

What Methodology Might I Consider?

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There are two questions and titles that I have been considering for my thesis.

- 1) What does the inclusive co-teaching classroom need for real collaboration between the general and special education teachers? A synthesis of research to find best practices.
- 2) Can the business world models of collaboration help in the inclusive co-teaching classroom? A guide for collaboration between general and special education teachers.

For my thesis, I have considered two different research methods, Survey Research and Synthesis of Research. The first method I considered was Survey Research. This research method includes creating a survey that participants can fill out and then give back to me. The survey can be done in person, through the mail, or online. The survey would be sent to regular and special education teachers who co-teach or have experience co-teaching. The purpose would be to ask them their opinions about what makes co-teaching work in an inclusive classroom. The advantages of using this type of research method are:

1. Can collect information from a large number of people.
2. Participants can respond when they want to.
3. Participants can be anonymous so that they might respond more truthfully.
4. Less time and money for the researcher.

Some disadvantages to using this method are:

1. Bias.
2. Time-consuming if there are unstructured questions.
3. Unpredictable numbers of who will respond.
4. If online, it must have security so data does not get corrupted.

The second method I considered was a Synthesis of Research. When using this research method, the researcher is trying to generate new knowledge by combining and comparing the results of multiple studies on a topic. The advantages of using this method are that the research can be done in a shorter amount of time, and no participants are needed. Some disadvantages to this method are that it can be time-consuming to find suitable studies to use, and it might be difficult to find studies that go with your topic.

I have concluded that the best research method for me to use is a Synthesis of Research. I am not currently teaching in a county and do not have access to emails from general and special education teachers. I could reach out to a few teachers I know, but it would not be a large enough sampling of teachers to hear from. By using a synthesis of research, I can use multiple research studies to find the answer to my question of what makes co-teaching a success in the classroom. Even though it can be time-consuming, I have many resources to help find the research studies I will need for my thesis.

Before I start working on my research, I will need to apply to Mary Baldwin University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB board is responsible for the oversight of all research activities that involve human participants. It is the responsibility of the board to make sure that all human subjects are protected, have all the information needed to decide to be in the study, understand the risks, and have the freedom to choose whether or not they want to participate (Mary Baldwin University, 2018).

My research project will collect human data, so I will have to submit a proposal to the IRB. I will fill out the application for a request for exemption by the IRB chair. My request for exemption is because my project will fall into this stipulation, "Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as research on instructional strategies, or research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods." (Mary Baldwin University, 2018, p3).

I will not need participants to fill out Informed Consent forms because I am not working with the participants. I am using the data from other research studies that have already gone through the IRB process and gathered informed consent if they needed to do so.

There are many things I need to do for my research project. The first step is to complete the human subject research training offered by Mary Baldwin University, and I must complete this before submitting my request for exemption by the IRB chair.

I am hoping that I can answer my thesis question with a synthesis of research. There have been many studies done on co-teaching that I will use to help search for answers. I am hoping that my research project will give education new knowledge that can be shared with teachers. I

hope to create either a brochure or professional development to help deliver my newfound knowledge.

References

Mary Baldwin University. (2018). *Using Human Subjects in Research*.

<https://go.marybaldwin.edu/research/irb/>

Mary Baldwin University. (2018). *IRB Approval and Proposal Form Checklist*.

<https://go.marybaldwin.edu/research/irb/>