

Using Video Research Methods to Capture Small Stories of Inclusion: A Research and Practice Model

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KEYWORDS: Professional Development Schools, school-university partnerships, video

ABSTRACT

This article details a model for research and practice using video data for multidimensional purposes as part of a professional development school (PDS) partnership. The research methods described situate practitioners as leaders in a school working toward more inclusive school reform with support from PDS partners, including two Professors-in-Residence (PIRs) and PDS teacher co-liaisons. The purpose of sharing this methodological model is to: (a) explore how video research can foster reflective opportunities; (b) highlight professional leaders; (c) (re)construct student competence from a strengths-based perspective; (d) contribute to a video bank of best practices, all as part of collaborative work toward more inclusive schools.

NAPDS NINE ESSENTIALS (2nd Edition) ADDRESSED IN THIS ARTICLE:

1. A professional development school (PDS) is a learning community guided by a comprehensive, articulated mission that is broader than the goals of any single partner, and that aims to advance equity, antiracism, and social justice within and among schools, colleges/universities, and their respective community and professional partners.
3. A PDS is a context for continuous professional learning and leading for all participants, guided by need and a spirit and practice of inquiry.
4. A PDS makes a shared commitment to reflective practice, responsive innovation, and generative knowledge.
5. A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets.
8. A PDS creates space for, advocates for, and supports college/university and P-12 faculty to operate in well-defined, boundary-spanning roles that transcend institutional settings.

Introduction

Rowan University's College of Education (CED) is housed within a four-year public research university in the northeastern United States. A defining feature of the CED is a partnership with a network of 11 P-12 PDSs. Professional Development Schools are school-university partnerships founded upon the nine essentials as outlined by the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) (2008). While our work integrates all of the NAPDS nine essentials, this particular article touches on:

Essential 3: Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need;

Essential 4: A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants.

In this network, PDS partnerships are maintained by university PIRs and P-12 teacher liaisons. The focus of the research at this PDS was the intersections of inclusive education and disability studies in education (DSE). Specifically, the PDS partnership involved actively deconstructing deeply ingrained assumptions and practices around disabled students' perceived competence and subsequent access to inclusive settings. We intentionally use both the terms "disabled students" and "students with disabilities" to honor a variety of preferences, and acknowledge that using only person-first language runs counter to a disability studies perspective by overgeneralizing disability or by failing to focus individual and cultural disability identity preferences (Linton, 1998). Additionally, when disabled students receive a segregated and substandard education, this creates disabling school environments for students (Baglieri et al., 2011). Our work also reveals how PDS partnerships can support inclusive reform grounded in strengths-based practices for students with disabilities. Next, we explain what we mean when we reference "the intersections of inclusive education and DSE."

Inclusive Education

For over 30 years scholars of inclusive education have shown the social and academic benefits of educating disabled and nondisabled students in age- and grade-appropriate classrooms with necessary supports (Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation [SWIFT], 2019). Despite this evidence, disabled students are routinely educated in segregated classrooms, and many school decisions are made based on their perceived deficits (Jackson et al., 2009). Our PDS research examines the process and experiences of university- and school-based teams collaborating to counter deficit-based assumptions about students with disabilities through ongoing teacher and administration reflection, and designing practices to (re)construct inclusive opportunities for at this school.

Disability Studies and Disability Studies in Education

We come at this work from a disability studies theoretical framework. As a field, disability studies challenges long-held assumptions and practices related to disability and special education (Taylor, 2006). Disability studies scholars situate disability as a natural form of human variation (Baglieri et al., 2011) and a "social phenomenon" (Taylor, 2006, p. xiii). Disability has historically been constructed through a deficit lens, compounded by stigma of difference associated with intersecting marginalized identities, such as racial and ethnic diversity (Annamma et al., 2013). Our collaborative work aims to document the process of resistance to deficit perspectives in inclusive educational reform aligned with disability studies in education, informed by the idea that "understandings of disability occur through human expectations and

interactions in social contexts” (Baglieri et al., 2011, p. 275).

Disability studies in education (DSE) scholars are concerned with aspects of *education* that “affect or are affected by disablement in educational contexts” (Gabel, 2005, p. 17). The term “disablement” refers to disabling economic, political, and cultural barriers that prevent disabled people from participating in mainstream society (Oliver & Barnes, 2012, p. 12). Central to the field are educational issues identified by disabled students and their families as they relate to exclusion and oppression. DSE scholars highlight how an absence of reliable support and limited, often segregated, educational access for students with disabilities has led to presumptions of incompetence and inequitable educational and social opportunities (Biklen & Kliever, 2006). The cyclic relationship between stigma, presumptions of incompetence, low expectations, and inequitable opportunities can be life-altering for those who have difficulties meeting normative expectations of performance in schools (Biklen & Burke, 2006). Engaging in this project through a DSE perspective placed responsibility on teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals to foster more inclusive practice.

Presuming Competence and Constructing Competence

Biklen and Kliever (2006) urge, “if you are interested in seeing another’s competence, it helps to look for it” (p. 184). The act of “looking for” competence of students with disabilities who move, communicate and participate in neurodiverse ways requires intentionality and support; so too does resisting deficit presumptions by constructing social and academic opportunities for such students to demonstrate their strengths in nontraditional ways in school (Ashby & Kasa, 2013). There have been few studies that capture the nuanced experiences of students, adults, peers, and families working together to deliberately shift toward a presumption of competence in/through inclusive education (Kasa-Hendrickson, 2005), or the outcomes of the students (Jorgensen et al., 2007), particularly within PDS partnerships. The research and practice model described is situated in this gap, and looks closely at the experiences of students and adults in the midst of school-wide shifts toward inclusive practice, captured in video recorded moments of student engagement.

Methods

Site of Study

This PDS project took place at a public elementary school in the northeastern United States that services fourth through sixth graders. The school is a Title I institution and considered “high needs.” The school serves approximately 500 students, almost half of whom (45.6%) live below the poverty line; 85 are students with disability labels and have individualized education programs. Of the school’s eleven special education classrooms, three are self-contained. The remaining eight special education classrooms are co-taught and considered “inclusion classrooms” integrating students with and without disability labels.

Participants

For the video research component of this project, we engaged the existing PDS Steering Committee to recruit a subset of teacher and student participants. We conducted interviews with three disabled students, two nondisabled students, three paraprofessionals, three teachers, and three administrators, for a total of 14 participants. We provide more detail in the *Data Collection* section. Table 1 provides an overview of participants.

Table 1: Participants in Video Research

Participant	Role	Grade
Isaac	Student 1 (Special Education)	6 th
Jayden	Student 2 (Special Education)	6 th
Eric	Student 3 (Special Education)	6 th
Antonio	Student 4 (General education)	6 th
Tyrone	Student 5 (General education)	6 th
Katie	Paraprofessional (General education class)	6 th
Joshua	Paraprofessional (General education class)	6 th
Katherine	Co-teacher (Special Education)	6 th
Joyce	Co-teacher (Special Education)	6 th
Alice	Basic Skills Teacher, PDS Teacher Co-Liaison	4 th -6 th
Penny	Social Emotional Learning Special Area Teacher	4 th -6 th
Steve	Administrator Building Principal	
Cara	Administrator; Special Education Supervisor	
Eve	Administrator; Case Manager	

Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Methods

Our collaborative approach is grounded in community-based participatory research (CBPR) where our “community” is composed of students, parents, staff, teachers, and administrators in one school building. CBPR actively engages participants throughout the project, even if not in all phases (e.g., analysis and publication) (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). This project emphasized collaboration and promoted activities with the aim of fostering practices with application to the local school community (e.g., students with disability labels accessing inclusive classrooms) (Stanton, 2014). Meaning, we conducted regular cycles of videotaped interviews with students, paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators and reflected on how we were collectively trying to reconstruct the conception of disabled students as strength-based contributors to the school community. Specifically, disabled students acted as experts on their school experiences, which we centered as the paraprofessionals, faculty, and administrators reflected on students’ thoughts on the inclusive support we were implementing.

Video Research Methods

As Woodfield joined the larger research project in 2018, she brought expertise on DSE-informed video research methods: the aspect of the project we discuss in this article. The PDS Steering Committee agreed to layer in video research methods into our existing CBPR framework. We collaboratively developed the following areas of focus for our research: adult perspectives and practices, and student perspectives and experiences, both of which require researchers to ask specific questions, presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Perspectives and Questions to Consider in DSE-Informed Research

Adult Perspectives and Practices	Student Perspectives and Experiences
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do adults describe and enact efforts to presume competence of students with disabilities in schools moving toward more inclusion? 2. What meaning do adults make of illustrative moments of students with disabilities' participation in inclusive academic and/or social activities? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do students with disabilities participate academically and socially in schools moving toward more inclusion? 2. What are students' reflections on illustrative moments in participation in academic and/or social activities between themselves and their peers?

To answer these questions, our approach drew on qualitative video-based narrative methods (Riessman, 2008). Use of video is well-suited for research with and about students with disabilities, as it allows for nuances of sound, movement, and non-spoken communication to be revisited closely (Dindar et al., 2017). This project zooms in on “small stories” (Bamberg, 2006) in school contexts through which we “...pay attention to inconsistent, fragmented, immediate yet important short everyday conversational narratives that may otherwise go unnoticed” (Kim, 2016, p. 262). This multimodal qualitative approach allowed for centering perspectives and experiences of students who have historically been excluded from research, to contribute to a base of understanding about their lived experiences and educational strategies that best support them from a strengths-based perspective.

Data Collection

During fall 2018 professional development days, paraprofessionals received PIR-led professional development on guidelines for support in inclusive settings through a checklist of best practices for general education classroom goals and desired outcomes (Doering, 2005). Paraprofessionals were then instructed to video record moments they felt illustrated their use of these best practices over the course of that fall and spring. All participants were made aware of this methodological approach and consented to video recording.

The data collection process was overseen by the researchers and facilitated by PDS teacher co-liaisons. Since data was collected by several paraprofessionals, the materials were housed in a central location. The Basic Skills classroom, operated by the PDS teacher co-liaisons, served as the central hub for cameras, and housed the log book used to check materials in and out. Paraprofessionals were also given instructions on recording best practices.

We collected nine illustrative moment videos from this initial fall 2018 data collection phase, ranging from students at recess and in the cafeteria to participating in inclusive academic activities with a range of levels of adult support. Following this initial round of data collection, we provided reflective opportunities to review the videos during follow-up professional development sessions for paraprofessionals and special area teachers. During these sessions, each participant shared an example of a video clip they captured and described their thought process for selecting it as an illustrative moment of best practice for inclusive support. The group used the guidelines originally introduced for this project to identify strategies implemented during each video.

We then conducted interviews with a sample of students, paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators. Participants watched videos that depending on their role they were either featured in or had video recorded. Each participant was asked a series of semi-structured questions to capture their responses to their actions in and around each video clip. The purpose of these interviews and professional development opportunities was to highlight what adults and students identified as strengths in inclusive practice in a PDS actively involved in inclusive school reform, based on a set of shared guidelines for inclusive support.

Participant Analysis and Reflections on Videos

Woodfield and Elder conducted initial coding of video data. Due to their respective backgrounds with qualitative research methods, they collaboratively analyzed data and reported emerging findings to members of the PDS Steering Committee, who then verified findings and provided feedback and next steps for the project. To capture the use of strategies within each example, Woodfield and Elder conducted two rounds of coding on each video using the analysis software, Vosaic (FACTS, 2021). In Round 1, they captured the type of events happening in the clip, for example “peer interaction.” In Round 2, they captured the nuanced use of strategies based on shared inclusive practice guidelines used for training, for example “adult initiated peer interaction.” Following the interview phase of the project, they juxtaposed responses to each video side by side to understand various stakeholder perspectives on the contents of each clip.

Table 3 is an example of a side-by-side analysis of multiple perspectives on an illustrative moment captured on video, in which a disabled student was invited to play basketball with peers by a nondisabled classmate. Elder, who was observing, supported this interaction. Here, we present a brief sample of the perspectives of: a disabled student, a nondisabled peer, the special education supervisor, the Social Emotional Learning special area teacher, and a paraprofessional. This moment was reflective of the kinds of interactions captured throughout the project. The responses represent examples of the range of reactions generated across interviews related to each illustrative moment reviewed. The quotes are juxtaposed to illustrate the interpretations and feedback received about this moment, which was considered an illustrative moment of peer interaction during an unstructured inclusive social activity.

Table 3: Side-by-Side Analysis of an Illustrative Video Moment

Description of the illustrative moment: A disabled student was invited into an impromptu basketball game at recess, facilitated by a nondisabled peer and Elder. It is worth noting that while Woodfield and Elder are PIRs leading the video-based research aspects of the project, they also regularly modeled best inclusive practices for participants.

Issac (disabled student)	Tyrone (nondisabled student)	Cara (special education supervisor)	Penny (special area teacher)	Katie (paraprofessional)
<p>Issac: I was playing basketball with others.</p> <p>Elder: You were playing basketball with other people and you even spoke to somebody. Who did you speak to?</p> <p>Isaac: Tyrone.</p> <p>Elder: Yeah? What did you say to Tyrone?</p> <p>Isaac: Can I play with him.</p> <p>Elder: So how did you feel when you were talking to Tyrone?</p> <p>Isaac: Less nervous.</p> <p>Elder: Why?</p>	<p>Woodfield: How did you feel after watching that?</p> <p>Tyrone: I had fun, it makes me happy that he's happy.</p> <p>Elder: And when I asked you initially because that happened, it wasn't planned. Right? I saw Issac looking and he looked interested in sports and I was like "oh I know Tyrone is there because I saw the video with you and [another student with a disability]." And so when I asked you initially what did you think?</p> <p>Tyrone: I thought that it could be fun.</p>	<p>Cara: Well [Issac] definitely wanted to play and as soon as they gave him the ball he even moved a little closer in towards the group. So I think just that initial engagement made him feel a little bit more connected.</p>	<p>Penny: I think that I would talk to that group separately before I had Issac come in and say "hey when we invite Issac we don't just invite him on to the court we teach him how to play [basketball]. We show him so maybe you could be his shadow. You know he walks around with you or follows you wherever you go for a few minutes to let him get acclimated to the game and let him know what the rules are." And just kind of explain to them that this is a great thing that you're doing including someone to play in this game but let's really</p>	<p>Katie: I felt like [Issac] needed a lot of encouragement. I've been with Issac three years and that's probably the one and only time I've seen him play with anyone. We told you [paraprofessionals] had tried to encourage him to play. I think what you do is physically took him and said "play, this is how we play," where she and I are always trying verbally to communicate it.</p>

Isaac: Well Tyrone is really nice.

Elder: Cool. And so what did you do to make that happen?

Tyrone: I brought him into the game and I told all of them to pass it to him for him to try and make a shot.

fully include him. This is what we're really looking for and you know and kind of turn it around on them how would you feel if you were playing a new game like chess but you didn't know how to play and somebody wanted you to play and you know don't you want them to show you physically what to do. And so kind of use some empathy to have him included.

Made clear in the side-by-side analysis, both students reflected positively on this experience. We examined the relationship between the two peers interviewed and the role of the nondisabled peer in facilitating the game, with both receiving a bit of encouragement from Elder. The administrator echoes the importance of the initial invitation in building the disabled student's confidence for engagement. The teacher's perspective focuses on what could be done to improve interactions like this one in the future. For example, since the teacher perceived that the student with a disability was unsure of the rules, she recommends coaching nondisabled students to provide more interactive modeling. The paraprofessional, who has worked with this student for three years, seems surprised at the interaction and makes clear that the strategies used to facilitate the moment are different from prompts typically used to support this student. These adult perspectives demonstrate that even in interactions when students felt comfortable, there is room for improvement from a support perspective to push further toward students' inclusion.

Discussion and Implications

The shared purposes of the video were to record illustrative moments at this PDS and create unique opportunities for ongoing reflection and collaboration. Next, we detail varied ways that the methodological process impacted research and practice, which in turn served to broaden and deepen the reach of this work.

Impact of the Model on Practice

The video clips captured by participants played multiple roles. In practice, the videos were situated to highlight paraprofessional expertise, helped to construct students from strength-based perspectives, informed inclusive placement decisions through action planning, and compiled a bank of best practice examples for professional development.

Highlighting Professional Expertise and Student Strengths

Using video research methods provided participants with opportunities to highlight their implementation of shared knowledge of best practice guidelines for inclusion. By incorporating these video clips into follow-up professional development sessions, the researchers created space to highlight paraprofessional and teacher expertise, while leaving room for growth and development in inclusive practice. The video clips show students engaging in inclusive settings, including social opportunities across students with and without disabilities and examples of students with disabilities participating in inclusive classroom activities. These examples helped counter deficit-based constructions of such students' competence. Further, creating space for collaborative practitioner reflection on video clips of students engaging in inclusive settings contributed to (re)constructing student competence in positive and impactful ways.

Use of Videos in Action Plan Meetings

We also used these videos in action planning meetings, which members of the PDS Steering Committee used to help develop proactive and sustainable inclusive support for disabled students. Action planning is one way to enact inclusive school reform that: transforms the organization of schools so stakeholders, including families, have more control, and helps to initiate, coordinate, and monitor integrated services for inclusive education (Sailor, 1996). During these regularly scheduled action planning meetings, we showed selected video clips to team members. When parents, teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals saw students being

successful in ways previously unexpected, it tended to open doors to additional opportunities for students to be included. Seeing the students in the video clips, as well as including the students in the action plan meetings, further empowered the students themselves to find and develop their own narratives. Previously, decision-making occurred without taking students' perspectives into consideration. An outcome of these meetings was that students with disabilities were increasingly included in general education academic and social settings with nondisabled peers.

Video Bank of Best Practices

The videos collected for reflection and analysis in the research also served as exemplars of inclusive practice actively being implemented in the school. The use of these clips in professional development sessions, interviews, and action plan meetings helped to create space for students to be seen as active contributors to the school community in ways previously not available. By compiling video examples and creating space for reflection based on shared foundations in the presumption of competence, this process helped to create more awareness of areas of success and further need in moving toward inclusive practice. The bank of videos has been utilized by general education teachers transitioning to more inclusive practice, special area teachers seeking to improve their programs to meet the needs of all students, training for new paraprofessionals, as well as a refresher on best practice.

Impact of the Model on Research

In the previous sections, we highlighted how we applied the video research to further develop inclusive *practices* throughout the school. In these sections, we explain how video methods helped to improve our ongoing *research* within the larger PDS project on inclusion.

Iterative and Collaborative Process

This video research model has promise for bridging research and practice in cyclical ways and strengthening PDS partnerships. We see the practitioner-led use of videos as part of this research data collection process as a potential model for PDSs to apply to their partnerships. One of the most important aspects of this work was the collaborative professional development of practices that support inclusion and shared responsibility for capturing illustrative moments of that practice. This work was supported by administrators, teachers, students, and paraprofessionals, and the process was facilitated by PDS teacher co-liaisons. Because so many stakeholders were involved at all phases, this was a highly effective and collaborative experience that captured both what was working for inclusion and what needed additional support.

Led by Practitioners with Shared Commitment and Resources around Inclusive Education

This article captures our collaborative process across the initial phase of this research, which was designed to be iterative. What we learned from this phase informs the professional development and research moving forward. We have since expanded data collection to include videos recorded by teachers and the researchers themselves, and plan to implement a third round of data collection captured from the students' perspectives. We learned that interpretations of moments look different based on those who are experiencing them, and that creating reflective opportunities across multiple stakeholders can have fruitful impacts on the direction of the research. For example, upon seeing the video examples, school administrators identified a need for more structured social inclusion opportunities for students with and without disabilities.

These opportunities created through practice and scheduling became an additional space in which illustrative moments for the research could be captured. The shared commitment to continuing to move toward full inclusion helped ensure that the research had a tangible impact on the space, and that the practice had a tangible impact on the research.

Next Steps and Conclusions

Because this is an ongoing project, this article stands as an illustrative moment in and of itself: a space to share our evolving methodological research structure. Moving forward, we plan to continue with the same reflective processes, highlighting illustrative moments captured on video as professional development opportunities, using strengths-based video clips of students' inclusion in action planning meetings, and conducting reflective interviews with participants to better understand the impact of these "small stories" on the larger narrative of this school's culture and practice of inclusion.

The reciprocal and collaborative work created through this methodological process has much promise for PDSs seeking to create space for reflective research and practice. The relationships across PIRs, teacher co-liaisons, the PDS Steering Committee, as well as administrator, teacher, paraprofessional, and student participants of the research were enhanced by shared and continued commitments to use of the videos to highlight, build on and support the inclusive practice. The research was strengthened by the investment, feedback, and ongoing contributions of the participants, as well as those who attended professional development reflection sessions. We see this model as replicable in other PDS networks seeking ways to bridge research and practice, engage in practitioner-led inquiry, and center the experiences of students from strengths-based perspectives.

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