PERCEPTIONS OF CO-TEACHING
BY CONTENT AREA AND SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS
WITH AND WITHOUT EXPERIENCE

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CONTENTS

Abstract

Schools are required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Recently there has been emphasis on co-teaching as a method to comply with this mandate. Co-teaching is a technique geared at utilizing a special education teacher and a content area teacher to concurrently instruct both students with and without disabilities in the general education setting. It is well established in the literature that it is vital that together both the content area teacher and special education teacher in these settings be effectively trained to meet the needs of the students with disabilities without hindering the progress of the students without disabilities (Fleming & Bauer, 2007; Goor, 1994; Dieker, & Murawski, 2003).

This study investigated the perceptions of special education and content area teachers with and without experience co-teaching of co-teaching. Twenty-two content area and fifteen special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience and currently enrolled (academic year of 2012-2013) in the graduate course of ED530 Teacher as a Researcher at Bridgewater State University responded to an 82-item survey to identify their experience and perspectives on co-teaching. Results of this study identified several features of content area and special education teachers' experience and views of co-teaching. Recommendations are offered for future research in the area of co-teaching and co-teaching professional development.

Keywords: Special Education, Inclusion, Cooperating Teaching, Team Teaching, Collaboration

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Chapter I: Introduction

Statement of the Problem and Significance

There is a long-standing philosophy in the United States that all citizens are created equal, but an equal opportunity to education for individuals with disabilities is a recent development. Today, the inclusion of all students with disabilities is guaranteed through IDEA, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (National Study of Inclusive Education, 1994), which states that all eligible school-aged children and youth with disabilities are entitled to receive a free appropriate public education. Advocates believe that, inclusion of all students improves education for all students (An Inclusion Talkback, 1996). In response to trends and legislation, many schools have implemented the "co-teaching" method (Cook & Friend, 1995) to promote effective instruction in inclusive classrooms to students with and without disabilities. The co- teaching method unites one special education teacher with one content area teacher to provide education to students with and without disabilities in a general education setting (Friend & Cook, 2010). The problem of practice that is of concern relates to the degree of preparation content area teachers are provided prior to their participation to effectively collaborate in a co-teaching classroom.

Co-teaching is one of the most popular instructional methods to include students with disabilities in the general education classrooms (Zigmond & Magiera, 2002). For co-teaching to be beneficial, special education and content area educators need to have received adequate training, be voluntary participants in the co-teach situation, and develop a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the inclusive classroom (Cook & Friend, 1995; Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Kamens, 2007; Morocco & Aguilar, 2002; Murawski & Dieker, 2008; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Pearl & Miller, 2007; Weiss, 2004;

Wischnowski, Salmon, & Eaton, 2004). Special education teachers are usually trained in inclusion methods while content area teachers often are not (Coombs-Richardson, Al-Juraid, & Stuker, 2000; Simmons & Magiera, 2007).

Commonly, the result is teacher dissatisfaction with the experience. Does the training of co-teacher teams in Massachusetts schools need to be improved, to achieve the goal of effectively training teachers and implementing effective co-teaching methods, consequently leading to greater teacher satisfaction? As schools invest valuable time and money into education, it is critical that co-teaching training and implementation be supported in order to effectively carry out the method (Nordh, 2011). Evidence shows that professional development has an impact on teachers' beliefs and behavior. Evidence also indicates that the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their practice is not straightforward or simple; on the contrary, it is dialectic, "moving back and forth between change in belief and change in classroom practice" (Cobb, Wood, and Yackel, 1990; Franke et., 1997).

The purpose of this research was to determine the influence co-teaching training and/or professional development has on teachers' perception of the co-teaching experience. The setting was a Bridgewater State University graduate course, and the subjects were teachers participating in this graduate course. This research is an effort to shed light on the influences, particularly teacher perceptions of their own experiences, contributing to co-teaching practices.

Significance. Since 1975, regulations such as Public Law 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children Act) now updated, reauthorized and re-titled as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), ordered that students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education. IDEA has transformed educational considerations for students with disabilities and resulted in profound departures from previous educational norms (Mostert

& Crockett, 2002). IDEA and No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), an act mandating that all subgroups of students meet with success, have prompted schools to implement inclusion of students with disabilities in general education (Waldron, 1996). Co-teaching is a popular technique to meet the regulations. Co-teaching ideally occurs when a special education teacher and a content area teacher share all responsibilities (planning, teaching, and evaluating) for a single group of students for a specific content (Friend & Cook, 2010).

Special education teachers are usually trained in the method of co-teaching, however, this is often not the case for content area teachers (Coombs-Richardson, Al-Juraid, & Stuker, 2000; Simmons & Magiera, 2007). Due to lack of training for content area teachers, there is often confusion about the role each co-teacher should take, dissatisfaction with the experience, and a lack of confidence in co-teaching (Chapple, 2009). There needs to be balanced efforts to prepare both teachers by implementing strategies to support professional development of co-teaching. Training must include not only topics such as: "What is co-teaching?", "How can it be implemented?", "What does it look like?", and "What are the approaches to co-teaching?", but must allow potential co-teachers to have time to discuss, plan, and implement this approach (Chapple, 2009; Murawski & Dieker, 2008).

Teacher training must consist of lessons in cooperative education approaches, mastery learning, individualizing lessons, collaborating/team-building techniques, identifying and adjusting lessons for diverse learners, etc. (Sailor, Gee, & Karakoff, 1993). In addition, school leaders need to support collaborative planning, necessary support personnel, and related assistive technologies. Without training, co-teaching will not be effective (Chapple, 2009). The goal of this research was to shed light on influences contributing to teachers' perceptions of co-teaching and the impact of prior training of content area teachers on their perceptions of co-teaching.

Educators' attitude is a fundamental component in shaping the success of services in the teaching of learners with disabilities (Stoler, 1992; MacDonald & Hardman, 1989; Parrish, Nunn, & Hattrup, 1982; Larrivee & Cook, 1979). While co-teaching methods are recognized as a recent initiative, few studies have been conducted to consider teachers' feelings regarding the topic.

According to Walther-Thomas (1997), a need exists to further investigate what can be done to improve current co-teaching systems and practices. This research has the potential to prompt school leaders to support training co-teachers to serve all students in general educational settings. If this research on co-teaching was not addressed the problem of practice will continue to occur and no plan of action could be determined to mend the potential difficulties of this inclusion service delivery method.

As already stated, in order to better serve all students in the general education classroom, it is imperative that co-teaching is effective. However, there are many obstacles that prevent co-teaching teams from being competent. One such barrier is implementing co-teaching without a delineated and formal process to plan, implement, and support the practice institutionalized within the school setting (Chapple, 2009). School leaders may be unaware of the frustration teachers experience in co-teaching. Although, they may have heard complaints, they may not realize how wide-spread negative perceptions are on co-teaching. The findings can be used to further develop a more comprehensive teacher training program aimed at preparing both content area and special education teachers for the co-taught classroom. This research encourages leaders to create plans to support each component of the co-teaching process.

In response to educational trends and law, many school districts have adopted fully inclusive classrooms through co-teaching to allow students with disabilities to access the curriculum in general education classes. Providing two teachers to teach a group of students is

expensive because two individuals are being paid where there was previously a single teacher educating students (Friend, 1993). The recommendation to ensure effective implementation of this partnership in a way that justifies the cost is to provide an advantageous teaching method that would not normally be achieved with one teacher in the classroom; this is only achieved through effective training (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010). Since many schools have invested considerable money and effort into co-teaching it is vital that through effective training co-teaching relationships are established and the benefits are understood. While this can present some challenges, when effective co-teaching relationships are established correctly there is evidence schools gain several benefits to both students and teachers (Scruggs, et al., 2007). Rice, Drame, Owen, and Frattura (2007) suggest social outcomes in the areas of behavior, discipline referrals, and attendance rates are potential positive impacts on student outcome. Students are exposed to and learn with a more diverse peer group, this includes students who are academically gifted or talented, students who have average ability, students who are at risk for school failure as well as students with identified disabilities (Cook & Friend, 2004). The school benefits are similar to benefits with other inclusion strategies, including a reduction in stigma for students with disabilities, an increased understanding and respect for students with disabilities on the part of other students, and the development of a sense of heterogeneously-based classroom community (Cook & Friend, 2004).

The co-teachers are provided additional opportunities for professional growth by learning from the collaboration with their co-teacher (Scruggs, et al., 2007). Teaching inclusion classes presents co-teachers with a unique situation to share accountability for educating general and special education students together. Co-teaching is one way to deliver services such as instructional modifications and accommodations, led by the special education co-teacher, to

students with disabilities within the general education classroom, which is often difficult and incorrectly implemented when solely done by a content area teacher with no special education training. At the same time, the special education teacher has a better understanding of the curriculum being addressed in the classroom and the expectations for academics (Cook & Friend, 2004). As part of a philosophy of inclusive practices of students with disabilities the increased in services within the general education setting can result in increased achievement in areas such as high stakes standardized test like the MCAS. Early indicators within the research base suggest teacher perception of positive student outcomes in co-teaching arrangements exists (Kohler-Evans, 2006; Wilson, 2006). In co-taught classrooms, all students can receive improved instruction within the general education setting. Special education students are provided additional attention because there are two teachers in the room.

Discussion of practical and intellectual goals

Practical goals. The practical goal of getting data was achieved through survey methods. First, a survey was given to southeastern Massachusetts teachers on the influences contributing to teacher perception of co-teaching and in particular the impact of experience on their perceptions of co-teaching. Also, this data, gathered from actual teachers in the schools, was essential to understand how experience has impacted non-special education teachers' perceptions.

These research goals are congruent with current needs in the special education field. There is a strong need to determine and create data in support of the need for implementation of co-teaching methods. When these research goals are achieved they will offer new findings and insights on co-teaching in southeastern Massachusetts schools. The findings illuminate the

current experiences, and perceptions of education teachers of co-teaching that may assist school leaders in developing new plans to address co-teaching practices.

Intellectual goals. There are two intellectual goals that are addressed in this research study. The first intellectual goal was to understand the meaning of the relationship between the co-teaching experience of content area and special education teachers and their perceptions of co-teaching. Another intellectual goal in this research study was to understand the context within which the co-teacher acts and the influence that this has on their actions. In this case, the context was the amount of training the teacher has received and the influence that this training has on their actions and perceptions. This is a critical intellectual goal because it may be the teacher's perception of co-teaching that influence their behaviors and the outcomes in co-teaching settings; for that reason, it is imperative that teachers (and other school leaders such as superintendents, principals, etc.) are given resulting research data to assist them in understanding the meaning of the relationship between perceptions of the co-teaching experience.

Audience. This investigation is relevant for school personnel such as teachers, school administrators, and special education specialists interested in planning for the implementation and sustainment of co-teaching methods. The findings of the study are not only significant within the school complexes in which these teachers are employed, but applicable across the region in similar school system, which adhere to the same procedural guidelines concerning the least restrictive environment. Stakeholders involved in decision-making concerning the least restrictive environment include teachers, parents, state lawmakers, state boards of education, local boards of education, local superintendents, principals, and special education directors.

Brief summary of Research Question(s)

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How are content-area and special education teachers' perceptions of co-teaching with or without experience different?

2. In what area of co-teaching do content area and special education teachers differ, including Advantages and Disadvantages, Professional Issues, Philosophical Issues, Logistical Concerns, Training, Planning, Support, Vision, Roles and Responsibilities, Expectations, and General Information?

Summary of Paper Contents and Organization

This study will be organized into five chapters. This chapter, Chapter 1, includes a statement of the problem and its significance, a discussion of practical and intellectual goals, a brief summary of the research question, a summary of the paper contents and organization of the proposal, and the theoretical framework that will inform the study. Chapter 2 gives a definition of terms, reviews the empirical and related literature as it relates to co-teaching, such as the historical background, current status of collaborative teaching arrangements, define collaborative models, and present the benefits and challenges of co-teaching as presented in the literature. Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the proposed research, including the research questions, site and participants, data collection, data analysis, validity, and credibility. Chapter 4 provides a full description of the methods of protection for the human subjects in the study and Chapter 5 gives the conclusions drawn from the findings.

Theoretical Framework

State and federal laws such as No Child Left Behind Act of 2001(NCLB) have mandated that students with disabilities be exposed to the greatest degree possible to the same curriculum content as their peers without disabilities; therefore, it is important that the co-teaching experience be successful for both teachers and students. Examining perceptions of the teachers

involved would help to inform policy makers as to the most successful way to make the co-teaching experience successful for all involved including school leadership, teachers, and students. The researcher will determine perceptions of co- teachers, in school systems in southeastern Massachusetts. The study will examine the differences in the perceptions of teachers due to their experience in co-teaching. In short, how does educator experience impact educator's self-assurance and viewpoint, as perceived by them?

This study will be informed by Bandura's theory of teacher efficacy. The conceptual framework used in this project is founded on the principle that educators with advanced perceived educator efficacy are predisposed to be motivated, successful, determined, and continue in their career longer than individuals with small amounts of perceived educator efficacy. An educators' sense of efficacy is the teachers' self-assurance in his or her capability to arrange and carry out a precise instructional assignment in a certain situation (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Researchers suggest there is a positive relationship among educators' sense of efficacy and student success (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; LoGerfo, & Hoy, 2004), making a strong sense of efficacy requisite for teaching.

A leading theory on educator efficacy is Bandura's "social cognitive" theory (Bandura, 1977), which is more acknowledged as the leading theory on educator efficacy. Educational theorist, Albert Bandura, carried out studies in social learning theory and self-efficacy. Educator efficacy is defined as a self-perceived belief of one's abilities to bring about preferred outcomes, even with students who are unmotivated or current discipline problems (Bandura, 1977). Educator efficacy has been found to be connected to educator performance, hard work, eagerness, originality, preparation, determination, flexibility, enthusiasm to work with students

who are difficult, and their dedication to the education field (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Educator efficacy has implications on an educational setting's management as well. Educators who believe strongly in their educator efficacy tend to rely on persuading student on rather than rigid control in the classroom, and continually maintain development of students' natural curiosity and academic self-directedness (Bandura, 1997).

Bandura (1977) defines efficacy as the belief that specific behaviors are able to influence goals. Bandura determined that self-efficiency, a multifaceted psychological process, involves the idea that specific behavior can result in desired goals and that a person can carry out the actions necessary to attain the preferred result. Consequently, a teacher must not only trust that certain strategies or actions are successful, a person must be assured in their capability to carry out those approaches or behaviors. Bandura's investigation was later used to study educators' effectiveness by Gibson and Dembo (1983). Gibson and Dembo's study affirms that educators that think that what they do impacts their students' achievement and teachers who have assurance in their own abilities will be more successful, determined, and display better educational focus within their classrooms.

"Social cognitive" theory (Bandura, 1977) attempts to predict and explain human behavior. A vital aspect of "social cognitive" theory is human agency. "Social cognitive" suggests that people are capable of human agency, or intentional pursuit of courses of action. Human agency is thought of as the result of interplay of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors. In this outlook, individuals are thought as equally products and producers of their surroundings (Bandura, 1997), and peoples' beliefs and views take a vital position in how they look upon and proceed in life. Individuals are able to think about and reflect upon their own behavior or rephrase in clear terms.

Vital to Bandura's "social cognitive" theory is his idea of self-efficacy. Bandura states that self-efficacy is the "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (1977, p. 3). Self-efficacy beliefs are the most vital of aspects in human agency, or intentional pursuit of courses of action, and play an influential position in shaping the choices individuals make, the effort they will expend, how long they will continue in the face of adversity, and the amount of apprehension or self-assurance they will bring to the assignment at hand.

The judgment of the probable result that actions will produce is outcome expectation (Bandura, 1986, P. 391). It is the person's evaluative viewpoint of the likely outcomes or likely consequences of task performance at the anticipated level of competence. Separate from self-efficacy expectations is outcome expectancy. Teachers may question whether or not they have the ability to organize and execute the actions essential to accomplish a specific task at a desired level. The result expectancy problem is, "If I accomplish the task at that level, what are the likely consequences?" (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Strong predictors of future conduct are self-efficacy expectancies (Bandura, 1996); unlike outcome expectancies, which are not strong predictors of actions. Though, outcome expectations do persuade drive in the form of information concerning motivation and disincentives for a given action (Bandura, 1997).

Gibson and Dembo (1984) found a two-factor dimensional construct of educator efficacy with American educators. The primary factor: personal teaching efficacy (PTE) represents an educator's beliefs of his or her own capability to sway students' actions and learning. It included the beliefs that are acted upon when practicing efficient instructional strategies, implementing better pedagogical skills, dealing with students who are difficult, bringing about beneficial

changes in students' learning, etc. The following factor: general teaching efficacy (GTE)

represents the principle about the capacity of educators and an educational system as a whole to

help students. It is the idea that education affects students more than the home atmosphere,

family conditions, and influences of parents.

Teachers try to sway positive student outcomes. Educators assess their capability to carry

out assignments based on the ability they have and the situation with which they must work.

Teacher efficacy theory proposes that the efficacy beliefs that educators grow from the cognitive

processing of their direct accomplishments within the classroom, incidents in which they

vicariously experience other educators' successes or failures, verbally persuasive support and

compliments from others about their instructional ability, and positive or negative physiological

states.

Educator efficacy has gained immense awareness over the last 25 years. Henson (2002)

notes, "Researchers have found few consistent relationships between characteristics of teachers

and the behavior or learning of students. Teachers' sense of efficacy…is an exception to this

general rule". Educator efficacy has been reported to have positive correlations with the

outcomes of student and educator behavior.

The earliest effort to measure teacher efficacy with questions based on psychological

theoretical construct occurred in a RAND (Research and Development) Corporation study. By

using RAND, Armor et al., (1976) found the link with educator efficacy and student success. In

research on reading gains amongst Los Angeles schools' students, they found that the higher

efficacy an educator had, the higher the score their students achieved (Goddard & Goddard,

2001). Ashton and Webb (1968) as far back as 25 years ago noted a correlation between the

efficacy score educators get from the RAND items and achievement scores of students in the

Metropolitan Achievement Test. Student achievement is connected to general educator efficacy while achievement in the language of students is related to personal teaching efficacy. Similarly, using Gibson and Dembo's Teacher Efficacy Scale, Moore and Esselman (1992) found that students in classes with educators with high General Teaching Efficacy score higher scores than students in classes with educators with low GTE beliefs. Additionally, Ross (1992) finds the higher the score on personal educator efficacy and general efficacy with educators, the higher student success scores. Also, being related to student achievement, educator efficacy has been linked with students' enthusiasm and their outlook toward the topic being taught. Educators with high efficacy can impact student enthusiasm in their knowledge, thus increasing the high academic efficacy of students (Fives, 2003; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

Similarity, teacher efficacy has been linked to educator actions in a variety of aspects (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Fives, 2003; Milner & Hoy 2003; Goddard & Goddard, 2001). Initially, educators with high teacher efficacy have a tendency to have high hopes for their students. They are prone to set more challenging objectives for their students as students have made an accomplishment. Next, high educator efficacy educators are more competent at management of their classroom. They display greater levels of development and planning, take on an activity-based instruction approach and endorse learner independence. They are less harsh with students when they make mistakes. Third, educators with high efficacy show greater professional dedication. They are excited and avid about instructing. When dealing with student failure and instructional troubles, they show strong perseverance. Fourth, educators with high educator efficacy show attitudes that are positive toward lower-skilled students. Rather than referring the students to special education these teachers are more willing to work with these students in their own class.

Also, found to persuade educators' outlooks toward the implementation is educator efficacy (Fives, 2003). Educator efficacy is positively associated to their eagerness to try to outlast latest curriculum practices. Educators with a strong sense of efficacy are open to new initiatives. Teachers scoring highly on efficacy surveys are more apt to implement improvements to instruction (Ghaith & Yaghi, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Also findings indicate that educators with high personal educator efficacy are willing to try diverse instructional methods and find ways to improve instruction to meet the students' needs. Miller et al. (1989) established that motivated and self-assured educators were more successful. Students exhibited greater drive, accomplished more, and had an elevated level of self-efficacy when their educator possessed a higher level of educator efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Guskey & Passaro, 1994).

"Social cognitive" theory proposes that teacher efficacy ideas and actions cannot be comprehended separately from the educational setting in which they are rooted. Whereas a great piece of an educator's occupation is spent inside the classroom, educators also work in a social structure comprised of other educators, administrators, and students. Consequently, the present research will center on the likelihood that educators' subjective experiences within the co-teaching setting are associated with their efficacy as a teacher.

This research will show that teacher efficacy, in this case the belief by teachers that they have been properly trained in co-teaching, can impact curriculum goals and outcomes. This research will aid in showing that to develop teacher efficacy in co-teaching partnerships, educators ought to be offered strategies and techniques that they belief will make a constructive change in their classroom and can be used successfully. Further efficacy investigations conducted by Jordan, Stanovich, and Roach (1997) confirmed that educators who have an

elevated level of efficacy will be more successful when working with learners, regardless of the learner's skill level. Educators who have a higher efficacy will also be more likely to integrate effective strategies to encourage students with disabilities (Bender & Ukeje, 1989). Efficacy studies reveal that teachers who are secure in their skills may bring about more constructive transformations when working with students with disabilities. This too suggests that it is imperative to expand co-teacher confidence and that co-teachers must be knowledgeable about correct methods that will permit them to meet the requirements of all learners with and without disabilities.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter includes an extensive survey of the scholarly literature on the effects of training on teachers' perception of co-teaching. The literature used is obtained from journal articles, books, and other sources (e.g. dissertations, conference proceedings) relevant to co-teaching research. The purpose of this literature review will be to offer an overview of significant literature published on a co-teaching. This chapter is comprised of the following seven sections: (1) a Definition of Terms for the purpose of reviewing the literature in Special Education, (2) a History of Special Education in the United States, (3) Current Status of Collaborative Teaching Arrangements in service of Special Education Students, (4) Defining Co-teaching Models, (5) Benefits of Co-Teaching, (6) Challenges of Co-Teaching, and (7) Current State of Co-teaching Training and Professional Development.

Definition of Terms

To support the presentation of literature in this section, the following terms are defined as follows:

Alternative teaching: A co-teaching approach that targets specific students or groups of students for specialized attention. This approach involves one teacher taking responsibility for the large group, while the other works with smaller groups (Friend, 2007).

Collaboration: Direct interaction of two equal teachers voluntarily engaged in collective decision-making as they work toward a shared goal (Friend & Cook, 2010).

Content area teacher: Content teacher is defined as the person assigned to teach a general education curriculum for a school term, I.E. science or history

Co-teaching: Service delivery model when two teachers, one typically a content area teacher and one a special education teacher, merge their knowledge to jointly instruct a

heterogeneous group of learners with and without disabilities in a sole classroom for part
or all of the school day (Friend, 2006).

Education for All Handicapped Act: The function of this law is to guarantee that learners with
disabilities and their guardians are ensured along with a free and appropriate education
provided and reviewed for effectiveness. This was approved by the United States
Congress in 1975. This is later revised, updated, reauthorized, and given a new title;
Individuals with Disabilities Education.

Free and Appropriate Public Education: FAPE is one of the mandates under IDEA that ensures
through special education and related services that are provided at no cost to the parent,
meet state standards, provided at an appropriate school, and that are provided in
accordance with the student's IEP" (Sheehy, 2007, p. 11).

Individual Education Program (IEP): A legal document which outlines a specific educational
plan for each student found eligible to be served as a student with a disability. The plan
includes goals, a statement of the learner's present stage of performance, and any
accommodations and modifications essential for the student to have access to the general
curriculum (Department of Education, 2006).

Inclusion: Education for learners with disabilities being equal to their peers without disabilities
(Fitch, 2003); Learners with disabilities getting an education in a general setting with
their peers without disabilities (Choate, 2004); Placing learners with disabilities in full
time general education setting with special education support services (Yssel,
Engelbrecht, Oswald, Eloff, & Swart, 2007).

Inclusive education environments: Settings where diverse groups of learners feel welcomed,
teach and learn from each other, and are actively engaged in an encouraging setting in

order for learners with and without disabilities to achieve at higher levels (Skoning,

2007).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: A reenacted edition of the Education for All

Handicapped Act, which obligates schools to provide whatever resources are necessary

for learners with disabilities to complete school tasks.

Learning Disabilities: Severe discrepancy between normal or near normal potential and

academic achievement in at least one of the areas of basic reading skill, reading

comprehension, written expression, expressive language, mathematical reasoning or

calculation, or listening comprehension, that is not primarily due to visual, hearing,

orthopedic, cognitive, or emotional/behavior disabilities or to environmental, cultural, or

economic disadvantage; "severe discrepancy" means at least 15 points on standard score

comparisons of ability and achievement or a minimum of 1.75 standard deviation

difference, taking regression and 1.65 standard errors of measurement into account

(Lyons, 1996). In simpler terms, a child that has at least an average IQ, has been given

opportunities to learn, does not have another primary disability, but still is not able to

read, write, or perform mathematical computations at the level of average peers.

Least Restrictive Environment: The educational assignment in which learners with disabilities

are taught with their peers who do not have disabilities to the utmost degree appropriate

(Hallahan & Kaufman, 2003)

One teaching/one assisting: One teaching/one assisting is a method during which one educator

assumes responsibility for leading the whole-group lesson, while the other educator

roams the room, assisting students as needed.

Parallel teaching: A co-teaching approach in which the class is divided and both teachers have

full responsibility for providing the same instruction to a smaller group (Friend, 2007).

Pull-out services: Pull-out services are instruction times when students leave the general

education setting to receive instruction in a special education classroom or learning center

with a teacher or paraprofessional. Individually or in small groups, students participate in

intervention programs or receive pre-teaching or re-teaching lessons of their general

education materials.

Push-in services: Push-in services are instruction times provided by a teacher or paraprofessional

inside the general education classroom. Students are supported in whole class or small

group activities. One category of push in services is co-teaching.

Self-efficacy: An individual's belief that he/she will be capable to achieve actions required to

bring desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977 b).

Special Education: Services that are individually intended to meet the recognized disabilities of

eligible students.

Special Education teacher: Special Education teacher is the person assigned to provide

instruction, case management, and necessary supports to fulfill a student's IEP

requirements.

Station teaching: In station teaching, each teacher arranges a section of the classroom to be their

instructing area and each delivers a different lesson to each group of students, who rotate

through the stations.

Students with disabilities: Students "evaluated in accordance with §§300.304 through 300.311 as

having an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or

language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional

disturbance (referred to in this part as "emotional disturbance"), an orthopedic

impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, another health impairment, a specific learning

disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs

special education and related services" (National Dissemination Center for Children with

Disabilities, 2008).

Teacher efficacy beliefs: Teachers' confidence in their capabilities to manage and carry out

courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific instruction task in

particular context (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy 1998).

Team teaching: A co-teaching approach in which both teachers share the responsibility for

delivering the main instruction to the whole group (Friend, 2007).

A History of Special Education in the United States

The education of learners with disabilities has an interesting and varied history. The

cultural and sociological phenomenon of the instruction and related services of students with

disabilities is commonly referred to as "special education," and as its name suggests, it is a

specialized branch of education (Heward, 2006). The needs of learners with disabilities vary

(Council for Exceptional Children, 2003). Similarly to all students, children with disabilities

differ in personality, learning style, ability, and age (Blackorby et al., 2002; Wagner et al., 2002).

Learners with disabilities may have cognitive impairments, sensory impairments, specific

learning disabilities, physical disabilities, emotional conditions, health impairments, and/ or

multiple disabilities. These students have distinctive needs based on these disabilities that

necessitate services, such as transition planning, adaptive physical education, speech therapy,

specially designed instruction, and adapted materials. More than six million infants, toddlers,

children, and young adults receive these special education services in schools or community

settings in the United States every year (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

In the early part of the twentieth century, common practice was to exclude students with

disabilities from the educational setting. From the 1920's to the 1970's, the educational system

often served students with disabilities in segregated facilities (Graves & Tracy, 1998).

Individuals with disabilities were often confined in jails, asylums, and institutions without decent

food, clothing, personal hygiene, exercise, and other basic human rights. As stated, specialized

schools and institutions for persons with disabilities began to emerge in the U.S. in the early

1900s, however, the programs often merely warehoused children. The earliest nationwide

special education legislation came from the efforts of the civil rights movement (Smith &

Kozleski, 2005). In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered a milestone civil rights judgment,

Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), affecting developments within law, politics,

social policy, and education. The U.S. Supreme Court determined that African American

students had the right to identical educations as white students in the same town and that

segregated schools "have no place in the field of public education." Following the *Brown*

judgment, guardians of children with disabilities started to bring court cases in opposition to their

school districts not including their children. These parents felt that by not including their

children, districts were discriminating against the children due to their disabilities (Wright,

2006).

In the 1960s, American public schools continued to face discussions regarding social and

economic inequality. The federal government determined that a great deal of participation was

required to arouse action, guarantee the enforcement of regulations, the protection of civil rights

for all Americans, and the implementation of the pledge for unrestricted schooling (Osgood,

2005). The 1960s saw the establishment of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation, hundreds of landmark cases, the beginning of deinstitutionalization, and the emergence of segregated public school programs for some students with disabilities. However, until 1975, learners with disabilities remained frequently barred from school. When permitted to be there, students with disabilities were habitually grouped collectively in generic special education classes. Because schools isolated students with disabilities from "normal" students, special education programs were habitually held in undesirable, out of the way places like trailers and school basements (Weber, 1992). Prior to 1975, educational efforts were commonly led by scattered professionals, parents, and advocates whose efforts were fundamental in maintaining the visibility of students with disabilities (Mostert & Crockett, 2002). However, these efforts lacked legal enforcement, support by schools, and unifying principles for educating children with disabilities.

The introduction of Public Law 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975 (in 1997 it was reauthorized, updated, and renamed Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - IDEA) was the most momentous turning point in U.S. special education history. Public schools became legally responsible for the education of students with disabilities. Programs for students who had never before been served by public schools were developed, which drastically altered educational approaches and considerations for students with disabilities and resulted in profound removal of earlier educational norms (Mostert & Crockett, 2002). P. L. 94-142 in essence removed the 'separate but equal' that existed in many schools between students with and without disabilities. This law created the guidelines that requires schools to teach students with disabilities in a "free and appropriate public education" or FAPE, and that this education has to be provided in the "least restrictive environment" or LRE (Department of Education, 2006, p.3).

Special education advocates lobbied for the inclusion of learners with disabilities to be taught in the same settings as their peers for over 30 years (Kloo & Zigmond, 2008). In the 1980s, there was increasing recognition of the instructional and social value of learners with disabilities placed in the general educational setting. Some students were "mainstreamed" into general education classes when they demonstrated behavior and academic skills close to grade level with little support. While these students with disabilities may have earned their way into general education classes, they still did not "belong" to general education.

In the 1990s, P. L. 94-142 was amended and established the standard that all children would have the same chances to learn unless their disabilities were considered too severe for placement in the general education setting. In effect, P. L. 94-142 (now IDEA) prevented the misplacement of children in a special education setting, as well as the founding of an understandable procedure for classifying children with disabilities. This law created the setting of inclusion that is present now in public schools in regards to the instruction of children with disabilities.

Current Status of Collaborative Teaching Arrangements in service of Special Education Students

Many models of support and collaboration for serving students with disabilities exist, and each has its merits and drawbacks (Le Mare & de la Ronde, 2000). Schools typically use variations of one or two models of support: "pull-out," where students leave their general education classrooms to participate in groups inside a special education classroom, or "push in," in which special education teachers and paraprofessionals assist students inside their general education classrooms. While pull-out programs continue to be widely used and show some

benefits to students, push-in programs are emerging as viable alternatives to pull-out models (Cook & Friend, 1995).

In the early 1980s, co-teaching was beginning to be used in special education as a means of mainstreaming (Friend, 1993). The co-teaching method was born out of necessity; philosophy and legislators were asking educators to establish means of support so that learners with disabilities could be successfully included in the general education setting (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Kloo & Zigmond, 2008). Co-teaching is one push-in model that is gaining momentum as more studies emerge in support of its effectiveness in meeting the needs of learners with and without identified disabilities (Welch, Brownell, & Sheridan, 1999). The stress on the co-teaching, a partnership when a special education teacher with a content area teacher together in a general education setting, is supported by the belief that children with disabilities are taught best within the general setting with their peers without disabilities (Murawski & Swanson, 2001). The phrase co-teaching was originally cooperative teaching, later condensed to co-teaching, and on occasion called team teaching. Cooperative teaching, team teaching, and co-teaching all indicate similar inclusion teaching models (Fleming & Bauer, 2007).

Both educators are anticipated to merge their personal proficiencies to offer lessons to the learners, students with and without disabilities (Magiera, Smith, Zigmond, & Gebauer, 2005). "This method of instruction is likely to increase the outcomes for all students in the general education setting, while ensuring that students with disabilities receive necessary modifications yet are provided instruction by a content expert" (Murawski & Dieker, 2004). Meeting the needs of all learners entails a supportive teaching rapport that is clear with preparation. "Critical issues for teachers clustered around three major areas: the nature of collaboration, roles and responsibilities, and outcomes" (Keefe & Moore, 2004, pg.77).

Defining Co-teaching Models

According to Dieker (2001) there are five variations of the co-teaching method:

1. Lead and Support: One educator directs and the other educator offers aid and assistance to an individual student or a small cluster of students,

2. Station Teaching: Learners are divided into mixed groups and work at classroom stations with each other,

3. Parallel Teaching: Educators together prepare lessons, but each may present it to half the class or a small cluster,

4. Alternative Teaching: One educator works with a small cluster of learners to pre-teach, re-teach, or enhance, while the additional educator educates the larger class,

5. Team Teaching: Both educators divide equally the planning and instruction of learners in a coordinated fashion. (p. 15)

In the Villa, et al., (2004) method, as well as the Friend and Cook (2007) techniques, there are numerous elements that must be talked about by co-teachers before the execution of this method. One of the basics of co-teaching is a sense of trust among the co-teachers. Frequently, co-teaching has been compared to a professional marriage in that the characteristics that build a successful marriage are similar to the traits that make a thriving co-teaching partnership. In getting ready for co-teaching, the team members must converse about their philosophy and beliefs on education, what will the classroom routines look like, how will discipline be handled, how and when will they find time to prepare properly, how will they tackle with the increased noise level, how can they offer each other feedback, what are each other's pet peeves in educators, and lastly, how the two will resolve conflicts (Chapple, 2009). Block and Haring (1992) found that as a school moves toward incorporating new programs into

their school, certain changes must take place in school personnel attitudes, the organization of how the program is run, as well as instructional changes. The classroom teacher is a major player in the transition. Therefore when implementing a new curriculum, teachers should receive the needed training and support to implement the program.

There have been conflicting results concerning the benefits of team teaching, especially when comparing the earlier studies to the more recent research. A review of 13 studies reflected no difference between the models with respect to academic achievement (Cotton, 1982).

Benefits of Co-Teaching

Student benefits. Only recently have studies on co-teaching existed (Murawski & Swanson, 2001); though the research has determined this method is able to be an extremely successful technique for meeting students' needs (e.g., Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007; Murawski, 2006; Magiera, Smith, Zigmond, & Gebauer, 2005; Rea, McLaughlin, & Walther-Thomas, 2002;). An example of the positive effects of co-teaching is the exposure students received to multiple views and approaches to learning. This exposure has been credited with the development of students' critical thinking skills (Davis, 1995). In co-taught classrooms, learners are given high-quality lessons with appropriate accommodations from the viewpoints of two educators (Hourcade & Bauwens, 2001).

Bauwens and Hourcade (1991) stated that the co-teaching method has circumvented the use of labels that results in dishonor and depreciation of children with disabilities. In addition, co-teaching provides for children that do not meet the criteria for special education, but demonstrate learning needs. All children profit from two teachers within the classroom and the distinctive skills that each educator brings to the classroom, be it content or specialized learning approaches and methods (Weiss & Lloyd, 2003). Co-teaching enhances contact to a wider

assortment of instructional opportunities for children with disabilities, improves the involvement of children with disabilities within the general education classroom, and increases the performance of children with disabilities (Zigmond & Magiera, 2001).

Teacher benefits. An advantage of team teaching is that teams produce a sense of community and shared commitment which reduces teacher isolation and uncertainty about effectiveness. It is reported that there is higher job satisfaction, faculty morale, and teacher empowerments that is not normally felt by teachers (Arhar, et. al., 1988). Whitelaw (1988) acknowledged another advantage of team teaching is that is allows teachers to teach to their strengths and strengthen the quality of their lessons.

Educators' beliefs about and perceptions of co-teaching have been studied by a combination of conventional manners. Austin (2001) conducted a large-scale survey from school districts in New Jersey. Data revealed that educators established that (a) co-teaching was a valuable educational arrangement with shared gains, (b) co-teachers should set up and sustain explicit duties, (c) educator training should include co-teaching skills, and (d) numerous of the school-based supports being used were not as useful as anticipated. Rice and Zigmond (2000) studied teacher beliefs concerning co-teaching in Australian and North American. Australian and American teachers reported similar beliefs connected to the value of school-wide recognition, the benefits of co-teaching, the necessity for professional and personal compatibility, the position of special education teachers, the proving of competency on the part of special education teachers, and competing with attitudinal and administrative barriers.

Challenges of Co-Teaching

Student challenges. While co-teaching shows great potential for meeting all students' needs within the general education classroom, it also maintains some challenges and limitations

to its use. Research on co-teaching has been restricted to case studies, observations, survey studies, and reports from educators involved in the process (Dieker, 1999). The National Study of Inclusive Education (1994) showed that the practice of inclusion is spreading in the United States. One would anticipate volumes of quality studies on inclusion methods, such as co-teaching, but quality published research is not available thus far. "Comprehensive program evaluations of inclusion are limited. Evaluations are often anecdotal and focus on the students with disabilities alone" (National Study of Inclusive Education, 1994). Another argument against team teaching is that especially for grade school children, particularly students with disabilities; team teaching does not offer the same stability and security as self-contained classrooms (Smith, 1985).

Ramey (1992) surveyed students in the fifth and sixth grade measuring the level of comfort that students felt in a team compared to that of a self-contained classroom. The survey was based on writing lessons that occurred for three consecutive days, 40 minutes each day. The results of the survey confirmed the fact that certain students do experience some difficulties with team teaching; however, they still seemed to prefer being taught by a team. The survey suggested some students in the study reported a loss of comfort from changing from a self-contained class to a team teaching situation, however, this was limited to a small number of students and most did not experience a deficiency in a sense of security or stability as Smith indicated. Furthermore, two other criticisms include the fact that several students reported that they felt their teachers did not provide extra help nor did they know them as well as their previous teacher in a self-contained class.

Teacher challenges. Within the research on co-teaching, numerous topics surface which are significant for this method to be effectively implemented. These topics spotlight the need for

communication between co-teachers, administrative support, similar philosophies, and common planning opportunities (Dieker, 1999). One study determined that the content area educators, as content specialist, were often the leading member of the partnership. It was unusual to discover the special education teacher instructing the whole class, mainly performing duties such as grading assignments, writing on the board, or performing short reviews (Mastropieri et al. 2005). Several studies noted that even for teachers dedicated to co-teaching, confusion abounds as to what it looks like and how and when it is best used (Murawski & Swanson, 2001). It has been found that teachers sometimes assume being in the same room concurrently is co-teaching; more often than not, these teachers are missing key components of co-teaching (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Weiss, 2004).

Educators have described an assortment of frustrations with co-teaching; they consist of lack of training (Mastropieri, et al., 2005), lack of administrative support (Dieker, 2001; Rea, 2005), and a lack of equality in the classroom (Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Spencer, 2005). Moving the historically solo art of teaching into the new realm of collaborative instruction has been shown to cause some upset to traditional teacher roles (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Welch, 2000). In broad terms, content area teachers have doubted the general instructional skills of special educators (Murawski, 2005). Dr. Lynne Cook, a co-teaching expert, explained that "co teaching is not simply having two teachers in a classroom with one acting as a glorified paraprofessional or an in-class tutor for one or two students" (Spencer, 2005), and nevertheless that is precisely what numerous educators complain (Weiss & Lloyd, 2002).

Current State of Co-teaching Training and Professional Development.

Across the states, interest in co-teaching as a means for ensuring that students with disabilities have access to and are fully included in the general education curriculum is high

(Müller, Friend, & Hurley-Chamberlain, 2009). Currently, Massachusetts requires school

districts to adopt and implement professional development plans for all principals, teachers, and

professional staff. The plans must include training in the state's curriculum frameworks, in

participatory decision-making, and parent and community involvement (Mass. Gen. Laws Ann.

Ch. 71, § 38Q). In order to renew an educator license every five years, an educator must attest

that they have completed a professional development plan that meets guidelines established by

the State Board of Education. However, the State of Massachusetts does not required schools or

teachers to have any co-teacher training or professional development for teachers before or

during co-teaching implementation, as it is required in other states such as the State of Vermont's

regulation Section 2360.3.1(b)(1)(i)(A) (Edwards, 2010).

Chapter III: Research Design

Research Questions

This study had helped to provide additional information on the teachers' perceptions of this model of service for students with disabilities. As additional studies are done in this area, decisions can be made by administrators and all stakeholders in the best placement for education for students with disabilities. Friend (2008) stated "the number of studies appearing has increased over the past several years, and if that continues, the research basis for co-teaching should become clearer." It is the intent of this study to provide additional information in this area and to determine the perceptions of teachers that can inform current and future co-teaching practices and professional development.

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How are content-area and special education teachers' perceptions of co-teaching with or without experience different?

2. In what area of co-teaching do content area and special education teachers differ, including Advantages and Disadvantages, Professional Issues, Philosophical Issues, Logistical Concerns, Training, Planning, Support, Vision, Roles and Responsibilities, Expectations, and General Information?

The goal was to understand the meaning of the relationship between teachers' perceptions and experiences of co-teaching. The goal was based on a theoretical framework inclusive of teacher efficacy, which posits that co-teachers who have confidence in their own abilities, through proper training, will be more successful, persistent, and exhibit greater academic focus within their inclusion classroom. In the first sub-question, "How are content-area and special education teachers' perceptions of co-teaching with or without experience different?."

Discovering this information was a critical goal because it may be teacher's perception of co-teaching that influence their behaviors and the outcomes in co-teaching settings. For that reason, it is imperative that teachers (and other school leaders) were given this research data to assist them in understanding the meaning of the relationship between their perceptions of the co-teaching experience and their co-teaching training.

The second question "In what area of co-teaching do content area and special education teachers differ, including Advantages and Disadvantages, Professional Issues, Philosophical Issues, Logistical Concerns, Training, Planning, Support, Vision, Roles and Responsibilities, Expectations, and General Information?" This offers vital information that may lead to additional research and insight into the currently used co-teaching method training and co-teaching activities. This is linked to the theoretical framework of teacher-efficacy because the amount of training a teacher has in co-teaching methods will be compared and correlated to the satisfaction with the experience.

Many content area and special educators are assigned to co-teach with little regard for their preferences, a lack of formal preparation or training, and no clear understanding of their roles or responsibilities to learners with disabilities in the co-taught setting (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Weiss & Lloyd, 2003). It was important to understand how prior training in co-teaching methods influences southeastern Massachusetts teachers' perception of co-teaching experiences because the information was currently unknown. Knowledge of this can prompt action by school leaders in the applicable schools to change current practices in co-teaching training and practices. This can also lead others to conduct similar research in other settings (this study will focus on strictly southeastern Massachusetts public schools). It may also offer insight to school leaders in similar settings throughout Massachusetts.

Methodology

This study consisted of sources of data and accompanying analyses: A survey with content-area teachers engaged in formal teacher training at Bridgewater State University. The intent of the survey was to collect relevant data in response to the research questions from content area teachers throughout Southeastern Massachusetts. The survey was a research design in which the researcher surveys content area co-teachers currently teaching collaboratively. A survey study is an efficient and effective technique to find out about the attitudes of a great range of educators in a small amount of time. The survey was available through an internet survey instrument within Google Docs.

Subjects were BSU graduate students currently enrolled (academic year of 2012-2013) in ED530 Teacher as a Researcher. All subjects were currently employed as content area (English, science, history, math, etc.) teachers in a Massachusetts public school. Age, gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic level, literacy level, and health will not be determining factors for participation in this study. This course is for all students obtaining their Master's degree in education. At Bridgewater State there is no special education courses or training on co-teaching for content teachers as part of their degree; therefore, the only training and/ or professional development on co-teaching these content teachers would have obtained would have been within their individual school districts.

Most quantitative data gathering techniques condense data in order to see the bigger picture. Quantitative data will consist of codifying the information involving the identification of categories and themes, triangulating the data, and making comparisons (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In this case, the data was collected through a survey consisting mainly of closed questions (and a few open ended questions that will offer qualitative data. For the closed

questions a 1-5 Likert Scale response scheme was used to obtain quantitative data and responses will range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In this part of the research the closed questions were used as part of a descriptive survey. A descriptive survey design was used to create quantitative data (Duran, et al., 2007). The basic principles include the premise that it is a non-experimental method that tries to identify the characteristics, incidence or prevalence of an observed phenomenon, and/or to establish possible correlations between this and other phenomenon. It does not directly attempt to develop a solution for the problem situation, but rather to develop a prior understanding of such problem. It works well when the goal of the research is to directly respond to relevant needs of practitioners.

Survey research is relevant because attitudes toward co-teaching experiences are impossible to determine through observation. The survey allows the collection of this data by teachers self-reporting their attitudes. Babbie (1995) suggested survey studies to determine "attitudes and orientation in a large population." Salant and Dillman (1994), confirmed: "If your goal is to find out what percentage of some population has a particular attribute or opinion, and the information is not available from secondary sources, then survey research is the only appropriate method."

Survey research allows the advancement of several intellectual goals. First, was to understand the meaning of the correlation among co-teaching training and perceptions of co-teaching. The teachers' perceptions influence their behaviors and the outcomes in co-teaching settings; therefore, it is imperative that teachers were given research results to assist them in understanding the meaning of the relationship between their perceptions of co-teaching and their training. Another intellectual goal in this study was to understand the context within which the content area co-teacher acts and the influence that this context has on their actions. In this

research, the context was the amount of training the content area teacher has received and the influence that this training has on their actions. In this case, an action refers to perceptions of co-teaching.

By using survey research the research goals and questions can be addressed. It allowed the study of a large sample of teachers in order to get feedback on the research question. The purpose was to determine the influence of experience on teachers' perceptions of the co-teaching. The survey (adapted from prior surveys in Salend's (2010) *Creating inclusive classrooms* in Cochran's (1997, revised 2000) *Differences in teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education as measured by the Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms*) allowed a review of many different aspects of the teachers' perceptions and experiences. There was ability to review varied responses that tell how their co-teaching experiences have been similar and different, the factors that they consider successful and unsuccessful, and several other issues that may impact their opportunities for training, their decisions regarding co-teaching choices, and the methods of practice they have employed as co-teachers.

Cross-sectional research studies a sole group at a sole point in time (Hagan, 2006; Neuman, 2004; Trochim, 2001). An examiner collects information by a particular deadline, "taking a slice or cross-section of whatever it is he or she is observing or measuring" (Trochim, p. 5). Cross-sectional research, contrasting longitudinal methods, necessitate a reduced amount of commitment from the study's partakers, take a reduced amount of time to finish, and do not include various barriers connected to discovering and preserving a sample population. Preliminary investigation into teachers' perceptions concerning co-teaching necessitates simply cross-sectional research.

In this survey investigation, the object was constructing the case for "convergent validity." Most precisely, convergent validity is using information from an assortment of sources to back each other, and triangulate on a research discovery (Page, 2002). Basically, when the information from numerous diverse starting places all point to similar trends and are giving a similar narrative, the researcher is able to have genuine assurance in the assumptions and summaries. The investigator took particular concern to keep away from vague wording, unknown terms, inflammatory speech which may generate an unconstructive emotional reply, leading language, loaded questions, and over-estimation of participants' understanding. Total anonymity of study participants permitted truthful answers, because participants did not need to worry about being acknowledged as trouble makers or non-team players. The investigator employed a table to display the statistics from study participants.

Site and participants

Individual participants in this study from the public school sector were selected by their enrollment in Bridgewater State University's graduate course, ED530 Teacher as a Researcher. The population of this study included content area educators. The content area educator is the curriculum expert. The content specialist is certified in the specific content area taught in the course. Teachers surveyed were employed full time through the spring semester of the 2012-2013 school year at a southeastern Massachusetts public school. The participants maintained complete anonymity in the study.

Data collection

Bridgewater State University personnel were contacted for the approval of this study. Once approval was granted, school personnel identified students within the course. The survey approach had necessary components for accomplishing successful data collection.

Survey. Dillman (2007) discusses approaches that are necessary for accomplishing successful survey studies. These approaches comprise of the employment of respondent-friendly surveys and initiating numerous contacts with prospective respondents. In keeping with Tailored Design, some of these approaches will be employed in this research. These approaches and how they were put into practice are talked about later.

The survey technique is the mainly used method for assembling information in the fields of study concerned with society and human behaviors (Neuman, 2004). Surveys are customarily utilized in research in criminology to collect information on discrimination, feelings to law enforcement, etc. (Hagan, 2006). The survey technique additionally is suitable for questioning persons to read the statement and select a response by themselves without researcher interference concerning certain activities, attitudes, feelings, judgments, personalities, outlooks, and understanding (Hagan, 2006; Neuman, 2004). In addition, surveys are helpful devices for finding uniqueness of big example populations. The rationale of the survey technique for this research was to produce statistical information concerning educators' behaviors and opinions that were numerically studied (Fowler, 2002).

For this research a self-administered online survey was used. The self-administered survey technique was best matched for this research for numerous reasons. Initially, the examiner is capable to recognize and contact the sample population with virtually no difficulty. Next, individuals of the sample population are educated and can comprehend and understand survey inquiries, which remove the necessity for someone to read the inquiry to respondents. Lastly, educators are expected to assist the examiner to present their views concerning co-teaching. Self-administered surveys allow the teachers to finish surveys at their own ease.

Educators spend the majority of their day at teaching learners and still have a very modest time to work on class assignments or even have lunch. Therefore, it is essential to offer them an information gathering tool beneficial to their demanding agendas. Moreover, the inquiry requested inside the survey, the size of the studied group, and geographic limits connected to statistics gathering determines that self-administered surveys were the most suitable technique for this research.

The survey method for this research was based on Dillman's (2007) Tailored Design method. The Tailored Design method is based on lessening survey inaccuracies. The Tailored Design method is based on social exchange theory. In the Tailored Design method surveys should be looked as a classic social exchange, however happen among an examiner and the sample population. Examiners would like at the same time to enlarge the rewards and decrease the costs related with potential sample populations' contribution in the study. Rewards refer to what potential sample participants anticipate to get from contributing (Dillman, 2007). Examiners are able to amplify supposed rewards by letting the potential members of sample population know why the study is being done, giving appreciation to members of the sample population, asking for recommendations or help from respondents, showing support for values held by potential members of the sample population, generating an exciting survey, offering support, and by relay the need of potential members of the sample population to state their apprehensions. These portions were enclosed inside the cover letter (see Appendix D) that comes with every survey.

Additionally, the survey included inquiries about the subject of concern to educators and was created based on the Tailored Design method (Dillman, 2007). The Tailored Design method highlights the significance of inquiry word phrasing, inquiry arrangement, inquiry design, and

general appearance. The examiner also conveyed the possibilities for educators to state their

unease about school concerns and expressed gratitude to respondents for their involvement. The

examiner additionally communicated to prospective members of the sample population that the

research was for a doctoral study, which gave educators in the research group a chance to add to

the examiner's education.

Social exchange theory additionally recognizes cost as a significant concern of self-

administered survey studies. Cost refers to what one believes they must sacrifice for getting a

something that is given in return for their participation (Dillman, 2007). Examiners are able to

decrease the seeming costs connected with study involvement by building surveys easy for

potential members of the sample population to finish, by keeping away from the use of

patronizing wording, and furthermore by reduce requirements for private information. The

examiner made each effort to pursue these procedures for lessening costs. No patronizing

phrases were used in the survey and minimum private information was asked for. Furthermore,

the survey is fairly small and simple to understand and the probability of discomfiture was

considerably lessened as surveys were self-administered and entailed no contact with an

examiner. Lastly, self-administration allowed potential sample population members'

involvement easy as individuals were capable to finish the survey on their own schedule.

Creating confidence contains the belief that the benefits for contribution will balance the

expense and effort involved (Dillman, 2007). To create confidence, examiners could offer a gift

of thanks in advance, recognize sponsorship by a legitimate authority, make the undertaking

seem imperative, or they could call upon additional exchange relationships. Given that the

survey was questioning about co-teaching inside the potential sample populations' job setting,

the examiner took numerous of these concerns into thought when creating the study. These concerns are discusses underneath as element of the approaches for applying the study.

Dillman's (2007) primary proposal for greater efficiency in survey studies is for examiners to create respondent-friendly survey. Basically, surveys should be effortless to understand, follow, and respond. Additionally, surveys ought to start with the most appealing questions and finish with the least appealing questions.

The online survey was planned in a way that was simple to understand, simple to finish, and simple to complete. Earlier studies have established this amplifies respondent interest in finishing (Dillman, 2007). Dillman's (2007) with the next idea is to begin numerous contacts with possible respondents. The first contact for this research was a pre-notice letter, given in the participants' course, Bridgewater State University's ED530 Teacher as a Researcher, which informed possible member of the sample population of the forthcoming survey. The following contact was the survey with the cover letter. The third communication was a memory aide; this concluding communication was considered the final try to produce involvement and is intended to express a sense of significance.

Because of time and supply constraints, this research primarily projected three communications with potential respondents. The primary communication was through a pre-notice letter (see Appendix B). The pre-notice letter created a partnership with the possible sample population by initiating familiarity between the study and potential sample members (Dillman, 2007). Creating a relationship with the possible sample population in whichever way is expected to boost reply numbers. This letter informed possible respondents that their participation is asked for and a survey will shortly show in their email with additional directions.

The communication concluded by expressing thanks to the possible sample population for their effort. The pre-notice was sent a few days preceding the survey.

The survey was intended to be the next communication. After getting the survey, the possible sample population was expected to remember getting the pre-notice letter. Giving notification of a future survey communicates to the possible sample population both the significance of the survey and of their contribution. In addition, the announcement stated to possible sample members that the examiner recognizes their effort is important.

The next contact involved the delivery of a link to the survey itself, inclusive of the agreed upon consent text as expected by the IRB (see Appendix C). The survey (see Appendix D) will additionally state the reason for the study. In an attempt to enlarge the reply numbers, the email emphasized the significance of the research and the need for potential sample populations' involvement. The email also plainly stated that involvement was by choice and respondent's had the liberty to leave at whichever time throughout the research.

The third communication was an effort to persuade contribution from the respondents who had not completed the survey to do so (Dillman, 2007). This was done using an email that was sent two weeks after the survey was disseminated. The email expressed gratitude to respondents who had finished and sent back the survey and offer additional support for those who had not yet finished the survey. Once these steps were finished, the examiner waited to start compiling the statistical data until all respondents had an appropriate time to finish the survey, ten days after the final request.

The initial 11 questions of the survey requested specific personal and professional characteristics of the respondents. These questions will were followed by statements regarding the respondents' general perceptions of the co-teaching environment. These statements were

rated using a Likert Scale of 1-5 (1 – Strongly Agree, 2 – Agree Somewhat, 3 – Neither Agree, 4 – Disagree Somewhat, and 5 – Disagree Strongly). The first seven statements addressed the respondents' general perception of the advantages and disadvantages of co-teaching. The next five statements addressed the respondents' general perception of the professional concerns they perceive din the co-teaching environment. The next four statements addressed the respondents general perception of the philosophical issues involved in co-teaching. The following four statements addressed the respondents' general perception of the logistical concerns they faced in co-teaching. The next nine statements addressed the respondents general perception of the training involved in co-teaching. The following 12 statements addressed the respondents' general perception of the planning process in co-teaching. The next four statements addressed the respondents general perception of the support provided and needed in co-teaching settings. The next six statements addressed the respondents' general perception of the vision they have for co-teaching. The following 11 statements addressed the respondents' general perception of the roles and responsibilities of those involved in co-teaching. The next 10 statements addressed the respondents' general perception of their expectations of the co-teaching experience. And the final 10 statements addressed the respondents' general perception of other pertinent general information. A complete list of the questions may be found in the survey located in Appendix C.

Data analysis

      Survey analysis. Data analysis is a methodical exploration for implications from the data collected from members of the sample population. Since it is difficult to group narrative descriptions of teachers' perceptions, the teachers that respond to the survey were asked questions about their perceptions and then asked to respond using a Likert Scale of 1-5 (1 – Strongly Agree, 2 – Agree Somewhat, 3 – Neither Agree, 4 – Disagree Somewhat, and 5 –

Disagree Strongly). This allowed the data to be looked at through a method that may reveal patterns to responses. First, the data from survey participants was aggregated and descriptive statistics were calculated for all quantitative data, taking into consideration several determinant characteristics such as non-special education teachers vs. special education teachers, current co-teach vs. not currently co-teach, as well as several other individual items. In addition, several questions were identified to determine whether there are any significant categorical differences in respondents' answers to other survey items. For example, are there any significant differences on other survey items between those who respond agree or strongly agree to Training statement # 21 ("I have received the training I need to successfully use co-teaching strategies and implement inclusion" and those who did not.   Similarly, are there any significant differences in responses to other survey items between those teachers who respond in the affirmative to Training statement #29 ("Teachers in your school have participated in professional development for co-teaching") and those who did not.   It was assumed that students who had co-teaching training answered positive towards their perception of the method.   It was assumed that there was be a correlation in teachers who received formal training having a more positive perception of co-teaching with their preparedness to co-teach in inclusive classrooms than those whose training was less formal. Significance on such items was tested using a simple t-test for significance.

In addition to the categorical comparisons across respondents as described above, an exploratory Factor Analysis (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Floyd & Widaman, 1995; Fricker, Kulzy, & Appleget, 2012) was employed to identify whether there were any strong correlations across several survey items resulting in two or more identified and independent "factors" (or correlations across several items) within the population surveyed as identified in their survey responses. An exploratory Factor Analysis can statistically uncover underlying structures and

relationships across multiple survey items. For the purpose of this study, an exploratory Factor Analysis was employed to discern whether there may be an underlying set of relationships across several items in the survey.

Numerous themes have been arrived at through both a categorical analysis of survey responses as well as the Factor Analysis. Hatch (2002) acknowledged that "Analysis means organizing and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories" (p. 148). Merriam (1998) states data analysis as "the process of making sense out of the data" (p. 178). Merriam furthermore explained the practice of data analysis as a way to classify, discover, merge, and condense the information that has been obtained from the statistics gathering procedure.

Validity & Credibility

Validity. Carmines and Zeller (1979), argues that validity "concerns the crucial relationship between concept and indicator (i.e., measurement)" (p. 12). Construct validity relates to understanding and measurement of concepts used in studies (Hagan, 2006; Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). For this research, the concern was whether the survey is measuring educators' responses to co-teaching, or some other theoretical construct.

Fowler (2002) recognizes four reasons why respondents could answer erroneously when finishing a survey. Initially, potential members of the population may not comprehend an inquiry. If respondents infer dissimilar meaning from the identical question, then mistake is likely to take place. Examiners ought to have questions that are effortlessly and always understood. The examiner designed the survey to comprise of questions that are simple to

understand and simple to reply to. Fowler in addition says that examiners occasionally must give definitions if research is based around a complex construct.

Next, participants may not have the necessary information to reply a survey item correctly (Fowler, 2002).   This frequently happens when examiners ask respondents to reply to extremely comprehensive questions, when examiners ask respondents to recall events that happened in a certain time frame, and when examiners want information that respondents cannot give. The majority of questions have been designed as single item measures with interval level response categories.

Lastly, respondents occasionally do not want to respond to certain questions (Fowler, 2002). This frequently happens when examiners ask questions that respondents recognize to be personal or invasive. The examiner did not expect this to be a predicament for this research as the theme of examination referred to behaviors that educators respond to frequently as a part of their occupation. In addition, this study was measuring teachers' perceptions of co-teaching rather than authentic behaviors. Being capable to finish the survey on their own and having their individuality continue unknown often increases the level of accuracy. This research was also concerned with survey inaccuracies as it relates to validity.

The general objective of the Tailored Design method is to decrease study inaccuracies. As stated by Dillman (2007), there are four bases of inaccuracies that worry examiners when collecting statistics from surveys. These bases of inaccuracies are connected to sampling, coverage, measurement, and non-response. Sampling inaccuracies happen when the finished sample (i.e., those individuals who finish and sent back surveys) does not sufficiently embody the sample population. Sampling inaccuracies could result if there are troubles with how surveys are disseminated.   If a small reply rate results from the issues connected to the sampling, then

the examiner will have bring in these inaccuracies into the research. Inaccuracies in this case results from possible respondents being disqualified from participation. Assuming there are no problems with survey circulation, individuals will self-select themselves into the sample by choosing to finish and send back the survey. Nevertheless, the examiners tried to assemble statistics from each potential respondent as surveys are emailed. In addition, the examiner joins forces with school principals to make certain that each person had an opportunity to partake.

Measurement inaccuracies happen after study inquiries do not exactly determine the concepts they are projected to quantify and commonly outcomes from bad inquiry phrasing and bad study assembly (Dillman, 2007). Survey studies do not permit for changes to be completed to the statistics gathering tool once it has been disseminated. Therefore, it is vital that examiners concentrate on the potential of measurement mistakes as carefully preceding collecting data. Past studies and presumptions were inspected to establish applicable variables for addition in the assembly of survey items. Consequently, it is understood these concepts of concentration were sufficiently investigated. There is still a chance that measurement inaccuracies happened if educators' responses to the survey did not precisely represent the answers they would state in real situations. For instance, respondents are occasionally worried that their behaviors might be interpreted as socially unacceptable, or undesirable. Also, respondents were given secrecy in exchange for their information, which removed any chance for embarrassment from certain responses. Inaccuracies also can occur from non-response (Dillman, 2007). This kind of inaccuracy is a consequence from those who do not finish or send back the survey to the examiner. Non-response inaccuracies happens to more likely when the individuals who do not finish and send back the survey have exceptionally diverse traits than those who do finish and send back the survey, and these traits are pertinent to the research. Sampling and coverage

mistakes happen once examiners do not sufficiently offer respondents an opportunity to partake. Non-response mistakes occur due to respondents choosing not to contribute.

Dillman's (2007) Tailored Design method includes approaches for rising reply speed. These approaches, which previously were mentioned, comprise of the use of respondent pleasing surveys, initiate numerous contacts, and use of monetary enticements. Furthermore, the examiner chose a respondent group that was common to the study matter. The examiner highlights the idea that respondents' involvement would offer the educators a say. These approaches amplify the reply speed for this research.

Credibility. Credibility requires the researcher to apply rigorous methods that produce high quality data. The researcher must have credibility in terms of experience and how they present themselves to the participants.

Protection of Human Subjects

To insure the security of individual participates in this study all subjects will be knowledgeable of the purpose of the study and sign a consent form prior to data collection, The consent form will include the purpose of the study, a statement of voluntary participation, information about the confidentiality of the study, and the option to withdraw from the study at any time. Human subjects will require that information be used, stored, and disclosed in a way that ensures the confidentiality of the participants. In addition, while for purposes of analysis the information will be coded and entered into digital files with only code numbers identifying the individual participants. On all completed documents, names and other identifying information were replaced with identification numbers. Following completion of the research, findings will be distributed to participants in summary form and results will be reported as overall patterns and group means. No individual will be identified by name in any public report.

Ethical Considerations. In all studies there are potential ethical issues. Before implementing the research design, ethical concerns first needed to be addressed. The research design depends on the relationship the researcher has with participants because it is essential that they understand that the researcher can be trusted, their responses will be confidential and never revealed as individual responses, and that the researcher's motive in investigating this data is to improve conditions for all co-teachers. The researcher needs to intentionally establish a collaborative, reciprocal relationship with the participants, as discussed by Powell and Takayoski (2003) and Cushman (2004).

Possible conflicts between the researcher's role as a professional and the researcher's role as a researcher will be addressed by limiting potential ethical issues through gaining permission from the proper Bridgewater State University personnel before collection of information. In addition, all participants will need to sign informed consent forms to signify their understanding of the purpose of the study and grant their approval to be included. Due to the sensitive character of several of the questions, the researcher will numerically encode each survey to establish the importance of confidentiality for all subjects. Identities (names and positions) will not be disclosed in the study. Teacher involvement in the study will be strictly voluntary and all involved teachers will be debriefed on the findings of the study.

The most important ethical significance regarding the issue of teachers' perception of co-teaching is the fact that their perceptions strongly impact the delivery of service to every student with whom they work in the co-taught classroom. It also affects their level of happiness on the job, their feelings of success, and their effectiveness as teachers.

Chapter IV: Report of Research Findings

The teaching profession is entering an important stage of transformation. With increasing demands for redevelopment, educators at the national, state, district, and school levels have looked for a ways to change instructional design to accommodate the needs of identified special needs students and one of the recommendations has been co-teaching. The purpose of this descriptive, survey investigation was to explore whether the perspectives of content area and special education teachers with and without experience co-teaching differ and how in any significant way. To determine the different perspectives across these four populations, an 82-item survey was given to southeastern Massachusetts teachers currently enrolled (academic year of 2012-2013) in the graduate course ED530 Teacher as a Researcher at Bridgewater State University. This data, gathered from teachers throughout southeastern Massachusetts schools, was essential to identifying whether special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience differed from those of content area teachers with and without co-teaching experience. This offered insight relating to the context within which the co-teacher acts and the influence this may have on their perceptions.

For the purpose of presenting the data, this chapter is divided into five sections. In the first section, titled Research Questions, the research questions are once again briefly explained and the reasons why and how they were developed are reviewed. The third section, titled Site and Participants, delivers a brief overview of the school and teachers involved in this study. It provides the reader with information on the participant, such as number of years teaching, grade level of school teaching, content area, and number of years co-teaching. In the fourth section, Data Collection, the researcher sequentially presents the data by area of analysis. This section presents a quantitative and narrative summary of the data by section of the survey as they pertain

to teachers' current experiences, perspectives and beliefs regarding co-teaching, recommended co-teaching practices, and school-based support of co-teaching.

Research Questions

This investigation was a quantitative survey study. The researcher designed the study to uncover the perceptions of BSU graduate students enrolled in a class at Bridgewater State University on Teacher as a Researcher during the academic year of 2012-2013. Participating special education and content area teachers represented all subjects (English, science, history, and math) and grade levels across several southeastern Massachusetts public schools.

The problem of practice that is of concern relates to perspectives of content area and special education teachers with or without experience on their co-teaching. It is assumed that special education teachers' perspectives may be different from content area teachers as a result of their pre-service and in-service training as well as their experience in the classroom co-teaching. In the quest to identify if content area and special education teachers' with and without experience co-teaching is different, the following research questions guided this analysis:

1. How are content-area and special education teachers' perceptions of co-teaching with or without experience different?

2. In what area of co-teaching do content area and special education teachers differ, including Advantages and Disadvantages, Professional Issues, Philosophical Issues, Logistical Concerns, Training, Planning, Support, Vision, Roles and Responsibilities, Expectations, and General Information?

The questions that guided this study are not unlike those used by other researchers in the field, such as Austin (2001), Bauwens, Hourcade & Friend (1989) and Salend & Johansen (1997). These researchers, among others, also investigated co-teaching to determine which best

practices and models would maximize student learning outcomes and teachers' professional

satisfaction. It was thereby assumed that this would be an appropriate set of questions to

investigate perceptions of southeastern Massachusetts teachers.

When designing each phase of data collection, the theoretical framework was critical.

This study explored various and critical aspects of co-teaching and to what degree training and/or

professional development were implemented and the potential impact of that training of PD.

Site and Participants

Individual participants in this study from the public school sector were selected by their

enrollment in Bridgewater State University's graduate course, ED530 Teacher as a Researcher.

The population of this study included content area educators. The content area educator is the

curriculum expert. The content specialist is certified in the specific content area taught in the

course. Teachers surveyed were employed full time through the spring semester of the 2012-

2013 school year at a southeastern Massachusetts public school. The participants maintained

complete anonymity in the study.

Participants. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the demographic characteristics of those who

decided to participate in the study, responding to the survey. This study investigated 37 teachers'

perceptions of co-teaching. Twenty-two of the teachers were content area teachers, with 12 of

the content area teachers having had experience co-teaching, fifteen of the teachers surveyed

were special education teachers, with eight having had experience co-teaching and 7 having had

no experience co-teaching.

Table 1

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey - Demographics Summary

Demographic Component	Result

Total Participants	37
Gender	8 males / 29 females
Age Span for Sample	21-52
Years Teaching	0-11
Content Area Teacher	22
Content Area Teachers with experience	12
Content Area Teachers without experience	10
Special Education Teachers	15
Special Education Teachers with experience	8
Special Education Teachers without experience	7

Table 2 specifies the demographic characteristics of participants in detail. The majority of content area teachers taught in the high school grades vs. the special education teachers whose majority taught between elementary and the high school grades. The majority of participating content area teachers are located in suburban school settings and the majority of special education teachers are located in a private special education school. The majority of content area teachers teach social studies and the majority of special education teachers teach across all subjects. The highest level of education for the majority of content area teachers was divided between bachelor's and master's degrees and for the majority of special education teachers it was a bachelor's degrees. The majority of the ages and gender for all surveyed teachers were female in their 20s. The majority of years working as a teacher for content area teachers were 2 years and the majority of special education teachers had less than 1 year.

Table 2

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey- Demographics Detail

Question	Content Area Teachers without Experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with Experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
What grade do you teacher?	5 –Elem. 3 -Middle 2- H.S.	1 –Elem. 11 -H.S.	1 -Pre/K 3- Elem. 1 -Middle 2 -H.S.	2 –Elem. 2 -Middle 3 -H.S. 1 -All
What is your setting?	2 -Regional 2 -Urban 5 -Suburb 1- Religious	1-Urban 9- Suburb 1- Regional/ Rural 1- Suburb/ Rural	5- Sped 1- Suburb 1-Sped/Suburb	3- Sped 1- Suburb 1- Sped/ Private/ Rural 1- Sped/ Urban 1- Private/ Vocational 1- Sped/ Private
What content area(s) do you teach?	3- All Subjects 1- Math 1- English 1- Science 3- S. Studies 1- Reading	1- All Subjects 2- Math 4- English 2- Science 3- S. Studies	6- All Subjects 1- English	6- All Subjects 1- Math 1-Speech
Which area of certification are you currently employed in?	10 – Gen. Ed.	12 – Gen. Ed.	7- Sped	8- Sped
What is the highest level of education you have achieved?	4 -Masters 6 –Bach.	7- Masters 5- Bach.	2- Masters 5- Bach.	8- Bach.
What is your present age?	7- 20s 1- 30s 1- 40s 1- 50s	5- 20s 6- 30s 1- 40s	6- 20s 1- 30s	4- 20s 2- 30s 1- 40s 1- 50s
What is your sex?	2- M 8- F	4- M 8- F	7- F	2- M 6- F
What type of educator are you at this school?	1- Para 1- Sped 8- Reg.	12- Reg.	3 -Para 4 -Sped	2- Para 1- SLPA 5- Sped

How many *consecutive* years have you been teaching?	2- 1 year 3- 2 years 1- 4 years 1- 6 years 2- 7 years 1- 8 years	1- 2 years 3- 3 years 1- 6 years 1- 7 years 1- 9 years 3-10 years 2-11 years	4- 0 years 1- 3 years 1-5 years 1- 6 years	1- 1 year 2- 2 years 1- 3 years 1- 4 years 2- 5 years 1- 7 years
Do you currently co-teach?	10- N	5- N 7- Y	7- N	3- N 5- Y
How many years have you co-taught?	10-0 years	7- 1 year 2- 2 years 2- 3 years 1- 8 years	8- 0 years	1 –0 years 3- 1 year 1- 2 years 1- 3 years 1- 4 years 1- 5 years

Findings

This section presents a quantitative summary of the data and narrative for each section of the survey. Participants' perceptions of inclusion and co-teaching are presented in the following 11 areas:

- Advantages and Disadvantages,

- Professional Issues

- Philosophical Issues

- Logistical Concerns

- Training

- Planning

- Support

- Vision

- Roles and Responsibilities

- Expectations, and

- General Information

Each section of the survey tables present the data based on the mean, standard deviation, Mann Whitney Test results, and the Fisher Exact Test results. Following the presentation of data and findings across these 11 areas is a summary of the findings.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Co-Teaching. As will be the case in all of the tables for each of the following 11 subsections, Table 3 presents the mean and standard deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey items having to do with <u>teachers' perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion and co-teaching</u>.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 3). Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without

experience. For example, in response to Statement 2, 83% of content area teachers with co-teaching experience agreed in contrast to only 40% of the content area teachers without experience agreeing. And in response to statement 6, 83% vs. 10% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, disagreed. In keeping with these differences, 67% vs. 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed to Statement 7. As for the differences with special education teachers, only in response to Statement 2 did special education teachers respond differently than content area teachers. Unfortunately, it was the special education teachers who did *not* have experience co-teaching that responded favorably to this item and *not* the special education teachers who had co-teaching experience. Also unfortunately, fewer special education teachers with or without experience disagreed with Statement 6 (25% and 43% respectively), and it was the greater majority of content area teachers *with* experience that disagreed the most (83%).

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would always be pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teachers would be more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to questions on Advantages and Disadvantages issues. This is not the case in this survey. For example in question #2 "Students with disabilities learn social skills that are modeled

by students without disabilities", special educations teachers without experience have a 71%

agreement rate, with experience it is lessened to 38% agreement rate, however content area

teachers without experience have a 40% agreement rate, with experience it is increased to 83%

agreement rate. Special education teachers and content area teachers are answering in reverse

with experience. This raises the question of why are special education teachers with experience

are answering with disagreement. Perhaps this is because special education teachers are always

with students with disabilities in the classroom. What the content area teacher is interpreting as

improvements in social skills of students with disabilities may actually be far less gains than a

special education teacher would expect or feel the students with disabilities are capable of.

Table 3

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures- Advantages and Disadvantages

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	**% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement**			
1. I believe students with disabilities should be educated in a special education classroom.	25% 3.40 (0.70)	0% 3.16 (1.11)	43% 3.14 (1.21)	50% 2.62 (0.74)
2. Students with disabilities learn social skills that are modeled by students without disabilities.	**40%** **3.30*#** (1.16)	**83%** **1.91*** (0.67)	**71%** **2.28#** (1.60)	38% 2.75 (1.03)
3. Students with disabilities have higher academic achievement when included in the general education classroom.	30% 3.00 (0.82)	42% 2.58 (1.00)	57% 2.57 (1.51)	25% 3.12 (0.83)
5. Self-esteem of children with disabilities increases when included in the general education classroom.	30% 3.00 (0.82)	50% 2.33 (0.98)	57% 2.71 (1.38)	25% 2.87 (0.99)
7. Students with disabilities should be included in the general education	**20%** **3.30^**	**67%** **2.25^**	43% 3	38% 2.87

curriculum with their peers without disabilities.	(0.95)	(0.85)	(1.41)	(1.12)
Statement	**% Disagree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement**			
4. It is difficult for children with disabilities to make academic gains in the general education classroom.	10% 2.80 (0.79)	25% 2.83 (0.83)	29% 2.85 (1.34)	25% 2.75 (1.03)
6. Students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms hinder the academic progress of the students without disabilities.	**10%** **2.80**^{Z}** **(0.63)**	**83%** **4.00**** **(0.85)**	**43%** **3.42^Z** **(1.61)**	25% 3.12 (0.99)
	Overall Average % Agree and % Disagree			
Summary	24%	50%	49%	32%

* Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 98, z=-2.46, p=.0135
\# Fisher Exact Test, p=.019
** Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =16, z=2.87, p=.004
^{Z} Fisher Exact Test, p=.019
^ Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 94.5, z=-2.24, p=.025

Professional Issues Co-Teaching. Table 4 presents the mean and standard deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey items having to do with teachers' perspectives on the professional issues of inclusion and co-teaching.

Expectations. In this category, one would expect that special education teachers with or without co-teaching experience would respond favorably/ positively to many of the survey items regarding the professional issues of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special

education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 4). Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without experience. For example, in response to statements 8, 10, 11, and 12 responses average toward strongly agreeing or disagreeing. In response to statement 8, 75% vs. 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 10, 75% and 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, disagreed. In response to statement 11, 83% and 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, disagreed. And in response to statement 12, 67% and 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, disagreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses in regards to their confidence in their ability to teach children with disabilities.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would always be pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teacher would be more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to questions on Professional issues. This is not the case in this survey. For example, in

question #11 "I become anxious when I learn that a student with disabilities will be in the general education classroom", special education teachers without experience have a 71% agreement rate, with experience it is lessened to 25% agreement rate, however content area teachers without experience have a 30% agreement rate, with experience it is increase to 83% agreement rate. Special education teachers and content area teachers are answering in reverse with experience in the co-taught classroom. This raises the question of why are special education teachers with experience are answering with disagreement. Perhaps this is because special education teachers are always with students with disabilities in the classroom, they are aware of students with disabilities' learning capabilities and have higher expectation for students with disabilities. What the content are teacher is interpreting as gains academically may actually be far less gains that what the special education teacher would normally expect or feel that the students with disabilities should achieve.

Table 4

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - Professional Issues

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
8. I am confident in my ability to teach children with disabilities.	**20%** **3.40*** (0.97)	**75%** **2.16*** (1.11)	**43%** 2.71 (1.79)	**63%** 2 (1.41)
9. I have been adequately trained to meet the needs of children with disabilities.	40% 2.90 (1.10)	42% 2.91 (1.16)	**57%** 2.71 (1.70)	**75%** 2 (1.06)
Statement	% Disagree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
10. I become easily frustrated when teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom.	**20%** **2.80#**	**75%** **3.75#**	**71%** 4	**25%** 3.12

	(1.48)	(1.06)	(1.15)	(1.12)
11. I become anxious when I learn that a student with disabilities will be in the general education classroom.	**30%** **2.80ᶻ** (1.48)	**83%** **4.00ᶻ ᐟ** (1.13)	**71%** 4 (1.41)	**25%** 3ᶻ ᐟ (1.41)
12. I have problems teaching students with cognitive deficits in the general education classroom.	**20%** **2.60ᵠ** (1.51)	**67%** **3.58ᵠ** (1.31)	**57%** 3.71 (1.38)	**25%** 3.12 (1.35)
	Overall Average % Agree and % Disagree			
Summary	**26%**	**68%**	**60%**	**43%**

* Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 97.5, z=-2.44, p=.015

#Fisher Exact Test, p=.019

ᶻ Fisher Exact Test, p=.027

ᐟ Fisher Exact Test, p=.019

ᵠ Fisher Exact Test, p=.043

Perception of Co-Teaching – Philosophical Issues. Table 5 presents the mean and standard deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey items having to do with teachers' perspectives on the philosophical issues of inclusion and co-teaching.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding the philosophical issues of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 5). Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without experience. For example, in response to statement 13, 75% vs. 50% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 14, 92% and 50% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 15, 83% vs. 50% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. And in response to statement 16, 92% and 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would always be pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teachers would be more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to questions on Philosophical Issues. This is not the case in this survey. For example in question #16 "Special in-service training in teaching children with disabilities should be required for all general education teachers", special education teachers without experience have a

57% agreement rate, with experience they have a 75% agreement rate, this is not surprising, and in accordance with what was anticipated, however content area teachers without experience have a 30% agreement rate, with experience in the co-taught classroom it is increased to a 92% agreement rate. This raises the question of why are content area teachers and special education teachers with experience are in similar agreement that in-service training should be required for all content area teachers. Perhaps this is because content area teachers without experience think that teaching all students regardless of disability with a similar method achievement can occur. Once the content area teacher is in the classroom with students with disabilities they soon find that these students with disabilities require modifications and adaptations to the curriculum they are untrained to carryout.

Table 5

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - Philosophical Issues

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
13. Although students differ intellectually, physically, and psychologically, I believe that all children can learn in most environments.	**50%** 3.00* (1.25)	**75%** 1.75* (1.14)	43% 2.28 (1.70)	63% 2.37 (1.40)
14. I believe that academic progress in the general classroom is possible for children with disabilities.	**50%** 3.20** (1.62)	**92%** 1.75** (1.14)	57% 2.57 (1.81)	63% 2.5 (1.06)
15. I can handle students with mild to moderate behavioral problems in the general classroom	**50%** 3.40^ (1.51)	**83%** 2.00^ (1.13)	43% 2.42 (1.13)	63% 2.25 (1.58)
16. Special in-service training in teaching children with disabilities should be required for all general education teachers.	**30%** 3.40^^ (1.43)	**92%** 1.41^^ (0.67)	57% 1.85 (1.57)	75% 1.87 (1.64)
	Overall Average % Agree			

Summary	45%	85%	50%	66%

* Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 98.5, z=-2.51, p=.012
** Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 94, z=-2.21, p=.027
^ Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 92, z=-2.08, p=.038
^^ Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 106, z=-3, p=.001

Perception of Co-Teaching – Logistical Concerns. Table 6 presents the mean and

standard deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well

as the percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this

section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement

across the survey items having to do with teachers' perspectives on the logistical concerns of

inclusion and co-teaching.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or

without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding

the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those

statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates

for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers

with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might

respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and

without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 6).

Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward

neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area

teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without

experience. For example, in response to statements 17, 18, and 20 responses average toward

strongly agreeing or disagreeing. In response to statement 17, 75% vs. 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 18, 83% and 50% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. And in response to statement 20, 75% and 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. Special education teachers with experience had the lowest response rate, indicating one who strongly agrees to the statements regarding their perception of the co-teaching method, this is what one would expect to see, and one would hope that special education teachers would find the value in a student with disabilities in the classroom as opposed to content area education teachers.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would always be pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teachers would be more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to Logistical Concern issues. This is not the case in this survey. For example in question # 17 "I am comfortable teaching a child that is moderately physically disabled in the general classroom", special education teachers without experience have a 43% agreement rate, with experience it is increased to 74% agreement rate, also content area teachers without experience have a 40% agreement rate, with experience it is increased to 75% agreement rate.

Special education teachers and content area teachers are answering similarly increasing their agreement rate with experience. This raises the question of why are the special education teachers and content area teachers answering similarly. Perhaps this is because students with physically disabilities in the general classroom education are often able to access the curriculum with less adaptations and modifications than a student with developmental disabilities in the same setting. Students with physically disabilities are able to achieve much greater gains academically than a student with developmental disabilities. Often students with physically disabilities are able to achieve academics gains similarly to their typical peers.

Table 6

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - Logistical Concerns

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
17. I am comfortable teaching a child that is moderately physically disabled in the general classroom.	**40%** 2.90 (1.00)	**75%** 2.16 (1.11)	**43%** 2.57 (1.27)	**75%** 2 (1.06)
18. I don't mind making special physical arrangements in the general education classroom to meet the needs of students with disabilities.	**50%** 3.00 (1.63)	**83%** 1.83 (1.11)	71% 2.14 (1.67)	63% 2.12 (1.35)
19. Adaptive materials and equipment are easily acquired for meeting the needs of students with disabilities.	20% 3.10 (0.74)	25% 3.41 (0.67)	29% 3.14 (1.21)	38% 2.75 (1.38)
20. My principal is supportive of the accommodations needed for teaching students with disabilities.	**30%** 3.10 (1.52)	**75%** 2.25 (1.22)	**29%** 2.85* (1.06)	**88%** 1.5* (1.06)
	Overall Average % Agree			
Summary	35%	64%	43%	66%

* Mann Whitney Test, U (13) = 45.5, z=-1.97, p=.049

Perception of Co-Teaching – Training. Table 7 presents the mean and standard deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey items having to do with teachers' perspectives on inclusion and co-teaching training.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 7). Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without experience. For example, in response to statements 22, 23, 24, and 25 responses average toward strongly agreeing or disagreeing. In response to statement 22, 83% vs. 50% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 23, 83% and 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 24, 75% and 40% of content area teachers with and without experience,

respectively, agreed. And in response to statement 25, 75% and 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would be always pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teachers (regardless of their experience) would be more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to questions on Training issues. This is not the case in this survey. For example in question #21 "I have received the training I need to successfully use co-teaching strategies and implement inclusion", special education teachers without experience have a 14% agreement rate, implying that they did not feel they had enough training, and with experience special education teachers have a 38% agreement rate. The content area teachers without experience have a 40% agreement rate, and with experience this decreases to a 25% agreement rate. This raises the question of why are special education teachers with experience feeling more positively on the training they have received being adequate, and content area teachers with experience feeling less positively on the training they have received being adequate. Perhaps this is because special education teachers once actually working with a content area teacher realize that they, the special education teacher, are actually the expert on inclusion of students with disabilities in this partnership. Special education teachers are receiving

far more training than their counterparts. The special education teacher may not feel that they

have had enough training, they realize that it is far more than the content area teacher in this

method.

Table 7

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - Training

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
21. I have received the training I need to successfully use co-teaching strategies and implement inclusion.	40% 2.80 (1.48)	25% 3.16 (1.19)	14% 3.14 (1.06)	38% 3 (1.41)
22. School district workshops/mini courses on facilitating co-teaching would enhance co-teaching experiences.	**50%** 2.90 (1.52)	**83%** 1.91 (1.16)	71% 2.14 (1.67)	63% 2.37 (1.50)
23. Mentoring by experienced co-teaching teacher(s) would be beneficial to the co-teaching experience.	**40%** 3.20* (1.23)	**83%** 1.91* (1.16)	71% 2.28 (1.88)	75% 1.87 (1.35)
24. Pre-service courses in co-teaching would be beneficial to the co-teaching experience.	**40%** 3.10** (1.37)	**75%** 1.91** (1.00)	71% 2.14 (1.67)	75% 2.25 (1.48)
25. Pre-service special education courses for general education teachers would be beneficial to co-teaching.	**30%** 3.30^ (1.42)	**75%** 1.91^ (0.79)	71% 2.14 (1.67)	75% 2.12 (1.55)
26. Pre-service general education courses for special teachers would be beneficial to co-teaching.	40% 3.20 (1.48)	67% 2.00 (0.85)	71% 2.28 (1.60)	75% 2.12 (1.55)
27. In-service training opportunities provided (workshops, etc.) would be beneficial to co-teaching.	50% 3.10 (1.52)	75% 2.08 (1.16)	71% 2.14 (1.67)	75% 2.12 (1.55)
28. Administrators in your school have participated in professional development for co-teaching.	20% 3.20 (1.23)	**8%** 3.25 (1.06)	29% 2.57 (1.13)	**63%** 2.62 (1.50)
29. Teachers in your school have participated in professional development for co-teaching.	20% 3.00 (1.05)	17% 2.91 (0.90)	14% 3 (1.15)	38% 3 (1.60)
	Overall Average % Agree			
Summary	36%	56%	53%	64%

* Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 96, z=-2.34, p=.019
** Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 90.5, z=-1.98, p=.048
^ Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 94.5, z=-2.24, p=.025

Perception of Co-Teaching– Planning. Table 8 presents the mean and standard

deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the

percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this

section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement

across the survey items having to do with <u>teachers' perspectives on inclusion and co-teaching</u>

<u>planning</u>.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or

without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding

the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those

statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates

for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers

with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might

respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and

without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 8).

Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward

neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area

teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without

experience. For example, in response to statements 33, 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40 responses average

toward strongly agreeing or disagreeing. In response to statement 33, 75% vs. 40% of content

area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.   In response to statement 35, 92% and 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 36, 83% vs. 50% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 37, 75% and 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 39, 67% vs. 10% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. And in response to statement 40, 67% and 10% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would always be pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teachers would be more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to questions on Planning. This is not the case in this survey. For example in question #37 "Summer planning time allocated would be beneficial to co-teaching", special education teachers without experience have a 71% agreement rate, with experience special education teachers have a reduced agreement rate to 50%. The content area teachers actually have the opposite trend. The content area teachers without experience have a 30% agreement rate, however with experience the agreement rate increases to 75%. This raises the question of why

are special education teachers with experience feeling less inclined to be favorable to summer

planning time as opposed to the content area teachers with experience. Perhaps this is because

special education teachers are often in a subordinate role while co-teaching, often the content

area teacher takes over the planning, much to the dismay of the special education teacher. The

special education teachers may feel that although time could be allocated in the summer for

planning, the content area teacher would still be in the role of the primary planner.

Table 8

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - Planning

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
31. I have the time in my work day to individualize instruction for students with disabilities.	20% 3.20 (0.92)	8% 3.83 (1.11)	14% 3.14 (1.06)	38% 3 (1.51)
32. A scheduled mutual planning time for co-teaching has been assigned.	10% 3.00 (1.05)	25% 3.91 (1.50)	0% 3.42 (0.78)	13% 3.5 (1.30)
33. Co-teachers need a common planning time officially scheduled during school hours.	**40%** 2.90 (1.80)	**75%** 1.58 (0.90)	57% 2.42 (1.61)	63% 2.5 (1.69)
34. Co-teachers need a daily planning period.	40% 2.80 (1.55)	**42%** 2.75 (1.29)	43% 2.42 (1.39)	**75%** 2.25 (1.75)
35. Co-teachers need a weekly planning period.	**40%** 2.90# (1.66)	**92%** 1.58# (0.67)	57% 2.28 (1.38)	63% 2.75 (1.66)
36. Co-teachers need to plan for lessons, evaluation of students' performance, and other general issues.	**50%** 2.90 (1.73)	**83%** 1.66 (0.78)	57% 2.28 (1.38)	75% 2.37 (1.68)
37. Summer planning time allocated would be beneficial to co-teaching.	**30%** 3.30 (1.70)	**75%** 2.08 (1.16)	71% 2 (1.41)	50% 2.5 (1.51)
38. Both co-teachers have input into the unit/lesson plan.	30% 2.80	58% 2.33	29% 3.14	25% 2.87

	(1.03)	(1.30)	(1.57)	(1.35)
39. Both co-teachers readily accept each other ideas.	**10%** 3.20* (0.79)	**67%** 1.83* (0.94)	14% 3.28 (1.11)	**38%** 2.62 (1.18)
40. Inclusive language (us, our, we) is used by both teachers during the planning process.	**10%** 3.10** (0.74)	**67%** 1.91**^ (1.08)	14% 3.28 (1.25)	**13%** 3.12^ (1.12)
Statement	% Disagree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
30. I do not have enough time to communicate and collaborate with my co-teacher.	20% 2.90 (1.20)	25% 2.33 (1.23)	14% 3 (1.15)	50% 3.37 (1.06)
41. I find it difficult to modify my instructional strategies and my teaching style to meet the needs of students with disabilities.	40% 3.00 (1.05)	58% 3.41 (1.24)	57% 3.71 (1.11)	63% 3.62 (0.51)
	Overall Average % Agree and % Disagree			
Summary	28%	56%	35%	47%

#Fisher Exact Test, p=.02
* Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 101, z=-2.67, p=.008
** Mann Whitney Test, U (20) = 95, z=-2.27, p=.023
^ Mann Whitney Test, U (18) = 74, z=-1.97, p=.049

Perception of Co-Teaching –Support. Table 9 presents the mean and standard deviation

across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of

agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table

provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey

items having to do with teachers' perspectives on the inclusion and co-teaching support.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or

without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding

the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those

statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates

for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers

with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 9). Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without experience. For example, in response to statement 43 responses average toward strongly agreeing or disagreeing. In response to statement 43, 75% vs. 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would answer questions regarding Support of co-teaching and inclusion very differently than content area teachers. This is not the case. For example question #43 "Adequate teaching supplies appropriate to learning levels would be beneficial to co-teaching", special education teachers without experience have a 57% agreement rate and with experience special education teachers increase their agreement response to 63%, similarly content area teachers without experience have a 40% agreement rate

and with experience content area teachers increase their agreement response to 75%. This raises

the question of why are content area teachers answering in a similar trend to special education

teachers? Perhaps this is because special education and content area teachers once having

experience co-teaching realize that adequate teaching supplies for the varied learners are not

often provided. Special education teachers and content teachers have to make considerable

modifications and adaptations to the general education curriculum when the inclusion of students

with disabilities takes place. Special books, activities, lessons aren't provided, often until

teachers are in that setting they do not realize the amount of work that goes into this.

Table 9

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - Support

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
42. The school administration in my school system is committed to co-teaching implementation.	30% 2.70 (1.25)	42% 2.66 (0.98)	14% 2.85 (0.89)	38% 3 (1.30)
43. Adequate teaching supplies appropriate to learning levels would be beneficial to co-teaching.	**40%** 2.90 (1.45)	**75%** 2.00 (1.20)	57% 2.42 (1.61)	63% 2.5 (1.85)
44. Opportunities to modify classroom configuration would be beneficial to co-teaching teaching.	30% 3.30 (1.42)	67% 2.08 (1.24)	57% 2.42 (1.61)	75% 2.25 (1.16)
45. There are clear district and school guidelines for implementation of co-teaching.	30% 2.90 (1.29)	17% 3.58 (1.00)	14% 3 (1.15)	38% 2.75 (1.16)
	Overall Average % Agree and % Disagree			
Summary	32%	50%	35%	53%

Perception of Co-Teaching–Vision. Table 10 presents the mean and standard deviation

across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of

agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey items having to do with <u>teachers' perspectives on the vision of inclusion and co-teaching</u>.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 10). Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without experience. For example, in response to statements 46 and 51 responses average toward strongly agreeing or disagreeing. In response to statement 46, 17% vs. 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. And in response to statement 51, 83% and 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education

teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

   Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would be more confident in their own abilities than content area teachers believing in special education teachers abilities. This is not the case in this survey in regards to questions concerning Vision. For example in question #51 "Special educators have the skills to suggest instructional strategies to meet unique student needs", special education teachers without experience have a 43% agreement rate, and with experience it increases to a 50% agreement rate, similarly content area teachers without experience have a 40% agreement rate, however content area teachers with experience increases considerable to 83% agreement rate. Perhaps this is because content area teachers with experience in the co-taught inclusion setting actually realize through this experience that special education teachers have a considerable amount of training compared to content area teacher in regards to the instructional strategies to meet unique student needs, which is critical when teaching students with disabilities.

Table 10

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - Vision

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
46. Key personnel are clear on their roles and responsibilities for co-teaching	**40%** 2.50	**17%** 3.50	**14%** 2.85	**50%** 2.75

implementation	(0.97)	(0.96)	(0.89)	(1.48)
47. There is open, positive communication between general and special educators	30% 3.10 (1.20)	42% 2.83 (1.27)	**0%** 3.42 (0.78)	**50%** 2.75 (1.48)
48. General educators have basic knowledge and skills to work with students with disabilities.	50% 2.70 (1.06)	50% 2.25 (0.87)	29% 3 (1)	25% 3 (0.92)
49. General educators appreciate the need for accommodations and modifications to the curriculum for students with disabilities	30% 3.20 (1.03)	50% 2.08 (0.90)	14% 3.42 (0.97)	25% 3.12 (0.99)
50. Special educators are familiar with the general education curriculum and methodology.	30% 3.00 (0.82)	58% 2.41 (1.00)	29% 3.14 (0.89)	38% 3 (1.06)
51. Special educators have the skills to suggest instructional strategies to meet unique student needs.	**40%** 3.10* (1.29)	**83%** 1.75* (0.75)	43% 2.71 (1.38)	50% 2.62 (1.06)
	Overall Average % Agree and % Disagree			
Summary	36%	50%	21%	39%

* Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =96, z=-2.34, p=.02

Perception of Co-Teaching–Roles and Responsibilities. Table 11 presents the mean and standard deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey items having to do with teachers' perspectives on the roles and responsibilities of inclusion and co-teaching.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers

with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 11). Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without experience. For example, in response to statement 52, 75% vs. 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.   In response to statement 53, 83% and 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 54, 83% vs. 50% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.   In response to statement 55, 75% and 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 56, 75% vs. 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.   In response to statement 57, 75% and 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 58, 75% vs. 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.   In response to statement 59, 75% and 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 60, 92% vs. 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 61, 67% and 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. And in response to statement 62, 58% vs. 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience

co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would be always pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teachers (regardless of their experience) would me more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to questions on Roles and Responsibilities. This is not the case in this survey. For example in question #52 "When co-teaching is done correctly one teacher may lead and another offers assistance and support to individuals or small groups", special education teachers without experience have a 71% agreement rate, with experience special education teachers have a reduced 38% agreement rate. The content area teachers without experience have a 20% agreement rate, however with experience this increases to a 75% agreement rate. This raises the question of why are special education teachers with experience are feeling less in agreement with co-teaching method procedure and content area teachers with experience feel more confident in co-teaching method procedure. Perhaps this is because special education teachers once actually working with a content area teacher are in a subordinate role, similarly to a glorified aide. The content area teacher may feel they are implementing the method correctly, however the special education teacher, who is trained in the method, know this is not being implemented correctly.

Table 11

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey - Roles and Responsibilities

Statement	Content Area Teachers	Content Area Teachers	Special Ed. Teachers without	Special Ed. Teachers

	without experience (n=10)	with experience (n=12)	Experience (n=7)	with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
52. When co-teaching is done correctly one teacher may lead and another offers assistance and support to individuals or small groups.	**20%** **3.20*** (0.92)	**75%** **1.91*** (1.00)	71% 2.28 (1.25)	25% 2.87 (0.99)
53. When co-teaching is done correctly both teachers may simultaneous teach.	**30%** **3.10**** (1.20)	**83%** **1.83**** (1.19)	43% 2.85 (1.57)	38% 3 (1.30)
54. When co-teaching is done correctly both teachers alternate teaching students.	50% 2.60 (1.17)	83% 1.66 (0.78)	57% 2.28 (1.11)	50% 2.62 (1.18)
55. When co-teaching is done correctly the general education teacher may lead in a co-taught classroom.	**20%** **3.30^** (1.25)	**75%** **1.83^** (0.83)	43% 2.85 (1.21)	63% 2.37 (1.18)
56. When co-teaching is done correctly the special education teacher may lead in a co-taught classroom.	40% 2.90 (1.20)	75% 2.00 (1.2)	43% 2.85 (1.21)	50% 2.62 (1.30)
57. When co-teaching is done correctly the general education teacher may be responsible for lesson planning.	**30%** **3.00^^** (1.05)	**75%** **1.91^^** (1.00)	43% 2.85 (1.34)	50% 2.75 (1.48)
58. When co-teaching is done correctly the general education teacher may be responsible for instruction.	**30%** **3.00^{+}** (1.05)	**75%** **1.83^{+}** (1.03)	43% 2.85 (1.34)	38% 2.75 (1.03)
59. When co-teaching is done correctly the general education teacher may be responsible for evaluating students.	**20%** **3.10^{++}** (1.10)	**75%** **1.83$^{++\&}$** (1.03)	43% 2.85 (1.34)	**25%** **3.25$^{\&}$** (0.88)
60. When co-teaching is done correctly the special education teacher may be responsible for modifications for students with disabilities.	**40%** **3.10$^{\&\&}$** (1.37)	**92%** **1.58$^{\&\&}$** (0.67)	**29%** 3 (1.15)	**63%** 2.5 (1.41)
61. When co-teaching is done correctly the special education teacher is responsible for monitoring student behaviors for students with disabilities.	**20%** **3.20$^{\sim}$** (1.14)	**67%** **2.16$^{\sim}$** (0.94)	29% 2.85 (1.06)	38% 3 (1.06)
62. When co-teaching is done correctly the special education teacher is responsible for monitoring student remediation for students with disabilities.	30% 3.00 (1.15)	58% 2.25 (0.75)	57% 2.57 (1.13)	38% 2.87 (1.12)
	Overall Average % Agree and % Disagree			
Summary	30%	75%	45%	43%

* Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =99, z=-2.54, p=.011
** Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =95, z=-2.27, p=.023
^ Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =99.5, z=-2.57, p=.01

^^ Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =92.5, z=-2.11, p=.035
[+] Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =94, z=-2.11, p=.035
[++] Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =95.5, z=-2.31, p=.021
[&]Mann Whitney Test, U (18) =81, z=-2.51, p=.012
[&&]Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =99.5, z=-2.57, p=.01
[~] Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =91.5, z=-2.04, p=.041

Perception of Co-Teaching–Expectations. Table 12 presents the mean and standard deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey items having to do with teachers' perspectives on the expectations of inclusion and co-teaching.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 12). Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without experience. For example, in response to statements 63, 65, 67, and 68 responses average toward

strongly agreeing or disagreeing. In response to statement 63, 83% vs. 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 65, 92% and 40% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 67, 75% vs. 10% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. And in response to statement 68, 67% and 30% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would always be pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teachers would be more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to questions regarding Expectations. This is not the case in this survey. For example in question #68 "Students with disabilities in a co-taught classroom increase positive feelings about themselves as capable learners", special education teachers without experience have a 57% agreement rate, with experience the special education teachers have a decreased agreement rate of 38%. The content teachers without experience have a 30% agreement rate, and with experience the content area teacher have an increased agreement rate of 67%. This is the opposite of the special education teachers' trend. This raises the question of why are special education teachers with experience feeling less positive than special education teachers without

experience of students with disabilities' feelings in a co-taught class, and content area teachers with experience feeling more positive than content area teachers without experience of students with disabilities' feelings in a co-taught class. Perhaps this is because special education teachers work with students with disabilities all the time, and the gains and positivity feelings the content area teachers think they are seeing are not a difference from the students with disabilities' typical norm behavior.

Table 12

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - Expectations

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
63. I believe students without disabilities can receive an appropriately challenging education in an inclusive general education classroom.	**30%** 3.30* (1.16)	**83%** 1.83* (0.72)	57% 2.42 (1.61)	50% 2.37 (1.06)
65. I believe students with disabilities can receive an appropriate education in an inclusive general education classroom.	**40%** 3.10** (1.20)	**92%** 1.75** (0.62)	43% 2.28 (1.25)	**50%** 2.62 (1.06)
67. Students with disabilities learn more in a co-taught classroom than in a single-teacher general education classroom.	**10%** 3.30 (0.82)	**75%** 2.00 (1.21)	43% 2.57 (1.27)	50% 2.62 (1.40)
68. Students with disabilities in a co-taught classroom increase positive feelings about themselves as capable learners.	**30%** 3.30 (1.16)	**67%** 2.00 (0.74)	57% 2.57 (1.51)	38% 2.37 (0.91)
70. The behaviors of students with disabilities are better in a co-taught classroom.	20% 3.30 (0.71)	42% 2.41 (0.79)	43% 2.71 (0.75)	25% 3 (1.06)
Statement	% Disagree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
64. I believe that special educators working in inclusion settings generally take a subordinate role in the classroom.	40% 3.20 (1.14)	50% 3.33 (1.50)	57% 3.14 (1.21)	25% 3 (0.75)
66. The support provided to students with disabilities in co-taught classrooms is insufficient.	50% 3.50 (1.08)	42% 3.25 (1.29)	14% 2.57 (0.97)	13% 2.75 (0.70)

69. Students with disabilities have difficulty adjusting to the higher expectations in the co-taught classroom	40% 3.50 (0.72)	25% 2.91 (1.08)	29% 3.14 (0.69)	25% 2.75 (1.03)
71. The behaviors of students with disabilities are worse in a co-taught classroom.	30% 3.00 (1.15)	50% 3.75 (0.87)	57% 3.71 (0.75)	25% 2.87 (0.83)
72. The behavior issues in co-taught classrooms interfere with other students' learning needs.	20% 2.70 (0.95)	33% 3.25 (0.87)	43% 3.28 (0.75)	25% 2.62 (1.06)
	Overall Average % Agree and % Disagree			
Summary	31%	55%	44%	32%

* Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =102, z=-2.74, p=.006
** Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =100.5, z=-2.64, p=.008
^ Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =100.5, z=-2.64, p=.008

Perception of Co-Teaching–General Information Table 13 presents the mean and standard deviation across the survey statements in relationship to the topic of the section, as well as the percent of agreement or disagreement for each survey item across the populations. In this section, the table provides the mean, standard deviation, and percent agreement or disagreement across the survey items having to do with teachers' perspectives on the general information on inclusion and co-teaching.

Expectations. In this category, one might expect that special education teachers with or without co-teaching experience would respond positively to many of the survey items regarding the advantages of co-teaching for students with or without disabilities and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.

Findings. In fact, the results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances (see Table 13).

Overall, responses across both content area and special education teachers averaged toward neither strongly agreeing or disagreeing, except on a few survey items where content area teachers with experience responded much more favorably than content area teachers without experience. For example, in response to statements 78, 79, and 82 responses average toward strongly agreeing or disagreeing. In response to statement 78, 67% vs. 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. In response to statement 79, 67% and 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed. And in response to statement 82, 83% and 20% of content area teachers with and without experience, respectively, agreed.

The **overall** responses to the items in this section of the survey indicate that special education teachers, at least those participating in this survey, whether or not they had experience co-teaching, were fairly mixed to those statements for which one would hope special education teachers would respond positively. And, interestingly, it was those general education teachers *with* experience co-teaching that had the more favorable and positive responses, seeing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom as beneficial for them as well as other students in the class.

Discussion. One would think that special education teachers would be always pro co-teaching and inclusion, and content area teachers would be more anti co-teaching and inclusion in regards to questions from the General Info portion of the survey. This is not the case in this survey. For example in question #77 "Co-teaching is a worthwhile professional experience", special education teachers without experience have a 14% agreement rate, with experience special education teachers have an increased agreement rate of 50%. The content area teachers without experience have a 20% agreement rate, with experience content area teachers also have

an increased agreement rate of 83%. This raises the question of why are content area teachers

with experience feeling much more positive of the co-teaching experience than their special

education teacher counterparts also with experience. Perhaps this is because special education

teachers although still believing in the method still feel that they are in a subordinate role in the

classroom, the gains for students with disabilities the content area teacher perceives are great

may actually not be as substantial as what the special education teacher would typically expect.

Table 13

Perception of Co-Teaching Survey Figures - General Information

Statement	Content Area Teachers without experience (n=10)	Content Area Teachers with experience (n=12)	Special Ed. Teachers without Experience (n=7)	Special Ed. Teachers with Experience (n=8)
Statement	% Agree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
73. You and the other teacher you co-teach with both volunteered to collaboratively teach together?	20% 2.80 (1.03)	42% 3.00 (1.60)	0% 3.42 (0.78)	63% 2.25 (1.03)
74. You and your co-teaching partner and work very well together.	0% 3.30 (0.67)	75% 2.00 (1.13)	0% 3.14 (0.37)	50% 2.75 (1.48)
75. Co-teaching has improved your teaching.	10% 2.90 (0.74)	83% 2.00 (1.28)	0% 3.42 (0.78)	50% 2.75 (1.48)
77. Co-teaching is a worthwhile professional experience.	20% 3.20 (0.92)	**83%** 1.83 (1.19)	14% 3.14 (0.69)	**50%** 2.5 (1.51)
78. You have seen evidence of improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities in inclusion classrooms.	**20%** 3.20 (0.92)	**67%** 2.41 (1.16)	29% 2.71 (0.95)	**25%** 2.87 (0.99)
79. You have found that inclusion has encouraged you to experiment with new teaching methodologies.	**20%** 3.00 (0.67)	**67%** 2.16 (1.16)	14% 3 (0.57)	**25%** 3 (1.19)
80. In the inclusion classroom, your co-teacher and you consistently work with all students, including those with disabilities and those without disabilities.	20% 3.10 (1.00)	**92%** 1.66 (1.15)	14% 3 (0.57)	**25%** 2.62 (1.06)

82. In your inclusion classroom(s), students with disabilities and students without disabilities receive equal access to the same general curriculum.	**20%** 3.40^ (1.08)	**83%** 1.75^+ (1.22)	14% 3.42 (1.27)	**25%** 2.62+ (0.74)
Statement	% Disagree, Mean, & St. Dev. with Statement			
76. In your co-teaching experience, you do more than your partner.	**0%** 3.20 (0.79)	20% 1.91* (0.67)	14% 3 (0.57)	**38%** 3.25* (0.70)
81. The students with disabilities in your inclusion classroom(s) work separately from their classmates without disabilities a majority of the time.	30% 3.00 (0.82)	**75%** 4.00** (1.13)	43% 3.57 (0.78)	**0%** 2.5** (0.92)
	Overall Average % Agree and % Disagree			
Summary	16%	68%	14%	38%

* Mann Whitney Test, U (18) =86.5, z=-2.93, p=.034
** Mann Whitney Test, U (18) =15, z=-2.51, p=.012
^ Mann Whitney Test, U (20) =104, z=-2.87, p=.004
+ Mann Whitney Test, U (18) =75, z=-2.04, p=.041

Summary of Findings

In inclusive classrooms, students with and without disabilities are taught together. As inclusion has become more common, teachers have sought ways to meet the diversity of their students' needs. One popular arrangement in inclusive classrooms is co-teaching. In the idealized model, a content area teacher and a special educator team-teach as true collaborative partners and share equally in planning, in the presentation of content, in behavior management, and in responsibility for all students. Students with disabilities interact with the content area teacher as much as with the special educator (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007).

In reality, co-teaching does not currently resemble this ideal. By far, the most common co-teaching model in practice is "one teach, one assist." In this approach to co-teaching, one educator "takes the lead" and is responsible for conducting whole class activities and presentations to impart content knowledge. The other educator plays a subordinate role and drifts around the class helping students, addressing behavior issues, and supporting the instruction.

While this approach to co-teaching can be effective for students and teachers alike, as it is currently implemented the general educator is typically the dominant, leading teacher, while the special educator typically assumes the subordinate, "drifter" role. Such lack of parity in the two teachers' roles can cause problems between the teachers themselves as well as cast doubts on the authority of the subordinate teacher in the classroom (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007). The objective of this research was to record the perceptions of content area and special education teachers on co-teaching.

In this study one might expect that special education teachers with or without training would respond positively to many of the survey item regarding the advantages of the co-teaching method for students with or without disabilities since they have had the most training, and disagree with those statements that saw co-teaching as a disadvantage to any student, given their role as advocates for special education students as well as their training. In addition, one would hope that teachers with experience, whether they are general education teachers or special education teachers, might respond more favorably to statements regarding the value of co-teaching for all students.   In this study special education teachers with experience actually have less favorable perception than content area teachers with experience because the special education teacher may perceive themselves in the role of the gloried teacher assistant and content area teacher still are in a leader role. Special education teachers are less favorable with experience, those who are not trained in the method, who may be future co-teachers, may be optimistic but naïve regarding the skills needed, effort required and preparation necessary for successful results.

The results across content area and special education teachers with and without co-teaching experience were rather mixed except in a few instances. It was concluded though from

this study that co-teachers generally supported co-teaching. Study participants reported benefits of co-teaching for students both with and without disabilities as well as for the co-teachers themselves. These findings are a good representation of current co-teaching practices. However, teachers who had negative co-teaching experiences could choose not to participate in the studies. Thus, it's possible that findings provide a more favorable picture of co-teaching than would have been found in a true sampling of co-teachers. Even with the probable slant in favor of co-teaching found in these studies, participants expressed concerns about how co-teaching was being implemented, although most people involved in co-teaching classrooms felt the practice provided benefits for everyone involved.

Chapter V: Summary, Discussion, and Implications

With the increasing demand for the redevelopment of special education within public schools, educators at the national, state, district, and school levels have looked for a ways to change instructional design to accommodate the needs of these identified students with disabilities. In response to trends and legislation, several schools have put into practice "co-teaching" (Cook & Friend, 1995) to promote successful teaching in inclusive classrooms to students with and without disabilities. Co- teaching unites one special education teacher with one content area teacher to provide education to students with and without disabilities in a general education setting (Friend & Cook, 2010). The question raised throughout this study is whether special education teachers' perspectives of co-teaching differed from content area teachers. The expectations, noted throughout Chapter 4, were that special education teachers because of their training, as well as role and responsibility, would look more favorably upon the advantages of co-teaching, with and without experience. But it was also of interest to the researcher to pursue whether these perceptions were different from content area teachers, again with and without experience co-teaching, given that co-teaching in the best of all worlds should be viewed as favorable to all students by both special education and content area teachers.

Special education teachers are usually trained in inclusion methods while content area teachers often are not (Coombs-Richardson, Al-Juraid, & Stuker, 2000; Simmons & Magiera, 2007). Although this model pairs general educators with special educators to address the needs of various students with disabilities, the model does not always take a consistent form (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007). Unfortunately but commonly, the result is teacher dissatisfaction with the experience, for both the special education teacher and content teacher. One important step toward improvement is implementing strategies to support co-teaching that

enhances student achievement (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007). Training of co-teacher teams in Massachusetts high schools needs to be improved to achieve the goal of correctly training teachers and implementing effective co-teaching methods, consequently leading to greater teacher satisfaction. While the practice of co-teaching continues to gain popularity among special and content area educators across the country, the research base supporting its use has not expanded in proportion (Murawski & Swanson, 2001). As schools invest valuable time and money into education, it is critical that co-teaching training and implementation be supported. The purpose of this research was to determine the influence co-teaching training may have had on teachers' perceptions of co-teaching. This offered insight relating to the context within which the co-teacher acts and the influence this may have on their perceptions.

School can be frustrating and difficult for many students, but for those with disabilities there may be even more challenges. Students with disabilities need a teacher that understands their problems, has skills to help them overcome their challenges, and supports them in their efforts to achieve success. Due to the additional services required for students with disabilities, traditionally there have been two separate teaching environments; one for students with disabilities and one for students without disabilities, in order to suit the students' specific needs. Today's classrooms need not follow the constraints of the past. Classrooms are now mandated to offer students the benefits of 38 years of experience teaching children with disabilities, since the enactment of Public Law 94-142 in 1975. In 1997 the law was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), refined, and improved. With these changes came opportunities for better learning environments for all students. These legal changes have made it increasingly difficult to have educational programs designed solely for students with disabilities (Zollers, Ramanathan, & Moonset, 1999). Today, a student with cerebral palsy may be sitting

next to a student without disabilities. Only students with extreme disabilities or severe behavioral problems are typically pulled out of class into a separate setting; although in many instances the students with disabilities are accompanied by a professional aide and remain in the general educational setting.

Due to the updates in IDEA teachers continue, as always, to search for effective methods to educate all students in the general educational setting.   Legal mandates promote the maintenance of learners with disabilities within the general curriculum with the support of additional assistance provided by special education.   Supplementary aids and services include the placement of a special educator within the general education classroom to provide in-room assistance as requested or to participate actively and equally in the instructional process by co-teaching (Rosman, 1994). Co-teaching therefore has become one of the most popular methods of including learners with disabilities into the general educational setting (Smith, 2008).

Even though the choice of co-teaching, instead of a substantially separate classroom, is now to a great extent widespread, the coupling of the special education and content area teachers and the technicalities of the pairing seem to be the stumbling blocks to the efficiency of the partnership (Fleming & Bauer, 2007). According to the findings from this survey, special education teachers and content area teachers' perspectives on co-teaching greatly varies, including those with and without experience co-teaching. One would think special education teachers would be the most positive/ favorable to the co-teaching method since they have had the most training, and the content area had less favorable perception but special education teachers with experience have less favorable perception than content area teachers with experience because they may be in the role of the gloried teacher assistant and content area teacher still are in a leader role. Special education teachers are less favorable with experience, those who are not

trained in the method, who may be future co-teachers, may be optimistic but naïve regarding the skills needed, effort required and preparation necessary for successful results.

It was concluded from this study that co-teachers generally supported co-teaching. Study participants reported benefits of co-teaching for students both with and without disabilities as well as for the co-teachers themselves. These findings are a good representation of current co-teaching practices. However, teachers who had negative co-teaching experiences could choose not to participate in the studies. Thus, it's possible that findings provide a more favorable picture of co-teaching than would have been found in a true sampling of co-teachers. Even with the probable slant in favor of co-teaching found in these studies, participants expressed concerns about how co-teaching was being implemented, although most people involved in co-teaching classrooms felt the practice provided benefits for everyone involved. Because of the small sample size, and the fact that the population was from a single college environment, the study recommends that additional research on co-teaching, the subsequent proposals are given for future co-teaching practices:

This chapter will be broken down into the following sections: Discussion of the Major Findings, Discussion of the Major Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework, Discussion of the Major Findings in Relation to the Literature Review, Definition Recommendations, Training Recommendations (University Level and School District Level), School Recommendations (Practice and Districts Policy), Further Research Recommendations, and Summary.

Discussion of the Major Findings

Upon review there are three major findings that have resulted from this study.

Special education teachers. The special education teacher is the person assigned to provide instruction, case management, and necessary supports to fulfill a student's IEP requirements. Educators' attitude is a fundamental component in shaping the success of services in the teaching of learners with disabilities (Stoler, 1992; MacDonald & Hardman, 1989; Parrish, Nunn, & Hattrup, 1982; Larrivee & Cook, 1979). Special education teachers are usually trained in inclusion methods while content area teachers often are not (Coombs-Richardson, Al-Juraid, & Stuker, 2000; Simmons & Magiera, 2007). Due to lack of training for content area teachers, there is often confusion about the role each co-teacher should take, dissatisfaction with the experience, and a lack of confidence in co-teaching (Chapple, 2009).

One would hope that special education teachers would be positive of the co-teaching method and inclusion, as special education teachers should be the advocates for the education of students with disabilities. However, the responses by these students participating in this survey evidenced just the opposite. For example, under the Advantages and Disadvantages section question #2, "Students with disabilities learn social skills that are modeled by students without disabilities," special education teachers without experience had a 71% agreement rate. However, for those with experience it was only 38%. For question #3, "Students with disabilities have higher academic achievement when included in the general education classroom," special education teachers without experience had a 57% agreement rate. However with experience it was only 25%. For question # 7, "Students with disabilities should be included in the general education curriculum with their peers without disabilities," special education teachers without experience had a 43% agreement rate, while for those with experience it was only 38%. And under Expectations question #68, "Students with disabilities in a co-taught classroom increase positive feelings about themselves as capable learners," 57% of special education teachers

without experience agreed while only 38% without experience agreed. Finally, for question #70, "The behaviors of students with disabilities are better in a co-taught classroom," 43% of special education teachers without experience agreed while only 25% with experience agreed.

In this survey, and with this population of these students, special education teachers with experience many times held a less favorable view of co-teaching than special education teachers without experience. Without the experience of the co-taught classroom the special education teachers are very positive about students with disabilities within the general education environment. This begs questions the question, why is this happening? Is this due to the lack of co-teaching professional development, support, environment, or something else? What happens once the special education teacher is in the co-teaching school environment? Why did this group of special education teachers with experience look less favorably about co-teaching and inclusion as an opportunity to benefit students with disabilities?

Content area teachers. A content teacher is defined as the person assigned to teach a general education curriculum for a school term, I.E. science or history. Moving the historically solo art of teaching into the new realm of collaborative instruction has been shown to cause some upset to traditional teacher roles (Mastropieri et al., 2005; Welch, 2000). Many content area are assigned to co-teach with little regard for their preferences, a lack of formal preparation or training, and no clear understanding of their roles or responsibilities to learners with disabilities in the co-taught setting (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Weiss & Lloyd, 2003). In addition, many content area teachers have doubted the general instructional skills of special educators (Murawski, 2005).

One might posit that content area teachers might look less favorably upon co-teaching and inclusion as an opportunity to benefit both general education students and students with

disabilities given that this has not been a focus of their training. However, responses to several items evidenced just the opposite, again, with this group of students. In fact, on many survey items, content area teachers *with* experience looked *more* favorably upon the opportunity of co-teaching to benefit students with disabilities. For example, under the Expectations section question #67 "Students with disabilities learn more in a co-taught classroom than in a single-teacher general education classroom", only 10% of content area teachers without experience agreed, and 75% of content area teachers agreed implying students with disabilities learn more in a co-taught classroom than in a single-teacher general education classroom, therefore supporting co-teaching. For question #75, under the General Information section, "Co-teaching has improved your teaching", 10% of content area teachers without experience agreed, while 83% of content area teachers with experience agreed. And, finally, for question #77 "Co-teaching is a worthwhile professional experience", 20% of content area teachers without experience agreed, while 83% of content area teachers with experience agreed.

Interestingly in this survey, and with this population of these students, content area teachers with experience many time held a more favorable view of co-teaching than content area teachers without experience. This is a very positive discovery. Without the experience of the co-taught classroom the content area teachers are less favorable about students with disabilities within the general education environment. This begs questions the question, why is this happening? What happens once the content area teacher is in the co-teaching school environment working with students with disabilities? Why did this group of content area teachers with experience look more favorably about co-teaching and inclusion as an opportunity to benefit students with disabilities?

Training. It is well established in the literature that it is vital that together both the content area teacher and special education teacher in these settings be effectively trained to meet the needs of the students with disabilities without hindering the progress of the students without disabilities (Fleming & Bauer, 2007; Goor, 1994; Dieker, & Murawski, 2003). As schools invest valuable time and money into education, it is critical that co-teaching training and implementation be supported in order to effectively carry out the method (Nordh, 2011). Without training, co-teaching will not be effective (Chapple, 2009).

Based on the responses to this survey there needs to be more training on the co-teaching method and on the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education environment for the partnership of the content area teacher and special education teacher. This training should take place in in-service professional development training throughout the experience and prior to the implementation of a co-teaching environment. Under the Training section question #21 "I have received the training I need to successfully use co-teaching strategies and implement inclusion", special education teachers without experience have a 14% agreement rate, implying that they did not feel they had enough training, and with experience special education teachers have a 38% agreement rate. The content area teachers without experience have a 40% agreement rate, and with experience this decreases to a 25% agreement rate.

This raises the question of why are special education teachers with experience feeling more positively on the training they have received being adequate, and content area teachers with experience feeling less positively on the training they have received being adequate. Perhaps this is because special education teachers once actually working with a content area teacher realize that they, the special education teacher, are actually the expert on inclusion of students with disabilities in this partnership. Special education teachers are receiving far more training

than their counterparts. The special education teacher may not feel that they have had enough training; they realize that it is far more than the content area teacher in this method. In the majority of questions #21-29 from the Training portion of the survey the content area teachers with experience realize they do need training in the method, training that is not taking place.

Discussion of the Major Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework

Teacher efficacy. This study was informed by Bandura's theory of efficacy. The conceptual framework used in this project was founded on the principle that educators with advanced perceived educator efficacy will be predisposed to be motivated, successful, determined, and continue in their career longer than individuals with small amounts of perceived educator efficacy. The goal of this inquiry is to understand the experiences and perception of the teachers and the context in which they originated through the lens of self- efficacy theory. An educators' sense of efficacy is the teachers' self-assurance in his or her capability to arrange and carry out a precise instructional assignment in a certain situation (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Researchers suggest there is a positive relationship among educators' sense of efficacy and student success (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002; LoGerfo, & Hoy, 2004), making a strong sense of efficacy requisite for teaching and therefore, co-teaching.

Bandura's social cognitive theory provides the main theoretical framework for the research on teacher efficacy. In this theory, human behavior is described through a triadic reciprocity model of interconnection wherein behavior, cognitive and added individual factors, and environmental events function as interrelating causes of one another (Bandura, 1986). Individuals behave as a result of personal, behavioral, and environmental influences. The

efficacy of teachers may be influenced by various aspects which include opportunities during collaborative planning and co-teaching.

The collaboration practices between teachers are associated with teacher efficacy (Nunn et al., 2009). Teacher efficacy refers to one's perception that he or she possesses the capability to perform actions needed to accomplish desired teaching goals (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Teacher efficacy relates to student achievement as it results in teachers' efforts to adapt instructional practices that support student learning (Allinder, 1995; Almog & Shecktman, 2007; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Caprara et al., 2006; Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Goddard et al., 2004; Ross, 1992). The reason for this research is to study the efficacy of content area and special education teachers on co-teaching. The results revealed that there was no significant difference in teacher efficacy between the content area and special education teachers on co-teaching.

Results of this study were in many ways not anticipated, but the study did identify some variables that may influence special education and content area teachers' efficacy beliefs and attitudes toward co-teaching and inclusion. According to Yeo, Ang, Chong, Huan, and Quek (2008) teachers develop higher teacher efficacy as they mature in their years of professional teaching experience. The combination of experience and expertise of both co-teachers may be a contributing factor that resulted in the lack of significant difference between the efficacy of content area teacher and special education teachers.

Educator efficacy is described as a self-perceived belief of an individual's abilities to bring about preferred outcomes, even with students who are unmotivated or have current discipline problems (Bandura, 1977). Educator efficacy has been found to be connected to educator performance, hard work, eagerness, originality, preparation, determination, flexibility,

enthusiasm to work with students who are difficult, and their dedication to the education field (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

Teacher efficacy beliefs significantly affect classroom effectiveness (Brownell and Pajares, 1999). One would think that special education teachers would be more confident in their own abilities than the content area teachers believing in special education teachers abilities. This is not the case in this survey in regards to questions # 46-51 concerning Vision. For example in question #51 "Special educators have the skills to suggest instructional strategies to meet unique student needs", special education teachers without experience have a 43% agreement rate, and with experience it increases to a 50% agreement rate, similarly content area teachers without experience have a 40% agreement rate, however content area teachers with experience increases considerable to 83% agreement rate. Perhaps this is because content area teachers with experience in the co-taught inclusion setting actually realize through this experience that special education teachers have a considerable amount of training compared to content area teacher in regards to the instructional strategies to meet unique student needs, which is critical when teaching students with disabilities.

Buell et al. (1999) surveyed 289 content area and special education teachers' perceptions towards inclusion. Results indicated that the special education teachers rated their efficacy, ability and understanding higher than did content area teachers. These findings are consistent with particular questions in this survey, such as #9 "I have been adequately trained to meet the needs of children with disabilities" and #21 "I have received the training I need to successfully use co-teaching strategies and implement inclusion" with teachers' with experience, from this current survey's results and Freytag (2001) who found a significant mean difference between content area teachers and special education teachers' efficacy scores; findings indicated special

education teachers had higher teaching and personal teaching efficacy beliefs than did content area teachers. In 2007, Cameron and Cook examined the beliefs, intended practices and skills of teachers in planning and accommodating students with intellectual disabilities. Special education teachers rated their beliefs, intended practices and skills higher than did content area teachers, which is in accordance with particular questions, #9 and #21, from this survey.

Previous experiences create a sense of high or low self-efficacy. Therefore, it seems reasonable that educators ought to be offered strategies and techniques that they belief will make a constructive change in their classroom and can be used successfully. Further efficacy investigations conducted by Jordan, Stanovich, and Roach (1997) confirmed that educators who have an elevated level of efficacy will be more successful when working with learners, regardless of the learner's skill level. Educators who have a higher efficacy will also be more likely to integrate effective strategies to encourage students with disabilities (Bender & Ukeje, 1989). Efficacy studies reveal that teachers who are secure in their skills may bring about more constructive transformations when working with students with disabilities. This too suggests that it is imperative to expand co-teacher confidence and that co-teachers must be knowledgeable about correct methods that will permit them to meet the requirements of all learners with and without disabilities.

Discussion of the Major Findings in Relation to the Literature Review

The objective of this research was to record the perceptions of content area and special education teachers on co-teaching. One would think special education teachers would be the most positive/ favorable to the co-teaching method since they have had the most training, and the content area had less favorable perception but special education teachers with experience have less favorable perception than content area teachers with experience because they may be in the

role of the gloried teacher assistant and content area teacher still are in a leader role. Special education teachers are less favorable with experience, those who are not trained in the method, who may be future co-teachers, may be optimistic but naïve regarding the skills needed, effort required and preparation necessary for successful results.

Under the Training section question #21 "I have received the training I need to successfully use co-teaching strategies and implement inclusion", special education teachers without experience have a 14% agreement rate, implying that they did not feel they had enough training, and with experience special education teachers have a 38% agreement rate. The content area teachers without experience have a 40% agreement rate, and with experience this decreases to a 25% agreement rate. This raises the question of why are special education teachers with experience feeling more positively on the training they have received being adequate, and content area teachers with experience feeling less positively on the training they have received being adequate. Perhaps this is because special education teachers once actually working with a content area teacher realize that they, the special education teacher, are actually the expert on inclusion of students with disabilities in this partnership. Special education teachers are receiving far more training than their counterparts. The special education teacher may not feel that they have had enough training, they realize that it is far more than the content area teacher in this method.

In the majority of questions #21-29 from the Training portion of the survey the content area teachers with experience realize they do need training in the method, training that is not taking place. In keeping with the findings, the literature supports the need for professional development for teachers seeking an effective co-teaching model. A problem identified in this study, as well as many others (Walther-Thomas, 1997; Scruggs, Mastropieri & McDuffie, 2007)

was a lack of staff development directed at co-teaching strategies. This professional development can take many forms. Simmons & Magiera (2007) and Villa et al. (1996) suggest school districts should train co-teachers as a pair, instead of separating general educators from their special educator peers. The participants in this study complicated this suggestion because some teachers were not interested in mentorship programs to facilitate co-teaching. Despite their perceptions, the literature shows when they are all trained together, it increases the understanding of their collective roles. Conderman & Johnson-Rodriguez (2009) found hands-on experience was most beneficial in teacher training to accommodate special education students. In regard to professional development, Gerber & Popp (2000) suggest professional development on co-teaching should include all staff members such as new teachers, administrators, general educators, guidance counselors and parents. In their study, Smith & Dlugosh (1999) iterate in-service trainings need to be both relevant and practical. Participants in the study confirmed this notion. In keeping with the research findings, the review of current research corroborates the importance of professional development when instituting an effective model of co-teaching. The results of this study coincided with studies that found, in general, educators felt they were not sufficiently trained to engage in successful co-teaching practices (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Carter, Prater, Jackson & Marchant, 2009). While they enjoyed the collaborative experience, participants conveyed they had substantial room for growth. Gerber & Popp (2000) cite, "mentorships, school-based staff as consultants, problem-solving sessions, and sessions for teacher dialogue to share best practices as vehicles to support new and ongoing collaborative efforts" (p. 233).

Strategies, challenges, benefits for both students and teachers, and academic influences of co-teaching are affected by many factors. One evident necessity for successful co-teaching is

proper planning. Some issues to Planning section were also revealed according to the survey, particularly questions 33-36. The need for co-planning time was reported by co-teachers as a major challenge. This finding is in agreement with prior research, which also identified the lack of co-planning as a barrier to co-teaching (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004; Walther-Thomas & Bryant, 1996).

Though the questions #63-72 under the Expectation section of the survey it was determined that co-teachers largely believed in co-teaching and have the expectation it can work. The content area and special education teachers surveyed stated benefits of co-teaching for learners both with and without disabilities as well as for the co-teachers themselves. The results, specifically questions #65 and #67 from the survey confirm that both special and content area teachers agree with the idea of co-teaching, and that is can be an effective method, but there are some elements that have yet to be addressed for improvement. These results are a worthy depiction of existing co-teaching practices. However, educators who had negative co-teaching experiences may have selected not to contribute in the survey. Therefore, it's likely that conclusions deliver a more positive image of co-teaching than would have been found in an accurate sample of co-teachers. Even with the possible viewpoint in approval of co-teaching found in this survey's data, participants expressed concerns about how co-teaching was being implemented, #19 "Adaptive materials and equipment are easily acquired for meeting the needs of students with disabilities", #21 "I have received the training I need to successfully use co-teaching strategies and implement inclusion", #31 "I have the time in my work day to individualize instruction for students with disabilities", #32 "A scheduled mutual planning time for co-teaching has been assigned", and #41" I find it difficult to modify my instructional strategies and my teaching style to meet the needs of students with disabilities", although most

teachers' part of co-teaching classrooms felt the practice provided benefits for everybody involved.

Connections between the findings of this study and the literature on co-teaching pointed to numerous topics which might need to be addressed to ensure that co-teaching is correctly implemented. These topics include: (1) the need for communication between co-teachers, (2) administrative support, (3) a common philosophy of serving students with learning disabilities and co-teaching between content area and special education teachers, and (4) common planning opportunities (Dieker, 1999). Educators have described an assortment of frustrations with co-teaching. These frustrations consist of absence of preparation (Mastropieri, et al., 2005), absence of administrative backing (Dieker, 2001; Rea, 2005), and an absence of equality in the partnership (Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Spencer, 2005). In broad terms, content area teachers have doubted the general instructional skills of special educators (Murawski, 2005). Dr. Lynne Cook, a co-teaching expert, explained that "co-teaching is not simply having two teachers in a classroom with one acting as a glorified paraprofessional or an in-class tutor for one or two students" (Spencer, 2005), and nevertheless that is precisely the complaint of numerous educators (Weiss & Lloyd, 2002).

Across the states, interest in co-teaching as a means for ensuring that students with disabilities have access to and are fully included in the general education curriculum is high (Müller, Friend, & Hurley-Chamberlain, 2009). Currently, Massachusetts calls for school districts to implement and adopt professional development procedures for all administrators, classroom teachers, and professional staff. However, the state of Massachusetts does not required schools or teachers to have any co-teacher training or professional development for teachers before or during co-teaching implementation (Edwards, 2010).

Definition Recommendations

Teachers need to be made aware of what co-teaching is and how it is defined in order to be prepared to co-teach. Perhaps some of this confusion originates within the confusing and conflicting nature of the related literature. To begin with, there are many definitions of co-teaching and several states have adopted their own definitions of co-teaching. In addition, there are a multitude of models of co-teaching (Muller, Friend, & Hurley-Chamberlain, 2009), according to the needs the state. Similarly, states have also chosen to use different terminology when describing co-teaching (Muller, Friend, & Hurley- Chamberlain, 2009). This undoubtedly leads to confusion. Schools and teacher education programs may benefit from using a similar language regarding co-teaching to ease this confusion. Institutes of higher learning should be clear in their teacher education preparation programs regarding terms and definitions that are used in the surrounding districts and use a 'common language' with regards to co-teaching (Brownell, Ross, Color, & McCallum, 2005).

Training Recommendations

University. Teacher education programs in universities prepare teacher candidates for their field of study. Candidates are required to have numerous field experiences before even beginning their student teaching or professional internship. Today's university teacher preparation programs strive to produce excellent teachers. Findings from this study reveal that one way to produce teachers that are prepared for today's classroom and capable of having the highest levels of self-efficacy in terms of co-teaching is by offering a curriculum in which co-teaching is imbedded. One possible way to create even better teachers, ready to enter modern inclusion classrooms seems to be by offering more co-teaching, more practice, and in turn, more

collaboration across fields of study (Parrotti, 2011). This would be applicable to programs preparing content area teachers, elementary education teachers and special education teachers.

The relationship of the two teachers in co-teaching settings is complex, and intricacies can be worked through by offering meaningful field experience practice for these professionals prior to the point where they are doing it on the job. Murawski (2002) offers suggestions that would benefit pre-service teachers on how to deal with sharing space and responsibilities in a co-taught class. Pre-service teacher candidates should be encouraged to review these strategies before and during their field experiences. Collaboration is a large part of co-teaching. Teacher education programs should emphasize the importance of collaboration by blending special educators and general educators for more class work. This would prepare pre-service teachers not only for co-teaching, but for the expectation of teachers to collaborate with other professionals (Parrotti, 2011).

By implanting these, students with and without disabilities will benefit. The first year teacher will enter today's classroom, one in which co-teaching is the norm, and be prepared and be able to educate young people optimally alongside another teacher. The questions, concerns, and confusion regarding co-teaching will have been addressed in teacher education programs prior to taking professional employment as a teacher. If these recommendations are used by teacher education programs, the pre-service teacher candidate will be equipped to educate in today's educational realities (Parrotti, 2011).

School district. School district administrators need to include preparation and on-going professional development to all teachers to best prepare them for co-teaching experiences. Special education teachers and general education teachers will comprehend the model with a deeper understanding and work together more and work together more effectively when joint

teacher training is offered to all partners. This reinforces the co-teaching model by formalizing a consistent district interpretation of co-teaching, while allowing for individual teaching styles among co-teaching pairs (Simmons & Magiera, 2007).

School districts should take steps to ensure sufficient administrative training that assists in developing policies required for educating in inclusive settings. School districts must prepare administrators to focus on the definition of co-teaching, special education law, plans for assessing, encouraging, and arrangement of educators' preparation time so that teachers in co-teaching classrooms have chances to prepare simultaneously and share information.

School Recommendations

Practice. Wolfe and Hall (2003) stated, "Let's end the debate about whether to include students with (mild and moderate) severe disabilities in the general education classroom, let's focus on (the) how, when, and where" (p. 52).   Most schools have adopted the co-teaching model for providing support to their students with disabilities within general educational classes. This approach to teaching students with and without disabilities in co-teaching classes presents benefits as well as challenges. One challenge is additional demand for uniting teachers of co-taught classes to collaborate together in order to provide rich educational experiences that meets the needs of all students. There is an opportunity for district leaders and professional developers to look at providing adequate support to co-teachers so that they are provided information about research based practices, which lead to effective co-planning and co-teaching. The principal plays a critical role as an instructional leader in facilitating and guiding the collaboration between co-teachers (Hines, 2008). The results of this study present implications for supporting co-teachers.

A scheduled planning time would be ideal; however, any support for collaboration time is beneficial to teachers. The educators surveyed stated shared preparation as significant for a flourishing co-teaching arrangement. It might be hard to achieve this in the course of the hours of school. Innovative scheduling possibly will allow co-teachers instances to convene when they would otherwise be given a study hall supervision or cafeteria duty (Buerck, 2010). Letting co-teachers have moments to prepare jointly, whether it is in the school day or achieved by releasing the educators of previous to or following school duties, is essential for correct co-teaching to happen (Murawski & Dieker, 2008). An additional potential resolution would be for school leaders to lessen extra-curricular duties for co-teachers to permit them sufficient opportunity to meet earlier or after school (Buerck, 2010).

Furthermore, school leaders should make certain that special education teachers are joined up with only one or two general education teachers each day, and place them in the discipline area(s) in which they are the most proficient, and allow these duos to work with each other for several semesters in order to really cultivate an effective working rapport (Simmons & Magiera, 2005). Another aspect of co-teaching that instructional leaders may influence is in the assignment of special education teachers as teachers-of-record of their co-taught classes. This means that they can have access to the grade book and that their name will show up on the students' schedule identifying they are the co-teacher for the class. The recommendation is for school leaders to plainly explain what a co-teaching setting 'looks like' in their district and anticipate seeing the duo working together as two experts (Buerck, 2010).

Professional development arises in a variety of ways, as in-service preparation, participatory educator research, coursework, and professional conferences. Co-teachers at every step need to be exposed to in-service preparation. Professional development will grow teacher

self-assurance, outlooks, and readiness to form and implement a plan that encourages academic and social growth for all students. It appears that professional development must be leveled. Recommended tiers could be before implementation and for the duration of implementation (Chapple, 2009). Providing explicit training for co-teachers each year in advance of the academic year and letting co-teaching teams work together during the training was suggested in the study's replies. Generally, it would be best practice to have a plan for professional development that would be leveled from the teacher tier, to the school tier, to the town tier. Moreover, extra involvement from school leaders in the area of co-teaching may aid with pinpointing the professional development necessities of effective co-teaching teams. From the university viewpoint, further study on how to implement co-teaching at the higher education educator preparation perception is essential. This preparation needs to transpire previous to the application of co-teaching, throughout the application, and constant thru the application (Chapple, 2009). With any luck, the outcomes of this research might be the motivating spark for destroying obstacles and permitting a new method addressing how to better provide co-teaching experiences in schools.

District policy. An agreement is required on the exact features of the collaboration involved in co-teaching in order to yield positive outcomes. School districts should offer a clear explanation of the roles and responsibilities of the special and general education educators working in co-teaching classrooms. School districts should provide educators teaching students with disabilities ample teaching tools, resources, equipment, and support personnel to implement a successful co-taught classroom. Co-teaching partnerships ought to be built on their enthusiasm for the cooperative method and the content discipline. It is vital for the content area and special education educators to choose to be part of a co-teaching team.

As long as co-teachers remain an effective partnership, retain the teams together if possible. There should be no limit on how lengthy a co-teaching team stays with each other, as long as students continue to learn. Several researchers (Friend & Cook, 2010; Dieker, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000, Wallace et al., 2002) stress numerous features of effective co-teaching, predominantly personal and professional like-mindedness between educational teams and fairness of the education roles. If co-teaching teams exhibit compatibility and instructional equality, they are on the path to being a successful duo (Simmons & Magiera, 2007). Co-teaching teams ought to observe additional co-teachers. Inside the district in their individual contents, co-teaching teams ought to watch other teams in the classroom with opportunities built in for additional conversations between the educators. These observations give co-teachers the chances to share thoughts on the instructional method of co-teaching (Simmons & Magiera, 2007).

Co-teachers must be given often scheduled shared development opportunities throughout the week. In the setting researched by Wallace and her associates (2002), co-planning opportunities was frequently stated by the educators as a vital factor of school-wide backing. Endurance of co-teaching teams does not guarantee the success of the co-teaching teams (Simmons & Magiera, 2007). Nevertheless, excellence in co-teaching is established on shared co-planning opportunities, which leads to further reliable and thoughtful implantation of co-teaching. Also, the establishment of summer development opportunities for co-teaching teams, which permits for enduring development with essential accommodations built in from the onset (Simmons & Magiera, 2007). Quarterly half-day preparation opportunities similarly boost co-teachers to remain to design effective program of studies for all learners through the school year,

as well as students with disabilities (Simmons & Magiera, 2007). Special educators must be encouraged to grow into an essential member of a specific discipline.

Further Research Recommendations

As with all research, topics surfaced that inspire the need for further research. This study presents several indications of need regarding future research. The main limitation of this study is found in the instrumentation used in determining the teacher efficacy of co-teachers. The researcher aims to conduct future research to create a valid and reliable instrument that would measure the teacher efficacy of collaborating teachers of co-taught classes. In addition to this, there is a need to further explore the various sources of efficacy in co-teaching situations. Future studies that utilize a modified design that will include classroom observations, observations during co-planning time, and interviews about the collaboration dynamics between co-teachers may lead to better definitions and examples of sources of teacher efficacy that further supports the presented model of teacher efficacy in co-teaching. Although the co-teaching pair may be considered as a collective unit, the study did not attempt to determine information about the collective efficacy of co-teachers. Collective efficacy is considered as an important contextual school feature that may lead to the growth of educator effectiveness (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). Consideration of the possible connection among the shared effectiveness of co-teachers and their own personal teacher efficacy may lead to future research. Forthcoming studies linking educators' perceived sense of effectiveness views and approaches toward co-teaching with the certainty of knowing how to educate varied populations of learners in the general educational setting are required. In order to remain on the route to applying successful co-teaching partnerships, added study need to be led (Chappel, 2009).

The components of professional development, mutual preparation opportunities, and school leadership backing appeared as the greatest shared obstacles to carrying out successful co-teaching partnerships. While these major objects of interest arose from the literary works and from this study, it seems essential to conduct additional study on each of these issues. Added research on educators and administrators could help recognize what forms of in-service training for educators would have the greatest effect. Discovering a school district where co-teaching has been applied effectively and investigative their wide-ranging in-service co-teacher training design might garner other evidence on the arrangements of effective co-teaching training (Chappel, 2009). There should be added studies on the professional development for school leadership to continue to recognize the abilities essential to guide co-teaching as an instructional method inside the school leader's school (Chappel, 2009).

Detailed research on ways to employ co-teaching into educator and leadership candidate programs must be conducted. Furthermore, both qualitative and quantitative facts should be composed on the academic and social benefits of having learners taught in co-taught settings. These facts might additionally improve the desire of faculty to implement co-teaching as an instructional approach. Since the eventual objective of public education is to increase the learner's achievement and create better access to the general curriculum, this information may help teachers see the benefits to learners. Seeing learners show improved academic performance in schools with surge the likelihood, that when provided the necessary skills for teachers to implement co-teaching in schools, teachers will see the advantage of this instructional approach (Chappel, 2009).

Repeated observation over time from the preliminary first year in the school for co-teachers during a considerable period of time of implementing co-teaching should be taken on.

This research would provide some added figures on how the professional development necessities of co-teaching pairs have altered over time. This research could pinpoint the varying professional development necessities of co-teachers through the development of implementation. This investigator would also propose that this qualitative information be gathered through discussions with co-teachers, both separate and jointly, as well as observations of the co-taught classroom (Chappel, 2009).

Longitudinal research which looks at variables or partakers over a period of time should be considered to study changes in educator effectiveness and outlooks toward co-teaching (Smith, 2008). Replication and a broader research design will extend this knowledge base further. Thus continued assessment of efficacy views and outlooks toward co-teaching for in-service as well as pre-service educators is necessary (Smith, 2008). A larger population size (including other Massachusetts state universities, and populations from multiple states) should be studied to continue to build support for alternative instructional delivery methods and pinpoint in-service areas and preparation needs for schools and educators preparation programs. Job-embedded training might be compared with traditional professional development programs (Ercolano, 2007).

Research the outlooks from additional specialists in teaching such as administrators, educational assistants, support services, and allied service staff. This study has begun the process of providing empirical support for co-teaching. Implementation should be well-planned, following the guidelines proposed by Bauwens and Hourcade (1991). Preplanning discussion should include philosophy, theoretical viewpoints, procedures and instructional methods within the classroom, and evaluation practices.

Summary

Modern classrooms increasingly include children with and without disabilities and often such classes have two teachers. Co-teaching has gained much attention in current education literature. The addition of learners with disabilities into the general education setting will continue to grow and the collaboration of special and content area educators will make the process easier for all involved. As integral parts of school implantation plans, schools will need to provide these co-teaching teams with a preplanning conference time, a shared preparation time for the content area and special educators during the school year, and administrative support. In return, the students in co-teaching classrooms will receive variations in instruction and more individual assistance from a creative and dynamic team of teachers. Co-teaching has been part of education for a number of years. By formalizing what co-teaching looks like, special and content area educators can enhance each other's performance, and jointly, tackle the needs of all learners, including students with and without disabilities.

The teaching profession is entering an important stage of transformation. In response to educational trends and law, some school districts have adopted co-taught classrooms to allow students with disabilities to access the curriculum in general education classroom. While this can present some challenges, co-teaching can bring several benefits to both students and teachers (Scruggs, et al., 2007). Students are exposed to and learn with a more diverse peer group. Special education students are provided additional attention because there are two teachers in the room. The teachers are provided additional opportunities for professional growth by learning from the collaboration with their co-teacher (Scruggs, et al., 2007). Teaching co-taught classes presents co-teachers with a unique situation to share accountability for educating general and special education students together. Collaboration allows them to plan lessons that meet the

requirements of varied learners. It also allows them to access learning experiences as professional learning occurs within the collaborative relationship.

Considerable work has been written on the necessity for teamwork in schools to meet the demands presented by an increasingly varied student population (Mohr & Dichter, 2001; Brownell & Walther-Thomas, 2002; Duchardt, Marlow, Inman, Christensen, & Reeves, 1999; Friend & Cook, 2010; Cook & Friend, 2010). Furthermore, the challenges teachers face in meeting the academic and social needs of students with disabilities and other unique learning needs are often overwhelming for a single teacher in one classroom (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1991; Grant & Gillette, 2006; Little & Theiker, 2009; Nevin, Cramer, Voigt & Salazar, 2008). Over the past several decades, co-teaching has been viewed as a means to address the classroom needs of both students and the teachers who instruct them. It is imperative that the preparation of teachers who graduate with knowledge and skills in co-teaching as collaborative practice enables them to effectively address the needs of students with disabilities and other diverse learners. This level of training would help safeguard that all students have the same chance to reach their potential during their school experience (Grant & Gillette, 2006). Clearly, no one course, program, or organization is not capable of bringing about the total transformation needed in the field of teacher education that facilitates the attainment of understanding and abilities essential for collaborative practices such as co- teaching. An interdisciplinary approach to teacher training is vital in the field as the way to bring about this deeply needed change.

This study explored various and critical aspects of co-teaching and to what degree training and/or professional development were implemented and the potential impact of that training of PD. To reveal the perceptions co-teachers had of their own practice, and determine how the practice may be improved, the researcher conducted this survey study and this research

has confirmed the most necessary approach for implementing successful co-teaching partnerships is through professional development. Consistent with current literature, results of this study confirm that if schools are to effectively use co-teaching as an instructional method to meet the requirements of a diverse student population in co-taught environments, then educator preparation focused on effective strategies to enhance co-teaching is crucial. With the continuous increase of learners with disabilities, preparing more special education educators with the information and pedagogy required to meet the requirements of those learners should be a main concern of education reform plan (Smith, 2008).

The objective of this research was to record the perceptions of teachers on co-teaching. It is fascinating that through this research one can view that on the majority content area teachers without experience had a higher response rate indicating one who disagrees strongly to the statements regarding their perception of the co-teaching method, and the content area teachers with experience had a lower response rate indicating one who strongly agrees to the statements regarding their perception of the co-teaching method. Those who are not trained in the method, who may be future co-teachers, may be optimistic but naïve regarding the skills needed, effort required and preparation necessary for successful results. The special education teachers' defined roles were visibly secondary to their general education counterparts. When using the 'lead and assist' co-teaching method, the role of the special educator may seem secondary on the surface, but true co-teaching partnerships clarify their individual roles and value each other as professionals (Dieker, 2001). Principles, outlook, and effectiveness beliefs of educators for both content area and special education educators are essential to the educational and social achievement of learners with disabilities in co-taught settings (Smith, 2008). Pajares (1996)

acknowledged that educator effectiveness has established to be strongly connected to many significant learning outcomes.

To ascertain how college courses and/or professional development has impacted content area teachers' perceptions of co-teaching, a 82 item survey was given to southeastern Massachusetts teachers currently enrolled (academic year of 2012-2013) in graduate course of ED530 Teacher as a Researcher at Bridgewater State University on the influences contributing to teacher perception of co-teaching and in particular the impact of prior training of teachers on their perceptions of co-teaching. This data, gathered from teachers throughout southeastern Massachusetts schools was essential to understand how experience has, or has not, impacted teachers' perceptions. The results from this survey lead to the finding that co-teaching preparation for all teachers needs to be improved at both the pre-graduation and professional development stage. In simpler terms, the results show that more preparation is needed to prepare teachers before and during co-teaching experiences. The need to provide adequate resources to co-teachers has never been more critical, therefore, it is anticipated that the existing effort of the present study represents one valuable step into the public dialogue to support and strengthen the impact of co-teaching training. By disregarding this duty is shortchanging these co-teachers, and at the end of the day, their students.

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Appendix A- Bridgewater State University's Personnel Letter

Northeastern University
College *of* Professional Studies

Date
School
Address
City, State, Zip Code
Dear Professor,
I am writing this letter to ask for your help with my study on educators' responses to co-teaching. The research survey has been approved by the BSU Institutional Review Board. I would like to assess teachers (e.g., regular full-time teachers participating in co-teaching) as part of this project. The following provides a short overview of the study, as well as an outline of the preferred method of distribution.
The reason for this study is to inspect individual and organizational factors that may influence how co-teaching training affects the actual co-teaching experience. It should be noted that all data collected will remain anonymous. There will be no employee or institutional identifiers used. Therefore, there will be no way to identify which responses came from a particular teacher or from a particular school system. Furthermore, since participation is voluntary, teachers may choose to either participate or not to participate and they may withdraw their survey at any time prior to the publication of the data. There will be no way to determine who participates, or how many teachers participated from a particular school. A copy of the survey has been attached for your review.
Prior to distributing the study, the researcher will come into your class, with your permission, to briefly explain the survey, give contact information, and seek volunteers. This will not take longer than 10 minutes. This study will utilize an online survey. Thus, the teachers can complete the survey on their own time or at their convenience. For any students that are interested in participating, an email will be sent, including the survey and a cover letter that explains the survey to the teachers.
Thank you in advance for your support. Since the data collected from all schools will be presented in aggregate form, specific data regarding the schools where the graduate students are employed will not be available. However, if requested, a copy of this study will be made available to all who participate in the research.
In September you will contacted to discuss this project in more detail. Should you have any questions beforehand, please do not hesitate to call me at (508) 531-1226 or email me. Once again, thank you for your invaluable support.
Sincerely,

Ashley Blanca Rodrigues, M.A., C.A.G.S.
Northeastern University Doctoral Candidate
508-326-0059
ARodrigues@bridgew.edu
AshleyBlancaRodrigues@gmail.com

Appendix B- Initial Teacher's Letter

Northeastern University
College *of* Professional Studies

Date:

Dear Educator:

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. You are eligible to participate because you are a teacher in the identified Bridgewater State University course.

The researcher has been granted permission by the appropriate Bridgewater State University and Northeastern University Institutional Review Board to conduct this research and send surveys for distribution to you and your fellow classmates. You are not obligated to participate in this study. Participation is strictly voluntary, and no one, including your professor and your employer, will be aware of whether or not you participated in the study. Furthermore, all data collected will remain anonymous. There are no identifiers included on the survey.

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of applicable prior training on teacher perceptions of co-teaching. The survey questions will ask about your perceptions of certain aspects of your work. Should you choose to participate in this study, it will entail completing the survey and will require approximately 10-15 minutes of your time. All answers provided will be completely anonymous. No one will be able to link your answers to you. To maintain anonymity, please do not put any identifying information (employee or institution) on the survey.

There are no known risks associated with your participation. Your responses will be considered only in combination with those from other participants. The information obtained in the study may be published in scholarly journals or presented at scholarly meetings but your identity will be anonymous.

If you are willing to participate in the study, please fill out the survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated and a copy of the final report will be made available to all that participate in the study. Should you have any questions, please contact the Project Director or Faculty Sponsor listed below:

Project Director: Ms. Ashley Blanca Rodrigues
Doctoral Candidate
Northeastern University
(508) 326-0059
AshleyBlancaRodrigues@gmail.com
ARodrigues@bridgew.edu

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Christopher Unger
College of Professional Studies
Northeastern University
360 Huntington Avenue, BV 20
Boston, MA
Campus 617-373-2400
c.unger@neu.edu

Thanks again for your participation.
Sincerely, Ashley Blanca Rodrigues M.A., C.A.G.S.

Appendix C- Survey

Northeastern University
College *of* Professional Studies

Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey. Your involvement is greatly appreciated and will unquestionably give valuable information about issues that educators deal with in schools. Please read the directions for each part.

Part I- Teacher Information

Please respond the subsequent questions about your personal and professional characteristics either by writing your reply on the line provided or by placing an "**X**" on the appropriate line provided.

1. What grade do you teacher? Pre/ K_____ Elementary_____ Middle_____ High School_____
2. What is your setting? Regional _____Charter_____ Religious_____
                            Special Education_____ Private_____ Vocational_____
                  Rural_____ Urban_____ Suburban_____
3. What content area(s) do you teach (choose as many as applicable)?
         Social Studies_____ Sciences_____ English Language Arts_____ Mathematics_____
Other _____ (please specify) _____
4. Which area of certification are you currently employed in? Special Education_____General Education_____
5. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?
Bachelors_____Masters_____CAGS_____Doctorate_____
6. What is your present age? _____ years old
7. What is your sex? _____ Male _____ Female
8. What type of educator are you at this school?
         Regular (non-special education) full-time teacher _____ Special Education full-time teacher_____
         Or other (please specify) _____

9. How many *consecutive* years have you been teaching? _____
10. Do you currently co-teach (one regular education teacher and one special education teacher)?_____
11. How many years have you co-taught? _____

Part II- (adapted from 1) Salend, S.J. (2010). *Creating inclusive classrooms: Effective and reflective practices* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall 2) *Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC)* in Cochran, H. K. (1997, revised 2000). *Differences in teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education as measured by the Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-western Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.)

Instructions: A number of statements are presented below. Read each statement and think about your general perception of the statement. *Use the subsequent scale to specify your general perception about each statement.*

1 – Strongly Agree   2 – Agree Somewhat   3 – Neither Agree nor Disagree
4 – Disagree Somewhat   5 – Disagree Strongly

Advantages & Disadvantages

1.   I believe students with disabilities should be educated in a special education classroom.
          1   2   3   4   5
2.   Students with disabilities learn social skills that are modeled by students without disabilities.
          1   2   3   4   5
3.   Students with disabilities have higher academic achievement when included in the general education classroom.
          1   2   3   4   5
4.   It is difficult for children with disabilities to make academic gains in the general education classroom.
          1   2   3   4   5
5.   Self-esteem of children with disabilities increases when included in the general education classroom.
          1   2   3   4   5
6.   Students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms hinder the academic progress of the students without disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

7. Students with disabilities should be included in the general education curriculum with their peers without disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

Professional Issues

8. I am confident in my ability to teach children with disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

9. I have been adequately trained to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

10. I become easily frustrated when teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

	1	2	3	4	5

11. I become anxious when I learn that a student with disabilities will be in the general education classroom.

	1	2	3	4	5

12. I have problems teaching students with cognitive deficits in the general education classroom.

	1	2	3	4	5

Philosophical Issues

13. Although students differ intellectually, physically, and psychologically, I believe that all children can learn in most environments.

	1	2	3	4	5

14. I believe that academic progress in the general classroom is possible for children with disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

15. I can handle students with mild to moderate behavioral problems in the general classroom.

	1	2	3	4	5

16. Special in-service training in teaching children with disabilities should be required for all general education teachers.

	1	2	3	4	5

Logistical Concerns

17. I am comfortable teaching a child that is moderately physically disabled in the general classroom.

	1	2	3	4	5

18. I don't mind making special physical arrangements in the general education classroom to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

19. Adaptive materials and equipment are easily acquired for meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

20. My principal is supportive of the accommodations needed for teaching students with disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

Training

21. I have received the training I need to successfully use co-teaching strategies and implement inclusion.

	1	2	3	4	5

22. School district workshops/mini courses on facilitating co-teaching would enhance co-teaching experiences.

	1	2	3	4	5

23. Mentoring by experienced co-teaching teacher(s) would be beneficial to the co-teaching experience.

	1	2	3	4	5

24. Pre-service courses in co-teaching would be beneficial to the co-teaching experience.

	1	2	3	4	5

25. Pre-service special education courses for general education teachers would be beneficial to co-teaching.

	1	2	3	4	5

26. Pre-service general education courses for special teachers would be beneficial to co-teaching.

	1	2	3	4	5

27. In-service training opportunities provided (workshops, etc.) would be beneficial to co-teaching.

	1	2	3	4	5

28. Administrators in your school have participated in professional development for co-teaching.

	1	2	3	4	5

29. Teachers in your school have participated in professional development for co-teaching.

	1	2	3	4	5

Planning

30.   I do not have enough time to communicate and collaborate with my co-teacher.
        1   2   3   4   5
31.   I have the time in my work day to individualize instruction for students with disabilities.
        1   2   3   4   5
32.   A scheduled mutual planning time for co-teaching has been assigned.
        1   2   3   4   5
33.   Co-teachers need a common planning time officially scheduled during school hours.
        1   2   3   4   5
34.   Co-teachers need a daily planning period.
        1   2   3   4   5
35.   Co-teachers need a weekly planning period.
        1   2   3   4   5
36.   Co-teachers need to plan for lessons, evaluation of students' performance, and other general issues.
        1   2   3   4   5
37.   Summer planning time allocated would be beneficial to co-teaching.
        1   2   3   4   5
38.   Both co-teachers have input into the unit/lesson plan.
        1   2   3   4   5
39.   Both co-teachers readily accept each other ideas.
        1   2   3   4   5
40.   Inclusive language (us, our, we) is used by both teachers during the planning process.
        1   2   3   4   5
41.   I find it difficult to modify my instructional strategies and my teaching style to meet the needs of students
        with disabilities.
        1   2   3   4   5

Support
42.   The school administration in my school system is committed to co-teaching implementation.
        1   2   3   4   5
43.   Adequate teaching supplies appropriate to learning levels would be beneficial to co-teaching.
        1   2   3   4   5
44.   Opportunities to modify classroom configuration would be beneficial to co-teaching teaching.
        1   2   3   4   5
45.   There are clear district and school guidelines for implementation of co-teaching.
        1   2   3   4   5

Vision
46.   Key personnel are clear on their roles and responsibilities for co-teaching implementation.
        1   2   3   4   5
47.   There is open, positive communication between general and special educators.
        1   2   3   4   5
48.   General educators have basic knowledge and skills to work with students with disabilities.
        1   2   3   4   5
49.   General educators appreciate the need for accommodations and modifications to the curriculum for students
        with disabilities
        1   2   3   4   5
50.   Special educators are familiar with the general education curriculum and methodology.
        1   2   3   4   5
51.   Special educators have the skills to suggest instructional strategies to meet unique student needs.
        1   2   3   4   5

Roles and Responsibilities
52.   When co-teaching is done correctly one teacher may lead and another offers assistance and support to
        individuals or small groups.
        1   2   3   4   5
53.   When co-teaching is done correctly both teachers may simultaneous teach.
        1   2   3   4   5
54.   When co-teaching is done correctly both teachers alternate teaching students.
        1   2   3   4   5

55.   When co-teaching is done correctly the general education teacher may lead in a co-taught classroom.
      1   2   3   4   5
56.   When co-teaching is done correctly the special education teacher may lead in a co-taught classroom.
      1   2   3   4   5
57.   When co-teaching is done correctly the general education teacher may be responsible for lesson planning.
      1   2   3   4   5
58.   When co-teaching is done correctly the general education teacher may be responsible for instruction.
      1   2   3   4   5
59.   When co-teaching is done correctly the general education teacher may be responsible for evaluating students.
      1   2   3   4   5
60.   When co-teaching is done correctly the special education teacher may be responsible for modifications for students with disabilities.
      1   2   3   4   5
61.   When co-teaching is done correctly the special education teacher is responsible for monitoring student behaviors for students with disabilities.
      1   2   3   4   5
62.   When co-teaching is done correctly the special education teacher is responsible for monitoring student remediation for students with disabilities.
      1   2   3   4   5

Expectations
63.   I believe students without disabilities can receive an appropriately challenging education in an inclusive general education classroom.
      1   2   3   4   5
64.   I believe that special educators working in inclusion settings generally take a subordinate role in the classroom.
      1   2   3   4   5
65.   I believe students with disabilities can receive an appropriate education in an inclusive general education classroom.
      1   2   3   4   5
66.   The support provided to students with disabilities in co-taught classrooms is insufficient.
      1   2   3   4   5
67.   Students with disabilities learn more in a co-taught classroom than in a single-teacher general education classroom.
      1   2   3   4   5
68.   Students with disabilities in a co-taught classroom increase positive feelings about themselves as capable learners.
      1   2   3   4   5
69.   Students with disabilities have difficulty adjusting to the higher expectations in the co-taught classroom
      1   2   3   4   5
70.   The behaviors of students with disabilities are better in a co-taught classroom.
      1   2   3   4   5
71.   The behaviors of students with disabilities are worse in a co-taught classroom.
      1   2   3   4   5
72.   The behavior issues in co-taught classrooms interfere with other students' learning needs.
      1   2   3   4   5

General Information
73.   You and the other teacher you co-teach with both volunteered to collaboratively teach together?
      1   2   3   4   5
74.   You and your co-teaching partner and work very well together.
      1   2   3   4   5
75.   Co-teaching has improved your teaching.
      1   2   3   4   5
76.   In your co-teaching experience, you do more than your partner.
      1   2   3   4   5
77.   Co-teaching is a worthwhile professional experience.

	1	2	3	4	5

78. You have seen evidence of improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities in inclusion classrooms.

	1	2	3	4	5

79. You have found that inclusion has encouraged you to experiment with new teaching methodologies.

	1	2	3	4	5

80. In the inclusion classroom, your co-teacher and you consistently work with all students, including those with disabilities and those without disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5

81. The students with disabilities in your inclusion classroom(s) work separately from their classmates without disabilities a majority of the time.

	1	2	3	4	5

82. In your inclusion classroom(s), students with disabilities and students without disabilities receive equal access to the same general curriculum.

	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your assistance in providing this information is greatly appreciated.

Appendix D- Survey Cover Letter

Northeastern University
College *of* Professional Studies

Date:

Dear *ED530 - Teacher as a Researcher* student,
      My name is Ashley Rodrigues, and I met you in *ED530 - Teacher as a Researcher.* I am a doctoral candidate in the College of Professional Studies at Northeastern University. As part of my dissertation research, I am conducting a study with *ED530 - Teacher as a Researcher* students on the effects of training on teachers' perception of co-teaching.
      In order to gather data about this research, I am inviting you to participate in my study by filling out a quick survey. Your responses may help me learn about teachers' perceptions of their co-teaching preparation.
      Please take a few minutes to complete the survey, which can be accessed via this link:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dFM3NXAzVWoxeGpiY2x0djJLTXJQYnc6MQ
      Be assured that all answers will be saved anonymously. Don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for taking time out of your very busy day to help. Should you have any questions, please contact the Project Director or Faculty Sponsor listed below:

Project Director: Ms. Ashley Blanca Rodrigues	Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Christopher Unger
Doctoral Candidate	College of Professional Studies
Northeastern University	Northeastern University
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Thanks again for your participation.

Sincerely,
Ashley Blanca Rodrigues M.A., C.A.G.S.