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An analysis of improving teacher efficacy to enhance student learning by developing an evaluation instrument for special education teachers

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AN ANALYSIS OF IMPROVING TEACHER EFFICACY TO ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING BY DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION INSTRUMENT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of the study is to design an evaluation instrument to reflect state standards, and implementation of instructional performance criteria for special education teachers. It was designed to evaluate the performance of the specific job duties and instructional responsibilities required of special educators to determine if the instrument indicates teacher efficacy and provides adequate opportunities for feedback to improve performance. A total of 30 special education teachers from 4 different schools within the same school district participated in the study to evaluate the instrument. The respondents were categorized according to tenured or non-tenured status, and either co-teaching or self-contained classroom settings. Each teacher provided self-reported written responses to a questionnaire with 32 items indicating the extent to which they felt items were very appropriate, appropriate, somewhat appropriate or inappropriate. The responses were analyzed according to a rank of 4 to 1 indicating very appropriate to inappropriate and the mean and standard deviation of the questions ranked were calculated. An ANOVA was conducted to analyze the results to compare the responses of teachers in self-contained and co-teaching settings. The results indicate that there is no statistical significance of differences between the responses of teachers in those 2 different groups. The findings indicate that the evaluation instrument provides support for further research to develop an evaluation instrument for special education teachers to enhance their efficacy, and provide feedback to improve the quality of job specific performance.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Statement of Problems

Teacher efficacy is defined as the degree to which teachers believe that they have the ability to affect student performance (Ashton, 1984). A teacher's sense of efficacy has attributed variables that contribute a teacher's self- perception of his/her performance in the classroom (Denham & Michael, 1981), and is related to student achievement (Armour et al., 1976). These variables include a teacher's classroom management strategies (Ashton & Webb, 1986), instructional adaptations, curriculum innovations, teacher competence, and student performance (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989). It is evidenced that a teacher's efficacy is related to student academic achievement and his/her behaviors, such as expectations of student performance and achievement (Greene et al., 1988). Efficacious teachers show a preference for collaborative relationships with colleagues (Morrison, Walker, Wakefield, & Solberg, 1994), and are likely to accommodate changes associated with curriculum innovations and staff development programs (Berman & McLaughlin, 1995). According to Coladarci (1992), teacher efficacy, when compared to other factors such as his/her income and school climate, was the strongest predictor of a teacher's commitment to the teaching profession.

According to Morin and Welsh (1991), "self-efficacy... is an individual's perception of how effectively one can perform specific behaviors" (p.1). Applying the concept of self-efficacy to teachers, Gibson and Dembo (1984) state, "self-efficacy beliefs would indicate teachers' evaluations of their abilities to bring about positive student change" (p.570). Teacher efficacy refers to "the to extent to which teachers believe that they can affect student learning" (p.173).

The concept of teacher efficacy emerged from Bandura's research (1977) conducted on the conceptualization of self-efficacy and personal efficacy. Bandura (1977) states, "an efficacy expectation is the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce outcomes" (p.193). Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy are better organized (Allinder, 1994), more willing to try new ideas to meet their students' needs (Stein & Wang, 1988), less critical to students whenever they make errors (Ashton & Webb, 1986), more positive about teaching (Guskey, 1984), less likely to refer children to special education services (Podell & Soodak, 1993), and more likely to implement positive classroom management strategies (Emmer & Hickman, 1990). They also provide higher quality instruction (Rubeck & Enochs, 1991), use instructional planning time more effectively, and make more efforts to assist students who struggle academically (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Not surprising, therefore, a teacher's sense of efficacy is linked with student achievement and student motivation (Anderson, Green & Loewen, 1988).

In addition, a teacher's personal efficacy has been reflected in his/her expectations of himself/herself, and of his/her students, and interactions with students (Aston & Webb, 1986). Teachers with high levels of efficacy have higher expectations for student performance. These teachers extend extra effort to ensure student academic success. It is found that a significant relationship exists between a teacher's degree of efficacy and student gains on standardized math tests. Positive correlations between the degree of teacher efficacy and the amount of gains on standardized reading tests have also been noted (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Rosenholtz, 1989). Teachers with high personal efficacy are more receptive to implementing new instructional practices (Guskey, 1988). In contrast, teachers with a low sense of efficacy are more likely to doubt that any teacher or amount of schooling will affect achievement of low achieving students and are less likely to

persist in their efforts to teach students, or to exert extra effort (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson &Dembo, 1984).

To date, the research examining teacher efficacy seems insufficient.. Most of the research was conducted to examine teacher efficacy in regular education settings (DiBella, McCarthy & McDaniel, 1989). For example, Allinder (1994), using the Teacher Efficacy Scale (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), found that teachers with high efficacy tended to exhibit organization, fairness, enthusiasm, and clarity in instruction and planning. These teachers with high-efficacy were more inclined toward instructional experimentation-that is, exhibited a "willingness to try a variety of materials and approaches to teaching, and desired to find better ways of teaching, and implementing progressive, innovative techniques" (p.89). As noted, the result of the study is consonant with research involving regular education teachers (e.g., Guskey, 1988, Smylie, 1988).

Researchers also evaluated teacher efficacy within the context of special education and instructional supervision. It is evidenced that teacher efficacy may be related to special education referrals. For example, teachers with low efficacy are more likely to refer students with academic problems than those with high efficacy (Soodak & Podell, 1993). Similarly, teachers with low efficacy, unlike their counterparts with high efficacy, may tend to question the appropriateness of a regular education placement for students experiencing difficulties (Soodak & Podell, 1993).

Coladarci and Breton (1993) examined the relationship between teacher efficacy and the frequency and quality of supervision a teacher receives. It is found that there is a strong correlation between teacher supervision and teacher efficacy. For example, teachers who received constructive feedback from supervised evaluations provided successive approximation with regard to subject matter content and teaching effectiveness (Bandura, 1977). The feedback related directly to their instructional tasks and competencies for improving teaching

strategies. The evaluations benefited their instructional performance capacities. It seems reasonable to conjecture, therefore, that instructional supervision would have a salutary effect on teacher efficacy.

An appropriate evaluation consists of an evaluation instrument which includes goals that are valued by both the individual teacher and the school. This combination is vital to a successful evaluation system (Stronge, 1997). According to Stronge (1997), there are two domains of supervision specified: (a) formal evaluation, in which classroom observations are scheduled at a predetermined time for identifying instructional strengths and weaknesses, and (b) performance consultation, which represents informal, often spontaneous, exchanges between a teacher and a supervisor about instructional practices. A causal link between supervision and teacher efficacy is plausible and has been proposed (Glickman, 1990). Further, the perceived quality of supervision significantly predicted efficacy of teachers. That is, teachers who felt their supervision was helpful tended to report a higher sense of efficacy than those who reported less positive views of the quality of supervision they received. Thus, a quality evaluation instrument is needed to evaluate teachers as part of their supervision.

Significance of the Study

Special education legislation in the United States, namely, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (first enacted in 1975 as PL 94-142) resulted in the placement of increasing numbers of students with disabilities in general education classrooms (Avissar & Leyser, 2000; U.S. Department of Education, 1999). The success of this educational movement depends, to a large measure, on the willingness of teachers to make accommodations to meet individual students' needs (Bender, Vail, & Scott, 1995). A teacher's sense of efficacy, and confidence that he/she can perform the actions to lead to student learning, is a particularly powerful construct, as it is one of the few teacher

characteristics that reliably predicts teacher practice and student outcomes (Ross, Cousins & Gaddalla, 1996; Tscannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). However, within the field of special education, there is a lack of research regarding the applicability of evaluation instruments specifically aligned with the constructs and job specific parameters for special education teachers. This weakness in the development of evaluation instruments is apparent. Most instruments lack specific criteria in special education that impose a direct impact on the overall performance-based feedback for special educators to improve their quality of instruction. Conversely, increasing the quality of job-specific feedback as evidenced on an evaluation tool reflecting job- specific criteria, positively impacts the quality of instruction, as well as student performance. Properly designed evaluation instruments used for supervisions should include components related to enhancing teacher efficacy. The feedback from the evaluation components can ultimately impact a teacher's performance and his/her quality of instruction, and present positive results evidenced by greater student achievement. The significance of this study to develop the evaluation instrument is to enhance a sense of teacher efficacy and to encourage and promote the development of their competencies. It seems reasonable to conclude that the higher a teacher's sense of efficacy, the more successful that teacher will be in facilitating desirable student outcomes. "One would predict that teachers who believe student learning can be influenced by effective teaching, and who also have confidence in their own teaching skills, should persist longer, provide a greater academic focus in the classroom, and exhibit different types of feedback than teachers who have lower expectations concerning their ability to influence student learning" (Gibson & Dembo, 1984, p. 90).

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to design a proper evaluation instrument, which reflects special educators' sense of self efficacy. Teacher efficacy criteria will be measured by the instrument. This practical instrument is designed to reflect state standards, and implementation of instructional performance criteria for special education teachers. The instrument is designed to evaluate the performance of the specific job duties and responsibilities required of special educators. A group of thirty special education teachers will evaluate the developed instrument to determine the overall appropriateness as an evaluation tool. It is assumed that a properly designed instrument will encourage feedback from an evaluator related to a teacher's competencies to perform job responsibilities, deliver effective instruction, and accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.

Research Questions

1. From the teachers' perspective, will the teacher evaluation instrument developed, specifically reflect performance responsibilities for teachers of the handicapped, and enhance the quality of feedback to special education teachers?

2. From the teachers' perspective, will the teacher evaluation instrument developed improve teachers' efficacy ?

3. From the teachers' perspective, will the teacher evaluation instrument developed improve the quality of teachers' competencies ?

Chapter II

Literature Review

This chapter reviews related literature on teacher efficacy and teacher evaluation. The correlations between student learning and teacher efficacy, and appropriate teacher evaluations for supervision are discussed and explored.

Teacher Efficacy and Student Outcomes

Teacher Efficacy and Student Learning

According to Morin and Welsh, (1991), "An educator with high teacher efficacy will engage in activities that promote the development of competencies, whereas teachers with low efficacy may avoid engaging in those activities."(p. 60). It seems reasonable that the higher a teacher's sense of efficacy, the more successful the teacher will be in facilitating desirable student outcomes.

The relationship between teacher efficacy and teacher effectiveness was explored by Gibson and Denbo (1994). In their study, it was found that teachers' beliefs in their own abilities to teach students may contribute to individual teachers' differences in effectiveness. "One would predict that teachers who believe student learning can be influenced by effective teaching, and who have confidence in their own teaching abilities, should persist longer, provide a greater academic focus in the classroom, and exhibit different types of feedback than teachers who have lower expectations concerning their ability to influence student learning."(p.570).

Within the context of teaching, an outcome expectancy of a teacher with high efficacy is illustrated by information gathered by many teachers collectively,

rather than by an individual teacher (Denham & Michael, 1981). Teachers with high efficacy would be reflected by their confidence that they are personally capable of teaching. They are confident because they possess instructional skills. In contrast, a teacher with low efficacy entertains serious doubts about performing necessary skills to influence student behavior, and about their instructional effectiveness (Bandura, 1977). For example, according to the findings using the Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by Gibson and Dembo (1991), teachers with low efficacy agree with the statement that, "A teacher is incapable of really motivating a student, because their academic performance depends on the student's home environment." They also contend that, "The amount that a student can learn is primarily related to family background." In response to Rand's (1991) Efficacy Scale, a teacher with high efficacy would feel that, "If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult unmotivated students," or, "When the grades of my students improve, it is usually because I found more effective teaching practices." Teacher efficacy has been the basis of current research in the field of education, particularly in relation to teacher-training. Teachers with a high sense of efficacy will be persistent in assisting students to overcome failure, provide strategies in instruction and class management, less frequently absent, and present more of a "passion for teaching".

Teacher Efficacy and Student Achievement

Teacher efficacy impacts school achievement in curriculum domains involving language. These domains include reading, language arts, and social studies. Teacher efficacy also contributes to student achievement in other content areas such as mathematics.

Teacher efficacy influences student academic achievement through a teacher's goal-setting process. In Bandura's theory (1977), the expectation that one will be successful encourages the adoption of more challenging goals, and encourages

student persistence. Teachers with high efficacy anticipate that they will be effective, and tend to set higher standards of performance for themselves. Also, they tend to accept responsibility if the achievement standards are not met, and cope with student learning deficits. Efficacious teachers are persistent primarily because they believe their diligence is renewed by students' academic success. For example, in a study conducted by Brookhart and Loadman (1993), it was found that teachers with high efficacy set ambitious academic goals for their students. It was also found that beginning teachers with high levels of efficacy had significantly high levels of confidence in their abilities to perform various teaching functions. Fostering student development was their primary reason for teaching content. In contrast, new teachers with low efficacy believed their purpose for teaching was to cover the content of the curriculum.

In a similar study, Czerniak and Schriver-Waldon (1991) found that teachers with high efficacy were more likely to choose instructional strategies based on their power to increase student learning, while those with low efficacy selected instructional methods based on their potential to reduce classroom noise. For example, in their study, teachers with high efficacy more frequently chose powerful instructional strategies to meet class challenges. Cooperative learning, small group techniques and activity-based methods were listed as difficult instructional strategies to implement. Teachers with high efficacy often chose these methods. Further, they relied less upon instructional approaches that are weaker, yet easier to implement such as whole class teaching. (Ashton & Webb, 1992). In essence, the goal setting process used by teachers to implement effective strategies has a direct impact on student learning. Ambitious goal setting coupled with high expectancies for student academic performance, was a common trait among teachers with high efficacy. These expectations and goal setting processes were found across curriculum domains.

Teacher Efficacy and Students' Academic Standards

Teachers with high efficacy set higher classroom behavior management goals and standards for behavior for their students. This is accomplished by expecting students to be held accountable for their behavior, and persist until students meet various time on task goals. For example, teachers with high efficacy are more likely to promote student autonomy, limit behavioral management problems, and are generally successful at maintaining sufficient quality and duration of student's time on task. It is found that highly efficacious teachers are more confident in their ability to execute classroom management techniques, and rate behavior management problems as less severe. Teachers demonstrating these positive student oriented behavior management skills promote increased classroom time on task, and greater opportunities for student achievement (Midgley, 1988).

Mckeiver, Hogaboam-Gray and Ross (1995) evaluated teacher efficacy, and the impact of efficacious teachers increasing time on task for students who were randomly reassigned to classes consisting of students with various achievement levels. Initially, the ninth grade teachers felt capable of teaching their students of different abilities when the students were grouped according to similar academic achievement levels. After the students were detracked, and randomly placed in classes together, despite their academic levels, teachers experienced difficulties demonstrating their instructional skills and integrating instructional strategies to teach a mixed ability group. The study found that high efficacious teachers developed renewed confidence in their abilities and integrated new strategies for working with the heterogeneous classes. Additionally, they realized that achievement of the lower functioning students escalated, and exceeded students' and teachers' expectations for academic success.

Similarly, Ashton and colleagues (1988) found that low efficacious teachers concentrated their teaching efforts on the higher achieving students, often at the

expense of expending less teaching energy on the low achieving students, viewing the latter as potential sources of disruption. In contrast, teachers with high efficacy had positive attitudes toward low achievers, built friendly relationships with them, and set higher academic standards than teachers with low efficacy. Medley and colleagues (1988) observed that teacher efficacy had a bigger impact on low achieving students than on high achievers. This suggests that the lower achieving students are less certain about their academic competence, and more likely to be influenced to achieve because of the teacher's expectations (Medley et. al 1988). Thus, by increasing expectations for lower performers and providing instructional support, teachers with high efficacy may create changes in students' perception of their academic abilities. As students' beliefs and confidence in their achievement increase, they become more confident and enthusiastic about schoolwork. This process positively impacts student achievement.

Improvement of Teacher Efficacy

Measurement of Teacher Efficacy

Studies conducted relating to improving teacher efficacy found that teacher efficacy can be improved by isolating certain teaching characteristics. These include motivation, planning for instructional strategies, and improving the quality of classroom instruction.

Newman (1989) conducted a study about intervention strategies to improve teachers' motivation as an indicator to improve teacher efficacy. The aims of the study were focused on individual teachers' motivation, training and positive experiences. In the study, 50 trained teachers assigned to work with individual students, targeted each student's specific behavioral and academic patterns for needed interventions. The objectives of the study were to assess changes in teachers' efficacy as a result of teacher's planning, implementing and evaluating

individualized behavioral and/or academic interventions, and to investigate the effects of their implementation of the behavioral and/or academic intervention program. Prior to, and after the intervention, through a pretest and post-test, all teachers in training were administered an instrument including the Teacher Efficacy Scale (Gibson and Dembo, 1984), and a Teacher Locus of Control Scale (Rose and Medway, 1981) to evaluate their performance. After ten weeks of training, it was found that there was a vast improvement of those teachers with regard to goal setting for creating productive learning environments, and strategies for improving classroom behavior. It was also found that the experiences of training teachers showed high efficacy within actual classroom environments. In the training, these teachers were observed by their supervisors in school, and improved their instruction and performance based on their evaluation. The study indicated the importance of teacher training programs that include observation and data collection before the actual "student teaching" experience. More importantly teachers in training worked under supervised conditions within a naturalistic setting of the classroom. Thus, there is a definite need to continue the pursuit of greater competency in the areas of teacher motivation, and teacher efficacy.

Most of the current measures of teacher efficacy are effective because the measurements assess efficacy as it applies to teaching in general, and the results of the measurements apply to a broad range of subject content (Ross et. al., 1996). According to Grahan and associates (2001), teacher efficacy was identified as a variable accounting for differences in teacher practice and student outcome. In the research, a specific teacher efficacy scale was developed to examine teacher efficacy with regard to the area of writing. The researchers developed and validated an instrument to measure teacher efficacy for teaching writing and teachers' beliefs about writing instruction. The efficacy scale for writing was developed by modifying the Teacher Efficacy Scale designed by Gibson and Dembo (1984). The validity of the adapted instrument measuring teacher efficacy with regard to writing, was investigated and validated by findings that reported

classroom practices of high and low efficacy teachers differed. The study focused on the emphasis that teachers placed on the role of natural or incidental student learning methods for writing instruction. Within the context of the study, researchers confirmed that writing contributes to children's development as readers, and serves as a medium for communication, artistic expression, and self-exploration. Because of its importance to school success including reading development and concerns about children's writing attainment (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997) as well as the quality of classroom instruction (Palinscar & Klenk, 1992), educational researchers have devoted considerable attention to identifying productive methods and approaches for teaching writing. In many instances, this research focused on identifying the dimensions of pedagogy and subject matter knowledge that underlie effective instruction. Often overlooked, however, is the interaction between teachers' skills and knowledge and their beliefs. As Bandura (1986) noted, having the necessary knowledge and skills to perform a task does not ensure that the task will be performed successfully. Instead, effective action also depends on a teacher's efficacy or judgments that the knowledge and skills needed to perform the task can be mobilized successfully under varied and unpredictable circumstances. In the study, researchers found that the teachers' orientations to writing instruction made a significant and unique contribution to the evaluation of teacher efficacy. For example, their confidence that they can perform the actions that lead to student learning, was a particularly powerful construct, as it is one of the few teacher characteristics that reliably predicts teacher practice and student outcomes (Ross, Cousins, & Gaddalla, 1996). Results from the measurement of teacher efficacy indicated that teachers with high efficacy viewed students' acquisition of writing skills as a learning acquisition process, rather than as an incidental construct acquired naturally. It was found that teachers who had a high sense of efficacy, reported that their students spent more time on writing than those than the students taught teachers with low-efficacy. It was also found that teachers with high

efficacy reported that they spent quality time teaching grammar and its usage, as well as basic writing processes such as planning, text organization, and revision. Teachers with high efficacy were positive about instruction in the area of writing. Also, they were more likely to be confident about their abilities to teaching writing. The findings are compatible with previous studies on teacher efficacy. (Enochs et al., 1995; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Conclusively, although these findings need to be validated by additional research, it is important to note that they are consistent with previous investigations to show that teacher efficacy predicts observed teacher practices in classrooms. (e.g., Allinder, 1994; Ashton & Webb, 1986).

Teacher Evaluations

A dynamic relationship between a teacher and his school exists to achieve desired goals in a healthy organization. What's good for the organization must also be good for the teacher. This type of synergistic relationship enhances the ability of both the teacher and the school to achieve desired goals. Moreover, balancing individual needs with institutional expectations is essential for fostering productive work environments (March & Simon, 1993).

If it is correct in assuming that individual and institutional goals are intertwined, then it is logical to consider teacher evaluation as a vehicle to facilitate and assess success for both teacher and school. Such goals include personal growth and performance improvement, goal accomplishment, and accountability for the school. According to Stronge (1997), teacher evaluation should be considered a vital part of the total improvement/ restructuring efforts in education. The improvement may include performance of individual teachers, administrators and support personnel and programs and services to students, parents and the community. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy, create higher levels of satisfaction for other teachers, the administration, and schools in

general (McLaughlin & Yee, 1988). They suggest that efficacious teachers are critical to meeting the complex needs of students.

According to Duke (1990), two important purposes of personnel evaluations are accountability and performance improvement. The accountability reflects the need to determine the competence of teachers in order to ensure that services delivered are safe and effective (McGaghie, 1991). It is typically viewed as summative in nature. The performance improvement aspect reflects the need for professional growth and development of the individual teacher. It is typically regarded as formative in nature. Performance improvement and accountability are not competing, but supportive dual interests that are essential for improvement of educational service delivery. These two roles are inextricably intertwined in the total evaluation process. Moreover, a conceptual framework for teacher evaluation should emphasize the dynamic relationship between individual and institution where the needs and interests of one fuse with the other (Stronge, 1995). For teacher evaluation systems to serve these dual purposes, however, there must be a rational link between the purposes (Stronge, 1995). Thus, a comprehensive teacher evaluation system should be rooted in two broad purposes (Stronge, Helm, & Tucker, 1995). They are as follows: "It should be outcome oriented, contributing to the personal goals of the teacher and to the mission of the program, the school, and the total educational organization, and should provide a fair measure of accountability of performance (i.e., summative focus). It should be improvement oriented, contributing to the personal and professional development needs of the individual teacher as well as improvement within the school (i.e., formative focus)." (p 4).

Although a formative evaluation, often called supervision, is a common feature in schools, very little is known about its direct or indirect effect on teachers, or the mechanism by which teacher supervision influences the classroom instruction. Over the last 40 years, research on teacher evaluation lacked information on effective supervision (Denham, 1977). Denham could not find

studies on supervision and strategies to improve instruction. As of December 2002, there were seven articles related to teacher evaluation or supervision; however, only one of the articles reviewed of the design and implementation of teacher evaluation processes in schools. The article rendered useful information with regard to constructing a larger picture of the effects of principal supervision on teachers. Between 1982 and 2000 only 5% of the articles in widely circulated journals, such as *Educational Leadership*, the Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, ASCD's research outlet; *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*; and *Review of Educational Research*) focused on teacher supervision.

According to Ebmeier (2003), the general lack of a conceptual foundation for much of the past research on supervision, led some investigators to search for possible models in other areas that could help explain, or provide insight about how the supervision process in schools might affect student outcomes. One field of research that seems potentially useful and already has existing explanatory models is teacher efficacy. He suggests that the literature in this field has generally been based on Bandura's social cognitive theory, a unified theory of behavioral change concerned with human agency, or a belief in one's capacity to achieve success in a given situation. According to Allinder (1994), interest in examining teacher efficacy as a variable influenced by supervision is justified to influence teacher efficacy for classroom practice and subsequent student achievement.

Types of Teacher Evaluations

There are three types of teacher evaluations most widely implemented to evaluate teachers' classroom performance. They consist of classroom-based assessments, peer reviews, and self evaluations using portfolios. Variations of these three central evaluation methods are implemented as well.

Classroom-Based Assessments

The classroom-based assessment refers to data gathering procedures to collect information about teaching and learning processes in classrooms. This type of supervised assessment is aimed at identifying characteristics of effective teachers. Principals observe teaching behaviors identified as related to student achievement and other student outcomes (Brophy, 1986). Information about teachers behaviors collected is based on three categories. It includes the teacher's ability to broaden the students' perspective of the complexities of teaching and learning, the teachers' ability to enhance the development of quality teaching and learning environments for students and teachers, and their ability to contribute to the knowledge base designed to link research, theory, and practice with the goal of enhancing learning for students, teachers, and administrators. This type of assessment is consistent with a formative evaluation allowing principals to give teachers ongoing feedback about the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. The classroom-based assessment model for principals observing classroom teaching behaviors is derived from state-mandated formats to evaluate and license teachers based on their performance in the classroom. Many states have developed and implemented classroom-based assessments. For example, the following assessments have been developed throughout various states. The Teacher Performance Assessment Instruments (TPAI, Georgia), the Mississippi Teacher Assessment Instrument (MTAI, Mississippi), the Assessments of Performance in Teaching (APT, South Carolina), the Florida Teacher Performance Measurement System (FPMS, Florida), the Virginia Teaching Practices Record (VTPR, Virginia), the Tennessee Career Ladder Evaluation System (TCLTES, Tennessee), the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS, Texas), the Connecticut (Teacher Competency Instrument (CCI, Connecticut), and the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching (LCET, Louisiana). Although the classroom-based observation forms differ, the content of evaluation

emphasizes the teaching and/or teaching behaviors in the classroom (Millman and Darling-Hammond, 1990). Ellet (1990) suggested that the focus of classroom-based assessments should be shifted away from assessing and evaluating categories of teaching behaviors, and shifted towards gathering data on student learning, based on the assumption that all students can learn. His suggested approach emphasizes that students have different learning styles, and various cognitive abilities. The System for Teaching and Learning Assessment and Review (STAR) is an example of a comprehensive classroom-based assessment centered on student learning. The format of the assessment requires the evaluating principal to assess the quality of learning as well as teaching. On a STAR classroom-based assessment, a data gathering item assessing learning might read, "Students clearly understand explanations of content and topics are clear." This item allows the principal to make inferences from observations of students' engagement in learning. In contrast, a similar data collecting item on a teacher behavior-centered, classroom-based assessment might read, "The teacher's explanation of content and topics are clear" (p. 25).

Properly designed classroom- based assessments allow principals to identify characteristics of teacher behaviors to foster student learning in a classroom setting. Variations of classroom-based assessments provide a checklist for assessing the extent to which students are actively engaged in the learning process. According to Strong (1997), the vast majority of classroom-based assessments predominantly focus on the teacher and teaching, rather than on student learning. He suggests that classroom-based assessments should be developed to focus on student learning to accommodate newer theories of cognitive learning, as well as focus on the nature and quality of teaching and learning.

Portfolio Evaluation

Teaching portfolios are used for evaluating teachers' performance and professional staff development. A teaching portfolio is a collection of information about a teacher's practice. According to Lee Shulman (1992), a portfolio should consist of carefully selected student and teacher accomplishments that illustrate professional content standards, and individual and school goals. The specific structure and content for an evaluation portfolio, should be specified in advance. Providing advanced notice to teachers permits the requirements for completing the portfolio to be clear, and the evaluation process to be consistent among principals and teachers. Some school administrators provide teachers with a portfolio construction handbook which includes information stating the purpose and procedures for compiling portfolios, timelines for completion, and the required and/or suggested content. Additionally, school administrators usually provide content and performance standards criteria, and a description of the principal's verbal or written feedback and a teacher's appeals process.

The contents of teaching portfolios vary in design, and format. Some teacher portfolios contain samples of student and teacher work, such as photographs of class projects, lesson plans, student assessments, and evidence of professional activities. Others contain a statement of philosophy or teaching goals as well as commentaries, or written descriptions of the contents that reflect the teaching and learning documented in the portfolio.

The evaluation of a teacher's portfolio should be derived from content standards (the breadth of subject content teachers should know), and performance standards (their ability to demonstrate teaching skills). Both standards guide teachers in compiling portfolios and provide a framework of criteria for principals to evaluate portfolios. Administrators follow a systematic review process for evaluating portfolios. First, they read the entire portfolio to gather information about a teacher's overall performance. Afterwards, they review the portfolio and

indicate consistencies with regard to content standards and teacher goals. Next, they assign a rating scale for the portfolio. Lastly, administrators provide written and/or verbal feedback to the teacher about the substantive quality of the portfolio. Portfolios also serve a beneficial purpose to teachers in training. Their method of developing a portfolio entails collecting and organizing evaluative information regarding their competence, and to gain valuable feedback regarding their performance within broad categories. Using a portfolio during the process of teacher training is beneficial to teacher trainees in three ways. Firstly, well-organized portfolios provide a clear definition of the program requirements. Secondly, portfolios assist teachers in setting goals and priorities related to developing teacher competence. Also, the evaluation of the portfolio provides teachers with constructive feedback from their principals about their strengths and weaknesses. The evaluation could help them demonstrate their teaching competence at the end of training as well as earn a graduation certificate, required for future licensing and employment as a teacher (Nevo, 1994).

According to Stronge (1997), critics of teacher portfolios utilized as performance assessment criteria, validly argue that teacher portfolios should be used in addition to multiple measurements to acquire an accurate assessment of a teacher's performance. Stronge and others recommend basing teacher effectiveness on a variety of measures such as direct observation, parental feedback and student feedback. Conceptually, critics argue a teacher's portfolio could generate outstanding performance feedback, even though the teacher is ineffective as a teacher. Therefore, to reverse the possibility of an ineffective teacher's receiving a high rating based on the merits of a portfolio, it is suggested that administrators assess teachers' performance based on information gathered from on a variety of sources.

Teachers' portfolios should contain examples of teacher and student works that reflect professional content standards, and the school's mission. Additionally, detailed principal feedback is essential, and should represent content and

performance standards. A comprehensive teacher portfolio could be enhanced when used in conjunction with other detailed assessment criteria such as parent feedback, and student achievement.

A 360-degree Compass

Many school districts have discovered weaknesses in their teacher evaluation process. As a result some districts are using combinations and variations of new evaluation designs, such as a team approach used for evaluating teachers and administrators, known as 360-degree feedback. The evaluation entails teachers generating a matrix of feedback from six sources: According to Manatt, designer of the 360 degree model, a teacher is figuratively placed at the center of a six-pronged wheel receiving input from the following six sources.

- Peer teachers, who observe the teacher at work in the classroom.
- Principals, who conduct observations and discuss goals and other information with the teacher.
- Parents, who give their perceptions of the teacher's performance in response to a survey.
- Student achievement data.
- Students, who rate teachers according to their preparation for class, teaching performance and to make lessons interesting.
- The teacher who completes a self-evaluation drawn from reflections on classroom practice.

Principals use the feedback collected during the evaluation process to help them gauge teacher performance according to three tracks: beginning teachers, tenured teachers, and teachers who are not meeting the district's standards. The evaluations "act as a compass" by directing teacher growth and improvement with the purpose of helping students learn (Black, 1998).

Peer Review

Some administrators use peer reviews to evaluate teachers' performance. Usually, this method is administered in conjunction with other performance-based measures such as portfolio evaluations. Principals and teachers derive benefits from questioning teachers' colleagues. Such benefits are presented as providing professional growth opportunities and encouragement for teachers. According to Haefele, (1992, p.25), in a collegial model approach to evaluation, "teachers are encouraged to form relationships that enable school change to be based on what is best for the students." Only peers working directly with, or having direct knowledge of teacher's performance provide information. Also, the survey instrument should only include questions that focus on specific desired activities or behaviors related to the teacher's job duties.

Peer feedback can be particularly useful to teachers of the handicapped. Typically, special education teachers interact daily with regular education teachers and work either directly or indirectly with peers as co-teachers, school counselors, and support staff. In special education settings, collaboration and educational service delivery are vital components of responsibility for special education services.

According to Peterson, (1995), feedback from peers could provide results not representative of a teacher's actual performance. Rather, content of the feedback could be limited, irrelevant, or misleading. Information generated by peers, is most effective, when used as part of a comprehensive teacher evaluation system. Some concerns about the limitations of peer feedback were also identified. For example, peer feedback may reflect a conflict of professional interest. In addition, peers sometimes may lack professional knowledge about other teachers' practice. Thus, their feedback reflects perceptions, rather than actual knowledge about the quality of other teachers' job performance.

Teacher Self Evaluations

Teacher self-evaluation is an evaluation method which allows teachers to provide input about the adequacy and effectiveness of their knowledge, performance and areas for improvement. Self-evaluation is directly related to reflective practice. The evaluation approach allows teachers to asses their performance, and determine areas in need of performance related professional development activities. According to Hargreaves (1995), self evaluation encourages teachers to collect, interpret and to judge information about their performance. The underlying purpose of the self-evaluation stems from the premise that teachers' main reasons for engaging in teaching and professional development activities is to understand, critique, and improve their own practice. Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (1985) suggest that some of the most significant teacher evaluations are self-evaluations. Such evaluations avail teachers opportunities to explore their beliefs, and knowledge about teaching. Clandinin and Connelly (1988) emphasize that a teacher's beliefs system is a factor related to one's professional growth and performance. Kuhn (1991) emphasizes the importance of thinking about one's belief system about teaching. He adds that effective teachers reflect on their belief systems, analyze classroom problems, attempt new approaches, and judge the results in relation to the original purpose. Self -evaluation is a powerful evaluation method which uncovers teachers' belief systems and assumptions about teaching and professional growth and student achievement. One clear disadvantage of self-evaluation is the lack of feedback generated from principals. Self-evaluation approaches are inherently problematic because teachers can develop personal bias in decision- making and not accurately identify weaknesses in student learning or teaching practices.

Case study For Teacher Evaluation

The Eastern Washington University Education Department conducted a study designed to improve instruction and teaching practices of 153 teachers. The department's rationale for randomly selecting 153 respondents was to determine if the evaluation system was designed in such a way to prevent teachers from experiencing probation from their teaching career. The population of respondents had gone through rigorous screening programs, student teaching, and scrutiny of professional credentials prior to the evaluation. The survey led researchers to a conclusion that the significance of determining what criteria to include in evaluations was very important. According to Shreeve (1993), research indicated that evaluation instruments should be scrutinized to consider which items were important for good instruction, as well as meeting the criteria of fulfilling the purpose of evaluations. According to Hickcox (1982), it is critical that evaluations be designed for the purpose for which they are intended, and measured what they were intended to measure: the improvements of instruction, and improvement of the teaching/learning process. A most critical issue in the assessment process is developing criteria against which a teacher's performance is measured (Frels et. al. 1984). According to Beckman (1985, p.9), " There should be sufficient specificity in the elaboration of assessment standards so as to inform a reasonably prudent person of the applicable criteria. Case law and most state statutes require that performance criteria be objective and job related."

New development in Teacher Evaluation

Contemporary research on teacher evaluation emphasized the significance of devising comprehensive teacher evaluation methods to improve current teacher evaluations (Scriven, 1994). He contends that good teachers make a commitment to student success. Accomplishing the commitment can be done by teachers using

self-evaluation and peer evaluation to gauge success and improvement. Although evidence is needed to determine the extent to which comprehensive evaluations improve the quality of teaching, they are effective for providing feedback to teachers. These comprehensive evaluations would include surveys to provide feedback to administrators, supervisors and other school personnel to evaluate teacher performance and program implementation . The feedback can assist personal and professional improvement for assuring accountability in teacher performance and overall improvement in student achievement.

There is a growing awareness that current evaluation systems have limitations. Thus, school districts are increasingly using multiple systems, or comprehensive methods to evaluate teachers. For example, some districts use different evaluation systems for beginning and experienced teachers. In theory, the evaluations are different for experienced teachers because experienced teachers can reflect on their practice. McLaughlin and Pfeifer (1988) contend that when experienced teachers reflect on their practice, improvement often follows as a result. The improvement may be combined with district plans to benefit the school. Peterson and Comeaux (1990) found that although districts may want new teachers to demonstrate their ability to implement instructional models, evidence suggests that teachers improve as they gain experience, and develop reflective practice over time.

Summary

It has been found that teachers' efficacy has a direct impact on their performance and student learning. Teachers with high efficacy experience greater success in facilitating students' learning outcomes, and positive classroom management attributes. Additionally, it has been found that teachers with low efficacy improved their performance under supervised instruction and training. The differences in teacher efficacy have been identified as a variable accounting

for differences in teacher practice and student outcome. Improving teacher practices to reflect greater teacher competencies is a prevalent goal in educational systems designed to impact student learning. Student academic achievement may reflect goals and missions of educational institutions. Teacher evaluation instruments reflecting job specific responsibilities and high efficacy criteria, are tools designed to assess the quality of instruction, and ensure strategic measures for creating desired student outcomes in concert with missions and objectives of the school.

According to Wise (1995), many school districts employ evaluation systems that are inconsistent with the philosophy and mission of the school. Compatibility between the two should some-how be achieved to improve overall teacher effectiveness and student learning. One such incompatibility exists, for example if a district values small-group instruction in its mission, but does not measure the quality of the instruction when evaluating a teacher. Wise (1995) suggests that the institution's goals and missions, and its practices should be reflected on the evaluation systems to ensure compatibility. Traditional systems of evaluation have often prevented administrators from focusing attention on improving classroom instruction (Henson & Hall, 1993).

This present study attempts to develop a specific evaluation instrument to observe teachers' instructional strategies and student performances in the field of special education practices. The instrument has aligned job description criteria for special education teachers, and linked criteria to improve teacher efficacy in three categories. They are teaching procedures, management, and professional qualifications. Evaluation feedback from principals will enhance a teacher's instructional competencies, and provide measures of accountability from formative and summative evaluations. Schools have collective needs relative to their mission that are met through the academic achievement of students, and proper evaluation measures for teachers.

Chapter III

Methods

Participants

Thirty special education teachers from 4 schools within the same district participated in the study. All of the participating teachers teach students with disabilities either in inclusive classrooms or self-contained classrooms. The participants were asked to review an evaluation form designed in the format of a questionnaire and respond to the level of appropriateness. Also, they were asked to complete a form indicating specific information about their years of teaching experience, tenured or non-tenured status, and type of special education classrooms such as co-teaching or self-contained environments.

Figure 1 presents the general information of the participating teachers.

Figure 1: General Information of Participating Teachers

N=30	0-3 years	4-7 years	8 or more years
Tenured	0	9	18
Non-Tenured	3	0	0

N=30	0-3 years	4-7 years	8 or more years
Co-Teaching	2	3	7
Self-Contained	1	6	11
Total	3	9	18

N=30	Co-Teachers	Self-Contained
Tenured	10	17
Non-Tenured	2	1
Total	12	18

Procedures

The developed evaluation instrument was hand delivered to 30 special education teachers. Each teacher was informed that the purpose of the survey was to assist in developing an evaluation instrument designed specifically for evaluating special education teachers. The instrument was a modified version of the existing district-wide evaluation principals use to evaluate teachers. Additionally, each teacher was hand delivered a copy of the district wide teacher evaluation form currently used by principals to evaluate teachers. The purpose for distributing the 32 item district evaluation was to enable the teachers to cross-reference the forms by comparing the format and content to the evaluation format on the questionnaire. They were asked to circle one of four selections for each item. The options among which to select were *very appropriate, appropriate, somewhat appropriate, not appropriate*. In addition, they were asked to provide written feedback relative to their perspective of the evaluation providing performance feedback. They were also asked to note their perspective with regards to how the evaluation could improve teacher efficacy, and improve the quality of teachers' competencies. Three days were allotted to the participating teachers to return the questionnaires.

Research Design

The study used a survey to evaluate special education teachers' perspectives on a newly developed instrument for teacher performance evaluation. Each participant was asked to respond to a four level scale ranging from very appropriate as a score of 4, appropriate as 3, somewhat appropriate as 2 and not appropriate as 1.

A comparative analysis based on a self-reported questionnaire was used in this study. The purpose of the questionnaire was twofold: First it was to determine

the extent to which the evaluation was a good tool to generate feedback to improve teachers' instructional skills, and proficiency at managing classroom behaviors; second, to assess the extent to which evaluations reflected the performance responsibilities required of special education teachers.

Measurement

The 32 items on the questionnaire were divided into 3 categories: The items reflect a combination of performance responsibilities listed on a job description for teachers of the handicapped, and revisions of a school's district-wide teacher evaluation for classroom observation for supervisors to evaluate regular education teachers, and teachers of the handicapped.

The instrument in this research was developed based on the content from an evaluation instrument currently used by supervisors to evaluate regular education teachers and teachers of the handicapped in a large school district. The design of the questionnaire was formatted following a similar questionnaire designed by the Eastern Washington University Education Department in 1984. In that research, the 20-question survey was divided into 5 categories. Teacher respondents were instructed to read each question and to rate each according to a range from very appropriate, appropriate, somewhat appropriate and inappropriate. Teachers' responses to the questionnaire provided a unique opportunity to examine the applicability of evaluative criteria to improve instruction; to consider the purpose of teacher evaluations; and to review measurement outcomes for teaching improvement. The content of the instrument was also developed using a reference of information and items derived from the New Jersey Administrative Code Title 6A chapter 14 for special education. Additionally, the content included efficacy statements from the Gibson and Dembo (1985) Teacher Efficacy Scale. Each respondent indicated either yes or no to the following statements, "I can teach any student despite his/her conditions in the home environment". "Even thoroughly

trained and knowledgeable teacher can only do so much to teach children with a difficult home environment."

The content of the 32 items on the district wide evaluation currently used in the survey was revised to specifically reflect the performance responsibilities and job description of teachers of the handicapped. The three categories of criteria include teaching procedures, management, and professional qualifications. Teaching procedures contains 16 items, management contains 11 items, and professional qualifications contain 5 items. To evaluate the appropriateness of this revised instrument, a rating scale of 4 was developed representing 4 as very appropriate, 3 as appropriate, 2 as somewhat appropriate, and 1as inappropriate. The responses were assigned a numeric value of 4, 3, 2, and 1 in descending order, to match the range from very appropriate to inappropriate. The content of the instrument was also developed using a reference of information and items derived from the New Jersey Administrative Code Title 6A chapter 14 for special education. Additionally, the content included efficacy statements from the Gibson and Dembo Teacher Efficacy Scale. Each respondent indicated either yes or no to the following statements, "I can teach any student despite his/her conditions in the home environment". "Even thoroughly trained and knowledgeable teacher can only do so much to teach children with a difficult home environment." Figure 2 presents the evaluation items.

Figure 2: Teacher Evaluation Items

I. TEACHING PROCEDURES

Item 1. Selects and modifies appropriate learning content from curriculum management systems and Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 2. Maintains and utilizes lesson plans and instructional materials.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 3. IEP's include behavioral objectives and procedures that are clear and that reflect desired goals.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 4. Teaches to the lesson objective and implements modifications/reinforcements as needed.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 5. Objective is communicated to the students.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 6. Reviews previously learned skills/ content as needed.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 7. Provides motivation for lesson, displays mental alertness, and sound judgment.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 8. Uses techniques designed to encourage students to set and maintain standards of behavior to achieve.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 9. Knows and applies subject matter content and skills.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 10. Gives directions clearly and completely.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 11. Teaches to the students' ability levels.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 12. Monitors the students' progress and utilizes intervention strategies.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 13. Summarizes the lesson.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 14. Gives students an opportunity to practice or apply skills taught in the lesson.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 15. Provides for continuous evaluation of student progress consistent with district established goals and policies.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 16. Maintains a functional learning atmosphere in the classroom.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

II. MANAGEMENT

Item 17. Manages classroom procedures and school routines.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 18. Uses instructional time effectively.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 19. Uses strategies to maintain on task student behavior.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 20. Has established an effective classroom routine.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 21. Provides for individualized student differences.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 22. Enforces district policy, school, procedures, and administrative regulations for special education.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 23. Communicates classroom expectations.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 24. Provides a climate that is conducive to learning.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 25. Maintains positive interaction with students by demonstrating emotional poise and self-control.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 26. Completes and uses student records, reports, and IEP's.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 27. Is accurate and prompt with routine written assignments and administrative reports.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

III. PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Item 28. Demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 29. Demonstrates the ability to use appropriate communication skills.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 30. Demonstrates a willingness to establish cooperative relations and effective communications with staff and parents.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 31. Demonstrates responsibility through punctuality in the performance of assigned duties.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Item 32. Progress is being made towards achievement of IPIP objectives.

Very Appropriate Appropriate Somewhat Appropriate Not Appropriate

Data Analysis

The responses for each question were compared by the mean and standard deviation. An ANOVA analysis was conducted to analyze the results to compare the group differences according to respondents' self-report to indicate their work placement, self-contained or co-teaching classroom.

Chapter IV

Results

The total of 30 participating teachers responded to the questionnaire to evaluate the newly developed evaluation instrument. The mean and standard deviation of their responses on each question were analyzed.

Figure 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Each Question Responded By Participating Teachers

Questions	Mean	Std. Dev
Question 1	3.66	.674
Question 2	3.63	.556
Question 3	3.56	.568
Question 4	3.73	.520
Question 5	3.56	.626
Question 6	3.56	.626
Question 7	3.83	.379
Question 8	3.46	.621
Question 9	3.34	.466
Question 10	3.22	.406
Question 11	3.66	.621
Question 12	3.23	.626
Question 13	3.16	.711
Question 14	3.46	.730
Question 15	3.13	.819
Question 16	3.63	.621
Question 17	3.45	.563
Question 18	3.46	.571
Question 19	3.36	.490
Question 20	3.73	.520
Question 21	3.43	.568
Question 22	3.23	.664
Question 23	3.46	.628
Question 24	3.74	.534
Question 25	3.63	.498
Question 26	3.53	.508
Question 27	3.66	.498
Question 28	3.63	.490
Question 29	3.66	.479
Question 30	3.66	.498
Question 31	3.73	.449
Question 32	3.66	.479

The mean and standard deviation of each question responded by teachers in co-teaching and self-contained settings were calculated. Figure 4 presents the mean and standard deviation of responses from participating teachers in co-teaching and self-contained classrooms.

Figure 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of each Question Responded by Participating Teachers in Co-teaching and Self-Contained Settings

Groups	Co-Teaching		Self-Contained	
Questions	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Question 1	3.58	.668	3.61	.697
Question 2	3.66	.492	3.61	.607
Question 3	3.75	.452	3.44	.615
Question 4	3.83	.389	3.66	.594
Question 5	3.66	.651	3.55	.615
Question 6	3.33	.887	3.61	.607
Question 7	3.83	.389	3.83	.383
Question 8	3.50	.674	3.66	.594
Question 9	3.33	.492	3.27	.460
Question 10	3.16	.389	3.11	.323
Question 11	3.66	.651	3.55	.615
Question 12	3.16	.577	3.27	.669
Question 13	3.50	.674	3.22	.732
Question 14	3.50	.674	3.44	.783
Question 15	3.08	.792	3.11	.900
Question 16	3.41	.668	3.72	.574
Question 17	3.33	.492	3.44	.615
Question 18	3.33	.651	3.55	.511
Question 19	3.41	.514	3.33	.485
Question 20	3.50	.674	3.88	.323
Question 21	3.33	.651	3.50	.514
Question 22	3.33	.492	3.11	.758
Question 23	3.50	.522	3.44	.704
Question 24	3.75	.452	3.66	.594
Question 25	3.66	.492	3.55	.511
Question 26	3.33	.492	3.61	.501
Question 27	3.58	.514	3.61	.501
Question 28	3.58	.514	3.66	.485
Question 29	3.58	.514	3.72	.460
Question 30	3.41	.514	3.72	.460
Question 31	3.75	.452	3.72	.460
Question 32	3.50	.522	3.77	.427

An ANOVA analysis was used to determine if there was a difference of responses between participants in co-teaching and self-contained classes. Figure 5 presents the results.

Figure 5: ANOVA analysis of responses between participants in co-teaching and self-contained classrooms

Questions	Responses	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Question 1	Between groups	.006	1	.006	.012
	Within groups	13.194	28	.471	
	Total	13.200	29		
Question 2	Between groups	.022	1	.022	.070
	Within groups	8.944	28	.319	
	Total	8.967	29		
Question 3	Between groups	.672	1	.672	2.165
	Within groups	8.694	28	.311	
	Total	9.367	29		
Question 4	Between groups	.200	1	.200	.730
	Within groups	7.667	28	.274	
	Total	7.867	29		
Question 5	Between groups	.089	1	.089	.224
	Within groups	11.111	28	.397	
	Total	11.200	29		

Figure 5: ANOVA analysis of responses between participants in co-teaching and self-contained classrooms (Continued)

Question 6	Between groups Within groups Total	.566 14.944 15.500	1 28 29	.556 .534	1.041
Question 7	Between groups Within groups Total	.000 4.167 4.167	1 28 29	.000 .149	.000
Question 8	Between groups Within groups Total	.200 11.000 11.200	1 28 29	.200 .393	.509
Question 9	Between groups Within groups Total	.022 6.278 6.300	1 28 29	.022 .224	.099
Question 10	Between groups Within groups Total	.022 3.444 3.467	1 28 29	.022 .123	.181

Figure 5: ANOVA analysis of responses between participants in co-teaching and self-contained classrooms (Continued)

Question 11	Between groups	.089	1	.089	.224
	Within groups	11.111	28	.397	
	Total	11.200	29		
Question 12	Between groups	.089	1	.089	.221
	Within groups	11.278	28	.403	
	Total	11.367	29		
Question 13	Between groups	.556	1	.556	1.102
	Within groups	14.111	28	.504	
	Total	14.667	29		
Question 14	Between groups	.022	1	.022	.040
	Within groups	15.444	28	.552	
	Total	15.467	29		
Question 15	Between groups	.006	1	.006	.008
	Within groups	20.697	28	.739	
	Total	20.700	29		
Question 16	Between groups	.672	1	.672	1.788
	Within groups	10.528	28	.376	
	Total	11.200	29		
Question 17	Between groups	.089	1	.089	.273
	Within groups	9.111	28	.325	
	Total	9.200	29		
Question 18	Between groups	.356	1	.356	1.093
	Within groups	9.111	28	.325	
	Total	9.467	29		

Question 19	Between groups Within groups Total	.050 6.917 6.967	1 28 29	.050 .247	.202
Question 20	Between groups Within groups Total	1.089 6.778 7.867	1 28 29	1.089 .242	4.498
Question 21	Between groups Within groups Total	.200 9.167 9.367	1 28 29	.200 .327	.611
Question 22	Between groups Within groups Total	.356 12.444 12.800	1 28 29	.356 .444	.800
Question 23	Between groups Within groups Total	.022 11.444 11.467	1 28 29	.022 .409	.540
Question 24	Between groups Within groups Total	.050 8.250 8.300	1 28 29	.050 .295	.170
Question 25	Between groups Within groups Total	.089 7.111 7.200	1 28 29	.089 .254	.350
Question 26	Between groups Within groups Total	.556 6.944 7.500	1 28 29	.556 .248	2.240
Question 27	Between groups Within groups Total	.006 7.194 7.200	1 28 29	.006 .257	.022
Question 28	Between groups Within groups Total	.050 6.917 6.967	1 28 29	.050 .257	.202

Question 29	Between groups Within groups Total	.139 6.528 6.667	1 28 29	.139 .233	.569
Question 30	Between groups Within groups Total	.672 6.528 7.200	1 28 29	.672 .233	2.883
Question 31	Between groups Within groups Total	.006 5.861 5.867	1 28 29	.006 .209	.027
Question 32	Between groups Within groups Total	.556 6.111 6.667	1 28 29	.556 .218	2.546

The data analysis indicates that there is no statistical significance of differences between responses of participating teachers in the co-teaching and self -contained classrooms.

Chapter V

Discussions

The purpose of the present study was to evaluate a newly developed evaluation instrument to determine if the evaluation form indicates teacher efficacy. A teacher's efficacy reliably indicates a student's academic achievement level. When teachers receive performance feedback from evaluations they can improve their level of efficacy and improve student learning (Green et al., 1988). A properly designed evaluation instrument can provide teachers with useful performance feedback related to their competencies, delivery of effective instruction and accommodating the instructional needs of students with disabilities (Morin & Welsh, 1991). The evaluation instrument developed for this study was given to 30 special education teachers to examine their responses to determine the appropriateness of the instrument.

The first research question on the examination of teacher efficacy related to the teachers' perspective of the developed instrument designed to reflect specific performance responsibilities for teachers of the handicapped, and to enhance the quality of feedback. The participating teachers' responses indicated that the items on the questionnaire relating to performance responsibilities within the category of teaching procedures were appropriate. There were 16 questions in the category of teaching procedures. Ninety five percent of the responses in this category circled by teachers indicated a response of "appropriate". Thus, the mean scores of all items within this category on the questionnaire are over 3.0 out of 4.0. These appropriate items on the developed questionnaire reflecting job duties of special education teachers may enhance the quality of feedback to improve their performance with regard to teaching procedures.

The second research question was to examine the teachers' perspective of the developed instrument to improve teachers' efficacy. There were 11 questions in the management category. Ninety-seven percent of the responses of participants in the category of management were circled "appropriate". These results indicated that the items in the management category exceeded 3.0 out of 4.0. This is an indicator that the items may be appropriate for improving teacher efficacy. However, the extent to which the items on the developed instrument could improve efficacy has not been determined.

The third research question was to examine the participating teachers' perspective of the developed instrument to improve the quality of teachers' competencies. The responses to the items in the category of professional qualifications consisted of 4 items. Eighty-five percent of the items were circled "appropriate". Thus, the mean scores of all items in this category are over 3.0 too. These results indicated that the items in the category of management could improve the quality of teachers' competencies because the items were appropriately related to improving competencies. However, comparing the responses of 2 different groups of teachers from co-teaching and self-contained settings, there was no significant difference between them.

Limitations

There are some limitations of the study. First limitation is the sample size of the population. The population consisted of 30 special education teachers. The results of the data analysis may have revealed statistically significant information if the population consisted of a larger percentage of special education teachers within a larger school district. A larger sampling population may have included more teachers in co-teaching and self-contained settings. Another limitation of the study is the research design. This research used a self-reported questionnaire to

collect data. The analysis of data consisted primarily of participating teachers' responses. An analysis of their responses to the questions did not reveal a statistically significant difference between the two groups of teachers who were teaching in co-teaching and self-contained environments. An analysis of data of tenured and non-tenured was not feasible because the sample population consisted of only 3 non-tenured teachers. The category of non-tenured teachers consists of teachers most recently graduated from a teacher-training program. If a larger population of non-tenured participated in the research, an analysis of their responses may be possible for a statistical analysis.

The absence of teacher certification status as an independent variable is another limitation in the study. To differentiate between the emergency certified and standard certified teachers was a consideration in designing the analysis. Emergency certified teachers are hired from careers other than education, without prior teaching experience or the benefit of teacher-training programs. The emergency certified teachers, in contrast to their standard certified counterparts, may enter the teaching profession with different expectations of the classroom, especially with regard to their competencies for instructing students with special needs. Standard certified teachers of the handicapped may function from a different set of performance expectations. In this regard they may have higher levels of teacher efficacy, supported by an intrinsic desire to teach, and cultivated throughout their formal educational teacher preparation training. An analysis of their responses might reveal useful information. However, in the present study only 3 emergency certified teachers participated. Therefore, it is not possible to compare with the rest of the participating teachers because of the small sample size. In a future study, emergency certified teachers' responses may need to be compared with other teachers if a larger sample size could be organized.

Recommendations

Overall, the results provide support for research to suggest that an evaluation instrument reflect performance responsibilities of special education teachers, and enhance the quality of feedback to improve their performance. The feedback generated from an appropriate teacher evaluation may enhance teacher efficacy, especially if it is developed to improve teacher competencies. Given the limitations of the present research, an analysis of the participants' responses indicates that there is a need to develop an evaluation instrument with appropriate items for teachers of the handicapped. Further studies may examine teachers' level of efficacy prior to administering an evaluation instrument. This determination may differentiate the respondents between those teachers with low and high efficacy. The purpose of gathering this information prior to administering the developed evaluation may determine the extent to which the research questions are supported by the data analyzed. For example, teachers with low efficacy may view the evaluation instrument as an appropriate tool for enhancing performance expectations. Otherwise, teachers with low efficacy may perceive the instrument ineffective for enhancing teacher efficacy. Teachers with high efficacy may view the evaluation instrument as an effective tool to improve overall performance. A further study may be needed to include implementing the evaluation on a trial basis to teachers within actual classrooms. A test model of the evaluation should generate feedback to teachers regarding their performance. After implementing the evaluation a concurrent teacher questionnaire may be considered for teachers could be completed by the teacher to determine the appropriateness of each item on the evaluation instrument that was used as a tool to evaluate their performance.

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APPENDIX

Dear Teacher:

I am a graduate student at Rowan University and as part of my requirements for earning my Masters Degree, I will be conducting a research project. Under the supervision of my advisor, Dr. Xin, I will be conducting research on an analysis of improving teacher efficacy to enhance student learning by developing an evaluation instrument for special education teachers. The purpose of the research is to develop an evaluation instrument for special education teachers to provide feedback to improve the quality of job specific performance.

I would like you to participate in this research by responding to a questionnaire with 32 response items. The responses require circling a response of "very appropriate, "appropriate", "somewhat appropriate" or "not appropriate". If you decide to participate in the study, your involvement of responding to a self-reported questionnaire will take no more than 20 minutes of your time.

Your participation is completely voluntary and your individual responses will be held confidential, as participants shall remain anonymous.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and participation in this regard.

Sincerely,

Sollie Pinkston-Miles

Please indicate whether or not you wish to participate in this study by signing below.

Signature_____ Date_____