

Running Head: PERCEPTIONS OF CO-TEACHING

Teachers' Perceptions of Effective Co-Teaching

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Abstract

This study was designed to evaluate the perceptions that general and special education teachers have toward effective co-teaching. The researcher used an anonymous survey to gather information from 39 teachers who were currently in a co-teaching assignment. Three survey responses were statistically analyzed using a Chi Square analysis. The remainder of the survey was analyzed qualitatively, using charts and graphs to report the results. Results indicate that teachers believe they need paid planning time prior to the school year, common planning time during the school day and professional development to achieve effective co-teaching. When prioritizing importance, willingness to teach together and teaching styles/compatibility ranked as the two highest priorities for successful co-teaching. Furthermore, responsibilities of the co-teachers fall on both teachers and are considered shared tasks in and out of the classroom. Further results indicate that the teaching model used most often was the one teach/one assist. Additionally, general and special education teachers do share the responsibilities of grading, classroom management, lesson planning, writing/planning summative assessments/ essays/ projects and attending IEP meetings that come with teaching inclusively. Furthermore, the research indicated that the largest benefit of co-teaching is differentiation/having two perspectives and instructing with similar teaching styles and the biggest obstacle is lack of planning time or time to prep together and the second largest obstacle is the absence of compatibility/mutual respect. Further research that studies the perceptions of teacher's strategies for effective co-teaching on a larger scale should be considered.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables and Figures	v
Chapter 1, Introduction	1
Chapter 2, Literature Review	5
Chapter 3, Methods	22
Chapter 4, Results	26
Chapter 5, Discussion	38
References	48
Appendices	49

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Table 1	Co-Teaching Models	8
Table 2	Chi Square Data Analysis	29
Table 3	Shared Responsibilities of Co-Teachers	30
Table 4	Professional Development	30
Table 5	Benefits and Obstacles of Co-Teaching.....	32

Figures

Figure 1	Co-Teaching Models	41
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Overview

In the educational world, there have always been students with special needs. Some students need more help than others, some have a specific learning or physical disability which inhibits their learning, some have behavior issues. No matter what the situation, special education teachers are needed. There are different models that school districts use with regard to the use of special education teachers, but one model that is more and more common is the model of co-teaching. Co-teaching is most commonly demonstrated when one special education teacher is paired with one general education teacher in an inclusive classroom. But there are some different types of co-teaching strategies used, as well.

A problem exists in how we ensure that co-teaching is done effectively. There are several issues that are associated with co-teaching. Teachers who work together must have enough time to plan together; teachers who work together should have personalities that blend or complement each other; school districts and administration must offer trainings to any and all staff who may work in a co-teaching situation. Also, we must ask what are the different co-teaching models? What are the effective co-teaching indicators and are there implications for co-teaching? How do both students and teachers perceive co-teaching?

Purpose statement

A problem exists in how we ensure that co-teaching is done effectively. The purpose of this study was to determine what the indicators are for effective co-teaching, the current teacher's perspective of co-teaching, how it is best facilitated, and what are the current perceptions of co-teaching? The researcher looked at current research in co-teaching as well as exploring what both general and special education co-teachers want in regards to planning, professional development, shared responsibilities and co-teaching models so they can co-teach effectively. Although co-teaching is becoming a common phenomenon, there are still many things to consider. The following questions guided this research study:

Research questions

1. How do the factors of teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, views on classroom management and discussing IEPs and setting goals for both special and general education students rank in priority for general education versus special education teachers?
2. Are teachers offered professional development on how to co-teach?
3. Do teachers receive paid planning time before the school year begins?
4. Do teachers who co-teach together need common planning time during the school day?
5. What co-teaching models do teachers use most often?
6. What responsibilities do co-teachers share?
7. What are the benefits to co-teaching?

8. What obstacles do teachers feel are causing the models to not work effectively?

Hypotheses

Although this study was primarily a qualitative study, the researcher used some quantitative research methods to analyze the guiding questions. Three hypothesis sets were analyzed in this study.

Null hypothesis (1): There is paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year so co-teachers may work and plan together.

Research hypothesis (1): There is no paid planning time prior to the school year so that co-teachers may work and plan together.

Null hypothesis (2): A common planning time between co-teachers during the school day does not matter either way to general education co-teachers and special education co-teachers.

Research hypothesis (2): A common planning time between co-teachers during the school day is extremely important to both general education and special education co-teachers.

Null hypothesis (3): General education teachers and special education teachers prioritize the following factors as important to successful co-teaching similarly: Teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, view on classroom management, and discussing IEP's and setting goals for both special and general education students.

Research hypothesis (3): General education teachers and special education teachers do not prioritize the following factors as important to successful co-teaching similarly: Teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, view on classroom

management, and discussing IEP's and setting goals for both special and general education students.

Definition of terms

- **Alternative teaching** - One teacher leads a smaller pullout group while other teaches the rest of the class.
- **Co-teaching** - two equally-qualified individuals who may or may not have the same area of expertise jointly delivering instruction to a group of students.
- **Differentiation** - When teachers modify the content, the process and the product of instruction to meet the individual needs of students.
- **IEP - Individualized Education Program** - a legal document created by a team of educators for students with different special needs. This explains the goals and aids and services required for the student.
- **Inclusion** – When students with disabilities learn alongside their non-disabled peers in general education classrooms.
- **NCLB - No Child Left Behind** - the 2002 update of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which raised the federal role in holding schools accountable for student outcomes.
- **One teach/one assist** - One teacher leads instruction while the other assists in teaching by in various ways, including one on one or small group instruction.
- **One teach/one observe** - One teacher leads instruction while the other observes and collects data on the students.
- **Parallel Teaching** - Teachers split class in half, same content, same time

- **Station teaching** - Teachers divide content and students. Teachers each with one group)
- **Survey Monkey** - an online survey software that helps researchers to create and run professional online surveys with analytical tools
- **Team teaching** - delivering the same instruction at the same time.

Summary

This research study was conducted to assess the perceived needs of special and general education co-teachers to co-teach effectively. Additionally, this chapter begins to highlight the research associated with co-teaching. A third topic this chapter addresses is the research questions that guided this study and the hypothesis data studied. The last thing addressed in this is a list of terms associated with this topic of study, particularly this research study.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

Background

The purpose of this study was to determine current teacher's perspective of co-teaching, how it is best facilitated and what are the current perceptions of co-teaching. Chapter two will presents a review of literature that relates to this topic. The following subjects are discussed in this chapter.

- Co-teaching models
- Effective co-teaching indicators
- Implications for co-teaching
- Planning time and professional development as it relates to co-teaching
- Student perceptions of co-teaching
- Teacher perceptions of the co-teaching model
- Tools used for measuring and guiding co-teaching

Co-teaching models

Cook and Friend (1995) defined co-teaching as “two professional educators delivering substantive instruction to a diverse group of students, including students with disabilities, within a single space - typically a shared classroom as cited by Embury and Kroeger (2012 p. 103). To further define co-teaching, it is necessary to cite what researchers find that co-teaching is not. Inclusion and collaboration are often confused with co-teaching. Kilanowski-Press, Foote and Rinaldo explain inclusion as “bringing services and support to the student in the general education classroom, as opposed to removing students from learning experiences with same age peers.” (p. 43) Collaboration

should also not confused with co-teaching either. Collaboration is, according to Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain and Shamberger (2010) what one uses to “refer to how professionals and others interact in a variety of situations”. (p. 15) The definition of inclusion explains how special needs students are scheduled to learn in the general education classroom, rather than being pulled out with a special education teacher to learn. Collaboration is the cooperation of the teachers who are working together. Whereas, “in co-teaching, the general educator hold these critical pieces, but the special educator adds expertise related to the process of learning, the highly individualized nature of some students’ needs and an emphasis on teaching until mastery”. (Cook, et al, 2010, p. 15).

Various authors (Embury and Kroeger, 2012 and Friend, Cook, Chamberlain and Shamberger, 2010) cite the six co-teaching models as shown in figure 1.

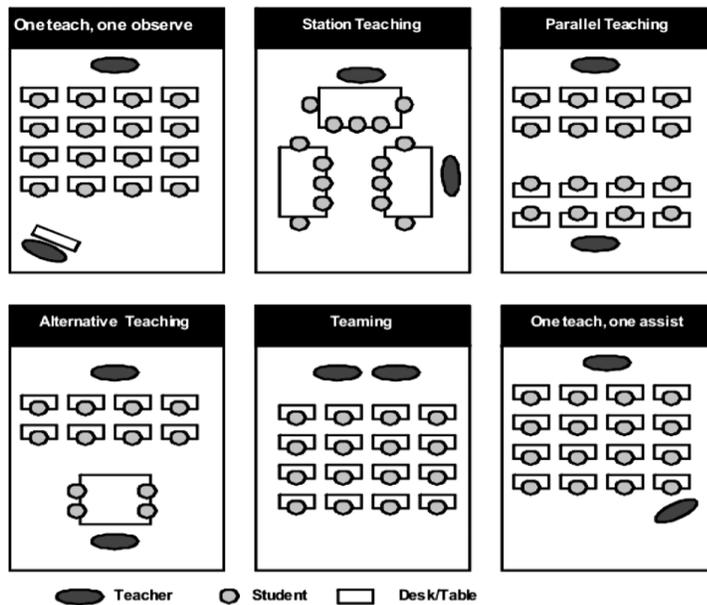


Figure 1 Co-teaching models as illustrated by Friend and Bursuck, 2009

Embury and Kroeger go on to explain the six co-teaching models as described below in

Table 1.

Table 1 – Co-teaching models

Co-teaching model	Definition
One Teach/One Assist	One teacher has primary responsibility for teaching while the other circulates through the room providing unobtrusive assistance to students as needed.
One Teach/One Observe	One teacher teaches while the other teacher observes/gathers data. Teachers decide in advance what information needs to be gathered and how data will be collected. Both teachers analyze the information together.
Station Teaching	Teachers divide content students rotate from one teacher to another to an independent station. Each teacher repeats instructions three times and students access both teachers and the independent station.
Alternative Teaching	Large group completes the planned lesson while smaller group completes an alternative lesson or the same lesson taught at different levels or for different purposes.
Parallel Teaching	Both co-teachers teach the same information, but they divide the class and conduct the lesson simultaneously.
Team Teaching	Both teachers deliver the same instruction at the same time. Each teacher speaks freely during large-group instruction and moves among all students in the class. Instruction becomes conversation, not turn taking.

(Embury and Kroeger, 2012, p. 103) It appears that these definitions are universal as many researchers cite and explain the co-teaching models using these terms.

Co-teaching Framework

Karen Wise Lindeman (2014) further explained how she and a group of teachers structured co-teaching regardless of the model. The author defines the six stages as a framework which could be used in any co-teaching model. Stage 1 is the planning stage in which all the professionals involved in co-teaching agree to collaborate with the support of administration. Stage 2 is when all who are co-teaching together participate in professional development so they share common vocabulary and ideas about what the delivery will look like. Stage 3, setting standards, is when the co-teaching teams lay out expectations for the inclusive classroom and plan on how often sit-down discussions will occur about the model. Stage 4 is when the co-teachers reflect. This reflection needs to occur during meeting time and gives the teachers' opportunities to ask questions of one another, discuss what strategies are working and what strategies are not. This process clarifies the roles of the teachers. If necessary, stage 5 involves bringing in an outside partner to assist with reflection and address both strengths and weaknesses in the model. Lastly, stage 6 is when the team looks at the performance of both the general and special education students. This framework can be applied to all six of the co-teaching models. This process serves as a structured framework to ensure that student's needs are met.

When planning for the implementation of co-teaching, prior to the start date, it is important that the school year be planned out properly. Brown and Sepetys (2011) suggest early planning when laying out the school year for several reasons. First, it is imperative that both teachers meet before the school year begins. They should discuss

teaching styles, techniques, goals and how to facilitate a healthy working relationship. Next they must sort out the expectations and roles of one another. This needs to be a discussion that includes many details including how they will plan, classroom management, daily instruction, grading, where their personal items will be kept in the room, and how they will generally operate the classroom. Also during this collaboration time, it is essential that they have a plan to explain to the students why there are two teachers in the classroom. Furthermore, they must divide up responsibilities and prepare for the first day and week of school. Included in this last step, the two teachers need to make a plan to meet at the end of the first day and the week to reflect and make changes as necessary.

The above paragraphs explain co-teaching models and how they can be implemented. However, the process does not end there. Other considerations are important and one of the factors that must be considered is the quality of co-teaching and research associated with ascertaining that quality.

Effective co-teaching indicators

“Teachers have identified a number of conditions needed for co-teaching to succeed, including sufficient planning time, compatibility of co-teachers, training and appropriate student skill level” (Scruggs, et al, 2007, p. 411). Furthermore, “co-teaching appeared to be most successful where both co-teachers practiced effective teaching behaviors, such as structure clarity, enthusiasm, maximizing student engagement, and motivational strategies.” (Mastropieri, Scruggs, Graetz, Norland, Gardizi & McDuffie, 2005, p. 269) There are other key components involved in effective co-teaching that must

be considered. Compatibility, synchronized planning time, professional development, the ability to communicate well and professionally, and using the expertise of both the special education and the general education teacher all come into play as effective co-teaching indicators (Mastropieri et al, 2005).

Although it may be helpful for co-teachers to choose with whom they co-teach, this does not always happen. When teachers do not have the opportunity to choose who they are teaching with, it is important that they find ways to work well together. One case study showed that with two sets of co-teachers, one who chose to work together and the other who had been assigned to work together exhibited similar behavior in relating to one another. The teachers, “frequently joked together, appeared genuinely at ease and seemed to enjoy each other’s company”. When these co-teaching teams were asked about their similar compatibility, “both teams indicated a genuine trust and respect for their partners, and this appeared to facilitate their working relationships” (Mastropieri, et al, 2005, p. 263).

Shared planning time is another important element when considering quality indicators of co-teaching. This subject and the subject of professional development will be looked at more in depth further in this study. However, it is important to note common planning time as a factor that leads to effective co-teaching. One team studied by Mastropieri et al (2005) did not have allocated common time to plan together. In their situation, they “managed to meet either before or after school or at lunch to discuss the Science unit and the roles and responsibilities for each teacher and the students” (Mastropieri, et al, 2007, p. 263). Although the time they managed to find to plan

together worked, this team indicated that “it would have been easier if the administration had been able to allow them co-planning time” (Mastropieri, et al, 2007, p. 263).

The curriculum used in co-teaching also affects the quality. Researchers “indicated that the key to successful co-teaching is the planning of the general education curriculum by a team of professionals to best meet the needs of students with and without disabilities” (Lindeman and Magiera, 2014, p.41). For example, a team of teachers who used a hands-on approach curriculum found that not only did the students benefit, but the teachers had a better opportunity to share the tasks in the classroom. This curriculum and implementation approach gave the teachers more time to work with and guarantee that all the students were completing their assignments. (Mastropieri et al, 2005).

Co-teaching teams that were studied by Mastropieri, et al (2005) managed effective classrooms using a system that incorporated the following with their lessons: review of what had already been presented, new information presented, activities which were guided; but allowed independent practice and finally, a formative review. This approach to learning coupled with effective classroom management lead to positive and effective instruction for all students. The same study found that the use of disability teaching adaptations boosted student performance.

In two separate lessons studied by Mastropieri et al (2005) the disabilities of the students were assessed. In the first lesson, for a group of fourth grade students, the worksheets the students would be completing were adapted to meet their needs. The students with disabilities had less language and literacy requirements, per their IEP, than the general education students. Also, in this fourth grade lesson, the special education

teacher worked in a small group with the students who had an IEP, while the general education teacher worked with the rest of the class. In the lesson for seventh grade students, the team presented concepts with a presentation, and used pictures. All the seventh grade students were allowed to ask questions both orally and pictorially. The special education students were allowed to answer questions using less written language, also. Procedures used in the lessons like the two explained above were found to be imperative in ensuring quality co-teaching and took both teachers working together to adapt the lessons properly. (Mastropieri et al, 2005).

Gately and Gately (2001) also discussed teachers working together. The authors explored how interpersonal communication, or the use of verbal, nonverbal and social skills develop as teachers work together. The authors suggested that there are three stages to co-teaching which include the beginning, compromising and collaborating stages. The beginning stage is when communication between co-teachers tends to be guarded and careful. In the compromising stage, there is give and take communication, where respect is developed and the teachers become more comfortable with each other. The final stage of communication is the collaborating stage where there is open communication and mutual admiration between the two teachers.

Another important consideration of teachers working together is explaining to students that the special education and the general education teacher are both their teachers. "Effective co-teachers are open, confident, and eager to try new ideas. They eliminate 'my/your' thinking and vocabulary quickly" (Thomas, Bryant and Land, 1996, p. 259). If the communication between between the co-teachers is positive, productive and strong, the students will see it in the classroom. This is important as the students must

understand that there are two teachers. The students will further benefit from the effects of quality co-teaching when they witness both teachers “offering feedback to one’s partner, sharing classroom management, providing daily mutual planning time, and using cooperative learning techniques” (Austin, 2001, p.254).

“Compatibility among professionals was the most important element in successful co-teaching relationships” (Lindeman and Magiera, 2014, p. 44). Co-teachers share everything. They share the classroom, the lessons, the behaviors, the grading, the students, the planning. Their success in carrying all these responsibilities out in a quality manner depend on their rapport. Furthermore, one researcher suggests that teachers and students both gain from the sharing. Austin (2001) shares his thoughts on “the benefit of another teacher’s expertise and viewpoint, the value of remedial strategies and review for all students, and the opportunity for the students without disabilities to gain some understanding of the learning difficulties experienced by many students with disabilities” (Austin, 2001, p. 251) add to the effectiveness of co-teaching. Additionally, Kilanowski-Press, Foote and Rinaldo (2010) discuss working together when they claim that compatibility, or interpersonal dynamics, can either promote or inhibit the quality of co-teaching. If there is mutual understanding between the two co-teachers

in terms of instructional beliefs, time for solid instructional planning, agreement on the establishment of classroom routines, establishment of classroom discipline norms, as well as parity, or the projection of both teachers as equally responsible for instruction, as critical components of strong collaborative teaching programs. (Press, Foote and Rinaldo, 2010, p. 46)

Implications for co-teaching

Kilanowski-Press et al (2010) surveyed 71 special education inclusion teachers who co-taught. The surveys indicated that co-teaching was not always perceived as the

best way to teach students with disabilities. They noted a lack of adequate training in teaching programs and as part of their professional development adds to frustration when co-teaching. Also listed as some concerns with co-teaching were class size, severity of the disabilities of student placed in inclusive settings and the different levels of teaching experience of the co-teachers.

In a case study of middle school co-teachers by Mastropieri et al (2005), researchers found a co-teaching team to have tension arise as a year of teaching together progressed. The two teachers in this study did not agree on teaching practices and classroom management. The tension between the two teachers rose and ultimately they “began to split the class into two small groups and move them into separate rooms for many of the activities.” (Mastropieri et al, 2005, p. 265).

In spite of the research cited above, Walther-Thomas point to lack of research evaluating inclusive teams as another possible implication of co-teaching. Walther-Thomas (as cited by Press et al, 2010, p. 46) stated that “Studies highlighting the social and emotional benefits of co-teaching to students are more replete than those highlighting academic gains, and frequently identify increases in peer relationships, social skills and self-esteem.” (p. 46) Additional research outlining best practice for inclusive, co-teaching programs is a something that Press et al (2010) suggest. This need for further research has been re-iterated by other authors.

When No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was put into place in 2002, how well every student performed on standardized tests became a priority to schools (Thomas-Brown & Sepetys, 2011). Standardized tests became known as high-stakes testing and “exerted a

strong influence on how content was covered and how co-teachers collaborated.”

(Mastropieri et al, 2005, p. 268) These researchers also suggest that when the focus of a school became how all the students performed on these tests, the teachers felt pressured to cover the material that would be on the test and in turn, leave out activities that helped students retain information. When this happened, the role of the special educator was lessened because regular education teachers wanted to skip the step of planning together and modifying content for the special education students. Their focus became stressing all materials that might be covered on the high stakes tests, so they skipped planning for the further explanations that the special education students may have needed (for example, pictures, videos, chunking of material, more in-depth studying, further breaking down of material).

When co-teachers do not volunteer to work together, but are assigned to work together, successful classroom management, lesson planning and parity was diminished. The teaching teams who were placed together and not consulted about the person they were to be working with wrestled with good collaboration, cohesiveness in teaching style and conflict. (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain and Shamberger, 2010) Additionally, some teachers who were made to work together had expressed that having a co-teacher was just more work and did not come naturally to all. Working that closely with another person required a set of skills that teaching alone did not require. (Thomas-Brown & Sepetys, 2011) Finally, in a study of two inclusive classrooms by Embruy and Kroger (2012) it was found that “because the teachers received no professional development in various approaches to co-teaching, and administration and expectation from

administration regarding implementation was unclear, co-teaching practice in classrooms was diverse.” (Embury & Kroger, 2012, p. 109)

Daily planning time and professional development as it relates to co-teaching

Co-teaching teams saw common planning time as crucial. “The most frequently mentioned logistical matter is the need for common planning time for co-teachers”.

(Friend et al, 2010, p. 17) Professional development was another area that Friend et al (2010) cited. They found that teachers needed high-quality professional development in regards to co-teaching. And according to Bauwens and Hourcade as cited by Walther-Thomas et al (1996):

Most new co-teachers benefit from 3 to 5 days of preparation before classroom implementation. Sessions should provide instruction related to effective co-planning; co-teaching variation; student scheduling; instructional consideration (e.g. study skills, learning strategies, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, instructional modifications); ongoing performance assessment; and interpersonal communication (e.g. problem solving, conflict resolution, negotiation). Sessions should be designed to provide appropriate co-teaching models, supervised practice a, and time for partners to discuss their concerns, solve problems, and formulate initial implementation plans. (p. 258)

Gately & Gately (2001) state that “common planning time is essential if teachers are to become collaborative.” (p. 44) Moreover, Friend et al, (2010) address how positive collaboration, or the interaction between the co-teachers, could be better developed if co-teachers had common planning time. They went on to explain how common planning time affected their co-teaching relationships more than any other issue.

In addition to the need for common planning time together, co-teachers have expressed the need for support from administration in ensuring they have paid planning

time before the school year begins and throughout the school year. Walther-Thomas et al (1996) note that planning time should be addressed at the district level if it is to be an important part of a school program. Also, Mastropieri et al (2005) interviewed co-teachers and found that “it would have been easier if the administration had been able to allow them co-planning time” (p. 263) Walther-Thomas, Brayand and Land (1996) suggest that administration finds the scheduling a challenging task as “it necessitates thoughtful consideration of complex schedules and in general, can be established if it is an administrative priority”.(p. 259) In spite of the scheduling issue, teachers seem satisfied with working together, but point out the need for planning time. Also, in speaking of satisfaction with co-teaching assignments, teachers reported that they were “satisfied with their ccurent co-teaching assignment, but not with the level of support received from the school, noting that they needed more planning time” (Austin, 2001, p. 251).

Student perceptions of co-teaching

“Students are a valuable and untapped resource in determining effectiveness of strategies such as co-teaching”. (Embury & Kroger, 2012, p. 105) Embury and Kroger (2012) studied two co-teaching teams and met with the students who were taught by these co-teachers. In the first instance, the one teach/one assist model was used. The researchers found that teachers who co-taught using the one teach/one assist model were perceived by the students as having different roles. Students explained that the special education teacher was the helper. They also referred to the general education teacher as the teacher of the *real* class. Embury and Kroger (2012) explained:

This kind of perception among students regarding a classroom teacher could have had a significant and negative impact on learning for all students. Students may be hesitant to ask for assistance when needed or refuse accommodations and differentiation that may make students successful in order to not be one of the others. (p. 109)

The other group studied, whose teachers used station, parallel and team teaching models, were both considered teachers by their eighth grade students. The students interviewed for this study described both the co-teachers responsibilities as interchangeable. The students considered the jobs of both teachers to be the same, not as one teacher and one helper. Another research study by Keeley (2015) found that “students indicated that the balance of teacher responsibility was most evident when station teaching or parallel teaching was incorporated especially when compared to one teach/one assist. (Keeley, 2015, p.11). In their study, Embury and Kroger (2012) concluded the following:

In order for students to be and feel fully included in the classroom, general and special teachers must demonstrate inclusion as equal and contributing members of the classroom community as well. When teachers’ roles are reduced to that of an assistant or aide in the classroom, the students show an awareness of that power, differential and status. (p. 110)

According to Friend et al (2010), having two teachers in one classroom was seen as a benefit to the students who were enrolled in a two teacher class. Wilson and Michaels, as cited by Friend et al (2010) found that students with disabilities preferred to be in classrooms where there were two teachers, specifically noting that they had an opportunity to get more help. The students enjoyed the fact that there was more than one teaching approach practiced, different teaching styles and opinions were helpful and felt their skills were able to develop better in these situations. In this study, students without disabilities felt that they had more opportunities for learning as well. (Friend et al, 2010).

Teacher perceptions of the co-teaching model

Scruggs, Mastropieri and McDuffie (2007) conducted a metasynthesis qualitative research project concluding “that co-teachers generally supported co-teaching, although a number of important needs were identified, including planning time, student skill level and training; many of these needs were linked to administrative support”. (Scruggs et al, p. 392). The benefits teachers noted included professional experiences, specifically learning from each other (general and special education teachers).

This same study found many needs in co-teaching situations. A desire for strong administrative support was often found as a need. Another expressed need was to have co-teachers volunteer to work together. If working together was forced, it may not work for the benefit of the students. Another suggestion of teachers was that co-teaching be phased in, with appropriated training and support. Two issues that came up repeatedly in the multiple studies was the need for common, paid planning time and professional development or better training for co-teaching. Furthermore, compatibility was another topic that teachers expressed as an important subject to be considered when placing them in a co-teaching classroom. Compatibility was even addressed as a co-teaching marriage by some. (Scruggs et al, 2007, p. 405)

Tools Used for Measuring and Guiding Co-Teaching

This purpose of this study was to ascertain what is effective for co-teaching. However, this researcher found many tools for measuring and guiding co-teaching, as well.

Magiera, Simmons, & Hance, as cited by Lindeman and Magiera (2014), indicate that “the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-Teaching delineates a quality process to ensure that co-teachers collaborate successfully and achieve the best results for their students”. (p. 41) The Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-Teaching centers on quality. There are six phases of it as follows:

1. Co-teaching - Planning to collaborate
2. Professional Development - Starting the collaborative process
3. Setting Collaborative Standards - Adopting a model
4. The Reflective Practice - Supporting co-teachers
5. External Observations - Examining collaborative practices
6. Student Achievement Impact - Collecting outcome data

This tool, along with communication, high expectations and professional respect are believed to be a helpful tool for administrators and teachers when diving into co-teaching practices. (Lindeman and Magiera, 2014).

Austin (2001) used a survey called the Perceptions of Co-Teaching Survey (PCTS) to assess the participants in his research on teachers beliefs about co-teaching. Austin suggested people contact him for a copy of his survey into two parts. Part one collected demographic information and part two sought information regarding four categories including: “co-teacher perceptions of current experience, recommended collaborative practices, teacher preparation for collaborative practices and school-based supports that facilitate collaborative teaching.” (p. 247)

Gately and Gately (2001) suggested that co-teachers use a Co-teaching Rating Scale (CRS), which is an “informal instrument that co-teachers and their supervisors can use to examine the effectiveness of co-teaching classrooms.” (p. 45) There are two parts to the CRS, the special education teacher format and the general education teacher format. Both surveys include 24 questions that the teachers answer with “rarely”, “sometimes” or “usually” and both formats ask questions that are similar. The surveys can “form the beginnings of professional discussions for the co-teachers as they evaluate their perspectives of their work in the co taught classroom.” (p. 46)

Chapter Summary

This chapter contained research information about co-teaching. Specifically, the topics explored were co-teaching models, effective co-teaching indicators, implications for co-teaching, planning time and professional development as it relates to co-teaching, student perceptions of co-teaching, teacher perceptions of the co-teaching model and tools used for measuring and guiding co-teaching.

Chapter 3

Methods

Overview

Many conditions guide the success of co-teaching and might include things such as training, sufficient planning time, compatibility of co-teachers, and student skill level (Scruggs, et al, 2007, p. 411). This study sought to determine how co-teaching can be done properly so that it is a positive model in teaching both special and general education students. A survey of both types of teachers (Appendix A) was used to determine the following: which co-teaching models co-teachers are most commonly and currently being used, how much and how important common planning time is offered for co-teachers during the school day, if teachers receive paid planning time prior to the school year and how important teachers feel paid planning time is, if co-teaching professional development is offered, what factors are the most important in co-teaching, what responsibilities are shared between co-teachers, and finally the benefits and obstacles experienced by co-teachers.

Sampling Procedures

The participants in this study were all co-teachers at one Midwest high school. The teachers may have co-taught only one class period or up to six class periods together per day. 39 teachers responded to this survey - 22 general education teachers and 17 special education teachers. The researcher sent an anonymous survey link via an all staff email to the teachers in this one Midwest high school. The results of each individual survey were used.

Data collection

The researcher developed the survey used in this study using Survey Monkey. Co-teachers were asked if they were special education or general education teachers, the number years they had been teaching and how many different teachers they co-taught with throughout the day as well as whether or not those teachers changed from school year to school year. Then, the teachers were asked if they had common planning time during the school day and paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year, they were also asked how important they thought each of these were. Whether or not professional development was offered was another question. Another question asked them to rank four listed factors of co-teaching according to priority. These factors included: teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, view on classroom management and discussing IEP's and setting goals for all students in the classroom. What responsibilities they shared in the classroom was an additional question, asking teachers to check all that applied. The choices given for this question included: grading, lesson planning, writing/planning summative assessments/projects/essays and IEP meetings. Finally, the benefits and obstacles of co-teaching, as an open-ended question was asked with a fill-in-the-blank option.

When the researcher analyzed the results using the tools in Survey Monkey, it was discovered that one teacher registered as both a general and special education teacher on the survey. The survey indicates that there thirty nine individuals who answered the survey, but in charts where regular and special education teachers answers' were

compared, this researcher counted this individual as a special education teacher. The answers on this teacher's individual survey to the open-ended questions appeared to be answers that would come from someone who taught inclusively, so could definitely be seen as a general education teacher, but in a co-teaching situation, was likely the special education teacher.

Procedures

The survey was administered using Survey Monkey. The survey was emailed to the entire mid-west high school staff and asked for responses from anyone who was in a co-teaching situation during that current school year. The researcher asked the participants to complete the survey within a week of receiving it and sent out a reminder about the survey two days after first emailing it. The researcher also ensured the participants understood that the survey was completely anonymous and would only be used for research purposes.

Data analysis

The questions presented in chapter one were analyzed using the information collected from the survey. First, all the answers to the survey questions were divided by general versus special education teachers. The first question in this study, how general education and special education teachers compare in their ranking of the priority of the following factors was analyzed: teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, views on classroom management and discussing IEPs and setting goals. Next, a comparison of what both the general and special education teachers views of the need for professional development in co-teaching was examined. The researcher analyzed on the

whether or not there was common planning time during the school day and paid planning time prior to the school year. The researcher applied the Chi Square test to the results of two questions dealing with benefits and obstacles of co-teaching from the survey to compare the answers of the special education teachers to the general education teachers. The co-teaching models the teachers used was the next question considered and the results were compared using a bar graph. The next question the researcher looked at was if co-teachers share the following responsibilities in the classroom: grading, classroom management, lesson planning, writing/ planning assessments/essays/projects, and IEP meetings. This was addressed on the survey when teachers were asked to check all responsibilities that they shared. The final two questions evaluated were both open ended questions dealing with benefits and obstacles in co-teaching on the survey. They inquired about the benefits and what works for effective co-teaching, and what the obstacles of co-teaching are. To summarize the answers to these open-ended questions, a chart which outlines the different views expressed shows the results of these final two open-ended questions. Data from each of the research questions addressed in this study can be found in Appendix B.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to explore teacher's perceptions of co-teaching. This study was conducted in an effort to explore how co-teaching can be done properly so that it is a positive model for teaching both special and general education students. The study specifically investigated: how much and how important common planning time is between co-teachers during the school day, if teachers receive paid planning time prior to the school year and how important pay for this time is, if co-teaching professional development is offered, what is most important in co-teaching, and the benefits and obstacles experienced by co-teachers. Furthermore, four factors which are important for effective co-teaching were prioritized by teachers and analyzed. Co-teaching models were defined and different strategies within those models were explained. Also, the researcher looked at the responsibilities the co-teachers shared.

Findings

Data was collected from 39 co-teachers in a Midwest high school. A survey was sent out to all staff at the high school which asked any teacher in a current co-teaching situation to respond. The data was collected during the first semester of the 2017-18 school year. Participants were asked to please complete the survey (Appendix A) within a few days of receiving it and were also sent a reminder about completing it a few days after it was first sent out. The anonymous survey link was sent through school email, with permission from the school administration, and the survey was completed and data gathered through Survey Monkey. The survey can be found in Appendix A.

When looking at the first two hypotheses presented in Chapter 1, the researcher used a Chi Square test to analyze the data. The first null hypothesis, co-teachers have paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year, was rejected based on the results of the Chi Square test. Research hypothesis one, that there is no paid planning time prior to the school year so that co-teachers may work and plan together, was accepted. This means that out of the teachers surveyed for the purpose of this study, teachers do not have paid planning time prior to the school year to plan with their co-teachers. A statistical significance of .05 was used, as well as one degree of freedom. Of 39 teachers, 12 said that they did get planning time before school began, while 27 said they did not. With a critical value of 3.84, the researcher rejected the null, as the Chi Square value was 5.76.

Null hypothesis two stated that a common planning time between co-teachers during the school day does not matter either way to general and special education co-teachers, but then null hypothesis was rejected. The research hypothesis stating that a common planning time between co-teachers during the school day was extremely important to both general education and special education co-teachers was accepted. With three degrees of freedom and a critical value of 7.81, using .05 as a level of statistical significance, the Chi Square value was 28.2. This is higher than the critical value, so null hypothesis two was rejected. 24 of the 39 teachers stated that a common planning time between co-teachers during the school day was extremely important (this result was split evenly between general and special education teachers).

The third null hypothesis stated that general and special education teachers prioritize the following factors as important to successful co-teaching similarly: teaching

styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, view on classroom management, and discussing IEP’s and setting goals for both special and general education students. This hypothesis is accepted. With three degrees of freedom and a critical value of 7.81, using .05 as a level of statistical significance, the Chi Square value for teaching styles/compatibility was 2.61, for willingness to teach together the Chi square value was 2.41, for view on classroom management the Chi square value was 1.80 and for IEP goals the Chi square value was 1.86. This information is presented in the table below. See appendices B, C and D for data analysis.

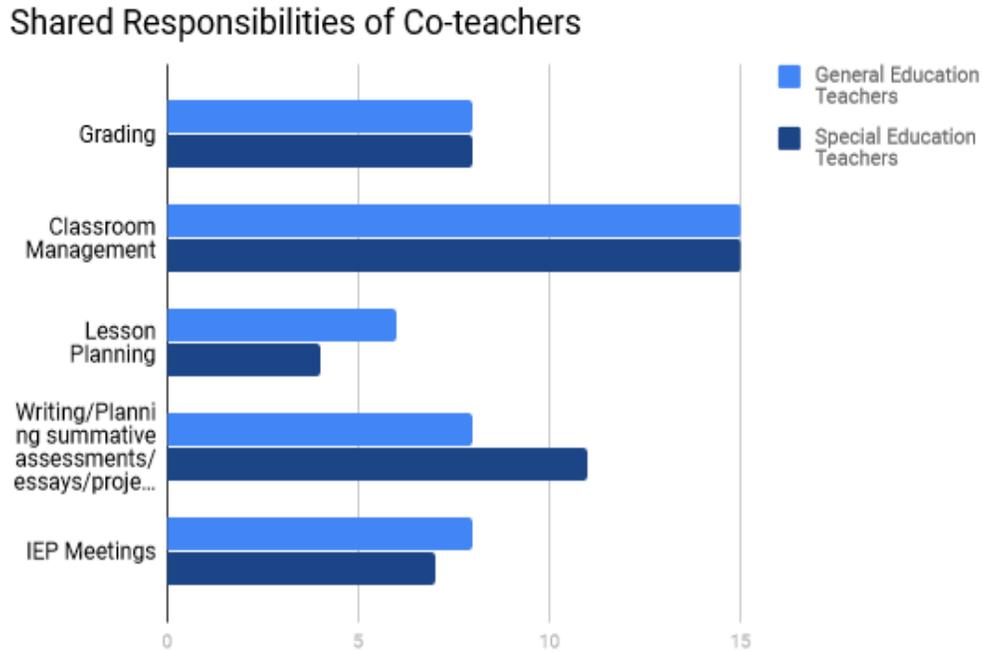
Table 2 - Chi Square Data Analysis

Hypothesis	Chi Square Critical	Chi Square	p-value	Decision
Hypothesis Set 1 – Planning time prior to school year	3.84	5.76	.05	Reject null, accept research
Hypothesis Set 2 – Common planning time during the school day	7.81	28.2	.05	Reject null, accept research
Hypothesis Set 3 – Priority of factors				
• Teaching styles/compatibility	7.81	2.61	.05	Accept null
• Willingness to teach together	7.81	2.41	.05	Accept null
• View on Classroom Management	7.81	1.8	.05	Accept null
• IEP Goals	7.81	1.86	.05	Accept null

A question on the survey asked which of the following responsibilities teachers share in the classroom as co-teachers: grading, classroom management, lesson planning, writing/ planning assessments/essays/projects, and IEP meetings. They were asked to check all that apply. Based on the responses of the survey, it was determined that teachers do share the responsibilities of grading, classroom management, lesson planning,

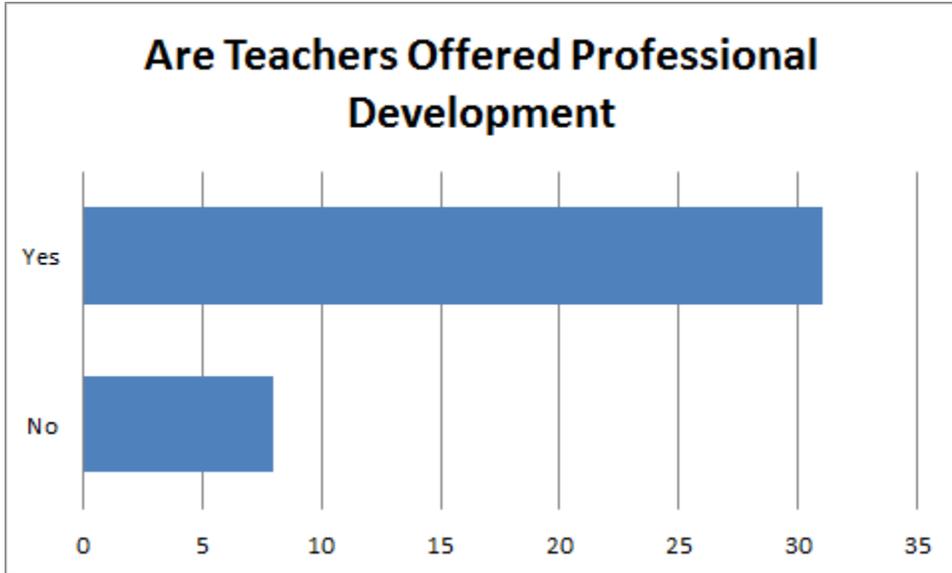
writing/planning assessments/essays/projects and IEP meetings in the classroom. Table 3 outlines this data

Table 3 – Shared responsibilities of Co-Teachers



When asked the question, are teachers offered professional development about co-teaching? Out of the 39 teachers surveyed, 31 said they were, while 8 said they were not. The chart below shows this.

Table 4 – Professional Development



The co-teaching model of true co-teaching was said to be used by 11 teachers, of which 6 are general education teachers and 5 are special educators. From 5 who parallel teach, 3 were special education teachers and 2 were general education teachers. With the station teaching model 6 special educators claimed to use this model, without any general education teachers using it. 16 general educators indicated using the one teach/one assist model with 9 special educators using this model. When looking at the one teach/one assist model, 8 teachers of general education and 6 of special education practice this model. And lastly, the alternative teaching model gathered results from 10 special and 7 general education teachers.

On the survey when teachers were asked to check all responsibilities that they shared, the co-teachers were asked to recognize the responsibilities they shared out of a list which included: grading, classroom management, lesson planning, writing/ planning

assessments/essays/projects, and IEP meetings. Based on the responses of the survey, it was determined that co-teachers do share the responsibilities of grading, classroom management, lesson planning, writing/planning assessments/essays/projects and IEP meetings in the classroom. Results of this survey question are presented in a bar graph in Appendix B.

The final two guiding questions of this study, benefits and obstacles to co-teaching, were presented to co-teachers in the survey as open-ended questions. This researcher summarized the answers, separating special and general educator’s responses in the chart below.

Table 5 – Benefits and Obstacles of Co-Teaching

Educator	Benefits	Obstacles
Special	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seeing what helps students best. ● Students gain experience and education from 2 teachers. As a teacher, the benefit of explaining things from multiple perspectives will also help the students and myself understand better and be a better educator. ● All students regarding special education teacher as a teacher in the classroom with equivalent authority. More effective meeting all students needs and levels. More success in inclusion setting and for special education students. ● Better understanding of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Different opinions. ● General education teachers not understanding what true co-teaching is and gen. education teachers not having the same training in co-teaching that special education teachers have. ● No proper planning time, special education teachers having the time to add this element, better organization with special education department procedures come first before we can properly give our time to the general education teacher. Fine tune how

	<p>content by Sped teacher who can then modify and differentiate for students on the fly, as well as have a firsthand understanding of where the gaps in understanding are.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A larger number of students benefit from differing teaching styles. ● Students get a different teaching style. ● You understand where the class is at and going. ● There is a higher teacher to student ratio. There is another teacher in the room to assist those who are falling behind or not on the same pace as their peers. ● Reaching more students in the time given; offering students different perspectives on various topics and knowing it is okay and encouraged to be different and cooperate with those differences; sharing ideas and opinions in materials to be taught as well as collaborating on how to differentiate with each student. ● Helps refresh and gives you ideas to feed off of. ● Two adults in the room are more effective than one. It helps with behavior issues and with giving students more one on one attention during work time. ● Students benefit from having two teachers, the ability to have information retaught, presented in a different way, bounce ideas 	<p>things are being done to monitor our own students first.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gen Ed teachers who have very different expectations of what the Sped teacher should be doing, and no explicit directions from administration. ● Planning and shared expectations. ● Scheduling ● Not having the same co-teacher to develop the relationship and content knowledge to do it successfully. ● Teachers have to be compatible and have mutual respect. Teachers have to find time to plan together. Communication needs to be regular and clear. ● No planning. ● Planning and the mutual understanding it is a 50/50 teaching relationship. ● Not enough prep/planning time, inexperience with how co-teaching is really supposed to work and look like, not enough time prior to school beginning to formulate a solid plan for our students because we didn't get the caseload or co-teaching assignments until two days before school started. ● One would be if you don't agree on things or
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	<p>of each other, share a grade book.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two teachers to teach all the students. Inclusive setting for students with an IEP. 	<p>have different learning styles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The special education teacher is often relegated to the "helper" or "assistant". Kids don't see the second teacher as their real teacher. Some General Ed. teachers are unwilling to work with Special Ed. teachers. Real co-teaching stretches the Special Ed. teacher thin and they can't pay all their attention to the kids with IEPs. ● Planning time. If two teachers are not compatible. ● Paid and common planning time. General education teachers who do not want special education teachers in their classroom.
<p>General</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student to teacher ratio, ability to learn from different teaching styles as well as one teachers strength might be the others weakness and vice versa. ● More influence into students' lives. ● Helping to meet the needs of all students ● Classroom management. ● Students get to learn from the perspective of two completely different teachers who have different backgrounds and experience. Some students may connect with one teacher, while others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finding the prep time to organize, prepare and implement the lesson cohesively. Willingness to share responsibilities. ● The other person. ● Different personalities or work ethic. ● No time to explain/collaborate. ● Planning time. Change of co teachers each year. Co teachers have many different classes they support or teach which complicates focus on one subject. ● Consistency with the students.

	<p>connect more with the other teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning approaches can be diversified. ● Can give students different ways to learn the same material. ● Another perspective and person to help give focus to special education student needs. ● Behavior reinforcement ● Having an extra person in the room helping students, especially in a large class, is beneficial because then I know more of my kids are getting the help they need and are focused. ● Reach more kids and at a deeper level. Also share workload and bounce ideas off of. ● Students get more personal attention. ● Too many to list. ● Students get help as needed without wait time. ● Having an expert in the field of special education to help students with special needs learn. ● Modeling and support for teachers using new or learning new skills or strategy/tech device/assessment type. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time! ● Not having the same co-teacher to develop the relationship and content knowledge to do it successfully ● I don't co-teach with the same person all day. I co-teach 2 out of 4 of the same prep classes. It doesn't make sense to plan differently for the same content twice. I use co-teacher as an opportunity to differentiate for students in the class my co teach pushes in on. ● Time management. ● Not being compatible with your co-teacher and not always knowing how to effectively utilize their skills ● Having a "co -teacher" that actually does something. Not on computer, phone, late to class, leave early, and only doing a quick walk around during assignment time and then calling it a day. No help with classroom management actually can hinder it at times. There are very few people actually "Co- teaching". We are just using this as the new buzz word of the year. ● Sometimes you end up with a co-teacher who doesn't want to participate in any way. ● Different teaching styles
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		<p>and methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of planning time. ● Not enough time, too many students, and too many classes. ● Planning and length of time available to co-teach in my schedule due to other responsibilities.
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This researcher analyzed the open-ended questions by grouping similar comments together. Some co-teachers listed more than one benefit or obstacle in their individual comments. There were a total of 28 individual responses made to benefits. 11 of those responses about benefits to co-teaching were about differentiation/having two perspectives and teaching styles. 8 responded about having a higher teacher to student ratio. 7 responses were about how co-teaching is a benefit to the students, while 5 mentioned shared responsibilities being a benefit. 3 co-teachers listed classroom management as a benefit of co-teaching and 2 listed inclusion and the benefits of helping students with IEPs. There were 32 individual responses to the open-ended question about the obstacles of co-teachings. 16 co-teachers discussed planning time or time to prep together as an obstacle. 12 teachers mentioned compatibility/mutual respect. 4 responded about consistency for the students, while 3 said that different opinions were a problem. 2 brought notice of administrative support/guidance and 1 mentioned different training of general and special educators.

Chapter Summary

This researcher used data from thirty-nine collected surveys to examine teachers' perceptions towards effective co-teaching and to answer the guiding questions presented in this study. In regards to the factors of teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, views on classroom management and discussing IEPs and setting goals for both special and general education students rank in priority for general education versus special education teachers, this researcher concludes that willingness to teach together is weighed as the most important factor by both general and special educators. It was ranked first by the most number both general and special educators. Teaching styles/compatibility was ranked first by the second highest number of both general and special education teachers. Classroom management was ranked as the most important factor by the third highest number of both sets of teachers, while discussing IEP's and setting goals was ranked fourth most important. Is professional development offered to co-teachers? This is rejected by the researcher, as only 8 of 39 co-teachers suggested that it is offered. Also rejected is that there was paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year so co-teachers may work and plan together. The Chi Square test rejected this hypothesis. The hypothesis that suggested that a common planning time between co-teachers during the school day does not matter either way to general ed co-teachers and special education co-teachers was rejected. Again, using a Chi Square test, the researcher accepts the hypothesis that common planning time between co-teachers during the school day is extremely important. The number of teachers who rated it as extremely important were equal between general and special education teachers, also. The question of what co-teaching model teachers used most often was narrowed down to the one teach/one assist model. The hypothesis of teachers sharing the following responsibilities in the

classroom, as co-teachers: grading, classroom management, lesson planning, writing/planning assessments/essays/projects, and IEP meetings is accepted. Based on the answers to the survey, this researcher concluded that the largest benefit of co-teaching is differentiation/having two perspectives and teaching styles and the biggest obstacle is planning time or time to prep together and the second largest obstacle is compatibility/mutual respect.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

Overview

Co-teaching in an inclusive setting which requires two adults to work together and meet the needs of general and special education students is a common phenomenon in education today. The findings in this study support research done in the area of co-teaching. Most schools are practicing some or all models of co-teaching, but there is little time for the teachers who work together to plan and communicate about their lessons, the curriculum and their roles/responsibilities in the classroom. Also, there is not professional development offered in the area of co-teaching. The purpose of this study was to explore how co-teaching could be done so that it is a positive model in teaching both special and general education students. The researcher looked at how special and general educators feel the priorities are in co-teaching and whether or not professional development was offered to improve effectiveness. The researcher also studied what both general and special education co-teachers needed in regards to paid planning time before the school year began and common planning time during the school day. Which co-teaching models teachers used and the responsibilities co-teachers shared was investigated. The benefits and obstacles of co-teaching were a final exploration of this study.

The results for the first and second hypotheses sets supported what the researcher expected. Co-teachers do not have paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year, but both special and general educators feel that it is extremely important in their collaboration.

The results of the third hypothesis analysis were different than what the researcher expected. General and special education teachers do prioritize the following factors as important to successful co-teaching similarly: Teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, view on classroom management, and discussing IEP's and setting goals for both special and general education students.

Discussion

The findings in this study coincide with prior research done in the area of co-teaching and the perceptions of general and special educators toward what they need in order for co-teaching to be effective. Based on these findings, the researcher was able to demonstrate that special and general education teachers rank factors of co-teaching closely. Looking at just what was their first priority, both sets of teachers ranked first priority as willingness to teach together (11 general education teachers and 7 general education teachers), while both ranked teaching styles/compatibility (6 general education teachers and 5 general education teachers) as their first priority. Although the special and general education teachers' factors were individually ranked different, it is significant that both types of educators see the highest priority as willingness to teach together and the second highest priority as teaching styles/compatibility.

The findings of this study supported what the researcher expected. Co-teachers do not have paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year, but both special and general educators believe that it is extremely important for their collaboration. This was supported with the data collected and analyzed.

Similarly, the statistical analysis completed in this study proved that common planning time between co-teachers during the school day is considered extremely important by both special and general education teachers. Not only was it proved statistically when looking at the answers to the specific question about common planning time, but it was also the most recurring comment mentioned in an open-ended question about the obstacles of co-teaching on the survey this researcher used for this study. The researcher expected the discussion of common planning time to be the most significant barrier in the perception of co-teaching effectiveness. Both the general and special education teachers surveyed communicated this in both a specific answer and an open-ended answer to one of the survey questions. Looking at teacher perception, this seems to be the most common hurdle in ensuring effectiveness in co-teaching.

Results of the survey indicated that more teachers felt that professional development was not offered before the school year began. It is interesting to note that of the 8 of 39 teachers who said it was offered, 5 were special educators and 3 were general educators. The researcher understands that there are some options to the sessions' teachers choose during professional development prior to the school year beginning. However, more than the majority of teachers agree that professional development is not offered before the school year begins.

The aforementioned conclusions, lack of professional development, absence of paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year, and the reality of no common planning time during the school day, contribute to the researcher's next conclusion. This finding was that the teaching model used most often was one teach/one assist. The researcher also found previous research (Embury and Kroger, 2012) which

indicated that students referred to the special education teacher as the assistant or the helper when this model was used. If co-teachers are not offered professional development which could train them in all the co-teaching models, this could potentially result in falling back to using the one teach/one assist model, which inhibits the learning in the classroom. It affects how the students perceive the teachers and discredits the important role of the special education teacher. All these factors lead to ineffectiveness of co-teaching.

Unexpectedly, teachers do share the responsibilities that come with teaching inclusively. The responsibilities included in the survey that were accessed included: grading, classroom management, lesson planning, writing/planning summative assessments/essays/projects and attending IEP meetings. The biggest gap in numbers of the responsibilities evaluated between special and general education teachers was lesson planning. Of course, if the teachers were allowed common planning time during the school day, this would likely be a responsibility that may be able to be shared more.

When looking at benefits and obstacles of co-teaching, this researcher concluded that the greatest benefit of co-teaching is differentiation/having two perspectives and teaching styles and the biggest obstacle is lack of planning time or time to prep together and the second largest obstacle was the absence of compatibility/mutual respect. Because the questions of benefits and obstacles were posed as open-ended questions in the survey, the researcher chose to summarize the most often mentioned responses. The benefits that co-teachers listed most often other than differentiation/having two perspectives, listed in order from most to least, included a higher teacher to student ratio, how co-teaching helped students, the ability to share responsibilities, classroom management, and finally,

the idea of inclusion. With planning time being the most mentioned obstacle for the effectiveness of co-teaching, the most mentioned other obstacles, listed in order from most to least, included compatibility, consistency for students, different opinions of the two co-teachers, lack of administrative support and guidance and lastly, different training. The correlation of the answers to the open-ended questions on the survey and the statistical analysis help to prove that special and general education teachers agree on the many benefits that exist in co-teaching. But in order for co-teaching to be effective, they need to have planning time, both paid time before the school year begins and common time during the school day. Also, being compatible in personality and teaching style is strongly desired by both sets of teachers.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the central purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of teachers in a Midwest region regarding their self-reported perception of the effectiveness of co-teaching, specifically, what contributed to benefits and obstacles, including paid planning time before the school year began, common planning time during the school day, professional development, co-teaching models used, responsibilities shared and the priority of different factors in co-teaching. The researcher wanted to look at these areas of co-teaching and evaluate how general and special educators concurred and/or differed in their thoughts on how these things impacted the effectiveness of co-teaching.

The results of this study suggest that co-teachers, who work together in any type of capacity need common, paid planning time and believe it is extremely important to assist them in meeting the educational needs of the students in their classrooms. Null hypothesis

one stated that there is paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year so co-teachers may work and plan together. This hypothesis was rejected as co-teachers reported that there is no paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year. Null hypothesis two stated that a common planning time between co-teachers during the school day does not matter either way to general and special education co-teachers and this hypothesis was also rejected. The data collected and analyzed proved that common planning time between co-teachers during the school day is extremely important co-teachers.

Null hypothesis three, that general education teachers and special education teachers prioritize the following factors as important to successful co-teaching similarly: teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, view on classroom management, and discussing IEP's and setting goals for both special and general education students was accepted. Contrary to what the researcher expected, special and general education co-teachers do similarly prioritize factors that are important to successful co-teaching.

This researcher also concluded that teachers would prefer professional development in the area of co-teaching. Furthermore, teachers share most of the responsibilities in the classroom, however, lesson planning and writing/planning summative assessments/essays/projects and are the two responsibilities which are shared the least. Lack of common planning time may be a factor contributing to fact that co-teachers do not share these two responsibilities as much as the shared responsibilities that are done directly in the classroom or in scheduled meetings.

The one teach/one assist teaching model was concluded to be the teaching model used most often by co-teachers. Another conclusion, that teachers require professional development and are not receiving it, may lead to the fact that this co-teaching model, which is not the most effective model, is used. Co-teachers need training in what different models are available, how to use them and also, what model their administration prefers them to use. Moreover, common planning time, another wish of co-teachers based on this study, would provide co-teachers time to discuss and put more effective teaching models into place.

Implications

Because co-teaching is a reality in public schools today, ensuring that is effective is of utmost importance. The results of this study suggest that teachers who work together need time to plan together. Many school administrations finds this to be a difficult task in regards to scheduling, compatibility and ensuring teachers have the time they need in order to plan together not only before the school year begins, but also the ability to have time together during the school day.

Moreover, teachers reported that to be successful with different co-teaching models, but there are times when teachers are not aware of the models that are available or do not understand which model works best or which model the school administration expects them to use. Teachers need to know which co-teaching models to use and what model is expected. Teachers need time to sort out their roles and responsibilities and reflect on their co- teaching.

Limitations

Limitations of this study included the sample size and who the survey reached. All the teachers surveyed were teachers at the same high school. Ideally, a larger number of teachers who teach at different grade levels should be surveyed. Also, surveying teachers in different communities would help the researcher get a better idea of the co-teaching dynamic across a larger area. Although the survey was anonymous, the researcher works closely with the special education teachers and two of the general education teachers who completed the survey and chose to verbally share their opinions after taking the survey with the investigator. Another limitation was that one teacher registered as both a general and special education teacher on the survey. Because the survey was anonymous, the researcher had to use her discretion, and based on the way the questions were answered, chose to count this individual as a special education teacher.

Recommendations for Further Study

Further research is needed to determine what other factors might be considered to determine the effectiveness of co-teaching. Limitations including sample size and a larger demographic can help future researchers discover ways to make co-teaching more effective. Another recommendation for further study is to evaluate outcomes between classrooms where teachers do have common planning time, comparing them to those who do not. Additionally, an analysis of educational outcomes of students when comparing the cohesiveness of teachers who chose to teach together compared to those who were placed together with no regard to preference could be done. Furthermore, teachers who received co-teaching training during their teacher education programs could be analyzed

compared to veteran teachers who never received professional development on the subject.

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Appendix A**Co-teaching Survey**

1. I am a...
 - Special Education Teacher
 - General Education Teacher

2. How many total years have you been co-teaching?
 - Less than 1 year
 - 2-3 years
 - 4-6 years
 - 7-9 years
 - 10+ years

3. How many teachers different teachers do you co-teach with this school year?
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4+

4. Do the teachers you co-teach with change from year to year?
 - Yes
 - No

5. What is the dynamic of collaboration with the teacher you co-teach with?
- True co-teaching (or team teaching - delivering the same instruction at the same time)
- Parallel Teaching (Split class in half, same content, same time)
- Station teaching (Divide content and students. Teachers each with one group)
- One teach/one assist
- One teach/one observe
- Alternative teaching (One leads a smaller pullout group while other teaches the rest of the class).
6. Do you have a common planning time with your co-teacher during the school day?
- Yes
- No
7. How important do you feel a common planning time during the school day is?
- Extremely important
- Somewhat important
- Not so important
- It doesn't matter either way to me
8. Do you have paid time to plan with your co-teacher prior to the school year?
- Yes
- No
9. How important do you feel paid planning time before the school year begins is?
- Extremely important
- Somewhat important
- Not so important
- It doesn't matter either way to me

10. Does your school/district offer co-teaching professional development?
 ___ Yes
 ___ No
11. Review the four factors below, associated with a successful co-teaching experience. Please rank the factors in order according to your personal priority (1=highest priority and 4=lowest priority).

- ___ Teaching styles/compatibility
 ___ Willingness to teach together
 ___ Views on classroom management
 ___ Discussing IEPs and setting goals for both SPED and general education students

12. In your co-teaching situation, do you share the following responsibilities:

Grading

___ Yes ___ No

Classroom management

___ Yes ___ No

Lesson Planning

___ Yes ___ No

Planning assessments/essays/projects

___ Yes ___ No

IEP meetings

___ Yes ___ No

13. What do you feel the benefits of co-teaching are?

14. What do you feel are the obstacles in co-teaching?

15. Please use this area to express any other ideas/thoughts you have about co-teaching.

Appendix B**Hypothesis 1 Chi Square Chart**

Null hypothesis (1): There is paid planning time prior to the beginning of the school year so co-teachers may work and plan together.

Research hypothesis (1): There is not paid planning time prior to the school year so that co-teachers may work and plan together.

	Expected outcome	Observed outcome
Yes	19.5	12
No	19.5	27

Chi Square = 5.76, therefore reject the null

Appendix C

Hypothesis 2 Chi Square Chart

Null hypothesis (2): A common planning time between co-teachers during the school day does not matter either way to general ed co-teachers and special education co-teachers.

Research hypothesis (2): A common planning time between co-teachers during the school day is extremely important to both general education and special education co-teachers.

	Expected Outcome	Observed Outcome
Extremely important	10	24
Somewhat important	10	9
Not so important	10	4
It doesn't matter either way to me	10	3

Chi Square = 28.2, therefore reject the null

Appendix C

Hypothesis 3 Chi Square Chart

Null hypothesis (3): General education teachers and special education teachers prioritize the following factors as important to successful co-teaching similarly: Teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, view on classroom management, and discussing IEP's and setting goals for both special and general education students.

Research hypothesis (3):): General education teachers and special education teachers do not prioritize the following factors as important to successful co-teaching similarly: Teaching styles/compatibility, willingness to teach together, view on classroom management, and discussing IEP's and setting goals for both special and general education students. (Full chart on following page.)

Priority	Teacher	Teaching Styles/Compatibility		Willingness to Teach Together		View on Classroom Management		Discussing IEP's and setting goals for both special education and general education students		TOTAL
		<i>Observed</i>	<i>Expected</i>	<i>Observed</i>	<i>Expected</i>	<i>Observed</i>	<i>Expected</i>	<i>Observed</i>	<i>Expected</i>	
1 st Priority	Gen Ed Teachers	6	5.9	11	10.4	4	3.5	1	2.2	22
	Spec Ed Teachers	5	5.5	7	7.5	2	2.6	3	1.7	17
2 nd Priority	Gen Ed Teachers	5	3.8	5	7.0	6	5.6	5	4.5	22
	Sped Ed Teachers	2	3.2	7	5.1	4	4.2	3	3.5	17
3 rd Priority	Gen Ed Teachers	5	6.5	3	2.1	9	8.5	4	3.9	22
	Spec Ed Teachers	7	5.5	1	1.7	6	6.5	3	3.1	17
4 th Priority	Gen Ed Teachers	4	3.8	3	2.3	2	3.4	12	11.4	22
	Spec Ed Teachers	3	3.2	1	1.7	4	2.6	8	8.7	17