was used, which involved ongoing conversations with the participants about their understanding and experiences with RtI. The open-ended interview design allowed me to ask for further clarification, examples, and explanations of certain topics at any time throughout the interview (Tillery et al., 2010; Turner, 2010).

The interview protocol was a set of more than twenty questions. Multiple open-ended interview questions aligned with each research question, the semi-structured nature of the interview allowed more questions to be asked for clarification, elaboration. Each interview was 20 minutes, and three interviews ranged 60 minutes.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face and audio-recorded in a setting convenient for the participants. Interviewees were asked about the following aspects: (1) their knowledge of RtI, (2) their experiences with RtI tiers implementation, and (3) their suggestions to improve the implementation of RtI in their schools. The interviews were transcribed verbatim in Microsoft Word. In this study, pseudonyms were used rather than participants' and school's name.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the interviews. Thematic analysis aims to present the meaning and experience that address the reality of each individual (Braun&Clark,2006)

Coding based on the meaning /thought and was analyzed using inductive approach to identify emerging themes (Krathwohl, 1998). Inductive analysis is defined as codes that emerge from raw data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Inductive codes have been used in qualitative research for a long time (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The purpose of inductive codes is to enable researchers to understand the underlying meaning of data through categorizing the data into themes (Thomas, 2003).

FINDINGS

Research Question 1: Teachers' knowledge of Response to Intervention (RtI)

The analysis of teachers' knowledge of RtI yielded the following theme:

Response to Intervention (RtI) is meant to identify students' problems

RtI is meant to identify students' problems. Three of the teachers agreed that RtI is meant to identify students' problems whether in academic areas such as Reading, Math and Science or related to behavior.

It's when you notice that a student isn't making enough progress, so you put interventions in place to see if they're working (Crista)

you have RtI for behavior and you have it for the subject area Reading, Math… for reading as for subject based its to help assist and find other ways in order to help that student to grow (Elisa)

When I think of response to intervention, RtI, I think of identifying a student where they struggle, whether it be Reading, Math, behavior. It could be attendance. Whatever it is that they

need to work on, and identifying the problem and then finding those steps to what are you going to do to intervene, and then you also have to track it over time what you're doing and how that is influencing the student (Emily)

Research Question 2: Teachers' Experiences of RtI implementation in Tiers Intervention/Instruction in Their School.

Several themes emerged that related to the teachers' positive perceptions of their experiences with RtI:

Students who demonstrate progress through RtI.

Three teachers expressed positive attitudes when students show progress after receiving the intervention. Crista stated that the growth of students had a significant impact on her because she was able to identify the students' needs, and thus help her students. Also, students were able to respond to intervention provided.

Goodness. I love the feeling of getting a child out of the process because they are

doing great, because I figured out what they needed. (Crista)

Other teachers expressed the same attitude when they looked to students' data from EasyCBM that showed their students made progress. Teachers' biweekly assessment showed them about their students' progress, when students showed growth and met the goals it made the teachers feel good.

I think when you look at the data you see their growth. That makes you super happy because like I said previously, you have your goals set. (Elisa)

I'm always so happy when I see she's actually pointing and reading and not just making up things (Emily)

Students who receive special education services.

Three teachers felt good when students received special education services after RtI was provided.

It's also a good feeling when a student does get the ESE label that they've needed because of the RtI process, because I proved I did this intervention with this child and he's not growing and he needs help. (Crista)

I just feel like some of my students, it's really helped them. Like I said, last year I would say one of my little boys, they put him in the program finally and he's starting to improve now because he's getting that one-on-one time, so it is a positive.(Abby)

Progress monitoring helps to keep teachers on track.

Two teachers appreciated the assessment piece in the RtI process. One teacher felt that the assessment tool such as EasyCBM was easy to use, time efficient and the results were easy to understand. This assessment helped her to recognize students' needs and know what students were missing words for a minute. Also, she liked the IReady, computer-based program because it was very detailed, and it identified students' tiers level, and provided choice of intervention for teachers to use. The IReady diagnostic split students into groups based on the similarity of students' needs. Crista commented that this kind of assessment was helpful because it directed her to RtI implementation.

So, I like the assessments we have at our school specifically.e. So it's quick, it's really easy to recognize when a student is missing the same word every time. So, I like our assessments because it helps me plan my lessons (Crista)

Another teacher, Abby, felt that the progress monitoring was helpful for her to continue to implement intervention and conduct assessments biweekly and complete the problem–solving form for each student. It helped her to continue the intervention and use the assessment to determine that she was doing what she was supposed to do in RtI to meet students' needs.

So I feel like this process is a positive. I feel like it keeps me on track along with keeping me accountable to make sure that I'm doing the things I need to do for them (Abby)

Teachers also commented on the social and contextual factors that informed their knowledge of the implementation of RtI in their school. The main themes related to this are the following:

School training.

All teachers felt that the training provided by the school was helpful for them to start RtI implementation because they did not know the starting point for RtI process.

Yes, I received help in guided reading, which is the Daily Five. I've received trainings in IReady, and they've given information at meetings about RtI, now you know, but, that was five years ago, so, when I first started I didn't know, now I know, and they've given training since then (Crista)

It is helpful. It is. Because then you're able to see where your kids are. (Elisa)

I think it helps to show what I need to do to be tracking the assessments, and then it also helped me identify how to choose the tier two and tier three students, looking at the data, looking at that and then putting it into the groups (Emily)

Yeah, because I've done a couple of IReady trainings, so I know how to really interpret their data that they give us. I went there and took it and got all the information about how it works, how to get the reports, how to do everything. (Abby)

Confidence of RtI practice.

All teachers agreed that ongoing practice with the implementation of RtI helped to develop their knowledge of the RtI process and its implementation. Teachers felt confident and comfortable after doing RtI for multiple years.

Oh year. My first year, I was not comfortable at this at all. I was like, "What am I doing? I don't understand this.." Now, I'm like, "Okay, I know how to do it. It moves quick. It's like no time at all." This used to take me to do a couple of packets. Now I can get it done quick because I'm comfortable with it. (Abby)

Oh, yeah. I would say my first year teaching I had no idea what I was doing, at all. It was a learning process, so I might go to an RtI meeting and they're like, oh, well, you don't have this paperwork, or you didn't do this, so it took time for me to get to where I am now, where I know exactly what I need to do. Yeah, I think it gives you more confidence, and you know the process more easily (Emily)

Of course. Now that I've been doing it and I've got the experience I feel more comfortable and recognizing when a student needs help, providing interventions and going to meetings with my team (Crista).

Yeah, it becomes easier. It does, it becomes easier to me as far as doing it on a continual basis, because then it's practice to knowing, and seeing what you might (Elisa)

Collaboration from school personnel.

All teachers stated that they received support from RtI leaders such as school psychologist who was responsible for managing RtI in this school.

We have a really good school psychiatrist that worked with me.., she will give me strategies. She'll give me advice, experience that she's had. She might even come in and observe the student and you know, kind of see what they need and help me that way (Crista)

We collaborate a lot. I can go to my psychologist, like today, I stopped in her office to ask about a student that I just received and I'm like, "What's going on?" She's quick to just fill me in and let me know, so it's very easy. (Abby)

We have our school psychologist. She pretty much facilitates everything. She has the meetings. She organizes everything for you. (Emily)

In addition, another teacher asked for RtI leader support when she had a new student and had academic or behavior problem and did not know where to start to help them. The RtI leader was kind to recognize the needs of teachers when they aren't sure what to do.

If I have a student that has never had any RtI, like anything done, and they have both behavior and academic that needs to be addressed, and I don't know where to start, that's when I would ask them for their help. Because I'll have their data from kindergarten, but I don't know where I should go with it. So I'd ask them, "Well, they don't have any paperwork. I don't know where to go (Elisa)

Evident in the dialogue was the fact that teachers asked the RtI leader when they were assigned students and did not know where to go to meet students' needs. So, the RtI leader was very supportive for teachers and managed the RtI processes to better meet the needs of students.

In addition to the support from RtI leader, three teachers appreciated the discussion with other teachers through the meetings that helped develop their understanding of their students.

It's to see where we're at, because sometimes I may struggle with teaching times. I'm like, "What am I doing? Why are your kids really good at it and my kids aren't? How are you teaching it? What do I need to do?" We talk about everything, writing, reading, all of that. About how do you teach it. Are your students getting it? Maybe mine are and yours aren't, so maybe my strategy might work for your students and we kind of discuss different ways to teach them (Abby)

Talk about their struggles. We talk about our students. Outside of lesson plan we talk about their struggles. We talk about their behaviors. We talk about what we're implementing in our rooms. Well, I see this is working with this student. Maybe if you try it, this will possibly help (Elisa)

It's really nice when you're at a team meeting and you bring up a student and you say, "I have this student, they're struggling with this, you know. What I should I do?" They help you, maybe they see something that you haven't seen by looking at the data or looking at the student as a whole (Crista)

Teacher Concerns About RtI.

It was clear the collaboration between RtI leader and grade level teacher had an impact on teachers in RtI implementation in terms of knowing how to start the RtI process and find ways to better meet students' needs. Further, all teachers expressed some concerns and identified challenges related to RtI implementation in their school. The main themes identified for the analysis are the following:

Planning is difficult.

In this school, there were large numbers of students eligible for RtI tiers services. Also, students' demographic (low economic status and ELL) were possible indicators that students needed immediate and early intervention. All students in this school
received 90 minutes, across three days of school wide intervention from IReady to increase vocabulary skills for students.

Table 2. Number of students in each class, and the number of students classified for Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction/ intervention

Teachers	Tier 2	Tier 3	Total # in Class
Abby 1st grade	7	9	22
Elisa 1st grade	4	5	21
Emily 1st grade	17	5	22
Crista 2nd Grade	2	8	20

Abby and Elisa commented on their difficulties related to planning for instruction because each student demonstrated different needs and required unique instruction that fit his/her needs.

I would say definitely the planning for the groups, which is reality for a teacher. This is what we have to do, but I mean planning for guided groups, it takes a lot of work because for me, I have five different groups and I got to plan for each group because they're all different and they all need something different (Abby)

One teacher felt unsure if she would be able to meet her students' need in terms of providing the adequate instruction which had impact on student progress when they did not receive the instruction that met their needs, especially students in Tier 3.

A lot of them are below level to where you have to go back to kindergarten and teach them letters and them identifying the sound. So, it's kind of difficult when you have those students and then you have your high ones.? As far as this year, I don't know if I'm meeting every student's needs because this is the biggest class that I've had (Elisa)

The sub – theme related to the main theme for planning is difficult is time consuming. Two teachers felt that planning is an exhausting process when there were a lot of students requiring intervention. Also, one teacher stated that planning took a lot of time and energy to do it and felt stressed to ensure that students benefit from the intervention.

I'm planning a 20-minute lessons for one group, it's five days a week. Planning is very strenuous, but other than that, I wouldn't say that the RtI process is that hard. It takes time. It is time-consuming (Abby)

I have a lot of students who are on it. Doing all the steps, all the paperwork to get them what they need. Takes a lot of time and a lot of energy and it's really hard when I have so many students who require it (Crista)

RtI is confusing.

Two teachers expressed a real concern about school resources such as IReady, which counted as the main diagnostic resource for RtI in this school. Teachers expressed concern about the confusion experienced when they used IReady to determine students reading level and the intervention to be used for students. For example, first grade teacher explained that IReady classified her students as Kindergarten in reading. She was sure that some of her students were reading a higher level for the grade, and not at the kindergarten level. The other teacher expressed the same concern when she knew for sure that her students read at the first- grade level but IReady said they were kindergarten readers.

The assessments that I use, I go by their IReady diagnostic, so it gives them an overall score. These kids are all at test level K. All my kids are in first grade, but this is telling me they're not ready for first grade. They're all level K.I don't think it's all the way reliable, no, because some of these kids, I'm like, "They know that," but some of it, it makes sense to me. (Abby)

So, this teacher made the decision to not use this type of assessment and made her own decision about students' levels.

Sometimes … it's a confusing process, and it's hard when you have someone, maybe they can read … they have a high reading level, but IReady says they're in Kindergarten, so it's kind of hard to place them when they don't always have the same level across the board. (Emily)

So, this teacher was still not sure what to choose whether following IReady's results or her own decision about her students. This confusion explained the stress of making decision on students' level. The teacher used the IReady results, which had adverse implications when students did not receive the appropriate intervention. For example, the teacher reported that the IReady did not address the appropriate intervention for certain groups of students. The IReady analysis revealed this group of students needed to learn beginning sounds and the teacher knew that those students knew all the beginning sounds and did not need this type of intervention.

Also, it seemed that this teacher continued to use IReady because her school required using IReady.

It's kind of hard because I tend to look at iReady, so it might suggest these different things, and I'll be like, oh, what did I already do with them? Or it might say to do identifying beginning sounds,.. So, it's hard, do I go by iReady, or I know what my students need, type of thing, so it's kind of hard. And you hear different things. They really look at iReady (Emily)

These teachers felt that IReady classified students as not being on level when they were sure that students were reading on level. This led to large numbers of students becoming eligible for tiered intervention, which ultimately impacted the effectiveness of RtI implementation in the school. Also, when these teachers chose IReady, they indicated that the intervention strategies did not meet students' needs, leading to students receiving the wrong intervention, which would not benefit them. Therefore, if RtI implementation did not address the need of students, students kept struggling and RtI became ineffective for those students.

Insufficient time for RtI implementation.

The majority of teachers (3 of 4) expressed concern about finding time to provide intervention for all students in Tiers 2 and 3. Teachers decided to provide intervention for students receiving Tier 3 services. However, students in Tier 2 still received IReady intervention program for three days a week for 30 minutes.

Yeah. I have 22, and it's hard to meet with all of them. You really have to prioritize who's the most .. Maybe I don't have time for all of them, but I am for sure going to meet with my tier three kids (Emily)

Another teacher also provided intervention for the most struggling students.

To me, I think that's a big problem. Because there's so many, I don't get more one-on-one with her. The ones like my kids that don't know their letters, they get it every day because they need me every day. The other ones get it three times a week. That means that are my tier three, tier two still come three times a week. Now, my ones that really don't need me only come two times a week (Abby)

I wish I had more time to provide the interventions, but I have so many students I have to see that are involved in the process, you know (Crista)

In addition, three teachers showed concern for lack of time for progress monitoring. According to the problem−solving form provided by the school, students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention should be assessed biweekly in order to see their progress. However, teachers expressed concerns about finding time to do all the assessments for students within RtI. For instance, one teacher felt that she might do the assessment by the third week.

I have a lot of Tier three students, so I have to rotate which one I can get to. So I have to go, "Okay, I assessed you this time and now I'm going to assess you this time." I'd say I try to do once every two weeks. But sometimes it'll go over to three weeks, depending on (Crista)

The other teacher made her own decision to not assess students receiving Tier 2 services. She believed that those students were not below level and did not require as much as students in Tier 3. It was clear that this teacher did not consider IReady diagnostic results for students receiving Tier 2, and followed her own beliefs about her students' needs.

I don't have a packet for every kid. They may be tier two because they get the program, but I may not make them a packet because they're not below levels, so they don't need me to do all of this because it's not necessary (Abby)

The other teacher did not really appreciate the process of monitoring students' progress because she felt that this process was overwhelming, and she did not have time to continuously monitor her students' progress leading her to forget to do the assessments to track students' progress as scheduled.

I understand we do the assessment every two weeks. Honestly, I forget a lot. I'm like, oh I needed to do that, so a week later, and it's supposed to be every two weeks, but maybe I did it once this month.So it just seems kind of like a waste of time sometimes, to be honest (Emily)

It was obvious that teachers had issues with providing both interventions and

progress monitoring. The large number of students' eligible for Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention/instruction, caused teachers to struggle to find time for implementation. Therefore, it led teachers to make their own decision on how to serve struggling students whether to ignore students who were eligible for Tier 2 services, not conducting assessments as required, or avoid doing assessment for long periods of time. The lack of time for implementation may reduce the effectiveness of RtI outcome to students especially those assigned to receive Tier 2 services.

Excessive RtI paperwork.

Two teachers clearly expressed the challenges associated with understanding and completing RtI paperwork. RtI paperwork includes three forms, problem-solving form, data form, and observation form. These forms asked teachers to identify students' problem whether it be in Reading, Math, Writing and behavior. It also asked teachers to identify whether students received the intervention and determine the duration of the intervention and the data of students' progress. Each student receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 services should have a packet that includes all these forms. One teacher felt she had difficulty understanding how to do the paperwork and she mentioned that she did not know how to do it. This could relate to the large number of students requiring Tier 2 and Tier 3 services and the time needed to complete all the paperwork, becoming an exhaustive process for teachers. Sometimes. Pretty much with RtI, I struggle with the paperwork. It's a lot of paperwork.

It's three different forms plus the data, plus the observations. It's just a lot of paperwork (Crista)

Really, I think the paperwork and documenting is the hardest challenge I know I have (Emily)

When it was large numbers of students receiving RtI in this school and each student had a RtI packet, it seemed RtI was a strenuous task for the majority of teachers to keep up with the process. That may explain why certain teachers decided not to have RtI packets for students in Tier 2, and only focused on students receiving Tier 3 services.

Delay of identification for special education services.

Two teachers described their concerns with RtI in terms of delay students who are suspected of having a disability receiving special education services. Teachers felt that they had to track students for long periods of time, such as a year, to prove that students did not show progress from intervention. Teachers were mostly concerned with the RtI process for identification when student had obvious problem and could not get immediate help in special education.

I like RtI, but I also think I'm wasting time. I have to track this and I have to meet with them just to prove there's a problem, when there's very obvious there's a problem (Emily).

I don't think that they do testing for disabilities unless you have an RtI. They might, but in my experience here before any of my students that I've had, which I've had quite a few students in the past that have gotten tested for a disability and ended up having one. They've required that we had an RtI done to prove that they, that we've been trying to give them the interventions and that we haven't seen that growth (Crista)

In this school RtI is considered as a prerequisite for special education identification. Also, data from RtI is used to determine students' eligibility for special education services. For students who have clear indicators of a need for special education services, RtI is considered as a waste of time.

Research Question 3: Teachers' Suggestions for the Implementation of RtI in Their School

The purpose of this question was to investigate teachers' suggestions to improve RtI implementation in their school. The emerging theme is the following:

Staff Support.

It was clear that this school involved large numbers of students receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 services. Three teachers recommended having another person from the school to assist in RtI implementation. One teacher would like to have assistance

that helps to provide

 intervention for students in Tier 3 who should receive intervention every day. Having an extra person. Having an extra person either pull groups. Give that extra. So, if I have someone here pulling them in the morning and I know I have to pull them in the afternoon, they're still getting their doubles. But if there's no one else in here, it's going to be hard to get them every day twice a day (Elisa)

Other teachers suggested having assistance that helps RtI in terms of planning instruction, delivering intervention in tiers, and documenting students' progress. They felt the process was too much and struggled to do it by themselves when they had this type of school population.

Just somebody that is an RtI person that can help with documentation, help with interventions and just assist us with, because we have a large population. If there was somebody who worked at a school like this that could help me with the paperwork, I would be really happy (Crista)

Yeah, like maybe if there could be someone's job to just be the RtI person and they can help teachers pull groups so that it's not all on me planning it, because I'm already planning the entire day. I teach everything, so you want me to teach Math, Reading, Writing, Science, Social Studies, and then you want me to pull this small group and do letters? It's just a lot (Emily)

This suggestion may allow students to get intervention as it's supposed to be, which would have an impact on their progress when they receive it every day or twice per day, especially students receiving Tier 3. Also, this suggestion may allow students in Tier 2 to receive intervention through small groups with teachers more frequently.

Discussion of Findings

Teachers' knowledge of Response to Intervention (RtI). Teachers' responses aligns with previous literature, which defines RtI as an early intervention framework for identifying and aiding struggling students (Fuchs & Deshler, 2007). Further, all teachers agreed that RtI data reveals a need for special education when RtI intervention did not work. In all, teachers were agreed the data from RtI is used

for eligibility purposes. Teachers, however, could not clearly state that RtI should improve student progress to get them on grade level (Hoover & Love, 2011); this may cause teachers to ignore the need to strengthen their instruction.

Based on these responses, teachers view RtI as a process to move students into special education. Teachers confuse the purpose of RtI with IDEIA in terms of using RtI data to see students' ability to respond to intervention (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). Teachers believe that struggling students, especially students receiving Tier 3, will ultimately qualify for special education services. This perspective negates NCLB laws in terms of providing students with help in general education classrooms rather than special education services (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006).

The findings of the first research question align with previous literature, which indicates teachers lack comprehensive knowledge of using research-based practices for RtI implementation, whether in intervention or assessment
 (Castro-Villarreal et al., 2014; Danielson et al., 2007; Harlacher et al., 2010; Spear-Swering & Chesman, 2012; Tillery et al., 2010).

Teachers Experiences of RtI Implementation in Tiers Intervention/ Instruction in Their School. Three of the teachers held a positive view of RtI when it helped students meet their goal.

The teachers felt joy in the ability to recognize student problems and address them. Teachers looked to students' data to monitor their progress, which positively impacted these teachers when it helped (Greenfield et al., 2010). These teachers also felt good about RtI when students received special education services. These teachers believed that RtI would help some students who need special education services. This may explain the aim of providing RtI first to struggling students to ensure that high quality instruction is provided in general education classroom (Swanson et al., 2012). One teacher commented that, "she would not like to document student's progress in RtI for a long time to show that this student has a problem when the student's disability is obvious." This concern aligns with studies that reveal many students receiving Tier 3 may get intervention for years before

special education identification (Ringlaben & Griffith, 2013). Two of the teachers interviewed appreciated RtI's ability to track student progress.

Tracking students' progress allowed teachers to remain accountable to the provided intervention and measure students' progress toward the intervention. RtI, they feel, "keeps teachers on track", which these two teachers found helpful. One teacher appreciated school resources such as IReady, which helped her identify student needs, tier level, and provided choice of strategies to use. Clearly, this school provides teachers with resources to collect student data for tiered instruction (Cummings et al., 2008). This finding aligns with studies demonstrating teacher's positive attitude about the RtI process allowing them to track their students' progress with data (Cowan & Maxwell, 2015; Greenfield et al., 2010).

All teachers believed that school-based training on RtI tools were helpful to make sense of the process. This school provided teachers with training on how to use IReady data and the Daily – Five strategies for students in Tier 2 and Tier 3. Also, the school provided training on using the Daily – Five strategies that works across elementary grades. All teachers expressed the importance of receiving this training in aiding them in gaining confidence in the process and its implementation. This became clear when one teacher pointed out that,

"It is helpful. It is. Because then you're able to see where your kids are. Instead of killing yourself trying to figure out what else? I mean you're still going to kill yourself trying to figure out what else. But you have a starting point. Without that starting point you'll be out there," (Elisa)

Training is required for effective RtI implementation in that the training increases teachers' awareness of the process and guides them in choosing the most effective intervention and conducting proper assessment (Tilly et al., 2008).

All teachers agreed the ongoing practice of RtI increased their confidence in its implementation. Teachers with RtI experience became more knowledgeable of student problems and more able to use different strategies to assist them. These social activities form teachers' knowledge of the process, which aligns with situative

theory perspective (Putnam & Borko, 2008). Ongoing implementation of RtI through using IReady, EasyCMB, and the Daily Five card strategies assisted teachers learning as well as the actual implementation of RtI on a daily basis. Furthermore, all teachers appreciated the collaboration from school staff with regard to RtI implementation. Teachers received support from the school psychologist who leads RtI in this school. Teachers consulted the RtI leader when they required clarification of issues or did not know how to begin RtI with students; especially new students. The social interaction between teachers and the RtI leader improves teacher knowledge in how to implement RtI (Darlig-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). One concern discovered in teacher responses revealed the lack of ongoing proactive support or status check regarding the process. In many cases teachers mentioned that when they needed help, they initiated the call for assistance rather than having a school official regularly "checkup" on them. In the end, effective implementation of RtI requires ongoing support from school administrators (Richards et al., 2007).

Two teachers interviewed appreciated team discussions among teachers within their grade level. These teachers could learn other strategies from colleagues to help their students.

Studies continue to demonstrate how teacher discussion remains critical to RtI implementation in selecting appropriate interventions (Kovaleski & Pedersen, 2008). However, these teachers did not mention the collaboration with special education teachers because, in this school, only general education teachers deliver Tier 2 services. Obviously, the collaboration between the RtI leader and grade level teacher provide critical to enhancing these teachers' implementation of RtI.

This school possessed a large number of students eligible for Tier 2 and 3 instruction/intervention. This caused teachers to express some concerns related to RtI implementation. When teachers used IReady, most students performed lower in reading. Previous studies have pointed out that when most students were screening at risk, it was unreasonable to provide intervention for all students, and it indicated

that the core instruction in Tier 1 is not strong enough to meet the majority of students' needs. As a result, Fuchs and Fuchs (2006) recommend that students at risk in Tier 1 should receive frequent assessments to see if they respond to core instruction before moving to further support in Tier 2. Studies suggest that students in Tier 1 must engage in research-based instruction to meet the needs of the majority of students (Hughes & Dexter, 2011). Because of the large numbers of students in need of Tier 2 and 3 instruction/intervention at this school, RtI implementation became a stressful process for these teachers.

Three teachers commented on the difficulty of planning instruction for students in Tier 2 and 3 as groups or individuals because of the variety of students' needs (Kratochwill et al., 2007). One teacher felt unsure she could provide adequate instruction for students. Planning for students in Tier 2 and 3 remains a stressful process for these teachers. Also, two teachers felt that planning for different groups of students constitutes an overwhelming and time-consuming

 process. These classroom teachers felt stress from the RtI process because they, alone, provide intervention for students in Tier 2 and 3 instruction/intervention. So, general education teachers in this school were responsible for RtI implementation, which may contribute to the literature of identifying the role of teachers in RtI (Fuchs & Deshler, 2007).

Two teachers shared concerns about the confusion RtI presents when using school resources such as IReady to make decisions about student tier levels. These teachers experienced confusion in choosing which assessment tool to follow to determine student levels. For instance, IReady classified students below level, and teachers believed those students performed on level based on other assessments. Furthermore, this confusion caused teachers such as Emily to have difficulty choosing which intervention to use that most effectively met her students' needs. Abby, another teacher made the decision about her students to use an assessment that seemed more appropriate to her than IReady. Clearly, each teacher made his or her own decisions whether to utilize IReady or another assessment tool. So,

decisions about students' data in this school seems to belong to the individual classroom teacher with a lack of input or support from school personnel in the actual implementation of tiered instruction. The literature speaks to this issue where the RtI process can become confusing for teachers (Castro– Villarreal et al., 2014). Three teachers discovered difficulty in providing face–to–face intervention for all students receiving Tier 2 and 3 services because of the increased number of students in each tier. Previous studies point out that teachers can have difficulty finding time to provide students with Tier 2 and 3 services, especially when there are greater numbers of students needing such intervention
 (Castro–Villarreal et al., 2014). Despite this, teachers reported providing Tier 2 intervention utilizing strategies such as IReady three times a week. Therefore, teachers in RtI process often focus on helping most struggling students in Tier 3. This finding contradicts with RtI literature that indicates students receiving Tier 3 services should get help from specialist to meet their needs such as special education teacher or reading specialist (Richards et al., 2007).

Three teachers also shared their difficulty in finding time to monitor student progress. These teachers shared a variety of responses related to the implementation of assessment. For instance, Crista may assess students receiving Tier 3 services once every two to three weeks, Abby decided not to assess students receiving Tier 2 services, and Emily may assess students once a month. In this case, the implementation of RtI related assessments lack fidelity and consistency because each teacher holds a different perspective of the implementation of progress monitoring. Fidelity of assessments used for progress monitoring is a critical aspect of the successful implementation of RtI (Danielson et al., 2007). Two teachers pointed out their difficulty with the demand of completing RtI related paperwork. Previous studies have shown the same finding from teachers with respect to RtI paperwork in terms of the demand, variation, and length
(Cowan & Maxwell, 2015; Castro– Villarreal et al., 2014). RtI paperwork for these teachers became an overwhelming task because of the large number of students

receiving Tier 2 and 3 services at this school. Abby did not feel overwhelmed by RtI paperwork because she made a decision not to assign an RtI packet for students receiving Tier 2 services. She focused on students receiving Tier 3 services who demonstrated more need.

Two teachers pointed out that RtI might delay special education services for students who they suspect of having a disability. In this school, teachers were required to implement interventions and track students' progress for long periods, such as a year or more, to ensure that

 students did not respond to intervention before special education referral. However, Emily felt that she wasted her time when she tracked one of her students who had clear difficulties. This finding reveals one of RtI's limitations when CEC and LDA pointed out RtI may delay student of special education evaluation

(Mellard et al., 2011). An important gap in the literature related to RtI is lack of consensus on when or how a student should be identified as non–responsive to intervention (Hughes & Dexter, 2011). Despite this ambiguity, the RtI process should not delay eligibility evaluations under the individuals with Disabilities Education Act (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Related Services, 2009). It seemed that one of the misconceptions the school held regarding RtI centered on the argument of whether or not to consider RtI as a primary or mandatory step before special education evaluation (Martin, 2015). One suggestion to avoid a school's liability of delaying special education evaluation involves clearly informing parents about RtI intervention

 (e.g. length of intervention, available resources), communicating to them about their right to request comprehensive evaluation at any time without waiting, and reaching a collaborative agreement that document all steps that outline this process

 (Mellard et al., 2011; Martin, 2015).

Teachers' Suggestions for the Implementation of RtI in Their School.

Three teachers recommend having staff support for RtI implementation in planning,

delivering the intervention, and conducting assessment. So, staff support may help all students get the help they need and assess with fidelity. Large numbers of students receiving RtI may lead teachers to hope to have staff support such as special education teacher or reading specialist to provide intervention for students receiving Tier 3 services. The close collaboration between school staff in RtI implementation may increase the effectiveness of the implementation, which directly impacts student outcome (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009).

Conclusions

This qualitative interview study focused on teachers' perceptions of RtI implementation in their school. Teachers' voices can provide insight for policy makers and professionals in the field to better prepare teachers for effective RtI implementation. Based on the findings of this study, teachers understood RtI as a model for identifying student problems based on data and providing intervention to see if students response to intervention or not. Teachers also looked to RtI as a model to move students for LD identification when intervention did not work. However, teachers did not demonstrate understandings of two important RtI elements: (1) that Tier 1 must center on high quality instruction; (2) that Tier 2 and 3 must contain research-based practices which are implemented with fidelity. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that teachers often lack full understanding of the RtI process.

Participants reported positive attitudes of RtI implementation when RtI did help students make progress. Additionally, teachers expressed positive experiences with RtI when students received special education identification because RtI intervention did not help. So, teachers felt encouraged because they had the data to show students' nonresponsive to instruction. Also, teachers favored progress monitoring

that aided them in tracking their students.

However, teachers concern about RtI implementation centered around difficulty with planning instruction for students who receive Tier 2 and 3 services. Further concerns regarding RtI emerged around using school resources such as IReady to make instructional decisions and selecting interventions for students receiving Tier 2 and 3 services. In addition, teachers expressed a lack of time for implementing intervention and assessment because only classroom teachers delivered Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention and assessment at their school. Teachers also expressed concerns about the demands related to completion of RtI paperwork. Another concern arose when teachers saw RtI as process to delay suspected students of special education service. These teacher's concerns about RtI coincides with previous research about the difficulty of planning instruction, lack of time for implementation, and RtI paperwork. Participants' suggestions for improving RtI implementation in their school are through increased staff support and including special education teachers and reading specialists as personnel who can provide intervention for students who receive Tier 3 services.

This study was framed, in part, using situative theory that identified the social and contextual factors impacted teachers' perceptions and implementation of RtI. Teachers reported that the ongoing practice of RtI did build their confidence and they became less intimidated by RtI implementation. School training became another contextual factor, which developed teacher's sense of how to start RtI implementation. Additionally, collaboration with RtI leader and grade level teachers assisted the development of strategies to use in the classroom. So, the situative theory identified social and contextual activities that aimed teachers' perceptions about their implementation.

References

1. Adler, J. (2000). Social practice theory and mathematics teacher education: A conversation between theory and practice. Nordic Mathematics Education Journal, 8(3), 31–53.

2. Braun V, Clarke V. Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qual. Res.

3. Psych. 2006; 3: 77–101.

4. Bradley, R., Danielson, L., & Doolittle, J. (2005). Response to intervention. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 38(6), 485–486.

5. Borko, H. (2004). Professional development and teacher learning: Mapping the terrain. Educational Researcher, 33(8), 3–15.

6. Berkeley, S., Bender, W. N., Peaster, L. G., & Saunders, L. (2009). Implementation of response to intervention: A snapshot of progress. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 42(1), 85–95.

7. Cummings, K. D., Atkins, T., Allison, R., & Cole, C. (2008). Response to intervention: Investigating the new role of special educators. Teaching Exceptional Children, 40(4), 24–31.

8. Castro-Villarreal, F., Rodriguez, B. J., & Moore, S. (2014). Teachers' perceptions and attitudes about response to intervention (RTI) in their schools: A qualitative analysis. Teaching and Teacher Education, 40(1), 104–112.

9. Cowan, C., & Maxwell, G. (2015). Educators' perceptions of response to intervention implementation and impact on student learning. Journal of Instructional Pedagogies, 16.

10. Danielson, L., Doolittle, J., & Bradley, R. (2007). Professional development, capacity building, and research needs: Critical issues for response to intervention implementation. School Psychology Review, 36(4), 632.

11. Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1995). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. Phi Delta Kappan, 76(8), 597.

12.Dunn, M. W., Cole, C. M., & Estrada, A. (2009). Referral criteria for special education: general education teachers' perspectives in Canada and the United States of America. Rural Special Education Quarterly, 28(1), 28.

13. Fletcher, J. M., & Vaughn, S. (2009). Response to intervention: Preventing and remediating academic difficulties. Child development perspectives, 3(1), 30−37.

14. Fuchs, D., & Deshler, D. D. (2007). What we need to know about the responsiveness to intervention (and should not be afraid to ask). Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 22(2), 129−136.

15. Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., & Stecker, P. M. (2010). The "blurring" of special education in a new continuum of general education placements and services. Exceptional Children, 76(3), 301−323.

16. Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S. (2006). Introduction to response to intervention: What, why, and how valid is it? Reading Research Quarterly, 41, 93−99. doi:10.1598/RRQ.41.1.4

17. Greenfield, R., Rinaldi, C., Proctor, P., & Cardarell, A. (2010). Teachers' perceptions of response to intervention (RTI) reform effort in an Urban Elementary School: A consensual qualitative analysis. Journal of Disability Policy Studies. 21(1) 47−63.

18. Identification of learning disabilities: Research to practice. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

19. Hughes, C. A., & Dexter, D. D. (2011). Response to intervention: A research-based
summary. Theory into Practice, 50(1), 4−11.

20. Harlacher, J. E., Walker, N. J. N., & Sanford, A. K. (2010). The "I" in RTI research-based factors for intensifying instruction. Teaching Exceptional Children, 42(6), 30−38.

21. Hargreaves, A. (2005). Educational change takes ages: Life, career and generational factors in teachers' emotional responses to educational change. Teaching and Teacher Education, 21(8), 967−983.

22. Hoover, J. J., & Love, E. (2011). Supporting school-based response to intervention: A practitioner's model. Teaching Exceptional Children, 43(3), 40-48.

23. Klingner, J. K., & Edwards, P. A. (2006). Cultural considerations with response to intervention models. Reading Research Quarterly, 41(1), 108-117.

24. Kratochwill, T. R., Volpiansky, P., Clements, M., & Ball, C. (2007). Professional development in implementing and sustaining multitier prevention models: Implications for response to intervention. School Psychology Review, 36(4), 618.

25. Krathwohl, D. R. (1998). Methods of educational & social science research: An integrated approach (2nd ed.). White Plains, NY: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

26. Kovaleski, J. F., & Pedersen, J. (2008). Best practices in data analysis teaming. Best practices in school psychology 2(1) 115-129.

27. LaRocco, D. J., & Murdica, P. (2009). Understanding teachers' concerns about implementing response to intervention (RTI): Practical implications for educational leaders. Online Submission.

28. Mellard, D. F., Stern, A., & Woods, K. (2011). RTI school-based practices and evidence-based models. Focus on exceptional children, 43(6), 1.

29. Martin, J. L. (2015). Legal implications of response to intervention and special education

30. identification. Retrieved from http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/ld/legal-implications-ofresponse-to-intervention-and-special-education-identification

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. New York, NY: Sage.

31. Putnam, R. T., & Borko, H. (2000). What do new views of knowledge and thinking have to say about research on teacher learning?. Educational Researcher, 29(1), 4-15.

32. Pyle, A., Wade-Woolley, L., & Hutchinson, N. L. (2011). "Just listen to us": The role of teacher empowerment in the implementation of Responsiveness to Intervention. Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 57(3), 258-272.

33. Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry a personal, experiential perspective. Qualitative Social Work, 1(3), 261-283.

34. Punch, K. F. (2009). Introduction to research methods in education. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

35. Ringlaben, R. P., & Griffith Ph D, K. (2013). Secondary teachers' Knowedge of Response to Intervention. Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education, 2(11), 2.

36. Richards, C., Pavri, S., Golez, F., Canges, R., & Murphy, J. (2007). Response to Intervention: Building the Capacity of Teachers to Serve Students with Learning Difficulties. Issues in Teacher Education, 16(2), 55-64.

37. Spear-Swerling, L., & Cheesman, E. (2012). Teachers' knowledge base for implementing response-to-intervention models in reading. Reading and Writing, 25(7), 1691-1723.

38. Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory. New York, NY: Sage Publications.

39. Stuart, S., Rinaldi, C., & Higgins-Averill, O. (2011). Agents of change: Voices of teachers on response to intervention. International Journal of Whole Schooling, 7(2), 53- 73.Seattle: Author, University of Washington.

40. Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of qualitative research (Vol. 15). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

41. Swanson, E., Solis, M., Ciullo, S., & McKenna, J. W. (2012). Special education teachers' perceptions and instructional practices in response to intervention implementation. Learning Disability Quarterly, 35(2), 115-126.

42. Turner III, D. W. (2010). Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators. The Qualitative Report, 15(3), 754.

43. Tillery, A. D., Varjas, K., Meyers, J., & Collins, A. S. (2010). General education teachers' perceptions of behavior management and intervention strategies. Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 12(2), 86-102.

44. Thomas, R. M. (2003). Blending qualitative and quantitative research methods in theses and dissertations. Corwin Press.

45. US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Data

Analysis System. Table 1-11: Children and students served under IDEA, part B,

in the

US and outlying areas by age group, year, and disability category: fall 1998

through

fall 2007. https://www.ideadata.org/TABLES31ST/AR_1-11.htm. Accessed

August 17, 2009. Werts, M., Lambert, M., & Carpenter, E. (2009).

Whatspecial education

46. directors say about RTI. Learning Disability Quarterly, 32(4), 245-254.

47. Wood, D., & Einbender, L. (1995). An authentic journey: Emergent

understandings about authentic assessment and authentic practice. New York:

National Center for Restructuring Education Schools and Teaching.