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Teacher Perceptions of Co-Teaching Effectiveness in Inclusive Elementary Classrooms

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine if co-teaching is an effective strategy of inclusion for students with Individualized Educational Program (IEP). Specifically, students in the general education classroom for grade levels kindergarten to fifth grade in the state of Illinois. Co-teaching has been utilized in middle and upper-grade levels, but the implementation of co-teaching has started to integrate into elementary grades. Two questions guided the study; is co-teaching an effective inclusive strategy for students with an IEP in a general education classroom; and does the model of co-teaching impact the student's academic progress? A quantitative study utilizing a survey-questionnaire method was designed to examine if teachers perceived co-teaching as an effective strategy to include students with IEPs a total of 140 participants in the study with 67 general educators, 63 special educators, and ten participants certified in both. Results revealed 61.43% of participants strongly agree that they understand the goal and purpose of the co-teaching program (M=3.59, SD=0.59). The participants also agreed that co-teaching is benefiting students who are at risk (M= 3.53, SD= 0.65). Further, data reported that the one-teach one-assist co-teaching model received the most "often" by the participant (M= 3.33, SD= 0.69). The results of the study revealed that teachers agreed with the effectiveness of co-teaching being implemented in elementary grades. The data showed no significance in the model utilized during implementation and the effectiveness or impact on a student's academic progress.

Keywords: co-teaching, inclusion, elementary education, IEP

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my thesis committee for their endless support during my writing process. I also would like to recognize my fiancé Katherine for helping me and giving me support. You have continually encouraged me and helped me get through not only my thesis but also graduate school. Finally, I would like to thank my sister Sam. Thank you for always answering my facetime calls and being someone that I could always call for support, encouragement, and a good laugh. I am blessed to have these amazing individuals in my life.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

In education, the push for the inclusion of students with special needs has increased. Inclusion is the idea that students in special education are given their accommodations and modifications in the general education classroom instead of being pulled out into a special education or resource classroom. Inclusion allows students with special needs to receive the same access as their peers, while also receiving supports in the general education classroom, which increases the amount of social interaction that the student receives with their grade-level peers. The determination for inclusion is based on the student's least restrictive environment (LRE). The LRE is where the student can receive their education in general education as much as possible, so they are separated from their same-grade level peers as minimally as possible. The LRE is decided differently for each student because each student has different needs.

The push for inclusion began when Public Law 94-142 was passed in 1975 (Morgan, 2016). This law was also known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and had six key components which were: education for all, nondiscriminatory evaluation, free and appropriate public education, the right to an LRE, due process rights, and shared decision making for implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). When this law was passed, inclusion became a widely discussed topic which led to different ideas about including students with IEPs in the general education classroom. Before the law was passed students with special needs were excluded from general education classrooms and even schools in general. After IDEA was passed, another law called The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was passed and financially supported educational assistance for students who were struggling or had disabilities. NCLB was passed in 2004 as well as a revision to IDEA, which was referred to as

The Individuals with Disabilities Educational Improvement Act (IDEIA). When IDEIA was

passed, it pushed to ensure that students with special needs were provided with an equal chance

for the same education as their peers without disabilities. This push for equality led to more

schools discussing the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

However, with inclusion, there still needed to be support for the students with disabilities so that

they would have an equal opportunity at learning the material that their peers did, while also

being included in the general education curriculum (Tremblay, 2013). Thus, strategies to support

inclusion were created and implemented in general education classrooms.

With the push for increased inclusion, the role of a special educator has changed, and

now instead of being the sole teacher that pulls students out to provide the instruction that the

student needs, the special educator and general educator work together to co-teach in the general

education classroom (Morgan, 2016). This shift in roles allows for co-teaching to occur in the

general education classroom so the student with special needs can stay in their LRE while also

getting the accommodations or modifications that they may need to access the material that their

same-grade level peers are also learning.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether if co-teaching is an effective inclusive

teaching strategy for students with an IEP. Specifically, this study is going to investigate the type

of co-teaching that is being utilized and the effects that model of co-teaching has on the student

with an IEP's outcomes with their academic performance. Co-teaching is usually done by

determining how the lesson is going to be taught. Six different teaching methods are usually

utilized when co-teaching: one teach one observe, one teach one assist, parallel teaching, station

teaching, team teaching, alternative teaching.

For this study, the type of co-teaching that the teachers report using most often will be analyzed along with the impact on the students with an IEP's academic skills in the general education classroom. While looking at the co-teaching model, the student's performance will also be rated to find out if co-teaching is an effective way for students in special education to learn the reading materials in the general education setting making the general education classroom their LRE.

Research Questions

1. Is co-teaching an effective inclusive strategy for students with an IEP in a general education classroom?

2. Does the model of co-teaching impact the student's academic progress?

Hypothesis

The researcher hypothesizes that when the educators work together to create an inclusive environment co-teaching can be an effective practice. An inclusive environment would include communication and planning each lesson to include every student. Additionally, the researcher hypothesizes that the cohesion and teamwork that the educators put forth will affect the student's success when included in the general education classroom.

Significance of the Study

Co-teaching has been an increasingly discussed topic and has become a way for schools to include students with disabilities. While there has been an increase in co-teaching, the research supporting co-teaching is limited, especially related to co-teaching specifically in the early elementary setting. Co-teaching has been researched and utilized in later grades, but some elementary schools have continued to utilize the practice.

Early elementary grades fluctuate with academic abilities regardless of whether the student has special needs or not. When measuring the growth of students, it is hard to determine what worked well when teaching the student. The student could have learned something because of the teaching model or the student finally reached the moment when the information starts fitting together. Due to this large academic growth and spectrum in the early elementary grades, trying to decide what helped the student's academic growth increase may be a struggle.

Limitations of the Study

There will be some limitations to this study. The major limitation of this study will be the sample size. Co-teaching in elementary school is still a practice that is scarcely utilized in schools, and only a select number of schools have continued this practice in kindergarten through fifth-grade classrooms. Some of the data that will be collected will also be from teachers that have potentially only used co-teaching for a brief time or teachers who have taught but are not co-teaching this year in a classroom because of the COVID-19 outbreak. So, the teacher responses may not be from teachers who are currently co-teaching in these grades but have done so previously.

The other limitation is that this study will only be conducted in the early elementary grades, kindergarten through fifth grade in Illinois public schools. Since this will only be done in Illinois public schools, no data will yield results from private schools. The data will represent how Illinois public early elementary teachers observe the progress of students in their classrooms. While the survey is going to be sent out to many co-teachers, not all of the teachers will take the survey so the results will represent those who have taken it in Illinois.

Definition of Terms

   Alternative teaching. This is one of the six main co-teaching strategies. This teaching model has one teacher teaching a lesson and then the other teacher either gives a pre-teaching lesson or a re-teaching lesson (Cook & Friend, 1995).

   Co-teaching. A method of teaching used in school systems to help include students with disabilities in the general education classroom. This teaching method consists of the general education teacher and special education teacher working together to prepare and teach the lesson to students so that the same-grade level students with and without disabilities can all learn together in one classroom (Cook & Friend, 1995).

   Individualized Educational Program (IEP*).* This is a legal document that is created to help students who need supports, services, or accommodations in a classroom (Kaye & Aserlind, 1979).

   One-teach and one-assist. This is one of the six main co-teaching models. During this method, one teacher will be instructing the whole group lesson, while the other teacher is helping individual students with any questions or needs that they may have (Cook & McDuffie-Landrum, 2020).

   One-teach and one-observe*.* This is one of the six main co-teaching models. This method has one teacher teaching the lesson to the whole group, while the other teacher is watching over the class. The teacher that is observing may also be collecting data to help focus on what needs to be changed for instruction (Cook & McDuffie-Landrum, 2020).

   Parallel teaching. This is one of the six main co-teaching models. This method has both teachers teaching the same lesson, but instead of being one whole group, the classroom is split into two equal groups. Everyone in the class is receiving the lesson, but it is completed in

two different groups thus reducing the teacher to student ratio (Cook & McDuffie-Landrum, 2020).

Station teaching. This is one of the six main co-teaching models. This method has both teachers teaching in groups as well, except the groups are small. So, each teacher may have three to five students and then the rest of the class will be completing work either independently or in groups (Cook & Friend, 1995).

Team teaching. This is one of the six main co-teaching models. This method of teaching is unique and takes a lot of planning because this method has both teachers teaching the lesson together working in tandem as one large group. During this method, both teachers will teach the lesson and build off of each other to help students learn the material (Cook & Friend, 1995).

Summary

While there are some limitations to co-teaching, the practice has been utilized to help students with disabilities. The educational system has implemented laws so that all students have the same opportunities to learn the same grade level material. To abide by the law and increase inclusion, co-teaching has become a popular approach for teaching students with disabilities.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

This literature review will discuss the importance of inclusion or "push-in" of students with special needs using the strategy of co-teaching. Co-Teaching and its implementation are key to student success. Co-teaching can be used in any grade level, but this review will specifically focus on using co-teaching in the early elementary grades of kindergarten through fifth grade. Finally, a review of how teachers utilized each model in their classrooms will be discussed.

Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is a practice that allows students with disabilities to be included in the general education classroom for their services and accommodations instead of being in a segregated setting such as a resource classroom. This inclusion practice requires the special education teacher to enter the general education classroom and help the general educator provide instruction (Cook & McDuffie-Landrum, 2020). Co-teaching relies on both the general educator's and special educator's skills and expertise and reduces the student-to-teacher ratio in the classroom. During the instructional co-teaching time, the student with a disability will be receiving their academic instruction from both their general education teacher and their special education teacher in the same classroom as the student's peers. This allows the student to have more time with their peers so that they may feel more comfortable while they are receiving the help they need and also gaining more socialization with peers (Dev & Haynes, 2015).

Co-teaching can be challenging because the lessons need to specifically accommodate the students with disabilities, while also educating their peers. Some teachers need to adjust notes, assignments, and learning models to help accommodate the students to the general education classroom (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017). To accommodate these academic needs while the

student is still in the general education classroom, the general education teacher and the special

education teacher work together using six main strategies to teach the lesson to the classroom.

There are more than six strategies that the teachers can use as instruction methods, but usually,

there are only six being used. During each lesson, the teachers choose one model to use as they

see appropriate.

Six Main Co-Teaching Models

When teachers are preparing to teach a co-taught lesson, they first must decide the best

way to implement the lesson so that all of the students will be able to grasp the lesson. To

determine what type of co-teaching model should be used for the lesson, the teachers should first

plan what they are going to teach and the accommodations needed for that lesson. Based on this

planning session, then the teachers can determine what model of co-teaching they would like to

implement for the lesson (Ferrante, 2017). The models that were created were, one-teach and

one-assist, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching, and team teaching (Cook &

Friend, 1995). Then as co-teaching started to increase in use, another model was added which

was one-teach and one-observe (Friend et al., 2010). The model that the teachers choose is

usually the one with which they are most familiar and comfortable, but again the model is

intended to best serve all students in the classroom as well as the students with IEPs.

Table 1 lists the six teaching models employed in a co-teaching classroom:

Table 1

Six Co-Teaching Models

#	Co-Teaching Model	Description

1	One-Teach and One-Observe	One teacher leads the class with the lesson, while the other teacher is observing the class and watching how the other teacher is teaching. This model is usually done when co-teachers are starting to adjust to each other and the different teaching models they both have.
2	One-Teach and One-Assist	One teacher mainly teaches the class, while the other teacher is roaming the classroom and assisting any student that may need help understanding or need extra clarification
3	Stations Teaching	Stations allow for some flexibility in a classroom. When co-teachers use stations, the class is divided into groups according to abilities. Then both teachers will take a group and teach the lesson while, the other students in the room work on independent work. Usually, stations are short and last about fifteen minutes or less, depending on how many groups each teacher needs to see and how quickly the students are understanding the lesson. Stations also allow the teachers to have flexibility because as students' academic knowledge fluctuates, the teachers can readjust the groups to fit the students' needs
4	Parallel Teaching,	The teachers split the class into two equal groups based on abilities and one teacher will teach a lesson to one group and the other teacher teaches the lesson to the other group.

		This model of co-teaching requires a tremendous amount of coordination so that way the teachers can both give their instruction without interrupting the other group. Usually, this model leads to drill and practice activities, requires close teacher supervision, and discussion of activities
5	Team Teaching	During team teaching, both teachers are teaching a whole group lesson and teach the same concept but they both focus on different parts of the lesson to help students. This model also requires lots of planning so that the teachers are not talking over each other or missing sections of the lesson.
6	Alternate Teaching	Alternative teaching is different because the class is taught in two groups, however, one teacher is leading a large group lesson while the other teacher is leading a small group lesson to further assist the students who need extra help.

Source: Cook & Friend, 1995 and Cook McDuffie-Landrum, 2020

Another form of co-teaching that is similar to parallel teaching is alternative teaching.

However, alternative teaching is different because the class is taught in two groups, but one

teacher is leading a large group lesson while the other teacher is leading a small group lesson to

further assist the students who need extra help. Finally, the last common co-teaching model is

team teaching. During this model, both teachers are working in tandem teaching a whole group

lesson and teach the same concept but they both focus on different parts of the lesson to help

students. This model also requires a large amount of planning so that the teachers are not talking over each other or missing sections of the lesson.

Why Inclusion is Important

Co-teaching supports students with special needs and allows them to be included in the general education classroom. This allows the student to gain experiences that they would not gain if they were pulled out for their services and accommodations. Inclusion is so important because it allows the student with special needs to gain and develop their social-emotional and academic skills while also promoting a positive classroom environment (Schwab et al., 2015). Socially, the students who are receiving accommodations through an IEP will gain more time to interact with their same-grade peers because they will be in the general education classroom more. The increase in social interactions of grade-level peers with and without disabilities helps the students have more positive engagements and experiences in the classroom. These positive engagements and interactions can also lead to more self-confidence and an increase in participation because the students feel comfortable adding their input.

When interaction in the classroom increases, academic growth may also occur. The academic growth may increase because students are participating more and asking questions for clarification so that they understand the concepts and material that is being taught. Co-teaching also allows for academic growth because when a student does not understand the topic, there are two teachers in the classroom for support. Students will receive help from both teachers. Each teacher brings their skills and expertise into the classroom when they co-teach. This extra help may help start to close the academic knowledge gap that is occurring in general education classrooms. The teachers have the opportunity to pick a co-teaching model that can impact how

fast or slow their teaching goes and the supports they give, which may also close the academic gap (Florian, 2010). Student's academic growth is dependent on many factors in the classroom.

Overall, multiple benefits are shown when co-teaching is implemented in general education classrooms. The growth does not only affect students with disabilities, but also the general education students. However, not all students show an increase in academic growth and social-emotional growth because they were already at grade level for the general education class. The researcher notes that the hardest part about co-teaching is finding the right model to use for each lesson to maximize the academic growth for all of the students, while also working well with each other to form a cohesive unit for the classroom.

Views of Co-Teaching

Co-teaching has been implemented in many schools. Research contains teachers' pros and cons of utilizing the co-teaching practice as a means for inclusion. As stated above there has been some successful growth with academics and social-emotional skills. Other benefits or drawbacks of co-teaching have been reviewed through teacher self-evaluation and sometimes whole-school evaluation.

Teacher Views

Through a qualitative study, teachers have shared their input and thoughts about how co-teaching has impacted not only themselves but also their classrooms. In many of the studies, the teachers who participated were teachers who had already done some co-teaching if not multiple years of co-teaching so that they had experienced before the studies were conducted. However, even though the teachers had participated in co-teaching before, multiple teachers indicated that they knew the basics of co-teaching but they did not feel fully comfortable with their understanding and implementation strategies for co-teaching (Brendle et al., 2017). The teachers

in the studies participated by having people come into the classroom and observe, they completed interviews, and they used self-assessments to further give their input on co-teaching.

One study gathered teacher feedback insight and analyzed for common themes and found five themes that all of the teachers had touched on or explicitly discussed during their study. Two of the themes were effective collaboration and the benefits of collaboration. The teachers felt that in the classroom, during the lesson, and during the prep, each teacher needed to make sure that they were working together and discussing any problems or things that the teachers think may not be working. However, they should also be discussing what works well so that they can continue to grow and continue to expand their communication and co-teaching relationship (Morgan, 2016). Communication and collaboration are skills that teachers are taught to interact with others, but co-teaching is a highly interactive teaching model and requires fully open and honest communication for this teaching model to be effective (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2017).

The next theme that was repetitive in the study was integrated services (Morgan, 2016). The teachers thought that there needed to be more of an overlap with services so that the teachers can both better understand how to teach the students while giving the students the accommodations that they need. Having both teachers in a single classroom allowed for each teacher's teaching model to show in the classroom; however, the problem was some teachers found the teaching models differed and sometimes would benefit the students because they were so different and allow the students to see multiple viewpoints and different perspectives (Brendle et al., 2017).

The last two themes were the quality of instruction and competing forces (Morgan, 2016). The quality of instruction needs to benefit all students, but specifically, the teacher needs to accommodate and modify for students with special needs tasks to best fit them. So, the

teachers would need to work together to help create a positive and effective learning

environment. If both teachers worked together, the classroom could experience academic growth

because all students would be able to learn from two teachers, which can help with

understanding. After all, the teachers will both have their model of teaching which gives the

students two perspectives (Ferrante, 2017). However, even though two teachers having different

perspectives in a classroom may be helpful, it may also hinder the student's learning if the

teachers become competing forces (Morgan, 2016). When teachers are not working and

communicating with one another, this can cause the lesson to interfere with student academic

growth because the lesson was not effectively planned to meet the needs of all the students in the

classroom. If one teacher tries to compete against the other teacher, this may cause the lessons to

result in malfunction during instruction, but it may also cause tension between the two teachers.

      Education and Training. Teachers who do not work well together will cause stress not

only between themselves but also in the classroom environment. These disagreements can cause

more underlying problems. One major problem that was discussed with having two different

perspectives was trust issues and task control between teachers (Morgan, 2016). When teachers

feel like their co-worker is not cooperative, a distrust can form, which can cause the teacher to

feel as if all of the work is their responsibility. The distrust can also cause a power struggle in the

classroom. To prevent these problems, proper education, and training to prevent some of the

major issues that could be solved by some training. The problem with training is that only about

44% of teachers participating in the co-teaching model have been formally trained and

understand how to effectively communicate and plan with another teacher (Chitiyo & Brinda,

2018).

Another topic that was discussed prevalently throughout the research was the idea that preparation of co-teaching needs to be done and extensively teach how to co-teach (Brinkmann & Twinford, 2012). As discussed above, collaboration is a large part of co-teaching because not only does co-teaching take preparation, but it also requires effective communication to implement co-teaching as a strategy. So, the teachers discussed training as well as taking classes to better understand how to implement co-teaching in the classroom while also working well with their fellow teachers. While having the opportunity to take classes, professional development, or training, the teachers also indicated that they wanted support from their school staff (Ferrante, 2017). The teachers desired support from their administration such as their principals should include the principal listening and helping to place teachers together that would likely improve the learning environment. The teachers should also want to create a framework for the teachers to help teachers determine factors that reoccur or are causing problems in the classroom.

Impacts. After the training and an understanding are established in the classroom, effective co-teaching can occur to help improve students' academics. Some of the positive impacts that came from a well-established co-teaching classroom include more opportunities to respond, more opportunities to receive feedback, smaller group instruction, and more one-on-one instruction (Sweigart & Landrum, 2015). These opportunities allowed for teachers to interact with more students because there were two teachers in the classroom, so the students had more opportunities to interact and ask questions. Having more than one teacher in the classroom also helps minimize distractions and unwanted classroom behavior (Tschida et al., 2015). Another impact that co-teaching has is the fact that classroom stress can overwhelm some teachers due to the amount of preparation of lessons, grading, and trying to keep up with accommodations and

modifications for the students in the classroom. Now, with proper training and preparation for co-teaching, teachers can rely on another teacher to help them get work done. This allows the teachers time to focus on the students more rather than focusing on figuring out how to teach together and keep the classroom engaged.

To keep up with the ever-changing views of co-teaching some teachers take self-assessments to figure out what they need to improve on and also how they could be a better co-teacher themselves. Completing a self-assessment is crucial for teaching in general, but self-assessing is even more important when co-teaching because the teacher is not just trying to better themselves but are also trying to improve the interactions between their peer co-teacher (Wolffensperger & Patkin, 2013). The self-assessment process can help the teachers develop a better understanding of themselves so that they can then be able to describe how they think and communicate. Once the teacher understands themselves and how they work and teach, they can share this information with their peer teacher to be able to teach using their strengths while supporting each other with their weaknesses. Self-assessing may take some time to get used to because critiquing oneself may be difficult, but over time the teachers gained the skill of critiquing themselves and they were more comfortable completing the assessment (Wolffensperger & Patkin, 2013). Once a teacher is comfortable critiquing themselves, they can share what they find and create a stronger co-teaching relationship.

Self-assessing helps teachers realize their weaknesses, while also helping them find some practices that may not work well in the classroom. As stated before, teachers feel like they are lacking the education and training to successfully implement a co-teaching model, but some suggest that co-teaching may be a way for schools to meet the inclusion requirement from NCLB (Nichols et al., 2010). When inclusion was implemented into schools, teachers were just pushed

into co-teaching and some of the teachers struggled with implementing the co-teaching strategy. When teachers were advised to co-teach, they indicated that they lacked the support and training to successfully help their students while implementing the co-teaching strategy.

Teachers indicated a need for support and training to help their students. Once the teachers received the training and support from their school districts, they indicated that co-teaching was effective and increased many aspects of the educational environment (Ferrante, 2017). While teachers are receiving the support, training, and education, the teachers can begin to work on themselves through self-assessments, which will help strengthen the co-teaching relationship. This strength will in turn help all of the students receive a more in-depth learning experience because the co-teachers will be able to have a balance of cooperation and communication.

Summary

While the concept of co-teaching is expanding and not currently utilized in every classroom, it has become a strategy to support the inclusion of students in special education in the general education classroom. While studies have been completed assessing students' growth and impacts of co-teaching, limited research has been conducted specifically on the early elementary grades. Since the research is still limited on the effectiveness of co-teaching, research needs to be gathered to ensure that the students have academic success, as well as a positive impact in the general education classroom while co-teaching is occurring. The following chapter will outline the methodology for the study.

CHAPTER III

Methods

This study used a quantitative approach, specifically the survey methodology. The survey was adapted from "*Effective Co-Teaching Within the Inclusive Classroom*" (Holliday, 2011) as well as "*The Impact of Co-Teaching on Student Learning Outcomes in Secondary Social Studies Classroom Implementing Content Enhancement*" (Zgonc, 2019). The survey also included some background questions that would help gather some demographic data. A quantitative approach is necessary to gather information from a large sample of the study and to report the validity and reliability of the data. The survey used a Likert Scale, to query teachers that have or are currently co-teaching in an elementary public school in the state of Illinois.

The independent variable in this study is the implementation of co-teaching in grade levels kindergarten to fifth grade. The dependent variable is the students with an IEP's academic success in the general education classroom. The researcher seeks to see if a significant correlation exists between the variables. The study also intends to examine the impact that co-teaching has on students with disabilities in the general education classroom. The focus of the study will be about co-teaching and answer the two questions:

1. Is co-teaching an effective inclusive strategy for students with an IEP in a general education classroom?

2. Does the model of co-teaching impact the student's academic progress?

Sample

The participants' information was gathered from the Illinois Report Card website (Illinois State Board of Education, 2020). The participants that meet the requirements of the survey (teachers who are currently or have experience co-teaching in general and special education in

grades kindergarten through fifth-grade public schools) were invited to participate in the study

(See Appendix E). The participation of the teachers is voluntary. The survey was delivered

through email to approximately 1,500 teachers throughout the state of Illinois.

Instrument

The instrument for the study is composed of two surveys that were modified together to

gather student success in a co-taught general education classroom. The survey questions were

adapted from "*Effective Co-Teaching Within the Inclusive Classroom*" (Holliday, 2011) and

"*The Impact of Co-Teaching on Student Learning Outcomes in Secondary Social Studies*

Classroom Implementing Content Enhancement" (Zgonc, 2019). In addition, questions

regarding demographics were added to gain more information and factors to co-teaching in the

classroom.

The survey was sent via email to teachers that are currently teaching in elementary

schools all across the state of Illinois. The platform that was utilized to gather data for the survey

was Qualtrics. The survey had two pre-determining questions before the whole survey to be

filled out. The first two questions will determine if the teacher has or is currently co-teaching and

the grade level that they are currently teaching. If the teacher does not meet the qualifications,

then their survey will end, but if they do, then they will be prompted to complete the rest of the

survey.

The survey specifically targeted teachers who have or are currently co-teaching in the

specified grade levels. The rest of the survey that they were prompted to fill out contained

questions regarding their demographic information, their ratings of the effectiveness of co-

teaching, and then finally the six main models of co-teaching and how often they are used. The

survey will then provide statements about co-teaching and the teachers will rate them utilizing a Likert Scale to identify how they perceive the effectiveness of the co-teaching statement.

The instrument for the study had a total of 23 questions. Of the 23 questions, two were the preliminary questions so that only teachers who are or have co-taught in the specific grade levels took the survey. Six of the questions focused on the demographics of the teachers. Nine of the questions pertained to the effectiveness of co-teaching. Eight of these questions were answered using a Likert scale with answers (shown below).

1- Strongly Disagree

2- Disagree

3- Agree

4- Strongly Agree

The last section of the survey pertained to the six main co-teaching models. These questions also used a Likert Scale (shown below) to show how often a teacher utilizes a particular teaching model while they are co-teaching.

1- Not at all

2- Rarely

3- Sometimes

4- Often

The survey was piloted with ten teachers and had a score of Cronbach alpha of 0.76. After the instrument was finalized, it was created within the survey program *Qualtrics XM*. Qualtrics is a web-based software that allows for the mass sending of academic surveys. Qualtrics allows for a link to be sent through the emails of all of the participants. After the

survey has been completed, the survey data comes back without the personal information of the

participants, ensuring that the survey has anonymity.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher used Qualtrics to deliver the instrument to roughly 1,500 teachers in

grades kindergarten through fifth-grade teachers who have or are currently co-teaching. The

instrument was delivered via email and also included the purpose of the survey and an

explanation about how to complete the survey as well as an explanation of the Likert-scale

ratings. After the survey is completed, a thank you email was sent out to each participant. After

the survey, data was collected and stored in Qualtrics.

The survey was sent out after the researcher received IRB approval. The surveys were

sent out at the end of January and remained open throughout February 2021. The return rate was

low, so a survey reminder was sent out two weeks later.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed descriptively based on the three sections of the survey. The answers

to these questions reported how effective co-teaching is perceived to be in the classrooms all

across Illinois. These answers addressed research question one: Is co-teaching an effective

inclusive strategy for students with an IEP in a general education classroom?

Next, the responses for the co-teaching models were also reported by analyzing the

responses: often, sometimes, rarely, and not at all. The data from this set of questions helped

determine how often each model of co-teaching is utilized in a classroom. This data also helped

determine if there is a relationship between the type of co-teaching model and a student with a

disability's academic success in a general education classroom.

Finally, the demographic section was analyzed to see if there were any commonalities between the grade level and the effectiveness of co-teaching. The demographics were also calculated by the areas of Illinois that have responded and the grade levels that were returned.

Summary

A quantitative approach was utilized in this study to gather and analyze data from a survey instrument that was created and modified from "Effective Co-Teaching Within the Inclusive Classroom" (Holliday, 2011) as well as "The Impact of Co-Teaching On Student Learning Outcomes In Secondary Social Studies Classroom Implementing Content Enhancement R*"* (Zgonc, 2019). Approximately 1,500 emails were sent out to either elementary principals or directly to the elementary teachers themselves. The survey was sent using Qualtrics and the data was gathered and analyzed to find out if co-teaching is an effective inclusive teaching strategy for students in special education.

Chapter IV

Results and Findings

This chapter will discuss the results and findings of the study. The first research question for the study was co-teaching an effective inclusion strategy for students with an IEP in a general education classroom. The second research question does the model of co-teaching impacts the student's academic progress is addressed. The data from the survey were analyzed descriptively using mean, standard deviation, variance, and percentage. A survey was sent out using Qualtrics to principals to pass along to teachers. The survey questions were based on their perceptions of co-teaching in their room previously or currently. The total number of responses that were received was 215, but only 140 of those responses were eligible for the survey because they have or are currently co-taught.

For research question one: is co-teaching an effective inclusive strategy for students with an IEP in a general education classroom, the data from Category B of the survey was used to answer this question. For research question two does the model of co-teaching impact the student's academic progress, data from Category C Co-teaching Model in the survey were used to answer the question. The following section will discuss the results of the study each research question and the finding of the study.

Research Question One: Is Co-teaching an Effective Inclusive Strategy for Students with an IEP in a General Education Classroom?

Data from Category B; effectiveness, in the survey was used to answer the first research question. The first question from Category B determined how often teachers spent time co-planning. The average time spent co-planning was one hour per week (See Appendix F).

The remaining section of Category B used a Likert Scale and was analyzed descriptively to determine the mean score for teachers' perceptions of co-teaching. The Likert Scale had a score of 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for agree, and 4 for strongly agree. The Likert Scale in Category B of the survey consists of eight statements about the effectiveness of co-teaching. Data from the mean score showed the range was 3.1 to 3.6. The statement that received the highest mean was, "I understand the goals/purposes of co-teaching programs" ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.56$). While the statement that received the lowest mean was, "I believe that student behavior is better in a co-taught class" ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.72$).

The complete list of co-teaching statements and their mean scores are reported in Table 2 All of the means were in the 3.1 – 3.6 range, indicating that overall teachers agreed with the statement that was provided.

Table 2

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Variance of Teachers' Perception Ratings of Co-teaching Effectiveness in the General Education Classroom. (n=140)

Category B Statements	M	SD	V
1. I understand the goals/purpose of co-teaching programs.	3.59	0.56	0.31
2. I believe that student behavior is better in a co-taught class.	3.19	0.72	0.52
3. Co-teaching is beneficial for students with special needs.	3.49	0.66	0.44
4. I think co-teaching is benefiting students who are at-risk.	3.53	0.65	0.42
5. I have seen evidence of improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities in inclusion classrooms.	3.36	0.70	0.49
6. Modifications of goals for students with special needs are incorporated into class.	3.51	0.58	0.34

7. I believe that students without disabilities can receive an   3.50   0.65   0.42

   appropriately challenging education in an inclusive general

   education classroom.

8. Students with disabilities and students without disabilities receive   3.44   0.62   0.39

   equal access to the same general curriculum.

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, and V=Variance.

Table 3 shows the comparison of percentages of agreeance of each co-teaching statement.

Table 3

Percentage and Number of Teachers' Perception Ratings of Co-teaching Effectiveness in the

General Education Classroom Scale. (n=140)

Statement	SD	D	A	SA
1. I understand the goals/purpose of co-teaching programs.	0.71 (1)	1.43 (2)	36.43 (51)	61.43 (86)
2. I believe that student behavior is better in a co-taught class.	1.43 (2)	14.29 (20)	48.57 (68)	35.71 (50)
3. Co-Teaching is beneficial for students with special needs.	1.43 (1)	5.00 (7)	36.43 (51)	57.14 (80)
4. I think co-teaching is benefiting students who are at-risk.	2.14 (3)	2.14 (3)	36.43 (51)	59.29 (83)
5. I have seen evidence of improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities in inclusion classrooms.	2.14 (3)	6.43 (9)	45.00 (63)	46.43 (65)

6. Modifications of goals for students with special needs are incorporated into class.	0.71 (1)	2.14 (3)	42.14 (59)	55.00 (77)
7. I believe that students without disabilities can receive an appropriately challenging education in an inclusive general education classroom.	1.43 (2)	4.29 (6)	37.14 (52)	57.14 (80)
8. Students with disabilities and students without disabilities receive equal access to the same general curriculum.	0.71 (1)	5.00 (7)	43.57 (61)	50.71 (71)

Note: SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree

The first statement and the question about time spent co-planning served as a way to show that teachers are working together, and understand how to implement a co-teaching strategy. The rest of the statements determined if co-teaching was an effective and beneficial inclusion strategy. While the time spent on co-planning was low, the effectiveness of co-teaching was rated as high, with almost all participants in agreeance.

While all scores were in the 3.1-3.6 range, the highest-scoring statement was, 'I understand the goals/purpose of co-teaching programs' (M=3.59, SD=0.56). This statement also received one rating in the strongly disagree resulting in a 0.71% and two ratings in the disagree section resulting in a 1.43% Understanding the co-teaching goals and purposes is critical this study because the teacher needs to understand and be confident in utilizing the co-teaching model to derive a positive outcome.

The next highest scoring statement was 'I think co-teaching is benefiting students who are at-risk' (M= 3.53, SD= 0.65). The percentages for this statement were also very high with

59.29% of participants strongly agreeing and 36.43% of participants agreeing. However, this statement also received the highest amount of participants who strongly disagreed with 3 participants strongly disagreeing resulting in 2.14%

The lowest scoring statement was in the strongly agree section was 'I believe that student behavior is better in a co-taught class (*M*=3.19, *SD*= 0.72). This statement had the lowest percentage of participants strongly agreeing with only 50 ratings resulting in a 35.71%. This statement had a total of 20 participants who disagreed with the statement resulting in 14.29 %. However, this statement also had the highest amount of ratings in the agree with the section with 68 participants voting for a result of 48.57% of participants agreeing to this statement.

The second-lowest scoring statement in the strongly agree section was 'I have seen evidence of improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms (*M*=3.50, *SD*= 0.65). 65 participants rated this statement as strongly agree to result in a 46.43%. However, it was the second-highest scoring in the agree with the section with 63 participants voting agrees to result in a 45%. Three participants rated strongly disagree resulting in a 2.14% and are one of the largest amounts of rates for the strongly disagree section.

Overall, the mean scores and the percentage scores correspond well and showed the same ranking of statements. However, two statements changed rank when the mean scores were compared to the strongly agree percentages. The statement 'co-teaching is beneficial for students with special needs received a mean score of 3.49 which was fifth in the rank of mean scores. However, for the percentage score, it was tied for third in the strongly agree category with 80 participants voting strongly agree to result in a 57.14%. The other statement that did not correspond with the mean score and percentage score was the statement 'modifications of goals for students with special needs are incorporated into class' which received a mean score of 3.51

and was the third-highest score. However, the statement only received 77 rates for the strongly

agree section resulting in a 55% and ranking the fifth for the statements.

The next section will report the results of the study for research question two.

Question Two: Does the Model of Co-Teaching Impact the Students' Academic Progress?

Research question two sought to find out if the model of co-teaching used impacts the

student's academic progress in the general curriculum classroom. There were six co-teaching

models used in the study. The teaching models are one-teach and one-observe, one-teach and one-

assist, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching, and team teaching. These teaching

models were placed in Category C Models of the survey. Category C used a four-point Likert

Scale with 1 for not at all, 2 as rarely, 3 as sometimes, and 4 as often.

Co-Teaching Model

The co-teaching model that received the highest mean score was the one-teach and one-

assist model ($M=$ 3.33, $SD=$ 0.69). The co-teaching model that received the second-highest mean

score was the team teaching model ($M=$ 3.09, $SD=$ 0.96). The model that received the lowest

mean was the alternative teaching model ($M=$2.27, $SD=$ 0.98). The model that received the

second-lowest mean score was the one-teach and one-observe ($M=$ 2.67, $SD=$ 0.89).

Table 4 reported the mean, standard deviation, and variance for all the teaching models used in

the study.

Table 4

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Variance for Each Co-Teaching Model. (n=140)

Model	M	SD	V
1. One-teach and one-observe model	2.67	0.89	0.79
2. One-teach and one-assist model	3.33	0.69	0.48

3. Station teaching model	3.01	0.91	0.82
4. Parallel teaching model	2.89	0.96	0.93
5. Alternative teaching model	2.27	0.98	0.98
6. Team teaching model	3.09	0.96	0.96

Note: M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, and V= Variance.

Table 5 reported data for each of the co-teaching models. It illustrated the percentage score of each co-teaching model. The highest co-teaching model percentage for the section often was one-teach and one-assist with a total of 62 participants resulting in a 44.29%. The next highest co-teaching model percentage for the section often was station teaching with 46 participants resulting in a 32.86%. The lowest scoring model for the often section was alternative teaching with 16 participants resulting in an 11.43%. The next lowest percentage for the often was one-teach and one-observe with 27 participants resulting in a 19.29%.

Table 5

Percentage and Number of Co-Teaching Models Used in the Classroom Based on a Likert Scale. (n=140)

Co-Teaching Models	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
1. One-teach and one-observe model	9.29 (13)	33.57 (47)	37.86 (53)	19.29 (27)
2. One-teach and one-assist model	1.43 (2)	8.57 (12)	45.71 (64)	44.29 (62)
3. Station teaching model	8.57 (12)	15.00 (21)	43.57 (61)	32.86 (46)
4. Parallel teaching model	10.71(15)	20.71 (29)	37.86 (53)	30.71 (43)
5. Alternative teaching model	27.14 (38)	30.00 (42)	31.43 (44)	11.43 (16)
6. Team teaching model	9.29 (13)	14.29 (20)	34.29 (48)	42.14 (59)

This section discusses the results for each of the co-teaching models.

One-Teach and One-Observe

One-teach and one-observe received a mean score of 2.69 with a standard deviation of 0.89. The one-teach and one-observe were the second to lowest percentages with 29.29% of participants voting that they utilize this model often. The majority of the participants selected that they utilized this method sometimes, 37.86%, or rarely, 33.57% Only 13 participants selected that they not at all utilize this method resulting in a 9.29%. These scores correspond with the mean score with one-teach and one-observe ranked as the second-lowest often utilized.

One-Teach and One-Assist

One-teach and one-assist received a mean score of 3.33 with a standard deviation of 0.69. The one-teach and one-assist was the highest percentage with 62 participants selecting that they use this method often, which resulted in 44.29%. The majority of participants selected sometimes, 45.71% or often, 44.29% of utilizing for this co-teaching model. A small number of participants selected that they rarely, 8.57%, or not at all, 1.43%, utilize this teaching model. These numbers correspond with the mean score with the one-teach and one-assist ranked the most often utilized.

Station Teaching

Station teaching received a mean score of 3.01 with a standard deviation of 0.91. The station model co-teaching method was ranked the third most often used model with 32.86% of participants utilizing it. The majority of participants selected that they sometimes, 43.57%, or often 32.86% of utilization. The model also received an 8.57% of not at all being utilized and a 15.00% of rarely being utilized. These numbers correspond with the mean score and both ranked as the station co-teaching model third most often utilized.

Parallel Teaching

Parallel teaching received a mean score of 2.89 with a standard deviation of 0.96. The parallel co-teaching method was ranked the fourth most often used model with 30.71% of participants utilizing it. The majority of participants selected that they utilize this co-teaching model sometimes, 37.86%, or often with 30.71% of utilization. However, 29 participants selected that they rarely utilize this model resulting in a 20.71%. These numbers correspond with the mean score and both ranked the parallel teaching model fourth for most often utilized.

Alternative Teaching

Alternative teaching received a mean score of 2.27 with a standard deviation of 0.89. The alternative co-teaching model was ranked the least often used model with 11.43% of participants utilizing it. This co-teaching model had an even distribution of participants that never, rarely, or sometimes utilize this teaching model (*Not all all*=27.14%, *Rarely*= 30.00%, *Sometimes* = 31.43%). These numbers correspond with the mean score and both ranked the alternative teaching model the least often utilized.

Team Teaching

Team teaching received a mean score of 3.09 with a standard deviation of 0.96. The team teaching model was the second most often utilized with 42.14 participants. A majority of the participants ranked this model as sometimes, 34.29%, or often, 42.14% of utilization. A smaller percent of participants selected rarely and not at all (*Rarely*=14.29%, *Not at all* =9.29%). These numbers correspond with the mean score and both ranked the team teaching model the second most often utilized.

Summary

        The results from the mean and standard deviation of the survey scores show that overall co-teaching is an effective inclusion strategy for students with special needs in a kindergarten to fifth-grade general education classroom. The results for research question two reported that the highest three co-teaching strategies that are being utilized in classrooms are one-teach and one-assist, team teaching, and station teaching.

CHAPTER V

Discussion and Conclusion

The current study sought to answer whether co-teaching was an effective inclusion strategy in the general education classroom and if the model of co-teaching affected the outcome. This section will discuss the findings of the study in more detail. Further, this section will also discuss the implications, areas for future study, and the limitations of this study.

Discussion

The main research question was developed to answer whether co-teaching was an effective inclusive strategy for students with an IEP in a general education classroom. The results of the study indicate that majority of the sample "agree" that co-teaching is an effective inclusive strategy. The highest scoring statement was that the participants understood the goals and purpose of co-teaching, which could impact the implementation of the strategy resulting in participants agreeing that co-teaching was an effective inclusion strategy. This statement from the survey, however, did contradict the literature because when surveyed before, most of the participants did not feel comfortable or understand the implementation of co-teaching strategies (Brendle et al., 2017). The extreme difference could be because co-teaching has been integrated more into elementary classrooms, so the teachers have received more training on how to implement co-teaching strategies, or the geographical location difference could also be an impact. The other question from the survey that impacted the effectiveness of the implementation of co-teaching strategies was the planning of the lessons. The results of this question corresponded with the research because a majority of the participants put that they are only co-planning for approximately one hour, which may affect the communication between the two teachers. Only co-planning for one hour could also be a result of not knowing how to effectively

communicate and build off of each other (Chitiyo & Brinda, 2018). In the research,

communication was one of the main reasons that teachers viewed co-teaching as a problem

because they need to communicate to effectively build and grow together to continually improve

their co-teaching implementation (Morgan, 2016). Communication was the main reason that

teachers thought that co-teaching implementation was hindered and agreed that communication

needed to be a place where teachers could be open and honest (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2017).

While the majority of participants only co-planned for one hour, slightly over half of the

participants were spending two or more hours co-planning. The time spent co-planning could be

why the participants agreed that co-teaching was effective.

The second research question sought to answer if the model of co-teaching impacted the

students' academic progress. The results revealed that the most often used co-teaching model out

of the six provided was the one-teach and one-assist teaching model. However, the result

reported that no specific co-teaching model was specifically utilized to increase a student's

academic success. The co-teaching models had an even amount of ratings for "sometimes" being

used, which means that the participants are utilizing each of the different teaching strategies

sporadically. This could be because the teacher is changing the model to fit their lesson for each

specific day or week. This results in all of the teaching models being utilized for co-teaching.

One of the statements with co-teaching specifically asked about students' unwanted behaviors in

the classroom and if the participants thought that because there were more teachers in a

classroom that behavior was improved (Tschida et al., 2015). The study showed that a majority

of the participants agreed that the number of unwanted behaviors decreased, the study still had

slightly over fifteen percent of participants who disagreed or strongly disagreed that the behavior

was better in their co-taught classroom. The majority of the co-teaching classrooms only

contained two adults to control behaviors. The data could contradict the model of co-teaching is

being implemented in the classroom because the most utilized co-teaching model was one-teach

and one-assist. During this co-teaching model usually, one teacher is teaching the whole class

and one teacher is working one-on-one or with a small group of students and rotating between

these students rather than focusing on other students in the classroom as much.

Implications

There are a few practical implications of the study for administrators and teachers. The

first implication is that teachers who are implementing co-teaching strategies as an inclusive

practice should first make sure that they have received enough training so that they understand

the goals and purposes of implementing the co-teaching strategy in their classroom. The teachers

need to make sure that they and their co-teaching partners are comfortable and fully understand

how to work together to implement this strategy. Furthermore, administrators should work

together with their teachers to make sure that they are receiving the appropriate amount of

training and feedback (Morgan, 2016). The training should include appropriate ways to

communicate and building a partnership to help strengthen the classroom environment.

Based on the current study, co-teaching is an effective inclusion strategy if the teacher

understands the goals and purpose; however, improvements could still be made as teachers are

beginning to implement the co-teaching strategy in elementary schools. Also, the implementation

of co-teaching could be done in more elementary classrooms as the data show that it was an

effective strategy for inclusion in the earlier grades, not just the middle and later grades of

school.

Future Study

To obtain more generalizable results, a future study suggestion could be to replicate this study in other states or specific geographical areas. The study could also be done again but with an area that has been utilizing the co-teaching strategy for longer than three years, so that the implementation and data will span over more than a year or two. Another possibility is to have a section of the survey which specifically asks about teachers' training, understanding, attitudes, and views of co-teaching from their perspective and then compare their perspective with their perspective of effectiveness. The study could also be given to private schools and a comparison of public and private school perceptions of co-teaching could be compared. Additionally, a study could be conducted to seek and evaluate the effects of professional training. Participants could first be given training about co-teaching and implementation. Then after the training and some implementation of the co-teaching strategy, the survey could be given, which would provide insight into the effectiveness of professional development. Another addition to the study could include questions that contain self-assessment questions that have the teacher reflect on themselves, as well as their views of their communication model after the training.

Future studies could also explore teacher perceptions of behavior in a co-taught classroom. During this study, the teachers perceived the behavior to not change in a co-taught classroom and the research suggests that the behavior should improve because more teachers are in the classroom. A future study could explore if the behavior improves or stays the same, as well as the factors that impact the students' behaviors in a co-taught classroom.

Limitations

This study had multiple limitations. The major limitation of the study was the sample size. Co-teaching in elementary schools is a practice that is still being re-integrated into schools. The sample size was relatively small, and the results may not be truly representative of co-

teaching in the state of Illinois. The results can not be generalized to other geographic areas. The

results do not yield data for any private school. The representation of elementary teachers

utilizing the co-teaching methods was limited, which was expected. Another limitation was the

COVID-19 outbreak, which forced classrooms to socially distance and limit the number of

people in a space. COVID-19 also caused some schools to go completely online, which

prohibited the utilization of co-teaching in some classrooms. This outbreak may have also caused

the results to be shortened if the teachers had only utilized the co-teaching method for part of the

year, and then were forced to go remote or cease all instruction for a month.

Another limitation was the questions were left for the teachers to perceptions. The Likert

Scale only allowed four choices and some teachers may have wanted a choice that was in

between but were unable to choose that answer. The survey instrument was a combination of two

surveys, which could also present a limitation and needs to be considered. Since the instrument

was a combination of two instruments, the instrument may be missing some questions that may

need to be added.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine if teachers perceived co-teaching as an

effective inclusion strategy for students with IEPs in elementary classrooms. The literature

reviewed for this study emphasized communication, training, co-teaching, and the various

models all impacting the effectiveness of the implementation of co-teaching. The researcher

inquired about the teachers' perceptions of co-teaching implementation, the effectiveness of the

implementation, and the models utilized during implementation in elementary classrooms

throughout the state of Illinois. While co-teaching is not a common practice in every elementary

school, the numbers showed that co-teaching is an effective inclusion strategy in elementary

schools if teachers understand the purpose and goals of co-teaching. This corresponds with the

researcher's hypothesis of co-teaching increasing overall student success in a general education

classroom. The other aspect of the study focused on the six main models utilized during co-

teaching instruction. While the data show that the model of co-teaching implementation changes,

no one set model is more effective or impactful to student success. The study utilized a survey

that was composed of two surveys with specific questions from each survey. The survey was sent

to approximately 2,500 public school teachers and principals to pass along to any teachers that

may have implemented or been currently implementing the co-teaching strategy. A total of 140

surveys were returned and overall, the results were conclusive that co-teaching was perceived to

be an effective inclusion strategy for students with IEPs in an elementary general education

classroom in Illinois.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument

The purpose of this survey is to find out if co-teaching is an effective inclusive teaching strategy for students with an Individualized Educational Program (IEP). It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Your answers to the questions will remain anonymous and will not link to you in any way. You may choose not to take the survey. If you begin the survey, you may stop at any point without penalty. If you Co-teach with multiple teachers, then pick the classroom you are most comfortable with. Thank you for your participation.

Category A: Teacher Demographics

1. What grade level do you teach? (mark all that apply)

    a. Kindergarten

    b. First

    c. Second

    d. Third

    e. Fourth

    f. Fifth

2. Have you or are you currently co-teaching? (Co-teaching is defined as a general education teacher and special education teacher teaching together in the general education classroom.)

    a. Yes

    b. No

3. What kind of teacher are you?

    a. Special education teacher

    b. General education teacher

    c. Both

4. How many years have you been teaching?

    a. 1 to 3 years

    b. 4 to 6 years

    c. 7 to 9 years

    d. More than 10

5. How many years have you co-taught?

    a. Less than 1 year

    b. 1 to 4 years

    c. 5 to 7 years

    d. More than 7 years

6. What area is your school located?

    a. City

    b. Suburban

    c. Town

    d. Rural

7. Have you co-taught with the same teacher each year?

    a. Yes

    b. No

8. How many adults are usually in the room during a lesson?

    a. 2

    b. 3

  c. 4

  d. 5 or more

Category B: Effectiveness

 9. How many hours do you spend co-planning lessons a week?

  a. 1

  b. 2

  c. 3

  d. 4 or more

Questions 10 -17 are using the following scale:

Strongly Agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Please mark one that is most accurate.

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10	I understand the goals/purpose of co-teaching programs.				
11	I believe that student behavior is better in a co-taught class.				

12	Co-teaching is beneficial for students with special needs.				
13	I think co-teaching is benefiting students who are at-risk.				
14	I have seen evidence of improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities in inclusion classrooms.				
15	Modifications of goals for students with special needs are incorporated into class.				
16	I believe that students without disabilities can receive an appropriately challenging education in an inclusive general education classroom.				
17	Students with disabilities and students without disabilities receive equal access to the same general curriculum.				

Questions 18-23 are using the following scale:

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Not At All

Please mark one that is most accurate.

Category C: Co-Teaching Models

I use a/an

#	Question	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Not At All
18	One-teach and one-observe teaching model				
19	one-teach and one-assist teaching model				
20	Station teaching model				
21	Parallel teaching model				
22	Alternative teaching model				
23	Team teaching model				

Appendix B

IRB Approval

May 12, 2021

Ann Sims

Sham'ah Md-Yunus

Teaching Learning and Foundations

Dear Ann,

Thank you for submitting the research protocol titled, "Teacher Perceptions of Co-Teaching Effectiveness in Inclusive Elementary Classrooms" for review by the Eastern Illinois University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has reviewed this research protocol and effective 12/29/2020, has certified this protocol meets the federal regulations exemption criteria for human subjects research. The protocol has been given the IRB number 20-147. You are approved to proceed with your study.

The classification of this protocol as exempt is valid only for the research activities and subjects described in the above named protocol. IRB policy requires that any proposed changes to this protocol must be reported to, and approved by, the IRB before being implemented. You are also required to inform the IRB immediately of any problems encountered that could adversely affect the health or welfare of the subjects in this study. Please contact me, or the Compliance Coordinator at 581-8576, in the event of an emergency. All correspondence should be sent to:

Institutional Review Board

c/o Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Telephone: 217-581-8576

Fax: 217-581-7181

Email: eiuirb@eiu.edu

Thank you for your cooperation, and the best of success with your research.

John Bickford, Chairperson

Institutional Review Board

Telephone: 217-581-7881

Email: jbickford@eiu.edu

Appendix D

Recruitment Email

Dear Principals of Illinois Elementary Schools,

My name is Ann Sims, and I am currently a graduate student at Eastern Illinois University. I am

currently working on my thesis about co-teaching. I am reaching out to request for you to pass

this survey on to teachers in your school or district that may be or may have co-taught. The

purpose of this survey is to find out if co-teaching is an effective inclusive teaching strategy for

students with an Individualized Educational Program (IEP). It will take approximately 10-15

minutes to complete. Your answers to the questions will remain anonymous and will not link to

you in any way. You may choose not to take the survey. If you begin the survey, you may stop

at any point without penalty. If you Co-teach with multiple teachers, then pick the classroom you

are most comfortable with.

The title of my research is Teacher Perceptions of Co-Teaching Effectiveness in Inclusive

Elementary Classrooms. Below is the link for the survey and the first question is asking for your

consent.

Thank you for your consideration.

https://eiu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_89fcBQsbDh08trE

Thank you,

Ann Sims

amsims2@eiu.edu

Appendix E

Survey Category A, Teacher Demographics

Percent and Number of Grade Levels Taught, Type of Teacher, and Location

Grade Level Taught/Type of Teacher	Percentage	Total Number
Kindergarten	11.36	25
First	13.49	29
Second	15.35	33
Third	18.14	39
Fourth	20.47	44
Fifth	20.93	45
General Education Teacher	47.86	67
Special Education Teacher	45.00	63
Certified in Both	7.14	10
City	7.69	11
Suburban	51.75	74
Town	20.28	29
Rural	20.28	29

Note: Some teachers may have co-taught in multiple grade levels.

Mean Score with Minimum and Maximum, Standard Deviation, and Variance of Category A

Questions from Survey

Question	M	SD	V

How many years have you been teaching?	3.11 (1-4)	1.12	1.25
How many years have you co-taught?	2.42 (1-4)	0.99	0.97
Have you co-taught with the same teacher each year?	1.66 (1-2)	0.47	0.22
How many adults are usually in the room?	1.20 (1-3)	0.45	0.20
How many hours do you spend co-planning?	1.94 (1-4)	1.11	1.24

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, and V=Variance

Appendix F

Time Spent Co-Planning

Percentage and Number of Hours Spent Co-Planning Lessons. (n=140)

Number of Hours	Percentage
1	47.86 (67)
2	27.14 (38)
3	7.86 (11)
4 or more	17.14 (24)

Mean Score, Standard Deviation, and Variance of Hours Spent Co-Planning Lessons. (n=140)

Question	M	SD	V
1. How many hours do you spend co-planning?	1.94	1.11	1.24