5-1-2016

A CASE STUDY: EXPLORING THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DECISIONS TEACHER EDUCATORS MAKE AND EXAMINING HOW PREPARED PRESERVICE TEACHERS FEEL TO TEACH DIVERSE STUDENTS

Lawrence Kofi Ametepee
Southern Illinois University Carbondale, lamet77@yahoo.co.uk

A CASE STUDY: EXPLORING THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DECISIONS TEACHER EDUCATORS MAKE AND EXAMINING HOW PREPARED PRESERVICE TEACHERS FEEL TO TEACH DIVERSE STUDENTS

by

Lawrence Kofi Ametepee

BA Ed., Africa University, 2002
MHSM, MBA, Texas Woman's University, 2007

A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Philosophy Degree

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
May 2016

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

A CASE STUDY: EXPLORING THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DECISIONS TEACHER EDUCATORS MAKE AND EXAMINING HOW PREPARED PRESERVICE TEACHERS FEEL TO TEACH DIVERSE STUDENTS

by

Lawrence Kofi Ametepee

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the field of Curriculum and Instruction

Approved by:

Dr. D. John McIntyre

Dr. Christie McIntyre

Dr. Lingguo Bu

Dr. Dimitris Anastasiou

Dr. Uche Onyebadi

Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

October 19, 2015

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

LAWRENCE KOFI AMETEPEE, for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, presented on OCTOBER 19, 2015, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale

TITLE: A CASE STUDY: EXPLORING THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DECISIONS TEACHER EDUCATORS MAKE AND EXAMINING HOW PREPARED PRESERVICE TEACHERS FEEL TO TEACH DIVERSE STUDENTS

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. D. John McIntyre

The purpose of this study was threefold: (a) to explore the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice general education teachers for inclusive classrooms; (b) to examine the preparedness of the preservice general education teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities in general education settings; (c) and to find out how the decisions teacher educators make may influence the preparedness of the preservice general education teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities in general education settings.

In this concurrent mixed methods study, 14 faculty members completed interview protocol, and 62 preservice general education teachers provided background information and completed Likert scale questionnaire. I also gathered data from teacher education program (TEP) documents. I used content analysis approach to analyze qualitative data and I analyzed quantitative data as Likert scale data.

Results show that whereas the TEP offers a significant percentage of content knowledge courses more than methods and inclusive education courses, only three out of the 14 faculty members indicated specifically that content knowledge was more important than the other components of inclusive education. Results further show that 11 (78.57%) of the seniors who completed student teaching stated they felt *confident,* 18 (54.55%) of seniors who were on

campus indicated they felt *somewhat confident*, and 11 (73.33%) of the juniors stated they felt *somewhat confident* teaching diverse students in general education classrooms. Furthermore, all the seniors who completed student teaching (14, 100%), twenty-seven out of the 33 (81.82%) of the seniors who were on campus, and eight (53.33%) of the juniors stated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. The results have implications for teacher education programs in regard to the competencies teacher education programs should emphasize and the professional development to faculty members. I also discussed recommendations that could place teacher education programs in a better position to effectively prepare preservice general education teachers.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, Lydia; and my children, Femi, Tai, and Kehinde for their sacrifices and confidence. It is also dedicated to my father, Stephen Ametepee Pessey; and my mother, Korsiwor Toboh-Ametepee for their lives and memories.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

God, and the people He placed in my life, made possible the successful completion of this dissertation. Thus, first, I would like to thank the Almighty for granting me the guidance, courage, strength, and grace to reach this milestone. This journey would have shipwrecked, if it were not for Him.

Second, I will always cherish the help and support I received from Dr. D. John McIntyre, my advisor. His angelic considerations made this story possible. He stood by me when everything and everybody seemed to stand against me. This journey would have ended unceremoniously without his help and thoughtfulness. He was more than an advisor. He was more than a mentor. He was God-sent.

Third, I would like to thank my dissertation committee members for all their efforts to improve this dissertation. Right from the time of coming up with the topic, through the prospectus stage, through the data collection stage, and finally, to the oral defense stage, the contributions of Dr. Christie McIntyre, Dr. Lingguo Bu, Dr. Dimitris Anastasiou, and Dr. Uche Onyebadi cannot be overemphasized.

Next, I wholeheartedly appreciate the support and help I received from the faculty and staff members of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, especially from Dr. Donna Post, the Chair of the department. Likewise, I would like to thank the staff of the Teacher Education Program at the large Midwestern university for facilitating the data collection process of this study. I acknowledge, in particular, the dedicated contributions of Ms. April Haar to this study.

Last, I would like to sincerely thank my wife, Lydia Ametepee; my sons, Femi Ametepee, Tai Ametepee, and Kehinde Ametepee; my siblings, Peace Kudawu, Nicholas Ametepee, and Benedictus Ametepee; and a host of relatives and friends, too many to mention, whose spiritual and material support provided me with the needed encouragement to make it to this end.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURE

FIGURE PAGE

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation investigates the inclusive education related decisions teacher educators make while preparing general education preservice teachers. It also examines how prepared the general education preservice teachers feel to teach diverse students. This chapter discusses the purpose of the study as well as its significance, and also states the research questions. In addition, the chapter discusses the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and the limitations of the study.

Statement of the Problem

Currently, teacher preparation and student outcome are two of the most controversial educational policy issues in public schools in the United States. These two related issues assume a level of great importance, especially, in this era of inclusive education. According to Wolfberg, LePage, and Cook (2009), the cornerstone of inclusive education in the United States was laid with the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) of 1975. The Act, reauthorized a number of times and now referred to as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, stipulates that students with disabilities have the right to be educated together with their peers without disabilities to the greatest extent possible using the principle of the least restrictive environment. The conceptualization of inclusive education has evolved over the years. Today, UNESCO, through its International Bureau of Education (IBE), has come up with a broader understanding of inclusive education. This broader conceptualization of inclusive education requires that teachers be provided with the appropriate skills and materials to teach students of diverse learning backgrounds using preservice training about inclusion,

among others (UNESCO IBE, 2008). Further, the agency has recommended that teachers' efforts to achieve or implement inclusion at all levels of education be supported and appreciated.

Another public law of importance, as far as inclusive education is concerned, is the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. The importance of this law is underscored given that the main reason for congress to reauthorize the IDEA 2004 was to align it with the NCLB. A main component of the assessment requirement of the NCLB is for states to be accountable and know if students are making adequate yearly progress (AYP). The AYP goals are set for the achievement of all students, as a whole, and for subgroups of students that include major ethnic/racial groups, economically disadvantaged students, limited English proficient (LEP) students, and students with disabilities (Cortiella, 2005; Ringwalt et al., 2011). In addition, for teachers to provide students with the appropriate academic content, the NCLB requires that teachers must be highly qualified (Powell, Higgins, Aram, & Freed, 2009). In this light, a highly qualified teacher, according to the NCLB, must at least have a bachelor's degree, must be fully certified by the state, and must be competent in the core academic subjects they are teaching.

It is also worth mentioning that about the time the NCLB was promulgated in 2001, "Model Standards for Licensing General and Special Education Teachers of Students with Disabilities: A Resource for State Dialogue" was developed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the Special Education Sub-Committee of the Council of Chief State School Officers. The document consists of 10 principles, which form the basis for the licensing standards regarding what elementary and high school general education and special education teachers should know and be able to do to teach students with disabilities (Burdette, 2007; INTASC, 2001; Jenkins & Ornelles, 2007). According to Burdette (2007), the document "currently provides the only well-known form of guidance addressing standards that

all teachers should meet to teach in classrooms that include all students, including those with disabilities" (p. 1). The focus of the INTASC principles is in line with the viewpoint of the NCLB, the IDEA, and inclusive education. To this end, the document reiterates that the teachers must have adequate content knowledge in their areas of specialization, they must have the appropriate knowledge and skills to effectively teach the content knowledge, and they must have the skills and knowledge necessary to teach students with disabilities (INTASC, 2001).

The concern of the federal government about public school students' outcome and teacher quality resulted in the signing into law another act—the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009—to address some of the shortcomings of the NCLB. The Act provided $4.35 billion for the Race to the Top Fund, which focuses on wide-ranging plans to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, and improve the quality of teaching so that students are adequately prepared for success in college education and future careers (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

Stayton and McCollum (2002) reported that the purpose of inclusive education was to change curriculum and instruction, roles of teachers, and programs for preparing preservice teachers. Harvey, Yssel, Bauserman, and Merbler (2010) agreed when they stated that given the mandates of the current educational laws of this country, general education preservice teachers need to be prepared to teach in inclusive classrooms. From the conceptualization of inclusive education by UNESCO, IDEA, NCLB, INTASC, and ARRA, it is clear, to me, that inclusive education emphasizes content knowledge without necessarily downplaying the importance of pedagogy in the training of preservice teachers. In addition, it is apparent that inclusive education emphasizes general education preservice teachers' ability to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom.

My personal experiences, professional training, and a thorough review of the literature led me to do this study in this country. As a doctoral student, I have an all-encompassing training in the education of students with diverse backgrounds, including students with disabilities. I also took specific courses—which gave me an in-depth knowledge of the implementation and the benefits of inclusion—in the area of inclusive education. In addition, working as a teaching assistant in my doctoral program gave me the opportunity to teach inclusive education related courses to both preservice general and special education teachers.

One particular special education course I taught to students, including general education preservice teachers, across the college of education, emphasizes making use of current research to determine best instructional practices for students with mild disabilities. Students with mild disabilities form the majority of students with disabilities who are taught in inclusive general education classrooms. Because collaboration is very important for effective teaching of this group of students, the course also emphasizes collaboration among general education teachers, special education teachers, and parents, for example. Based on my observations and the sincere feedback I received from some of the students in my classes, I have now reached two main conclusions. First, some general education preservice teachers, in particular, in my classes were not always very confident in teaching students with varying backgrounds even after taking the course. Second, as a result of this perceived feeling of the preservice teachers, I feel I, most probably, did not do enough, as an instructor, in the process of preparing the preservice general education teachers.

With regard to the literature, a number of studies have shown that students in the United States are performing below expectations academically and that preservice teachers believe they are unprepared to teach students with disabilities in the general education classroom. First,

according to the U.S. Department of Education (2014), in 2013, only 35% of eighth graders in public and private schools in the country performed at or above the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) proficiency standard in mathematics. The department also reported that in the same year, only 36% of eighth graders performed at or above proficient standard in reading. This means, in both cases, close to two-thirds of the students failed to reach proficiency level.

Aside from the NAEP report, two major studies (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2013; Schmidt, Cogan, & Houang, 2011) compared the United States' public school students' academic performance with those of other countries. Comparing the academic performance of the United States with those of other countries is important because in today's global economy, national standards alone are not enough to measure a country's success. To be competitive, a country should match its own students' performance with those of best-performing countries (National Governors Association Center…, 2010; OECD, 2013).

Using paper- and computer-based tests, OECD (2013), through its Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), compared the performance of 15-year-olds in 65 countries/economies and found that the United States scored, on the average, 481 in mathematics, 498 in reading, and 497 in science. Average OECD scores for the three subjects, respectively were 494, 496, and 501. The report also showed that only 9% of United States students were top performers in mathematics, whereas the OECD average was 13%. Overall, this report reveals that the United States performed below average in the three subjects.

Additionally, Schmidt et al. (2011) reviewed the 2010 Teacher Education and Development Study in Mathematics (TEDS-M), a 16-country survey of mathematics preservice

teachers that reported student outcome in relation to the percent of teacher-preparation coursework in the areas of (a) mathematics knowledge, (b) pedagogical knowledge pertaining to the teaching of mathematics, and (c) general pedagogical knowledge pertaining to instructional practices and schooling (Ball, Hill, & Bass, 2005; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2002). The results were that the two highest-achieving countries, in terms of student outcome, had on average a ratio across the three areas of roughly 50%:30%:20%. On the other hand, the estimated ratio for the United States was about 40%:30%:30%. Whereas, the percentage of coursework on mathematics pedagogy was the same, that of mathematics knowledge for the United States was lower than that of the highest-achieving countries. The U.S. future teachers' TEDS scores were midway between countries that did well and those that did not (Schmidt et al., 2011).

The literature has also shown that in spite of the fact that inclusive education has been implemented for some time now, there is evidence to suggest that preservice (and in-service) general education teachers do not believe they are completely prepared for the inclusion of students with identified disabilities (DeSimone & Parmar, 2006; Hamre & Olyser, 2004; Hemmings & Woodcock, 2011; Lancaster & Bain, 2010; Pavri, 2004).

The above studies (like my observations) raise one main question: How adequate is the training preservice teachers currently receive in their teacher preparation programs? Going by national and international standards, the academic performance of students is not encouraging. General education preservice teachers also do not feel fully prepared to teach the diverse students in the general education classroom. Educational stakeholders are concerned and educators, in particular, should be worried because the poor, racial minorities (Jacoby, 2013), and of course individuals with disabilities who are now included in the general education classroom experience the failure of the public school system more than others. Thus, there is the need to explore what

teacher educators do while training preservice teachers; for the training teachers receive impacts how prepared preservice teachers feel to teach all students and the students' academic outcome.

Purpose of the Study

The intent of this concurrent mixed methods study was to explore the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice general education teachers for inclusive classrooms and how those decisions may influence the preparedness of the preservice general education teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities in general education settings. In the study, I had intended to use a survey questionnaire and a focus group discussion to determine how the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms affect how well-prepared preservice teachers feel about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom but, eventually, I used only the survey questionnaire. In addition, the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms was explored using open-ended questions in a semi structured questionnaire with teacher educators at a teacher education program in a higher education institution in the State of Illinois. The reason for combining both quantitative and qualitative data is to better understand this research problem by converging both quantitative and qualitative data.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for a number of reasons. The limited number of studies in the area of inclusive education related decisions teacher educators make while preparing preservice teachers is of major concern to all educational stakeholders in the country, in general, and in the State of Illinois, in particular. As stated earlier, the country is lagging behind other countries academically and preservice teachers feel inadequately prepared to teach students with

disabilities in general education settings. With regard to Illinois, the state is among those that are making little progress in fourth and eighth grade mathematics and reading performance, according to the U.S. Department of Education (2014). A study in the area of the inclusive education related decisions teacher educators make while preparing preservice teachers will be of tremendous benefit to educational policy makers, teacher education programs, teacher educators, preservice teachers, and public school students. Policy makers at the national and teacher education program level, and teacher educators will become aware of the problem and thus seek ways to become familiar with instructional strategies for teaching preservice teachers, seek ways to be familiar with strategies for collaboration and team work that are essential for effective inclusive education, and understand fully the importance of subject content knowledge in inclusive teacher preparation (Berlin &White, 2012; Cooper, Kurtts, Baber, & Vallecorsa, 2008).

The results of the study will also help in designing and improving teacher training programs, in enabling teacher educators to make appropriate decisions within inclusive classrooms and in teaching general education preservice teachers how to teach public school students so that the students' performance can meet national and international standards. Additionally, the results of the study will enable teacher educators to teach student teachers how to teach diverse students in general education classrooms. The bottom line is that, when general education preservice teachers are adequately trained, public school students' academic performance may improve.

In the literature, there are few studies about the inclusive education decisions teacher educators make while preparing preservice general education teachers. The majority of the few studies that are available concern how prepared preservice general education teachers feel about teaching students with disabilities and are how inclusive education teachers are prepared. This

study is mainly an attempt to understand the inclusive education decisions teacher educators make while preparing preservice teachers. In view of the above, my main concern is that lack of adequate training could impact public school students' academic performance and preservice general education teachers' perceptions about teaching students with disabilities.

In his *Social Learning Theory* book, Bandura (1977) argued that individuals acquire new knowledge and behaviors by watching others; not just through their own experiences. A number of studies suggest that teachers usually teach the way they were taught while they were students (e.g., Lortie, 1975; Watanabe & Huntley, 2010; Wilson, Cooney, & Stinson, 2005). Furthermore, Wilson et al. (2005) indicated that preservice teachers receive new ideas that include how they should teach mathematics and what they should teach during training. Consequently, the way preservice teachers are taught will influence how and what they teach in today's ever-expanding inclusive classrooms. My perception is that one way to explore the way preservice teachers are taught is to ask teacher educators about the decisions they make in regard to what they teach and how they teach it. An exploration of this nature may reveal the extent to which teacher educators implement inclusive education while training general education preservice teachers.

Research Questions

The research questions developed for this study include:

1. What components does the teacher education program emphasize while preparing preservice general education teachers for inclusive classroom?
2. In preparing preservice general education teachers for inclusive education, what components (e.g., content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge/methods) do faculty members think should be emphasized more than the other? Why?

3. Do preservice general education teachers believe they are fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom?
4. How do the decisions teacher educators make affect how prepared preservice general education teachers feel about teaching diverse students?

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks of the Study

My main concern, in regard to this study, is that lack of adequate training of preservice teachers in the area of inclusive education could impact their feelings about teaching students with disabilities and as a result impact public school students' academic performance. Social learning theory, made popular by Bandura (1977), postulates that individuals learn social behavior by observing and imitating the actions/behaviors of others. According to the theory, these others are referred to as models. After observing a model for some time a child, for example, may identify himself/herself with the model. This happens when the child notices some quality in the model and decides to possess it. At the initial stages of developing the theory, Bandura adopted Skinner's idea of radical behaviorism; although he added the concept of modeling, which involves coding information, storing information, and developing rule-governed behavior. With time, Bandura distanced himself from the anti-cognitive position of behaviorists and took the position of information processing. Thus in 1986, Bandura changed the name of his theory to *social cognitive theory* to reflect his true position.

It should be noted that researchers have different views about Bandura's theory. First, whereas Akers and his colleague indicated that empirical studies over the years have suggested that the core propositions of social learning theory are valid (Akers, 1998; Akers & Jensen, 2006), other researchers saw things somehow differently. For example, from Gottfredson and

Hirschi (1990) and Sampson's (1999) point of view, the so-called evidence that supports the theory supports other theories as well.

Furthermore, another main criticism against the theory is that it is not a theory of development. As such, the theory ignores the important fact that human behavior changes with age (Coates & Hartup, 1969). Grusec (1992) seemed to acknowledge this when she stated that Bandura's theory was more or less a general theory of human behavior. To her, the above situation arose because Bandura had more interest in clinical matters than he had in child development.

Plausible as the above criticisms may seem, I believe they are closely related and can thus be summed up as follows: Bandura's social learning theory has failed to adequately address child development and as a result it can, at best, be described as a general theory of human behavior. In any case, the contributions of Bandura's social learning theory/social cognitive theory cannot be overemphasized. According to Grusec (1992), many of the essential principles and mechanisms are generally accepted and they have formed part of our belief system regarding human social behavior. From this standpoint, Bandura's theory is appropriate for my study because it is a general theory of human behavior that is generally accepted by the academic world and the participants of my study are preservice general education teachers, and not children.

As stated previously, a number of studies suggest that teachers usually teach the way they were taught while they were students (e.g., Lortie, 1975; Watanabe & Huntley, 2010; Wilson et al., 2005). Lortie, in his seminal work of 1975, interviewed 94 teachers regarding their work and suggests that the confusion of the initial weeks in a job may force teachers to fall back on the training they had while students. Thus teachers end up teaching the way they were taught. Little

doubt he referred to the experience or training teachers receive while students as “apprenticeship of observation” (p. 61). Lortie’s (1975) work was based on Chicago School’s symbolic interactionism, a theoretical legacy spearheaded by Mead (1934). Likewise, Wilson et al. (2005) conducted a study that involved nine secondary school mathematics teachers to determine the best field-experience for preservice teachers and their mentors and found that the preservice teachers, in general, performed well in their more traditional classroom settings and thus had a tendency to teach students in the manner in which they were taught.

My understanding is that the above studies support Bandura's (1977) idea. Additionally, Wilson et al. (2005) indicated that preservice teachers receive new ideas that include how they should teach, for example, mathematics and what they should teach during training. Consequently, the way preservice teachers are taught will influence how they teach in today’s ever expanding inclusion classrooms. Based on Bandura's theory, I have developed the conceptual framework below (see Figure 1.1) to illustrate how the interaction of college inclusive education programs with the decisions faculty members make (while training preservice teachers) might impact the ability of general education preservice teachers to effectively teach K-12 students. The interaction of the number of content knowledge courses (in a specific specialty area) offered by the program in relation to the number of other courses with the emphasis faculty members place on content knowledge in relation to the emphasis they place on other components, for example, could impact how competent preservice teachers are in the core academic subjects and their ability to teach diverse students. The two effects on the training preservice teachers receive, in turn, may affect the academic performance of public school student.

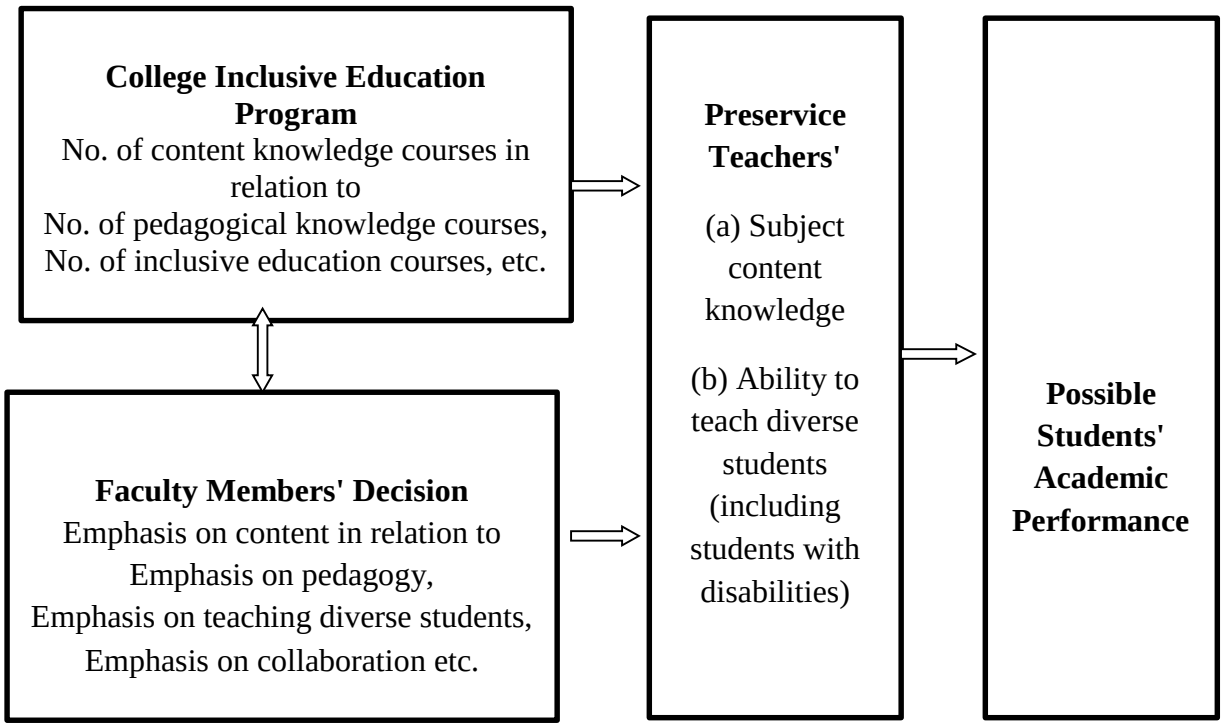

Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework. This figure illustrates how the interaction of college inclusive education program with faculty members' decisions might impact general education preservice teachers' ability to teach all students and eventually students' academic performance.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, there is a limitation because the faculty member's interview protocol was an adaptation of Cooper et al.'s (2008) study— "A Model for Examining Teacher Preparation Curricula for Inclusion—and Harvey et al.'s *Preservice Teacher Preparation for Inclusion Assessment Survey*. Although, for example, an alpha of .83 was obtained for Harvey et al.'s survey, adapting questionnaires, generally, may result in an increase in measurement error or making the questionnaire less valid and reliable. However, I consider this limitation minimal because alphas are calculated for quantitative and not qualitative studies. The interview protocol for faculty members will consist largely of open-ended questions. On the contrary, the questionnaire for the general education preservice teachers were largely adoptions of Jenkins and Ornelles's (2007) questionnaire and Wilczenski's (1992) ATIES. I, however,

modified the questionnaires, especially the Jenkins and Ornelles's (2007) questionnaire. Consequently, there may be some difficulties in how the results are interpreted and this may impact educational practice (Rattray & Jones, 2007). Increase in measurement error may still happen, even though to ensure face or content validity, I made the effort to develop items from a variety of sources. For example, I modified the questionnaires based on information from the related literature, opinions of the participants (general education faculty members, general education preservice teachers), and consultation with experts in the field of preservice teacher training and inclusive education (Bowling, 2002; Priest, McColl, Thomas, & Bond, 1995).

Second, there were two major limitations with the execution of the faculty member interview protocol. Apart from the fact that all general education faculty members did not complete the interview protocol, those who completed it might not be sincere in answering some questions. In other words, they might not have told the truth. This might happen even though I did everything to protect their privacy. For example, pertaining to the question whether content knowledge should be emphasized more than pedagogical knowledge in an inclusive classroom and vice versa, some faculty members might be tempted to answer the question based on what the literature on inclusive education says rather than on what they do in the classroom or what they think.

Last, although the case study approach is appropriate for my study, its findings may not be able to be generalized as those from an experimental design. In other words, a case study allows for investigating programs consisting of multiple variables; but, the findings cannot be used to predict future behavior (Merriam, 2007).

Assumptions of the Study

1. All participants/respondents are honest and thoughtful in their responses.
2. All faculty members have similar experiences teaching preservice teachers.
3. The training of the preservice general education teachers follows the course sequence similar to the ones developed for students in the ELED and ECHD programs.

Definitions of Key Terms

Content knowledge (CK) courses: Courses that focus on the understanding of the major concepts, assumptions, issues, and processes of inquiry in the subject matter content areas that preservice teachers/teachers teach. The courses also focus on how knowledge in a content area is organized and how it relates to other content areas (INTASC, 2001).

Early Childhood (ECHD): According to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction of the large Midwestern University, Early Childhood is one of the specialty areas in the Teacher Education Program. The program "focuses on the education and care of children from birth to eight years old, and also focuses on the family as the primary influence on children."

Elementary Education (ELED): According to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction of the large Midwestern university, Elementary Education is one of the specialty areas in the Teacher Education Program. The program "prepares students for a career teaching grades kindergarten through nine" and also "prepare students to teach in a variety of classroom settings – from self-contained classrooms to departmentalized and team teaching situations." However, the state was in a transition to move to grades one through six.

Faculty members: In this study, faculty members is defined as the teaching staff of the university, that is, professors (assistant professors, associate professors, and/or full professors), instructors, and teaching assistants who are sole instructors of courses.

Inclusive Education (IE): A philosophy that stipulates that students with disabilities have the right to be educated together with their peers without disabilities to the greatest extent possible using the principle of the least restrictive environment (IDEA, 2004).

Inclusive education courses: Special education "coursework in teaching students with disabilities for initial licensure of general education teachers" (Bocala, Morgan, Mundry, & Mello, 2010).

Instructor: In this study, instructor is defined as a non-tenured faculty member in the university.

Juniors: According to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction of the large Midwestern University, juniors are third-year students at the university who are doing their first year in the Teacher Education Program.

Methods courses: In this study, methods courses are defined as pedagogical courses or courses in which preservice teachers are taught how to teach a particular subject or to teach generally.

Preservice (general education) teacher: Student in teacher education program receiving training to become a general education teacher (Cooper et al., 2008).

Professor: In this study, professor is defined as a tenured or tenure-track faculty member in the university who is an assistant professor, associate professor, or full professor.

Seniors on campus: According to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction of the large Midwestern University, seniors who are on campus are fourth-year students at the university who are doing their last semester on campus before doing student teaching.

Seniors who completed student teaching: According to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction of the large Midwestern University, seniors who have completed student teaching are

preservice teachers who have successfully completed their programs, including student teaching, and are ready to go to the field and teach.

Social Science Education (SSCI): According to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction of the large Midwestern University, Social Science Education is one of the specialty areas in the Teacher Education Program. The program focuses on "students obtaining a secondary teaching certificate in social science with a history designation."

Teaching Assistant (TA): In this study, teaching assistant is defined as a graduate student teaching assistant who is a sole instructor of a course(s).

Summary

Bandura (1977), in his *Social Learning Theory* book, argued that individuals acquire new knowledge and behaviors by watching others; not just through their own experiences. Several studies suggest that teachers usually teach the way they were taught while they were students (e.g., Lortie, 1975; Watanabe & Huntley, 2010; Wilson et al., 2005). Additionally, Wilson et al. indicated that preservice teachers receive new ideas that include how they should teach mathematics and what they should teach during training. Thus, the way preservice teachers are taught will influence how they teach in today's ever expanding inclusive classrooms. One way to explore the way preservice teachers are taught is to ask teacher educators about the decisions they make in regard to what they teach and how they teach it. An investigation of this nature may reveal the extent to which teacher educators implement inclusive education while training general education preservice teachers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms and how those decisions may influence the preparedness of preservice teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities, in general education settings.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The issue of the adequacy of how general education teachers are prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, and how that preparation might impact the students' academic outcome is generally addressed sparingly in three main ways in the literature. This includes how inclusive education teachers are prepared; how prepared preservice teachers (and in-service teachers) feel about teaching diverse students, including students with disabilities; and the perceptions of teacher educators while preparing preservice teachers. This chapter discusses the three main ways mentioned above.

General Education Teacher Preparation

A number of studies (e.g., Bocala, Morgan, Mundry, & Mello, 2010; Claflin, Eddins, & Eicher, 2012; Fullerton, Ruben, McBride, & Bert, 2011; Sobel, Iceman-Sands, & Basile, 2007; Wolfberg et al., 2009; Wolsey et al., 2013) addressed the issue of inclusive teacher preparation from different perspectives. For example, Fullerton et al. (2011) and Wolfberg and colleagues (2009) advocated for merged or combined general and special education programs for effective preservice teacher preparation. The merged or combined program involves faculty in general and special education collaborating and developing one program in which all candidates receive licensure in both general and special education. The program allows preservice teachers to benefit from both general and special education content.

Additionally, Claflin and colleagues (2012) and Sobel and colleagues (2007) suggested collaboration among teacher educators was vitally important for successful preservice teacher preparation. The authors' viewpoint is that if collaboration is modeled and taught by faculty

members in colleges, preservice teachers may be able to practice collaboration when teaching diverse students. Bocala et al. (2010) reported that eight out of nine jurisdictions in the Northeast and Islands Region of the United States required some special education coursework in teaching students with disabilities for initial licensure of general education teachers. After examining 10 teacher preparation programs, Wolsey et al. (2013) found that teaching diverse learners in the general education classroom was a major problem in most of the studied programs. Nevertheless, they also found that preservice teachers indicated that their own literacy skills were important for students' meaningful performance. One main conclusion that can be drawn from the above studies is that the types of courses (e.g., inclusive education courses, content knowledge courses) that preservice teachers take and the collaboration with colleagues are of paramount importance in their preparation.

How Prepared Preservice Teachers Feel

A number of studies (e.g., Claflin et al., 2012; Gao & Mager, 2011; Hamre & Oyler; 2004; Hemmings & Woodcock, 2011; Jenkins & Ornelles, 2007; Lancaster & Bain, 2010; Sharma, Ee, & Desai's, 2003) addressed how prepared preservice teachers feel about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom. For example, Claflin and her colleagues (2012) suggested that universal design for learning (principles that give every student equal opportunity to learn) information and skills could increase the comfort level of student teachers when working with students with diverse needs. Hamre and Oyler (2004) found that although some of their participants' perceptions about teaching diverse students in the general education classroom were positive, they lacked the knowledge and skills to effectively teach the students. This observation seems to agree with that of Claflin et al. (2012) who emphasized the importance of universal design for learning skills for preservice teachers. Clearly, Claflin et al.

(2012) suggested that courses on universal design for learning have the potential for improving preservice teachers' confidence in teaching diverse students.

On the other hand, Gao and Mager's (2011) and Hemmings and Woodcock's (2011) studies examined the effects that a program or a course might have on student teachers' perceptions. In Gao and Mager's (2011) study, the participants completed their major coursework and fieldwork at the time of the data collection. But in Hemmings and Woodcock's study (2011), the respondents completed the questionnaires before and after they took an inclusive education course and a related practicum. Gao and Mager (2011) found that whereas participants' perceived levels of efficacy improved significantly, they were negative about having students with behavior problems in the classroom. Hemmings and Woodcock's (2011) results differed from that of Gao and Mayer (2011). They reported that a sizeable number (about 70%) of the student teachers believed they were not adequately prepared to teach students with diverse needs.

In a like manner, Lancaster and Bain (2010) determined whether there were differences in the effects of two types of a 13-week required undergraduate inclusive education course. One of the versions involved a field-based placement and the other one was designed based on the idea of complex adaptive systems, which focuses on the changes in the environment and sustainability. The authors found that although there were no statistically significant differences between the two versions of the course, there were statistically significant improvements in self-efficacy for both versions.

Additionally, Jenkins and Ornelles (2007) conducted a survey that was based on the 10 principles of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) that stipulates the knowledge and skills necessary for general and special education teachers so that they can teach students with disabilities. Results from the study showed that preservice teachers

in the general education program had significantly lower scores in all the variables compared with the scores of preservice teachers in the dual teacher preparation program. These results are noteworthy because whereas the participants in the dual program completed a total of 30 credits hours in special education, those in the general education program completed only three credit hours in special education. The results also point to the fact that the training of the general education preservice teachers in the study was inadequate.

Sharma and colleague's (2003) study is, in a way, unique in that it looked at preservice inclusive education from an international perspective. The researchers surveyed 91 preservice general education teachers from Australia and Singapore to examine their attitudes and concerns about implementing inclusive education in regular schools. Findings from this study revealed that preservice general education teachers from Australia indicated they were more in favor of including students with disabilities into the regular school than their Singaporean counterparts. In addition, the results showed that the preservice teachers from Australia were more willing to include students with social integration problems and students with physical disabilities into regular schools than include students with academic problems and those with behavioral problems. Teachers from Australia's action might be due to classroom safety issues and the time available, generally, for the teaching and learning process. Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham (2005) stated that disruptive behavior resulted in unsafe learning environments and insufficient time for teaching and learning. Robertson (2006) appears to agree with the above when he suggests that some teachers leave their jobs because of challenges they face managing disruptive behavior in the classroom.

Sharma and colleague's (2003) study suggest that although preservice teachers from Australia might be predisposed to teach students with disabilities in regular schools more than

those from Singapore due to the influence of the prevailing inclusive education policies in the country, more needs to be done in terms of policies and training in Australia so that students with academic problems and students with behavioral problems could benefit from inclusive education. From the seven studies above, one can deduce that in addition to the types of courses preservice teachers take, the number of courses they take can influence their efficacy and perceptions in regard to teaching diverse students. This is a positive development in that self-efficacy, for example, can result in effectiveness.

How Prepared General Education Teachers Feel

Aside from addressing how prepared preservice teachers feel about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom, few studies (e.g., DeSimone & Parmar, 2006; Parasuram, 2006; Patkin & Timor, 2010; Pavri, 2004; Wilczenski, 1992, 1995) also addressed the view of general education teachers about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Participants of the studies included elementary, middle, and high school general education teachers. Nonetheless, regardless of the level the general education teachers were teaching, one thing that is clear is more needs to be done in the training of the teachers. For example, DeSimone and Parmar (2006) examined middle school general education mathematics teachers' beliefs and knowledge of students with learning disabilities and inclusive instruction. The teachers in the study believed that the training they received during both preservice and inservice failed to adequately address inclusion teaching.

Pavri (2004) also interviewed 30 general education elementary school teachers regarding the types of preservice and in-service preparation practice they received to assist the social functioning of students with and without disabilities and found that 27 of them stated they needed additional training in the areas of dealing with challenging behaviors and teaching social

skills, for example. Similarly, Patkin and Timor (2010) studied the attitudes of 36 elementary school teachers toward the inclusion of students with learning disabilities in the general education classroom and found that although the teachers' attitudes toward inclusion were positive, their knowledge of learning disabilities, their perceptions of the physical inclusion of students with learning disabilities, their perceptions of their duty toward the curricular inclusion of students with learning disabilities and toward curricular adaptations were limited.

Furthermore, in developing the Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES), Wilczenski (1992, 1995) surveyed both in-service and preservice teachers. Her studies involved 301 elementary and secondary teachers and 144 undergraduate elementary education majors and she found that the respondents agreed with statements describing easier accommodations (social integration, physical disabilities) than they did with harder ones (academic problems, behavioral problems). Given that inclusive education targets improving the academic performance of students with disabilities in the general education classroom, these results suggest that more needs to be done to improve teachers and preservice teachers' confidence in teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

Last, Parasuram (2006) investigated general educators' attitude toward disabilities and inclusion of students with disabilities into regular schools in Mumbai, India and found that only prior contact with a person with a disability affected teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education. Out of a total number of 300 participants, 138 (46%) indicated that they knew an individual with a disability. Results of a one-way ANOVA was significant in the ATIES mean scores ($F(1, 298) = 7.71$, $p < .05$) indicating that the participants who were familiar with an individual with a disability had significantly more positive attitudes toward people with disabilities ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .63$) and toward inclusive education ($M = 2.84$, $SD = .63$) than those

who were not familiar with an individual with a disability. This result is unique because, unlike the results of most of the studies above, it did not mention the key components of inclusive education (e.g., content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, collaboration) as the variables that affected the teachers' attitude toward inclusive education.

The studies about in-service general education teachers, like the ones on the preservice general education teachers, draw our attention to the fact that the training received by general education (elementary, middle, or high school) teachers regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom is lacking in some areas and that concrete steps need to be taken to make it effective.

Perceptions of Teacher Educators

The literature in regard to the decisions teacher educators make while preparing preservice teachers is very limited. My search found only two related articles (Cooper et al., 2008; Harvey et al., 2010) on the perceptions of teacher educators while preparing preservice teachers. The participants of both studies were faculty members from special and general education fields. But whereas Cooper and colleagues' (2008) study involved only one university, Harvey and colleagues' (2010) study involved the entire United States. Cooper and her colleagues (2008) found that about 37% of the participants described their knowledge and skill base for preparing preservice teachers to work with students with disabilities in general education settings as "somewhat or extremely limited." They also, however, found that the three programs–Birth-Kindergarten, Elementary Education, and Secondary Education–were addressing the key inclusion competencies more in course content than in course evaluation activities. In Harvey and his colleagues' (2010) study, teacher educators across the country strongly stated that preservice teachers in their institutions take a special education introductory

course. Additionally, they indicated that their institutions offered field experiences to their student teachers so that they could collaborate across disciplines and majors.

The results from the two studies suggest that faculty members may not be very conversant with the principles of inclusive education. The results also suggest the importance of content knowledge courses, inclusive education courses, and collaboration in the preparation of general education teachers.

Summary

As stated earlier, the purpose of inclusive education is to change curriculum and instruction and prepare preservice teachers to teach in inclusive classrooms (Stayton & McCollum, 2002). Inclusive education also emphasizes content knowledge without necessarily downplaying the importance of pedagogy in the training of preservice teachers.

What is clear from the above studies is that the central phenomenon–the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms–has not been addressed directly in the literature. Thus, this study will use open-ended questions and semi-structured open-ended questions to explore the phenomenon. Also, how preservice teachers feel about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom has not been widely studied in the USA. Out of the seven studies I found only two (Gao & Mager, 2011; Jenkins & Ornelles, 2007) addressed the issue in the United States. Thus, this study is a contribution to narrow the gap in the literature in the United States. It can also be noticed that although a number of studies, especially the ones conducted in Australia, have focused on how preservice teachers feel prepared to teach students with disabilities in the general education classroom and collaboration among preservice teachers, only one study (Fullerton et al., 2011) specifically addressed subject content knowledge, an important component of inclusive education.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the participants, methods for data collection, techniques for data analysis, research methods and design, how the methods and design derive from the research questions, and data gathering procedures. The methods for the data collection section comprises interview protocol for faculty members, questionnaire for preservice general education teachers, and documents analyzed.

Participants

The population of interest in this study consists of two separate groups: university faculty members involved in teaching general education preservice teachers and general education preservice teachers. Participants in this study were faculty members involved in teaching general education preservice teachers, and third- and fourth-year (juniors and seniors) general education preservice teachers in the Teacher Education Program (TEP), Department of Curriculum and Instruction of a large Midwestern, research institution of higher education. The juniors and seniors are included in the study because the TEP normally admits students into the program at the beginning of their junior year.

A total of 14 (87.5%) faculty members participated in this study. They included six professors (assistant professors, associate professors, and/or full professors), four instructors, and four teaching assistants (TA). At the time of the data collection, there were 16 faculty members involved the teaching of preservice teachers of the TEP.

A total of 62 preservice teachers participated in this study. They consisted of 14 seniors who completed students teaching; 33 seniors on campus, who did not do student teaching but will do it in the future (seniors who were on campus); and 14 juniors. The total of 62 respondents

comprised preservice teachers in Elementary Education program (ELED); Early Childhood Education program (ECHD); Social Science Education program (SSCI); and 10 preservice teachers in Music, Art, and Physical Education programs. Several reasons accounted for the inclusion of the preservice teachers in Music, Art, and Physical Education programs in the study.

Table 3.1

Demographic information of participants (faculty members)

Demographic	Professor	Instructor	TA	Total
Participant sex	No.	No.	No.	
Male	4	0	0	4
Female	2	4	4	10
Total	6	4	4	**14**
Participant age				
30-40	1	0	4	5
41-50	3	1	0	4
51-60	1	1	0	2
61+	1	2	0	3
Total	6	4	4	**14**
Participant ethnicity				
Caucasian	3	4	3	10
Asian	3	0	0	3
Black	0	0	1	1
Total	6	4	4	**14**
Participant year at university level				
3-5	1	0	2	3
6-10	2	2	2	6
11-20	2	1	0	3
21+	1	1	0	2
Total	6	4	4	**14**
Participant specialty area				
Early Childhood	1	2	2	5
Elementary	5*	2	1	8
Social Science	1*	0	1	2
Total	7	4	4	**15**

Note. TA = Teaching Assistant. *One professor has two specialty areas, ECHD and SSCI.

First, the unit of analysis is the level the preservice teachers were in the programs (i.e., seniors who completed student teaching, seniors on campus, and juniors), and not the programs of the preservice teachers. Second, preservice teachers in the Music, Art, and Physical Education, take some key courses together with students in the ELED, ECHD, and SSCI programs. Third, the preservice teachers in the Music, Art, and Physical Education programs teach elementary and early childhood students just as preservice teachers in ELED, ECHD, and SSCI preservice teachers do. At the time of collecting data, the TEP had a total of 110 preservice teachers who took their class on the campus of a large Midwestern university. They comprised 76 preservice teachers in ELED; 15 preservice teachers in ECHD; 19 preservice teachers in SSCI. Thus, 52 (47.27%) out of the 110 preservice teachers from ELED, ECHD, and SSCI responded to the questionnaire. Added to the 52, were the 10 preservice teachers in Music, Art, and Physical Education.

Table 3.2

Demographic information of participants (preservice general education teachers)

	Sr. with ST	Sr. on Campus	Jr.	Total
Participant sex				
Male	5	11	2	18
Female	9	22	13	44
Total	14	33	15	**62**
Participant age				
20-25	12	27	14	53
26-30	2	3	0	5
31-35	0	1	0	1
36-40	0	2	1	3
Total	14	33	15	**62**
Participant ethnicity				
Caucasian	12	30	15	57
Hispanic	2	0	0	2
Black	0	3	0	3
Total	14	33	15	**62**

Table 3.2 (Continued)

Major/Specialty area				
Early Childhood	1	4	2	7
Elementary	9	20	11	40
Social Science	0	2	1	3
Elementary and Social Science	0	2	0	2
Music	0	2	1	3
Art	3	0	0	3
Physical Education	1	3	0	4
Total	14	33	15	**62**

Note. Sr. with ST = seniors who completed student teaching; Sr. on Campus = seniors who were on campus; Jr. = juniors.

For the faculty member and the preservice teacher data, convenience sampling method was used. Thus, the samples are not representative of the entire populations and because of this the results pertaining to the preservice general education teacher data cannot be generalized. The participants were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary. Table 3.1 shows the demographic information of faculty members and Table 3.2 shows the demographic information of the preservice teachers.

Methods for Data Collection

This study employed two main data collection instruments: the interview protocol for the faculty members and the questionnaire for the preservice general education teachers. In addition, I analyzed official documents related to the TEP for detailed information regarding course requirements. I had intended to use a focus group discussion in addition to a survey questionnaire to determine how well-prepared preservice teachers feel about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

However, the focus group discussion did not take place due to scheduling and logistic problems. The main reason some of the juniors and on campus seniors gave was that they had a lot of assignments to do. As a result, finding a convenient time period for every willing

participant was not feasible. The situation was completely different for seniors in student teaching. None responded to my invitations to participate in the discussions. I believe they were preoccupied with their student teaching assignments and their capstone projects. I discuss the two instruments—interview protocol and survey questionnaire—below and provide information about the analyzed documents.

Interview Protocol for Faculty Members

The interview protocol for the faculty members (see Appendix A) was a two-part interview protocol. The first part of the protocol elicited background information from the faculty members in six areas: gender, age, ethnicity, title, number of years teaching at the university level, and specialty area. I composed this part of the protocol. The second part of the interview protocol was based on the studies of Cooper et al. (2008) and Harvey et al. (2010), and the principles of inclusive education. This part was based on Cooper et al.'s (2008) study "A Model for Examining Teacher Preparation Curricula for Inclusion" and Harvey et al.'s *Preservice Teacher Preparation for Inclusion Assessment Survey.* Cooper and colleagues' (2008) study involved the process for making an inclusive education survey for teacher education faculty with an emphasis on the important competencies (developed by an expert review panel) for all teachers to develop effective teaching skills that will enable them to work with children with special needs in inclusive learning environments. Five inclusion competency areas identified by Cooper et al. (2008) included

(a) Knowledge of children with disabilities;

(b) Effective instructional strategies to work with children with disabilities within and across disciplines;

(c) Appropriate classroom management skills and behavioral interventions;

(d) Methods of formal and informal assessment; and

(e) Effective communication and collaboration skills with families and other professionals. p. 159

In addition, the questionnaire asked faculty members to do self-assessments regarding their knowledge and skill level to prepare professional teachers to work with students with disabilities in general education settings and how their knowledge and skill level reflect current research-based practices for effectively teaching students with disabilities in general education settings.

Harvey et al. (2010) examined the perceptions of faculty members in relation to training efforts used to prepare preservice teachers for inclusion. Participants for the study included a national sample of faculty members involved in the teaching of special education, elementary and secondary education, and curriculum and instruction teachers. Harvey and colleagues' (2010) open ended questions focused on program elements such as collaboration, coursework, and fieldwork. Faculty members were also asked about their perceived effectiveness of inclusion and collaboration. Thus my interview protocol addressed the competencies and the elements of inclusive education addressed in Cooper et al. (2008) and Harvey et al. (2010) questionnaires. The above are the only related articles my search found. The studies are about the perceptions of faculty members with regard to preparing preservice teachers and the participants of both consisted of faculty members involved in the preparation of preservice teachers.

Because the protocol is an adaptation based on other studies, there is the need to report the dependability of the study. Dependability in qualitative research is similar to reliability in quantitative research. In qualitative research, reliability is the degree to which the research results are consistent, dependable, and stable. Dependability emphasizes the extent to which the results found are consistent with the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicated that dependability is achieved by allowing external audits, which involves having an external researcher examine both the process and outcome of a study to determine whether the findings, interpretations, and conclusions are supported by the data. To achieve dependability, I let an expert review panel of qualitative researchers review the interview protocol for faculty members.

Furthermore, to establish trustworthiness (the worth of a study), triangulation, which generally refers to comparing different kinds of data and different kinds of methods in a study, is used. Triangulation is based on the understanding that only multiple methods of data collection and analysis can adequately answer a research question. Four basic types of triangulation identified in the literature are (a) data triangulation, which involves the use of a variety of data sources in a study; (b) investigator triangulation, the use of multiple researchers, evaluators, and peer debriefers; (c) theory triangulation, the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data; and (d) methodological triangulation, the use of multiple methods to study a single problem or program (Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach, & Richardson, 2005; Denzin, 1978). To establish triangulation, I analyzed documents pertaining to the college's inclusive education program (TEP) for, as illustrated by the conceptual framework (see Figure 1.1), the interaction of college inclusive education program with faculty members' decisions impact preservice teachers' ability to teach all students and this might eventually lead to how students performance academically.

Questionnaire for Preservice General Education Teachers

The questionnaire for the preservice general education teachers (see Appendix B) consisted of three parts. The first part asked for background information from the respondents in relation to gender; age; ethnicity; number of years' teaching experience; previous contact with a

person with a disability; how prepared they feel teaching diverse students; and number of inclusive education courses, content knowledge courses, and pedagogical knowledge courses taken. I composed this part of the questionnaire based on the available literature on how preservice general education teachers feel prepared to teach diverse students and on the principles of inclusive education.

The second part of the questionnaire is based on Jenkins and Ornelles's (2007) study. Up to now, Jenkins and Ornelles's (2007) instrument is the only one that has been used to assess general education teachers' perceptions on their competence to teach students with disabilities based on the INTASC principles. The instrument is unique in that the INTASC (2001) principles incorporate fully the ideas of inclusive education. The principles are:

1. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.
2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of each learner.
3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

6. The teacher uses knowledge of affective, verbal, nonverbal, and media communication technologies to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. The teacher plans instruction based on knowledge of subject matter, students, the community and curriculum goals.
8. The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner.
9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, families, and agencies in the larger community to support students learning and well-being. (pp. 10-37)

The respondents of the Jenkins and Ornelles's (2007) study included 81 preservice teachers in their final year. Forty-three of the students were in the elementary general education program and the remaining 38 were in the dual elementary and special education program. The Jenkins and Ornelles (2007) survey items were based on 48 competencies for both general and special education teachers across the 10 INTASC principles. The first author (who developed the survey) rephrased the competencies and made statements that began, for example, with ' "I can, I understand, I know" ' (p. 8). Although the reworded items were relatively shorter than the complete competency statements, the first author made it a point to maintain the content of the items. For example, competency number 5.05 under principle number 5, according to INTASC (2001) states, in part, that

All teachers participate in the design and implementation of individual behavioral support

> plans and are proactive in responding to the needs of individual students with disabilities within the learning community. They tailor classroom management and grouping to individual needs using constructive behavior management strategies, a variety of grouping options, and positive behavioral support strategies to create a learning context in which students with disabilities can attend to learning and respond in appropriate ways. (p. 25)

And the corresponding item is "I can participate in the design and implementation of Individual behavioral plans, and can use constructive behavior management strategies and positive behavioral support strategies" (Jenkins & Ornelles, 2007, p. 9). The authors reported Cronbach's alpha for each of the 10 principles. The alpha coefficients for each of the principles showed an acceptable level of consistency ranging from .68-.88.

Using the above ideas of Jenkins and Ornelles (2007), I reworded the competencies for both general and special education teachers across the 10 INTASC principles. The competencies, as listed by INTASC (2001), are 49 in number. Thus the total number of items in the questionnaire was 49, as against the 48 indicated by Jenkins and her colleague (2007). The 49 items were on a 7-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932) ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). To ensure face or content validity, an expert review panel reviewed the questionnaire.

The third part of the questionnaire is entitled Attitudes toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES; Wilczenski, 1992). The ATIES (1992) comprises only 16 items on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). As such, the definition of inclusive education, according to this scale, seems concise. However, I used the scale to examine specifically how preservice general education teachers feel about teaching students with

disabilities in the general education classroom. The total score of the scale ranges from 16 to 96. The higher the total score, the more favorable attitude or feeling toward inclusive education. In addition, the scale is divided into four subscales namely, attitudes toward students requiring social, physical, academic, or behavioral accommodations in the classroom (Wilczenski, 1992, 1995). Because the subscales consist of four items each, the total score for each subscale ranges from 4 to 16. A satisfactory internal consistency (.7 or higher) was recorded for the scale and the Rasch analysis of the ATIES combined all 16 items into one set to demonstrate that the scale was adequate to measure attitudes toward inclusive education (Wilczenski, 1995).

My decision to use the scale was based on the fact that it has a history of demonstrated adequate reliability and validity both nationally and internationally (e.g. Parasuram, 2006; Sharma et al., 2003; Wilczenski, 1995). With permission from the author (see Appendix C), I, however, made a minor adaptation to the ATIES. In its current form, the scale is a 6-point scale with no well-defined mid-point. To create a mid-point and to allow for a less biased measurement, I added a *neutral* option. This resulted in the total score of the scale to range from 16 to 112.

Document Analysis

I analyzed documents in relation to the sequence of courses taken by students in the TEP and the curriculum guides of the programs. The documents included (a) course sequence for the elementary education program (see Appendix D), (b) course sequence for the early childhood program (see Appendix E), (c) curriculum guide for the elementary education program, (d) curriculum guide for the early childhood program, and (e) curriculum guide for social science program. The course sequence documents state the order in which freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors take their required courses. The course sequence documents also indicate the

number of credit hours the students take each semester and the total credit hours. The curriculum guides are quite different from the course sequence documents. The curriculum guides list courses, but not in sequence in which students take them. In addition, whereas the curriculum guides list course options students can take, the course sequence documents do not.

Techniques for Data Analysis

The interview protocol for faculty members included both open-ended and semi-structured open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are appropriate for they allow for individual responses and are seen as an effective way of studying opinions, beliefs, and attitudes (de Vaus, 2002; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). According to Drever (1995), semi-structured interviews are appropriate for educational research and case studies. Semi-structured interviews also allow the researcher to deeply explore issues and experiences. In addition, they allow the participants freedom and at the same time enable the researcher to have control over the data collecting process.

The two related articles (Cooper et al., 2008; Harvey et al., 2010) on the perceptions of faculty members while preparing preservice teachers used both qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyze the data. In Cooper et al.'s (2008) study, quantitative data comprised a Likert scale for responses. As for the qualitative data, the authors used content analysis technique to analyze the data. They read and reread responses to the open-ended questions to look for patterns or themes across the data set. Harvey et al. (2010) analyzed data using Kruskal-Wallis tests (similar to one-way ANOVA) to explore differences for specific questions by program areas for the quantitative data. For the open-ended questions, frequencies and percentages of central tendencies were used to report results. From the two studies, it is clear that the authors employed qualitative content analysis for the qualitative sections of their studies. For my study, I

analyzed content to define categories from the responses to the qualitative section of the interview protocol for faculty members. I calculated frequencies on the main categories and, where necessary, I calculated percentages of the frequencies.

According to Maxwell (1996), analytic options in qualitative research fall into three main groups: memos, categorizing strategies (e.g., coding and thematic analysis), and conceptualizing strategies (e.g., narrative analysis, individual case studies, and ethnographic microanalysis). The goal of coding is to break down (Strauss, 1987) the data and reorganize it into categories that help in the comparison of the data within and between these categories. Coding also helps in the development of theoretical concepts. Another form of categorizing analysis, Maxwell (1996) further stated, involves sorting the data into broader themes and issues.

Going by Maxwell's (1996) understanding, qualitative content analysis, also known as ethnographic content analysis (Altheide, 1996), falls under categorizing strategies. Qualitative content analysis facilitates contextual meaning in text by developing emergent themes derived from textual data, which might be in verbal, print, or electronic form and might have been obtained from narrative responses, open-ended survey questions, interviews, focus groups, observations, or print media such as articles, books, or manuals (Bryman, 2001; Kondracki &Wellman, 2002). According to Stemler (2001), content analysis makes it relatively easy for the researcher to sieve large volumes of data in a systematic manner.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) stated that qualitative content analysis consists of three distinct approaches. They are conventional, directed, and summative. The main differences among the three approaches focus on how initial codes are developed. In a conventional content analysis, categories are derived when data is being analyzed. Implementing this approach enables the researcher to gain a richer understanding of a phenomenon. With a directed content analysis,

the researcher uses existing theory or previous research to develop the initial coding scheme before beginning to analyze the data (Kyngas &Vanhanen, 1999). The directed approach allows for additional codes to be developed, and the initial coding scheme revised and refined while analysis is going on. Hence, researchers using the directed approach have the opportunity to extend or refine existing theory. On the contrary, the summative approach is basically different from the two above. With the approach, the text is often approached as single words or in relation to particular content instead of analyzing the data as a whole. Then, patterns are analyzed and this leads to an interpretation of the contextual meaning of specific terms or content (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Because I used existing theory or previous research to develop the initial coding scheme prior to beginning to analyze the data, the directed content analysis approach was used in analyzing the data. Another important reason why the directed content analysis is appropriate for this study is that semi-structured open-ended questions to collect unanticipated data were used (Bitsch, 2005; Patton, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

As stated earlier, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) indicated the key strength of a directed approach is that existing theory can be supported and extended. Thus, the results of the current study will support and extend the existing theories relating to the decisions teacher educators make while training general education preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms. In addition, as research in an area grows, a directed approach makes it clear that researchers are not likely to be working from the naive viewpoint that is often seen as the symbol of naturalistic designs.

Aside from the strengths, from Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) point of view, employing existing theory can result in researchers approaching the data with an informed but strong bias. The risk here is that the researcher might be more likely to find evidence that is supportive rather

than non-supportive of an existing theory. Moreover, Hsieh and her colleague (2005) posited that placing more than necessary emphasis on a theory can blind the researcher to contextual aspects of the phenomenon. For example, in this study, overemphasizing the few theories generated from previous studies might cloud my ability to recognize contextual aspects of the phenomenon. These limitations are related to neutrality or confirmability of trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To achieve neutral or unbiased results, Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicated that dependability is achieved by allowing external audits, which involves having an external researcher examine both the process and outcome of a study to determine whether or not the findings, interpretations, and conclusions are supported by the data. Consequently, I used external researchers.

In addition, according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), some participants might get cues to answer in a certain way or agree with the questions to please researchers. For example, in this study, some participants might have agreed with the suggested theories at the initial coding stage. The degree or level of truth of participant responses, little doubt, improves the credibility of the study and one way to achieve this is for a researcher to develop trust and build rapport between him/herself and the participants (Cottrell & McKenzie, 2011). I assured the faculty members that their sincerity in completing the questionnaire is of vital importance to the success of the study.

With his development of the Likert scale, Likert (1932) is largely credited with the notion of using quantitative methods to measure personal beliefs, attitudes, and feelings. Because analyzing Likert data continues to be popular in the area of research, it is important to differentiate between Likert-type items and Likert scale data (Clason & Dormody, 1994). According to these authors, Likert-type items are single questions, which are not closely related, and the researcher has no intention of combining them into a composite scale. In contrast, a

Likert scale is a combination of four or more Likert-type questions or items that the researcher uses to measure quantitatively personal beliefs, attitudes, or feelings. Likert scale is the original method developed by Likert in 1932.

According to Boone, Jr. and Boone (2012), the nature of Likert-type items qualifies them for analyzing using an ordinal measurement scale, and descriptive statistics requires that for an ordinal scale, mode or median be computed for central tendency and frequencies for variability. Chi-square, Kendall Tau B, and Kendall Tau C are other types of statistics normally used with ordinal measurement scale. With regard to the Likert scale, analysis is at the interval measurement scale. This is so mainly because the means/sums of the items (combined) in the Likert scales are calculated and analyzed. Thus, in accordance with analyzing interval data, means are calculated for central tendency and standard deviations are computed for variability. Other statistics suitable for interval scale are Pearson's *r*, *t* test, ANOVA, and regression.

The use of Likert scales have advantages and disadvantages. Because Likert scales allow for a degree of opinion or no opinion at all, one of the main advantages of Likert scale is that respondents cannot answer using yes/no. This allows for collection of quantitative data, which can be easily analyzed. On the other hand, the validity of Likert scale data, like of all survey data, is called into question because of social desirability. Social desirability bias occurs when respondents answer questions in a way that may put them in a favorable position. For example, in this study, respondents might indicate high scores in the variables so that they could be seen as good preservice teachers. Paulhus (1984) found that the absence of identifying information on questionnaires reduces social desirability bias. The questionnaires do not contain identifying information.

The preservice general education teacher questionnaire for my study was analyzed as Likert scale data, for the two sub-questionnaires are each divided into subscales. The Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Competencies Questionnaire is divided into 10 composite parts in accordance with the 10 INTASC principles and the Attitude Toward Inclusive Education Scale is divided into four subscales namely, attitudes toward students requiring social, physical, academic, or behavioral accommodations in the classroom (Wilczenski, 1992, 1995).

Two of the studies related to this questionnaire (Jenkins & Ornelles 2007; Sharma et al., 2003) analyzed data in similar fashion. Jenkins and Ornelles (2007) ran a number of descriptive statistics (e.g., means and standard deviations) to show differences between the preservice teachers in the general education program and the preservice teachers in the dual teacher preparation program. Using SPSS Base 9.0 system for Windows, the authors examined the two groups based on p values and effect sizes. To compare Australian and Singaporean teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education, Sharma et al. (2003) computed independent sample t tests. Whereas Jenkins and Ornelles (2007) used their instrument, which was based on the INTASC principles, Sharma et al. (2003) used Wilczenski's (1992) ATIES.

On the contrary, Wilczenski (1995) conducted a study to scale the ATIES and did a Rasch analysis of the ATIES items to analyze the rating scale data. The use of Rasch analysis is appropriate for Wilczenski's (1995) study because the analysis is useful in the development of tests and questionnaires. Similarly, the calculating of the means and standard deviations, and the *t* test analysis are appropriate for Jenkins and Ornelles (2007) and Sharma et al. (2003) because the studies involved comparing of two groups. Likewise, for this study, I computed the means and standard deviations for the 10 composite parts of the INTASC instrument and the four sub-

scales of the ATIES to determine the differences in how prepared the senior who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and juniors feel to teach diverse students.

Research Methods and Design: Concurrent Embedded Mixed Method

The concurrent embedded mixed method (MM) is an appropriate approach for this research. According to Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007), the notion of using mixed methods (MM) in doing research in the social and behavioral or human sciences emerged not long ago as a result of researchers believing that combining qualitative and quantitative methods is useful in addressing their research questions. In any case, the use of MM is not new in the studies of anthropologists and sociologists. For more than the first half of the 20th century, elements of MM were seen in the works of cultural anthropologists and sociologists (e.g., Gans, 1963; Hollingshead, 1949; Jahoda, Lazarsfeld, & Zeisel, 1931/2003; Lynd & Lynd, 1929/1959).

The idea of MM continued to develop when Campbell and Fiske (1959) explained clearly how to use a number of research methods for the purpose of validation. Then, Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, and Sechrest (1966) built upon Campbell and Fiske's explanation by coining the term *triangulation* to mean between- or across-method triangulation. However, it should be noted that it was Denzin (1978) who, in detailing the four main types of triangulation (data, investigator, theory, methodological), explained the difference between *within-methods* triangulation and *between-methods* triangulation. According to Denzin, whereas within-methods triangulation is the use of a number of either qualitative or quantitative methods in one study, between-methods triangulation is the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in one study.

Denzin (1978), little doubt a promoter of MM, further stated that by using between-methods triangulation, "the bias inherent in any particular data source, investigators, and particularly method will be canceled out when used in conjunction with other data sources,

investigators, and methods" (p. 14). In support of Denzin's position, Jick (1979) stated a number of benefits of triangulation. They included (a) making investigators more confident with their results; (b) inspiring investigators to come up with creative ways to collect data; (c) making investigators to collect thicker and richer data; (d) allowing investigators to integrate or synthesize theories; (e) allowing researchers to discover inconsistencies; and (f) serving as a critical test for competing theories, due to its thorough nature.

Currently, in the world of research, the argument is about developing distinct features of MM research designs. For instance, whereas Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006) proposed four families of MM designs (sequential, concurrent, conversion, and fully integrated), Creswell (2009) introduced two main designs – sequential and concurrent designs. Creswell's sequential design consists of the sequential explanatory, sequential exploratory, and sequential transformative designs. On the other hand, his concurrent design consists of concurrent triangulation, concurrent embedded, and concurrent transformative designs.

According to Johnson et al. (2007), MM as one of the three major "research paradigms" (quantitative research, qualitative research, and mixed methods research) has been referred to differently over the years. Two of the early terms associated with mixed methods are triangulation (Webb et al., 1966) and multiple operationalism (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). More recent terms include multi-method research (Hunter & Brewer, 2003), integrative research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), triangulated studies (Sandelowski, 2003), and synthesis (Johnson et al., 2007). Currently, the common term used is MM (Johnson et al. (2007).

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) defined MM research as "the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study or set of related studies" (p. 17). Johnson

and Onwuegbuzie's concise and yet comprehensive definition somehow matches the definition given by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011). From their point of view, in MM research, researchers combine qualitative and quantitative forms so that the overall strength of the study is greater than just a qualitative or a quantitative research design. They further stated that the process involves philosophical approaches, and the mixing of qualitative and quantitative approaches in a study. Johnson et al. (2007) emphasized this broad definition of MM when they stated that:

> We believe that a broad interpretation and use of the word *methods* (in mixed methods) allows inclusion of issues and strategies surrounding methods of data collection (e.g., questionnaires, interviews, observations), methods of research (e.g., experiments, ethnography), and related philosophical issues (e.g., ontology, epistemology, axiology). p. 118

In general, investigators use a MM design for the following reasons: (a) to facilitate better understanding by mixing both qualitative and quantitative research; (b) to first explore variables, theories, hypotheses not known qualitatively then develop an instrument; (c) to do a qualitative study after a quantitative study to obtain more detailed information; and (d) to obtain various perspectives (e.g., biased and unbiased, subjective and objective) from a study (Creswell, 2009, 2012).

Since the 1980s, MM has been applied in diverse disciplines of research. They include evaluation (Greene, 2006; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989), nursing (Morse, 1991; Morse & Neihaus, 2009; Sandelowski, 2000), public health education (Steckler, McLeroy, Goodman, Bird, & McCormick, 1992), health research (Morgan, 1998), educational research (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Teddlie & Tashakkori,

2009), educational policy (Creswell, 1999), primary medical care (Creswell, Fetters, & Ivankova, 2004), and social and behavioral research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

Tashakkori and Teddlie's (2003) *Handbook of Mixed Methods in the Social & Behavioral Sciences* is recognized as the first comprehensive overview of MM. Nevertheless, the situation has changed recently. Currently, journals like *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, Quality and Quantity, and Field Methods,* focus mainly on MM. In addition, there are books (e.g., Bryman, 2006; Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2012; Creswell, 2014) on MM research.

Applying MM in research is not without challenges. Creswell (2009) indicated that some of the main challenges a researcher may encounter are making plans to collect large amounts of data, putting into consideration the length of time required to analyze the text and numeric data, and the need for the researcher to be conversant with qualitative and quantitative forms of research. My doctoral student training and the required research courses I have taken at the college have prepared me to do a MM research.

How the Methods and Design Derive from the Research Questions

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) postulated that because using MM involves doing a quantitative mini-study and a qualitative mini-study in one study, one of the main decisions the researchers have to make is whether they want to conduct the segments concurrently or sequentially. According to Creswell (2009), this critical decision informs the six types of MM designs. The main difference between the sequential and concurrent types of designs is that whereas in the concurrent types quantitative and qualitative data are collected at the same time, in the sequential designs, qualitative and quantitative data can be collected first or last (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The three types of concurrent designs are concurrent triangulation (comparing qualitative and quantitative data to ascertain if there is convergence, differences, or some combination), concurrent transformative (using a theoretical perspective to advance the needs of marginalized populations), and concurrent embedded (allowing either the quantitative or qualitative data to provide a secondary role in the study). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) further listed some examples of concurrent embedded design variants. They include the embedded-experiment variant, embedded-correlational variant (Harrison, 2005 as cited in Creswell & Plano Clark), embedded instrument development and validation variant (Plano Clark & Galt, 2009), mixed methods case studies variant (Luck, Jackson, & Usher, 2006) and mixed methods narrative research variant (Elliott, 2005). The common thing about the above examples is that, qualitative and quantitative data are embedded in the specific type of study. This study explores a central phenomenon and a supporting one at a large Midwestern research institution of higher education. And the qualitative and quantitative data was collected at the same time. Thus, the concurrent embedded MM case study variant is appropriate. In other words, I collected and analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently to examine a case, a large Midwestern research institution of higher education. With the concurrent embedded design, primary and secondary data sets are collected at the same time.

Implementing the embedded MM designs has some benefits. The embedded MM designs can be used when the researcher does not have enough time or resources for extensive quantitative and qualitative data collection because one data type plays a secondary role to the other. For this dissertation, I received neither a grant nor a scholarship and I have a time limit within which I should finish it; thus the embedded MM design is appropriate. Additionally, because different research questions are asked, the two types of results can be published

separately. However, the embedded MM design has some challenges. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) stated some of the challenges as follows:

- As with other MM designs, the researcher needs to be conversant with the quantitative or qualitative design used aside from being conversant with mixed methods research
- The researcher must clearly state the reasons behind making one purpose the primary one and the other the secondary one for the study
- The researcher should bear in mind that it can be difficult to integrate the results when the qualitative and quantitative methods are used to answer different research questions
- In an experimental study, the researcher needs to indicate at what point to collect the qualitative data with regard to the intervention
- The researcher should also note that collecting qualitative data during intervention in experimental study, may introduce potential treatment bias that may affect the outcomes of the experiment

Data Gathering Procedures

I collected data from three main sources for this dissertation: (a) general education preservice teachers, (b) faculty members, and (c) documents related to the TEP. Before starting the data gathering process, I requested permission from the Institutional Review Board at Southern Illinois University. After receiving written approval, I approached the instructors of the preservice teachers to ask permission to distribute copies of the preservice general education teacher questionnaire to the preservice teachers in their classrooms. While in the classrooms, I gave the preservice teachers the cover letter (see Appendix F) to read. After that, I reiterated that

completion and return of the questionnaire indicate voluntary consent to participate in the study. Aside from the fact that no identifiable information is available on the questionnaire, I still informed the participants that privacy and confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study. I distributed copies of the questionnaire to the seniors who completed student teaching during their final on-campus meeting with officials of the program.

I also gave the faculty members the interview protocol, the consent form (see Appendix G), and the cover letter (see Appendix H) in their offices. I asked them to read the cover letter and the consent form and to then sign the consent form using a pseudonym. After that, I asked them if they wanted to be interviewed (using the interview protocol as a guide) or if they wanted to complete the interview protocol. With the exception of one faculty member, all faculty members decided to complete the interview protocol at their convenience. As with the preservice general education teachers, I assured the faculty members of their anonymity and confidentiality. In order not to identify the faculty members in the study, I developed a code list for them. The faculty members are composed of professors (assistant professors, associate professors, and/or full professors), instructors, and teaching assistants who are sole instructors of courses. Thus, I assigned PFR-A, PFR-B, PFR-C, PFR-D, PFR-E, PFR-F to the six professors; ITR-A, ITR-B, ITR-C, ITR-D to the four instructors; and TAT-A, TAT-B, TAT-C, TAT-D to the four teaching assistants.

Additionally, I collected data from some official documents that are available to the public for detailed information regarding course requirements. The documents relate to the sequence of courses the preservice teachers take and the curriculum guides of the three main programs (ELED, ECHD, and SSCI). I consulted the directors of the programs for clarification regarding the documents during the data gathering process.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS: COMPONENTS TEP AND FACULTY MEMBERS EMPHASIZE

This chapter presents the results of Research Questions 1 and 2 of the study. The research questions are:

1. What components does the teacher education program emphasize while preparing preservice teachers for inclusive classroom?
2. In preparing preservice teachers for inclusive education, what component (e.g., content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge/methods) do faculty members think should be emphasized more than the other? Why?

This chapter ends with a two-part summary. The first part is in regard to the number of content knowledge, methods, and inclusive education courses the preservice teachers take in their areas of specialization. The second part involves the inclusive education components faculty members thought should be emphasized more than the other, and why.

Components TEP Emphasizes

To effectively answer Research Question 1, I analyzed documents in relation to the course sequence for the ELED and ECHD programs; and I also analyzed the curriculum guides for the ELED, ECHD, and SSCI programs. In addition, I asked the coordinators of the programs for clarifications while I attempted to answer the following questions.

1. How many content knowledge courses are required in a particular area of specialization?
2. How many methods courses are required in a particular area of specialization?
3. How many inclusive education courses are required in a particular area of specialization?

The analysis resulted in a number of observations. First, for the ELED and ECHD programs, some content knowledge and methods courses were combined. According to the coordinator of the programs (the programs had the same coordinator), the courses were combined because the department felt that combining the courses would benefit the preservice general education teachers. One way I think combining the courses could benefit the preservice general education teachers is that it might strengthen the skills of the preservice teachers in the content knowledge courses and the methods courses simultaneously. In other words, it might be the case of killing two birds with one stone.

Next, I observed that the preservice general education teachers in the programs take courses in sequence (see Appendix D and Appendix E). At the end of their junior years, the preservice teachers in the ELED program may have taken a total of 32 courses (92 credit hours). Of these, 14 are content knowledge only (CK) courses, three are methods only (M) courses, 14 are a combination of both content knowledge and methods (CK+M) courses, and one is a seminar course on academic success. For the seniors who have finished taking all courses prior to student teaching, they may have taken a total of 39 courses (110 credit hours). This results in this particular group of seniors taking 15 content knowledge only (CK) courses, three methods only (M) courses, 18 combination of both content knowledge and methods (CK+M) courses, two inclusive education (IE) courses, and a seminar course on academic success. In their final semesters, both ELED and ECHD preservice general education teachers take 12 credit hours of student teaching.

The situation is similar for ECHD preservice general education teachers. In general, at the end of their junior year, the ECHD preservice general education teachers might have taken a total of 34 courses (94 credit hours). Of these, 15 are content knowledge only courses, six are

methods only courses, 11 are a combination of content knowledge and methods courses, one inclusive education course, and a seminar course on academic success. For the seniors who have finished their first semester (the semester prior to student teaching), they might have taken a total of 41 courses (112 credit hours). This results in this group of seniors taking 16 CK courses, six M courses, 15 CK+M courses, three inclusive education IE courses, and a seminar course on academic success. The content knowledge only (CK), methods only (M), combination of both content knowledge and methods (CK+M), and inclusive education (IE) courses are indicated on Appendix D and Appendix E, using the assigned letters/symbols.

Minor differences, however, exist in the courses preservice general education teachers in the ELEM and ECHD programs take. For example, those in the ELED program take a statistics course (MATH 282) during the second semester of their sophomore years but preservice general education teachers in the ECHD program do not. Likewise, preservice general education teachers in the ECHD program take a language development course (CI 413) during the second semester of their sophomore years but those in the ELED program do not. This is understandable because just as children in early childhood classrooms need not be taught statistics (because of their level of education), children in elementary classrooms need not be taught how to develop their language. In general, students at the elementary level develop adequate level of language to engage effectively in the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, whereas preservice general education teachers in the ECHD program take three inclusive education courses, preservice general education teachers in the ELED program take only two. The extra inclusive education course preservice teachers in ECHD take is SPED 405, an introduction to early childhood special education. Clearly, this is an ECHD-specific course and, therefore, need not be taken by ELED program preservice general education teachers. It should be noted that the types and number of

courses preservice general education teachers in the programs take depend, in part, on the requirements of the Illinois State Board of Education.

With regard to the SSCI program, the situation is somehow different from those of ELED and ECHD. The following were implicit from the information I received from the SSCI program coordinator. First, the program follows the course sequence similar to those of ELED and ECHD programs. Second, the program does not have a combination of both content knowledge and methods courses. According to the available information, the program has content knowledge only courses and methods only courses. Preservice general education teachers in the SSCI program may also take the same inclusive education courses with the other preservice general education teachers. Additionally, I gathered from the curriculum guide of the program that the seniors who have finished taking all courses prior to student teaching may have taken a total of 113 credit hours, compared to 110 credit hours for ELEM and 112 credit hours for ECHD. However, I was not able to indicate unequivocally the exact number of methods and content knowledge courses the SSCI preservice general education teachers take.

It is also worth mentioning that there are three types of content knowledge courses taken across the programs. They are university content knowledge courses, education content knowledge courses, and program-specific content knowledge courses. University content knowledge courses (also referred to as general education courses) are required by the university for all undergraduate students. Education content knowledge courses are general courses required by the college of education for undergraduate students. Aside from the above, the three programs have their own specific content knowledge courses, which preservice general education teachers are required to take. It appears the university, the departments, and the programs are all aware of the importance of content knowledge and they all take the necessary

steps to emphasize it regardless of a student's specialty area. Thus, preservice general education teachers in the three programs take their specific university content knowledge courses and education content courses. In the same vein, the methods-specific courses taken by preservice general education teachers in SSCI program are different from those of ELED and ECHD preservice general education teachers.

From the information available, I found out that preservice general education teachers in the three programs take approximately the same total number of CK, M, CK+M, and IE courses put together. As could be seen from Table 4.1, out of a total of 38 courses that preservice general education teachers in ELED take, 15 (39.47%) are CK courses, 3 (7.89%) are M courses, 18 (47.37%) are CK+M courses, and 2 (5.26%) are IE courses. Correspondingly, out of a total of 40 courses that preservice general education teachers in ECHD take, 16 (40%) are CK courses, 6 (15%) are M courses, 15 (37.5%) are CK+M courses, and 3 (7.50%) are IE courses.

Table 4.1

Courses (Minus seminar course on academic success)

	Total		CK		M		CK+M		IE	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ELED	38	**100**	15	**39.47**	3	**7.89**	18	**47.37**	2	**5.26**
ECHD	40	**100**	16	**40**	6	**15**	15	**37.50**	3	**7.5**

Note. CK = content knowledge only; M = methods only; CK+M = combination of both content knowledge and methods; IE = inclusive education.

Components Faculty Members Emphasize

This section presents results that answer Research Question 2. The research question asked faculty members to state the inclusive education components (e.g., content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge/methods) they think should be emphasized more than others and why. To effectively address this research question, I presented responses to nine questions related to

the research question. I used qualitative content analysis to analyze the interview protocol for faculty members to define categories. I calculated frequencies on the main categories and I also calculated percentages of the frequencies, where necessary.

To prevent invalid data presentation and to promote consistency in the coding process, I developed translation rules (Chou, 2008). First, all responses of participants, including those of participants who picked all the options provided for questions that asked for the *most important* component, for example, were considered for that particular item. For instance, for Question 1 on the most important component(s) to prepare teacher candidates for inclusive education, all responses that consisted of all the choices for that particular question were considered. My perception is that all responses/choices of all the participants should be respected and considered; and this may enable me to have a detailed understanding of the phenomenon and the participants.

Similarly, for Question 1 on the most important component(s) to prepare teacher candidates for inclusive education, the order of the components listed by the participants did not matter. In addition, I coded or recorded concepts as the same even when they appear in different forms (e.g., differences in tense and spelling). Furthermore, the implicit meanings of concepts were considered. Thus concepts with similar implicit meanings were placed in the same categories. For example, statements like *collaborative learning*, *student group discussion* and *cooperative learning* (in response to Question 6 below) were placed in the same category (collaborative learning) because collaborative learning is, to a certain extent, a general term for the other two statements/terms.

Question 1

Question 1 states: "Of these components of the teacher education program (collaboration, inclusion coursework, content knowledge, teaching methods, field experiences) which do you

think is or are the most important to prepare teacher candidates for inclusive classrooms, including those with students with disabilities?"

Table 4.2 shows a summary of the responses from the 14 participants. A total of 33 individual responses were made. Most of the options picked by participants indicated either teaching method (10, 30.30%), field experience (9, 27.27%), and inclusion coursework (8, 24.24%) were either the most important or important. Only one of the participants indicated collaboration was important. According to UNESCO, IDEA, NCLB, INTASC, and ARRA, content knowledge is the most important of all the components of inclusive education. However, only 5 responses (15.15%) indicated content knowledge was the most important or important. Of the 5 responses, three were from faculty members (all from the same discipline) who indicated specifically that content knowledge was the most important.

Table 4.2

Summary analysis of responses to Question 1

Category	Frequency	%
Teaching methods	10	30.30
Field experiences	9	27.27
Inclusion coursework	8	24.24
Content knowledge	5	15.15
Collaboration	1	3.03
Total	33	≈100.00

Question 2

Question 2 serves as a follow-up question to Question 1. It states: "Why do you think these are the most important?" Table 4.3 shows the categories and the number of participants who gave various reasons why the categories were important. On the one hand, some participants only listed the components as important (Question 1) but did not give reasons why they are important. On the other hand, some participants gave multiple reasons why the components are

important. All 10 participants who indicated that field experience was important were unanimous in stating that it was important because it would enable preservice teachers to observe, learn and apply the knowledge and theories they learned in their courses.

With regard to content knowledge, which is the most important, two participants indicated that without a thorough knowledge of content, a teacher might not teach effectively. Additionally, four participants mentioned that content knowledge was the most important because inclusive classroom teachers need adequate content knowledge to teach diverse students. From my point of view, the two reasons are similar. Participant PFR-F summed up the reasons like this:

> I am talking about math teaching and learning. Content knowledge is critically important. Without a solid foundation of math content, it would be very difficult for teachers to provide timely and appropriate intervention to students with special needs. When a teacher/professor blames the students, it sometimes reflects the teacher's/professor's lack of knowledge of content and diverse aspects of the content.

This position matches the main idea behind inclusive education that all students, including students with disabilities in the classroom should be taught the appropriate content (ARRA, 2009; IDEA, 2004; INTASC, 2001; NCLB, 2001; UNESCO IBE, 2008). The main reasons the participants gave for the two other important components—teaching methods and inclusion coursework—also incorporate the ideas of inclusive education. From the participants' points of view, methods courses on universal design for learning, for example, aim at improving the teaching and learning process for all students, including students with disabilities; and inclusion coursework provides students with detailed information about policies, laws, assessments,

among others, in regard to how to successfully include all students in the general education classroom. Participant TAT-C expressed the above views in simpler terms:

> The types of teaching methods you use determine whether students will be involved in the lesson or not. As a teacher, you can pick on methods that will involve all the students including those with disabilities so that they do not feel left out.

Table 4.3

Summary analysis of responses to Question 2

Category and Reason	Frequency
Field experience	
To observe, learn, and apply the knowledge and theory learned	10
Teaching method	
To involve diverse students	4
To apply to various contents	2
Think this is area where preservice teachers need help	1
Inclusion coursework	
For detailed information on inclusive education	6
Content knowledge	
Prepare preservice teacher for inclusive classroom	4
One can only teach what one knows	2
Collaboration	
Required for a team approach for differentiating instruction	1

Question 3

Question 3 states: "Do you discuss effective teaching strategies for teaching in inclusive classrooms? If so, what are they?" Table 4.4A shows participants' answers to the first part of the question. Only one out of the 14 participants indicated that s/he did not discuss effective teaching strategies for teaching in inclusive classrooms while teaching. This suggests that almost all the participants are conversant with effective teaching strategies for teaching in inclusive classrooms.

Table 4.4A

Summary analysis of responses to Question 3A

Category	Frequency	%
Yes	13	92.86
No	1	7.14
Total	14	100.00

Table 4.4B shows answers to what effective teaching strategies for teaching in inclusive classrooms are (according to the faculty members), the second part of the question. As with Question 2, some of the participants did not supply a complete answer to Question 3. In this case, some of the participants did not state the effective teaching strategies they use for teaching in inclusive classrooms. The table shows that universal design for learning (frequency 3), modifying and adopting teaching materials for teaching environment (frequency 2), and group work (frequency 2) are the common teaching strategies among the participants.

Table 4.4B

Summary analysis of responses to Question 3B

Category	Frequency
Universal Design for Learning	3
Modifying and adapting materials and environments	2
Group work	2
Multiple ways of solving a problem	1
Accommodations teachers can use in the classroom	1
Differentiated instruction	1
Hand on activities	1
Evidence-based practices	1
Language demands in all contents	1

Participant TAT-B emphasized the importance of universal design for learning by stating that

> I focus on teaching my students UDL. I also model accommodations such as modified documents, multiple modes of delivery, and adjusting the required amount of work based on needs. As part of their assignments, students are expected to create lessons with word

banks, and use technology to provide interventions and alternative learning modes. Some sites, I introduce to my students are bookbuider.cast.org and docsteach.org. Both of these sites are digital environments teachers can use to create curriculum with appropriate scaffolds and/or provide computer-assisted learning that may be of benefit to students with unique learning needs.

Meanwhile, according to Principle 4 of INTASC, the effective teaching strategies in inclusive classroom are:

- understanding how different learning theories and research contribute to effective instruction for students with disabilities
- using research-based practices including explicit instruction and planned maintenance and generalization to support initial learning and generalization of concepts and skills for students with disabilities
- understanding that it is particularly important to provide multiple ways for students with disabilities (and all students) to participate in learning activities
- providing a variety of ways for students with disabilities to demonstrate their learning
- adjusting instruction in response to information gathered from ongoing monitoring of performance and progress of students with disabilities
- supporting the use of assistive and instructional technologies to promote learning and independence of students with disabilities

An examination of the strategies indicated by the participants and those of INTASC (above) revealed close similarities. This also points to the fact that the participants knew what the strategies were and might have discussed them in their classrooms.

Question 4

Question 4 states: "Do you discuss appropriate classroom management skills and behavior interventions for teaching in inclusive classrooms? If so, what are they?" Table 4.5A shows participants' answers to the first part of the question. A majority of participants, 11 (78.57%), stated they did discuss appropriate classroom management skills and behavior interventions for teaching in inclusive classrooms.

Table 4.5A

Summary analysis of responses to Question 4

Category	Frequency	%
Yes	11	78.57
No	3	21.43
Total	14	100.00

Table 4.5B shows answers to what are considered to be appropriate classroom management skills and behavior interventions for teaching in inclusive classrooms. The table shows that proactive teaching (whereby the teacher anticipates the problems that will happen and when they will happen, and take steps to prevent them) is the most common used by the participants. It has a frequency of 4 whereas all the others have one frequency each. Below is how participant TAT-B's perception of how good teaching can prevent behavior problems from happening in the classroom. In response to the second part of Question 4, what appropriate classroom management skills and behavior interventions for teaching in inclusive classrooms are, participant TAT-B stated:

> I emphasize to my students that good pedagogy begets good classroom management. I model small group work and then have students reflect on what they experienced as a way to show them how to manage the classroom. I also promote reflection on how

effective teaching strategies will help manage behavior. Finally, I discuss the point that the strategies that are effective for inclusion work well for all students and that if they provide lessons that are highly engaging and provide modified assignments, their efforts will reach all students.

A close look at the skills and interventions listed by the participants revealed that they know the appropriate skills and interventions. The skills and interventions are similar to those of INTASC.

Table 4.5B

Summary analysis of responses to Question 4

Category	Frequency
Proactive approach (good teaching)	4
Ground rules	1
Moving student closer to teacher	1
Teacher moving toward student	1
RtI to reduce behavior problems	1
Differentiated instruction	1
Being fair to all students	1
Positive Guidance Techniques	1
Keeping students engaged	1
Open-ended environment	1
Importance of predictable routines	1
Listening and talking with students	1

According to Principle 5 of INTASC the skills and interventions are as follows:

- identifying the interests and preferences of students with disabilities and use this information to design activities that encourage students with disabilities to make positive contributions to the learning community
- helping students with disabilities develop positive strategies for coping with frustrations in the learning situation that may be associated with their disabilities

- taking deliberate action to promote positive social relationships among students with disabilities and their age-appropriate peers in the learning community
- recognizing factors and situations that are likely to promote [or diminish] intrinsic motivation, and create learning environments that encourage engagement and self-motivation of students with disabilities
- participating in the design and implementation of individual behavioral support plans and being proactive in responding to the needs of individual students with disabilities within the learning community

Question 5

Question 5 states: "What methods of formal and informal assessment do you use (or discuss) in your classroom when preparing general education teachers?" Table 4.6 shows a summary of the responses from the participants. A majority of participants used/discussed

Table 4.6

Summary analysis of responses to Question 5

Category	Frequency
Tests	6
Discussions	5
Observations	5
Quizzes (in-class)	4
Lesson plans	4
Presentations	3
Quizzes (take home)	2
Pretest	2
Progress monitoring	2
Checklists, Rubrics	2
Diagnostic	2
Activities	2
Portfolios	1
Authentic Assessment	1
Peer editing, revising	1
edTPA	1

formal and informal assessments such as tests (frequency 6), discussions in groups (frequency 5), observations (frequency 5), lesson plans (frequency 4), and in-class quizzes (frequency 4). The thorough nature of the list of formal and informal assessments by the participants indicates that the participants were conversant with the various assessments and their usefulness. The detailed nature of the list is exemplified in that non-conventional forms of assessments like authentic assessment, which evaluates ability based on real-world contexts, and edTPA, which assesses ability to effectively teach subject matter to all students, are included. Principle 8 of INTASC, which is related to Question 5, stipulates that general and special education teachers understand and use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of learners.

Question 6

Question 6 states: "What types of effective communication and collaboration skills do you discuss in your classroom or use with families and other professionals when preparing general education teachers?" Table 4.7 shows a summary of the responses from participants. It is clear from the responses that collaborative learning (frequency 3), writing tasks (frequency 3), explaining solutions orally (frequency 3), emails to family members (frequency 3), notes/letters to family members (frequency 3), and parent-teacher conferences (frequency 3) are the common effective communication and collaboration skills participants discussed in the classroom or used with families and other professionals when preparing general education teachers. Two principles of INTASC are related to Question 6. They are Principle 6 and 10. Principle 6 emphasizes only the use of knowledge of affective, verbal, nonverbal, and media communication technologies to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom. And Principle 10 emphasizes how the teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, families, and agencies

in the community to support students learning and welfare. The participants' responses showed that the participants are knowledgeable about the skills to use in the classroom and with family members.

Table 4.7

Summary analysis of responses to Question 6

Category	Frequency
Collaborative learning	3
Writing tasks	3
Orally explaining solutions	3
Email to family members	3
Note/letter to family members	3
Parent-teacher conferences	3
Consulting other teachers in regard to courses	2
Participate in community events	1
Team teaching	1
Use classroom website to communicate	1
Phone call	1
Child's strength inventory	1
Written evaluation from field supervisors	1

Question 7

Question 7 is: "How would you describe your current knowledge and skills level to prepare general education teachers to teach students with disabilities in inclusive settings?" A summary of the responses from participants is presented below.

Five of the participants described their current knowledge and skill level to prepare general education teachers to teach students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom as moderate. This group of participants claimed they did not know everything about inclusive education and that they were ready to learn and improve on what they already knew. On the contrary, four of the participants described their current knowledge and skills level as very good or fairly well. This group felt they were competent to teach students with disabilities in inclusive settings. Aside from the above, two of the participants indicated that they were comfortable

teaching ECHD majors and one described his or her current knowledge and skill level as strong in teaching students with specific learning disabilities and language delays. Only two participants indicated they believed they did not have adequate knowledge to teach students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

From the responses, it is obvious that with the exception of two participants, all the others felt they have at least a working knowledge of teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Two participants summed up this position in the following statements. First, participant ITR-D stated, "With certification in all areas of special education, and ELL endorsement as well as my general education certification/license, I am well prepared to teach inclusion." Participant TAT-B was more elaborate:

> I think my current knowledge and skills are above average. I know what the best practices are in my field and I know that the methods that I teach are valid and reliable for all students. I work hard to make sure my teacher candidates know that they will be expected to meet learning needs of all students in their classrooms. However, there is a lot I do not know. If I were tested on more specific and sophisticated terminology, for example, I could not do that. I might be aware of ideas, but I do not have the specific language someone who specializes in this area would have.

Question 8

Question 8 states: "Have you had any training or professional development designed to improve your skills in preparing teacher candidates for inclusive classrooms?" Table 4.8 shows a summary of the responses from participants. Whereas, a majority, nine participants out of 14 (64.29%), indicated that they had some training or professional development designed to improve their skills in preparing teacher candidates for inclusive classrooms, the remaining five

participants (35.71%) stated that they did not have any training or professional development in inclusive education.

Table 4.8

Summary analysis of responses to Question 8

Category	Frequency	%
Yes	9	64.29
No	5	35.71
Total	14	100.00

Question 9

Question 9 asked participants to list any suggestions that they thought could place the college's inclusive education program in a better position to effectively train preservice general education teachers. Table 4.9 shows a summary of the responses from participants. Out of the 21 individual suggestions, six (28.57%) are for professional development for faculty members

Table 4.9

Summary analysis of responses to question 9

Category	Frequency	%
Professional development	6	28.57
More field experience	5	23.81
Connection with schools	2	9.52
More inclusion courses	2	9.52
Lab school	1	4.76
Resources/Public funding	1	4.76
Time to analyze field experiences	1	4.76
Quality of students admitted	1	4.76
Review eligibility categories	1	4.76
Effective reading instruction	1	4.76
Total	21	≈100.00

and five (23.81%) are for more field experience for preservice teachers. Further, two suggestions (9.52%) each are for establishment of a connection between the university/department and local schools, and for offering of more inclusive education courses by the department. The remaining

six individual suggestions have one frequency each. Of particular interest to me is the suggestion that the department should address the issue of the quality of students admitted to the TEP. I took particular notice of this because, from my point of view, the participant made the suggestion out of his/her concern for the progress of the program. Because this participant decided on being interviewed instead of completing the interview protocol, I was able to see the sincere expression of concern on the participant's face. Participant PFR-B put forth his/her opinion bluntly by saying that

> Students' basic knowledge is very low now and am beginning to think the minimum ACT score for admitting new students into the program is now below 20. Before, it used to be 20 and above. The admission process should take note of this. Content is very important!

In answering a couple of follow-up questions, participant PFR-B thought that the drastic reduction in the general student population, in the recent past years at the institution, might have made the department to reduce the minimum requirement for admission into the program. Participant PFR-B further said that a reduction of the minimum admission requirement might affect the quality of the preservice general education teachers the TEP might produce. My immediate response was that participant PFR-B's suggestion carries a lot of weight with the program, considering that this participant is a content teacher who has many years' experience teaching in the TEP program. However, upon further inquiry, I found that the dramatic reduction in the general student population at the university notwithstanding, the ACT score for the admission into the TEP had not been lowered and the program had not lowered the standards. Instead, as a result of Illinois State Board of Education rules, admission to the TEP, including the minimum scores for the ACT and TAP (Test of Academic Proficiency), has become more stringent.

Summary

Results for Research Question 1 and Research Question 2 are summarized below. First, preservice general education teachers in the three programs take about the same total number of CK, M, CK+M, and IE courses put together. Out of a total of 38 courses that preservice general education teachers in ELED take, 39.47% are CK courses, 7.89% are M courses, 47.37% are CK+M courses, and 5.26% are IE courses. Similarly, out of a total of 40 courses that preservice general education teachers in ECHD take, 40% are CK courses, 15% are M courses, 37.5% are CK+M courses, and 7.50% are IE courses. From this analysis, I deduce that the courses preservice general education teachers in SSCI take may follow a similar pattern. Considering the percentage of courses devoted to CK, CK+M, and/or M courses, it is clear from the analysis that the TEP emphasizes content knowledge more than methods and inclusive education. The order is content knowledge first, methods second, and then inclusion coursework.

Second, a summary of the responses from the participants indicated that most of the options picked by participants indicated that teaching methods (10, 30.30%), field experience (9, 27.27%), or inclusion coursework (8, 24.24%) was either the most important or important. It is, however, disappointing that only five responses (15.15%) indicated content knowledge was the most important or important. Of the five responses, three were for faculty members (all from the same discipline) who indicated specifically that content knowledge was the most important.

Additionally, with regard to content knowledge, participants gave five related reasons why content knowledge is the most important. In a nutshell, the reason the participants gave was that without a thorough knowledge of content, a teacher might not teach effectively in inclusive classrooms.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS: PRESERVICE TEACHERS' FEELINGS AND DECISIONS TEACHER EDUCATORS MAKE

This chapter presents the results pertaining to Research Questions 3 and 4 of the study. The research questions are:

3. Do preservice general education teachers believe they are fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom?
4. How do the decisions teacher educators make affect how prepared preservice general education teachers feel about teaching diverse students?

Similar to Chapter 4, this chapter ends with two summaries. The first part is largely in regard to preservice general education teachers' belief as to whether they are fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom. The second part is about how the decisions teacher educators make affect the preparedness of preservice general education teachers to teach diverse students. I present results in connection with Research Question 3 and then results in connection with Research Question 4.

How Prepared Preservice Teachers Feel: Research Question 3

The questionnaire for the preservice general education teachers (Preservice General Education Teacher Questionnaire) consists of three parts. The first part, apart from demographic information, asks for some background information from the respondents. The second part of the questionnaire is based on the INTASC principles (Jenkins & Ornelles, 2007). The third part of the questionnaire is entitled Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES; Wilczenski, 1992). In this section, I first present responses to the background information questions. Next, I

present results for the second part of the questionnaire, the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) sub-questionnaire. Last, I present results for ATIES (Wilczenski, 1992).

Respondent Background Information Questions

Seven questions address demographic information concerning the background of the general education preservice teachers who responded to the questionnaire. I present the results to each question below. The questions are:

1. How many courses on inclusion have you taken so far?
2. How many content knowledge courses have you taken so far?
3. How many methods courses have you taken so far?
4. Do you have any family members or relatives with disabilities?
5. Do you have any friend(s)/acquaintance(s) with disabilities?
6. How confident do you feel teaching students with disabilities? Check one:
    a. _____ Not confident
    b. _____ Somewhat confident
    c. _____ Confident
    d. _____ Very confident
7. Do you think that you will be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in your classroom at the end of your teacher education program? Why/Why not?

Questions 1-3. Questions 1, 2, and 3 asked respondents to indicate the number of inclusive education courses, content knowledge courses, and methods courses they took to date. From the responses, it was not easy to determine the number of inclusive education, content

knowledge, and methods courses the preservice teachers took. This was because, most of the preservice teachers either left the spaces blank or indicated they were not sure. This is understandable because, as I found out afterward, some of the preservice teachers took many courses and it was quite impossible for them to remember all of the courses while completing a questionnaire in a classroom without referring to any documents. As detailed in Chapter 4, another reason the preservice teachers were unable to state the number of inclusive education, content knowledge, and methods courses they took was that, the department combined some content knowledge and methods courses for the benefit of the preservice teachers. For this reason, I believe even if the preservice teachers knew that the courses they took were combinations of both content knowledge and methods courses, none of the questions on the questionnaire asked specifically for the number of combination of both content knowledge and methods courses the preservice teachers took.

Question 4. Question 4 asked respondents if they had any family members or relatives with disabilities. Table 5.1 shows the summary of responses from the respondents. Whereas, five (35.71%) seniors who completed student teaching have family members or relatives with

Table 5.1

Summary of responses to Question 4: Family members with disabilities

Category	Sr. with ST		Sr. on Campus		Jr.		Total
	No.	**%**	No.	**%**	No.	**%**	
No	9	**64.29**	16	**48.48**	10	**66.67**	35
Yes	5	**35.71**	17	**51.52**	5	**33.33**	27
Total	14	100	33	100	15	100	**62**

Note. Sr. with ST = seniors who completed student teaching; Sr. on Campus = seniors on campus, who will do student teaching in the future; Jr. juniors.

disabilities, nine (64.29%) of them did not have family members or relatives with disabilities. Thus, a majority of the seniors who completed student teaching did not have family members or

relatives with disabilities. Seniors who were on campus were about equally divided regarding whether they had family members or relatives with disabilities. Seventeen (51.52%) out of a total of 33 had family members or relatives with disabilities. Contrary to the responses of the seniors who were on campus, the responses of the juniors indicated that majority of them (10, 66.67%) did not have family members or relatives with disabilities.

Question 5. Question 5 asked respondents if they had any friend(s)/acquaintance(s) with disabilities. Table 5.2 shows the summary of the responses from the preservice teachers. Eight (57.14%) of the 14 seniors who completed student teaching indicated they had friend(s)/acquaintance(s) with disabilities and six (42.86%) indicated that they did not have friend(s)/acquaintance(s) with disabilities. Just like for Question 4 (above), seniors who were on campus were about equally divided regarding whether they had friends/acquaintances with disabilities. Whereas 51.52% of them indicated that they had friends/acquaintances with disabilities, 48.48% of them stated otherwise. In a like manner, out of the 15 juniors, eight (53.33%) indicated they had friends/acquaintances with disabilities and seven (46.67%) indicated they did not have friends/acquaintances with disabilities.

Table 5.2

Summary of responses to Question 5: Friend(s)/acquaintance(s) with disabilities

Category	Sr. with ST		Sr. on Campus		Jr.		Total
	No.	**%**	No.	**%**	No.	**%**	
Yes	8	**57.14**	17	**51.52**	8	**53.33**	33
No	6	**42.86**	16	**48.48**	7	**46.67**	29
Total	14	100	33	100	15	100	**62**

Note. Sr. with ST = seniors who completed student teaching; Sr. on Campus = seniors on campus, who will do student teaching in the future; Jr. juniors.

Question 6. Question 6 asked respondents how confident they felt teaching students with disabilities. The respondents had four options to choose from. They are (a) *not confident*, (b)

somehow confident, (c) *confident*, and (d) *very confident*. Table 5.3 shows the summary of the responses from the preservice teachers. For the seniors who completed student teaching, a majority, 11 (78.57%) stated they felt *confident* teaching students with disabilities and two (14.29%) stated they felt *very confident* teaching students with disabilities. For seniors who were on campus, a majority, 18 (54.55%) indicated they felt *somewhat confident* teaching student with disabilities and 11 (33.33%) indicated they felt *confident* teaching students with disabilities. Only two (6.06%) out of the 33 seniors who were on campus indicated that they felt *very confident* teaching students with disabilities. Below is how a senior who was on campus expressed why s/he was not *very confident* teaching students with disabilities, using the answer space for Question 7.

> I do not feel very confident because all disabilities are not the same and therefore require different teaching strategies. I have worked with about five children for an extended period of time who have disabilities, but I do not feel fully confident in teaching students with disabilities alongside of students in a regular classroom. I do feel prepared with multiple strategies to accommodate children with special needs, especially through taking EDUC 319 and 308.

What this senior who was on campus is saying is that, based on his/her experience working with students with disabilities and knowledge about disabilities, s/he still did not feel very confident teaching students with disabilities. Perhaps this preservice teacher might feel more confident after doing student teaching.

And for the juniors, a majority, 11 (73.33%) felt *somewhat confident* teaching students with disabilities and three (20%) felt *confident* teaching student with disabilities. From my point of view, overall, Table 5.3 shows that the more advanced the preservice teachers were in the

program, the more confident they believed they were teaching student with disabilities. In other words, this may mean, the more courses (content knowledge only, methods only, combination of both content knowledge and methods, inclusive education, and even student teaching) the preservice teachers take, the more confident they felt teaching students with disabilities.

Table 5.3

Summary of responses to Question 6: Confidence teaching students with disabilities

Category	Sr. with ST		Sr. on Campus		Jr.		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Not confident	0		2	**6.06**	1	**6.67**	3
Somewhat confident	1	**7.14**	18	**54.55**	11	**73.33**	30
Confident	11	**78.57**	11	**33.33**	3	**20**	25
Very confident	2	**14.29**	2	**6.06**	0		4
Total	14	100	33	100	15	100	**62**

Note. Sr. with ST = seniors who completed student teaching; Sr. on Campus = seniors on campus, who will do student teaching in the future; Jr. juniors

Question 7. Question 7 asked the respondents if they thought that they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their teacher education program. The respondents were also asked to give reasons regarding what they thought.

Table 5.4

Summary analysis of responses to Question 7: Fully prepared to teach diverse students

Category	Freq	%
Senior (Completed Student Teaching)		
Yes, because I am being adequately prepared	8	57.14
Yes, I already have experience working with diverse students	4	28.57
Yes, I always work with students with disabilities	1	7.14
Yes, because of student teaching	1	7.14
Senior (On Campus - Student Teaching in the Future)		
Yes, because of courses taken	18	54.55
Shall be fully prepared after student teaching	9	27.27
No, we seems not to have covered enough concepts on disabilities	6	18.18

Table 5.4 (Continued)

Junior		
Not fully prepared judging from courses taken so far	7	46.67
I hope to be fully prepared	5	33.33
Fully prepared but needs experience	3	20.00

Note. Freq = frequency

Table 5.4 shows the summary of the responses from the preservice teachers. A majority of the seniors who completed student teaching (8, 57.14%) stated that they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their programs. The reason this group of preservice teachers gave for their position was that they were adequately prepared in the program to teach diverse students effectively. A second major group of seniors who completed student teaching (4, 28.57%) indicated that they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students at the end of their programs because they already had experience working with diverse students. All the seniors who completed student teaching stated that they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their programs. This suggests that at the end of the program (i.e., after student teaching), most students feel fully prepared to teach diverse students.

A little above half (18, 54.55%) of the seniors who were on campus indicated that the courses they had taken made them think they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Nine of the seniors who were on campus (27.27%) believed they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms effectively after their student teaching experience. Unlike the seniors who completed student teaching, six (18.18%) seniors who were on campus stated that they thought they would not be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Their reason was that

they felt they did not cover enough concepts on disabilities to enable them teach diverse students effectively. Below is how one of the seniors who was on campus expressed the above sentiment.

> No, I do not believe that we have been informed about the very different disabilities that We may be faced with. I also don't believe that we have been instructed how to modify Lessons/activities for people with disabilities. Also, the only disabilities that I have Encountered include the ones from my field placements.

The statement above shows that the preservice teachers were aware of the fact that the courses they take in the programs (in this particular case, inclusive education courses) and student teaching might make them fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their programs.

Regarding the juniors, seven (46.67%) out of the 15 indicated they thought they would not be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Their main reason was that the number and types of courses (content knowledge, methods, and inclusive education) they had taken, at the time, were not enough to enable them teach diverse students well at the end of their programs. In addition, whereas five (33.33%) stated that the thought they would be fully prepared at the end of their programs to teach diverse students in their classrooms because of the robust nature of the program; three (20%) thought they would be fully prepared and that all that they needed was experience in teaching diverse students. The perceptions of these three juniors who thought experience in student teaching was important for being fully prepared to teach diverse students agrees with those of nine senior preservice teachers (above) who were on campus. In responding to Question 7, one junior expressed the importance of student teaching as follows:

> Yes, I feel that I will be given adequate training and experience during my time in the

teacher education program to teach diverse students including students with disabilities. I believe my time in the field will prepare me the most.

INTASC Sub-questionnaire

In this section, I assessed the competencies the general education preservice teachers should meet to teach in classrooms that include all students, including students with disabilities. The competencies are based on the 10 principles of INTASC. Thus, there are ten subscales. The ten subscales are: 1. Concepts, tools, and structures of discipline (Items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5); 2. Learning and development (Items 6, 7, 8, and 9); 3. Diversity (Items 10, 11, 12, and 13); 4. Instructional strategies (Items 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21); 5. Motivation and behavior (Items 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26); 6. Communication technologies (Items 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31); 7. Instruction planning (Items 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36); 8. Assessment strategies (Items 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41); 9. Reflective practitioner (Items 42, 43, 44, and 45); and 10. Relationships (Items 46, 47, 48, and 49). The 49 items are on a 7-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932) with 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*disagree somewhat*), 4 (*neutral*), 5 (*agree somewhat*), 6 (*agree*), and 7 (*strongly agree*) as the levels of agreement. I present the results on the competencies the general education preservice teachers should meet to teach in classrooms that include all students, including students with disabilities below.

Concepts, tools, and structures of discipline. Five items addressed the subscale on concepts, tools, and structures of discipline. The items are:

1. I have a solid base of understanding of the major concepts, assumptions, issues, and processes of inquiry in my subject matter content areas.
2. I know which key concepts, ideas, facts, and processes in my content area students should understand at different grades and developmental levels.

3. I understand that students with disabilities may need accommodations, modifications, and/or adaptations to the general curriculum depending on their learning strengths and needs.
4. I have knowledge of the major principles and parameters of federal disabilities legislation.
5. I know about and can access resources to gain information about state, district, and school policies and procedures regarding special education.

The items focused on the general education preservice teachers' understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) they teach (INTASC, 2001). That is to say, the first principle is about the importance of content knowledge and how the preservice teacher teaches it to all students, including students with disabilities, in the inclusive classroom.

Table 5.5 below shows the summary of responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 5.99 (0.56), 5.91 (0.76), and 5.47 (0.75). From the figures, it is clear that the seniors who completed student teaching have the largest mean, followed by the seniors who were on campus, and then the juniors. In addition, the seniors who completed student teaching have the smallest standard deviation, followed by juniors and then the seniors who were on campus. The standard deviations of the juniors and the seniors who were on campus are similar. The smaller the standard deviation, the more concentrated the responses around the mean. The largest mean and the smallest standard deviation of the seniors who completed student teaching point to the fact that they had the best understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the

discipline(s) they taught/would teach. The seniors who were on campus came second and last in line were the juniors (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.5

Summary analysis of responses to INTASC sub-questionnaire

Principle	Senior with ST		Senior on Campus		Junior	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
1	5.99	0.56	5.91	0.76	5.47	0.75
2	6.09	0.60	5.90	0.70	5.67	0.79
3	6.32	0.63	6.49	0.54	6.35	0.66
4	6.20	0.66	6.19	0.48	5.93	0.96
5	5.83	1.08	5.97	0.73	5.71	1.07
6	6.19	0.81	5.96	0.78	5.76	0.57
7	6.24	0.87	6.18	0.71	5.92	1.12
8	6.41	0.58	6.25	0.75	6.15	0.80
9	6.29	0.70	6.27	0.82	6.22	0.71
10	6.13	0.61	6.10	0.83	5.95	0.91

Note. Senior with ST = seniors who completed student teaching; Senior on Campus = seniors on campus, who will do student teaching in the future; Jr. juniors; M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

Table 5.6

Summary rank order of preservice teacher's self-perceived competence: INTASC sub-questionnaire

	Estimated Rank		
Principle	1st	2nd	3rd
1	Senior w. ST	Senior on Cp	Junior
2	Senior w. ST	Senior on Cp	Junior
3	Senior on Cp	Junior	Senior w. ST
4	Senior on Cp	Senior w. ST	Junior
5	Senior on Cp	Senior w. ST	Junior
6	Senior w. ST	Senior on Cp	Junior
7	Senior w. ST	Senior on Cp	Junior
8	Senior w. ST	Senior on Cp	Junior
9	Senior w. ST	Senior on Cp	Junior
10	Senior w. ST	Senior on Cp	Junior

Note. Senior w. ST = seniors who completed student teaching; Senior on Cp = seniors on campus, who will do student teaching in the future; Jr. juniors

Learning and development. Four items addressed the subscale on learning and development, the second principle. The items are as follows:

6. I have a sound understanding of physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development from birth through adulthood and I am familiar with the general characteristics of the most frequently occurring disabilities.
7. I can continually examine my assumptions about the learning and development of individual students with disabilities and I have realistically high expectations for what students with disabilities can accomplish.
8. I recognize that students with disabilities vary in their approaches to learning depending on factors such as the nature of their disability, their level of knowledge and functioning, and life experiences.
9. I am knowledgeable about multiple theories of learning (e.g., behavioral theory and behavior analysis, socio-cultural theory of cognitive development) and research-based teaching practices that support learning.

The four items above focused mainly on the teacher's understanding of how children learn and develop; and how the teacher can create the environments that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of the child (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.09 (0.60), 5.90 (0.70), and 5.67 (0.79). The seniors who completed student teaching have the largest mean, followed by the seniors who were on campus, and then the juniors. Furthermore, the seniors who completed student teaching have the smallest standard deviation, followed by the seniors who were on

campus, and then the juniors. Thus, of the three groups, the seniors who completed student teaching indicated they had the best understanding of how children learn and develop; and how the teacher can create the environments that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of the child. The seniors who were on campus and the juniors followed the seniors who completed student teaching, in that order (see Table 5.6). This result is similar to the one on the subscale on concepts, tools, and structures of discipline above.

Diversity. Four items addressed the subscale on diversity, the third principle. The items are as follows:

10. I can build students' awareness, sensitivity, acceptance, and appreciation for students with disabilities who are members of my classroom, school, and community.
11. I recognize that a specific disability does not dictate how an individual student will learn. (One size does not fit all).
12. I understand that a disability can be perceived differently across families, communities, and cultures and I seek to understand and use these insights when working with students and families within their cultural communities.
13. I understand that lack of attention to cultural, ethnic, gender, and linguistic differences can lead to inappropriate assessment of students, over- and under identification of students for special education services, and inappropriate instruction of students.

The four items focused on the teacher's understanding of how students differ in their approaches to learning and how the teacher creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to different students (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors

who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.32 (0.63), 6.49 (0.54), and 6.35 (0.66). The seniors who were on campus have the largest mean followed by the juniors, and then the seniors who completed student teaching. Regarding the standard deviations, the seniors who were on campus have the smallest, followed by the seniors who completed student teaching, and then the juniors. From the above figures, it appeared the seniors who were on campus had the best understanding of how students differ in their approaches to learning and how the teacher creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to different students. It also appeared the juniors came second. The juniors are closely followed by the seniors who completed student teaching (see Table 5.6).

This result is a little bit different from the two above. Whereas, the differences between the standard deviation of the seniors who were on campus and the ones for the other two groups are quite huge, the difference between both the mean and standard deviations of the juniors and the seniors who completed student teaching is only 0.03. The slightly larger standard deviation may mean the data for the seniors who completed student teaching includes an outlier or two. Meaning, few seniors who completed student teaching indicated they did not understand how students differ in their methods to learning and how the teacher creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to different students. This may also imply that, with regard to diversity, the level of education of the preservice teachers may not mean much.

Instructional strategies. Eight items addressed the subscale on instructional strategies, the fourth principle. The items are as follows:

14. I have a shared responsibility for the education of students with disabilities; thus I can work collaboratively and individually to provide effective instruction for students with disabilities.

15. I understand how different learning theories and research contribute to effective instruction for students with disabilities.
16. I can use research-based practices including explicit instruction and planned maintenance and generalization to support initial learning and generalization of concepts and skills for students with disabilities.
17. I understand that it is particularly important to provide multiple ways for students with disabilities (and all students) to participate in learning activities.
18. I can provide a variety of ways for students with disabilities to demonstrate their learning.
19. I can adjust my instruction in response to information gathered from ongoing monitoring of performance and progress of students with disabilities.
20. I can use strategies that promote the independence, self-control, and self-advocacy of students with disabilities.
21. I expect and support the use of assistive and instructional technologies to promote learning and independence of students with disabilities.

The focus of the eight items is on how the teacher understands and uses different instructional strategies to help all students so that they can develop critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.20 (0.66), 6.19 (0.48), and 5.93 (0.96). Although the means of the seniors who completed student teaching and the seniors who were on campus are about the same, the standard deviation of the seniors who completed

student teaching is quite larger than that of the seniors who were on campus. This means the individual data values of the seniors who were on campus are more concentrated around the mean value than those of the seniors who completed student teaching. Thus, in general, more of the seniors who were on campus indicated that they understood and could use different instructional strategies to help students so that they could develop critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills than the seniors who completed student teaching and the juniors, in that order (see Table 5.6).

Motivation and behavior. Five items addressed the subscale on motivation and behavior, the fifth principle. The items are as follows:

22. I can identify the interests and preferences of students with disabilities and use this information to design activities that encourage students with disabilities to make positive contributions to the learning community.
23. I can help students with disabilities develop positive strategies for coping with frustrations in the learning situation that may be associated with their disabilities.
24. I can take deliberate action to promote positive social relationships among students with disabilities and their age-appropriate peers in the learning community.
25. I can recognize factors and situations that are likely to promote (or diminish) intrinsic motivation, and create learning environments that encourage engagement and self-motivation of students with disabilities.
26. I can participate in the design and implementation of individual behavioral support plans and be proactive in responding to the needs of individual students with disabilities within the learning community.

The focus of the five items is on how the teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to build a learning environment that promotes positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 5.83 (1.08), 5.97 (0.73), and 5.71 (1.07). The seniors who were on campus have the largest mean followed by the seniors who completed student teaching, and then the juniors. Regarding the standard deviations, the seniors who were on campus have the smallest, followed by the juniors and then the seniors who completed student teaching. The standard deviation of the seniors who completed students teaching is only 0.01 larger than that of the juniors. The slightly larger standard deviation of the seniors who completed student teaching may signify the existence an outlier in the individual data values of the group. At any rate, the seniors who were on campus seemed to have had the best understanding of how the teacher uses individual and group motivation and behavior to build a learning environment that promotes positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation. The seniors who were on campus are followed by the seniors who completed student teaching and the juniors, in that order (see Table 5.6).

Communication technologies. Five items addressed the subscale on communication technologies, the sixth principle. The items are as follows:

27. I have knowledge of the general types of communication strategies and assistive technologies that can be incorporated as a regular part of my instruction to benefit students with disabilities.
28. I can collaborate with speech/language pathologists and other language specialists

to identify the language and communication skills that need to be developed in students with disabilities, and can work cooperatively to teach those skills across settings.

29. I understand that linguistic background has an impact on language acquisition as well as communication content and style and I can use this knowledge to interact with and plan instruction for students with disabilities.
30. I can provide multiple opportunities to foster effective communication among students with disabilities and other members of the classroom as a means of building communication and language skills.
31. I am sensitive to the verbal and non-verbal messages I may convey to students with disabilities and I can monitor the messages to ensure their positive impact on students with disabilities.

Together, the five items focused on the teacher's use of knowledge of affective, verbal, nonverbal, and media communication technologies to promote active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.19 (0.81), 5.96 (0.78), and 5.76 (0.57). The seniors who completed student teaching have the largest mean followed by the seniors who were on campus, and then the juniors. With regard to standard deviation, the seniors who completed student teaching have the largest, followed by the seniors who were on campus. The juniors have the smallest standard deviation, meaning the individual data values of the group are more concentrated around the mean than those of the other groups. Judging from the means and the standard deviations, the seniors who completed student teaching appeared to have had

the best knowledge of affective, verbal, nonverbal, and media communication technologies to promote active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom. The seniors who were on campus came second and the juniors came third (see Table 5.6).

Instruction planning. Five items addressed the subscale on instruction planning, the seventh principle. The items are as follows:

32. I can contribute my expertise as a member of a collaborative team to develop, monitor, and periodically revise individualized educational plans for students with disabilities.
33. I can plan ways to modify instruction, as needed, to facilitate positive learning results within the general curriculum for students with disabilities.
34. I can collaborate to plan instruction related to expanded curriculum in general education classrooms for students with disabilities who require such curriculum.
35. I can design the learning environment so that the individual needs of students with disabilities are accommodated.
36. I can monitor student progress and incorporate knowledge of student performance across settings into the instructional planning process.

The five items focused on the ability of the teacher to plan instruction based on knowledge of the subject matter, the students, the community, and the curriculum goals (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.24 (0.87), 6.18 (0.71), and 5.92 (1.12). The seniors who completed student teaching have the largest mean, followed by the seniors who were on campus. Aside from having the smallest mean, the juniors also have the largest standard deviation. This may indicate that the data of the juniors include a wide range of

values. Expressed in a different way, the individual data values of the two senior groups of preservice teachers are concentrated around their mean values than those of the juniors. Thus, on the average, more senior who completed student teaching indicated they had the ability to plan instruction based on knowledge of the subject matter, the students, the community, and the curriculum goals than the seniors who were on campus and the juniors. The seniors who were on campus came second (see Table 5.6).

Assessment strategies. Five items addressed the subscale on assessment strategies, the eighth principle. The items are as follows:

37. I understand the purposes, strengths, and limitations of formal and informal assessment approaches for making eligibility, placement, and instructional decisions for students with disabilities.
38. I can use a variety of assessment procedures to document students' learning, behavior, and growth within multiple environments appropriate to the student's age, interests, and learning.
39. I can collaborate with others to incorporate accommodations and alternate assessments into the ongoing assessment process of students with disabilities when appropriate.
40. I can engage all students, including students with disabilities, in assessing and understanding their own learning and behavior.
41. I understand that students with disabilities are expected to participate in district and statewide assessments and that accommodations or alternate assessments may be required when appropriate.

Together, the five items focused on the teacher's understanding and use of formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the students (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.41 (0.58), 6.25 (0.75), and 6.15 (0.80). The seniors who completed student teaching have the largest mean, followed by the seniors who were on campus, and then the juniors. Based on the standard deviations, it is clear that the seniors who completed student teaching have their individual data values concentrated around the mean value more than those of the seniors who were on campus and the juniors, respectively. Based on the sizes of the means and the standard deviations, it appears more of the seniors who completed student teaching indicated they had the best understanding and use of formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the students. The seniors who were on campus came second and the juniors came third (see Table 5.6).

Reflective practitioner. Four items addressed the subscale on reflective practitioner, the ninth principle. The items are as follows:

42. I can regularly use reflection and evaluation strategies to reflect on how individual students with disabilities are functioning in the classroom and how alternative instructional decisions and interactions might influence the student's progress or behavior.
43. I can continually challenge my beliefs about how students with disabilities learn and how to teach them effectively.

44. I can actively seek out current information and research about how to educate students with disabilities, including information that will help me understand the strengths and needs of students with disabilities.
45. I can reflect on the potential interaction between a student's cultural experiences and his/her disability, and regularly question the extent to which I may be interpreting the student's responses wrongly (i.e., not based on the student's culture).

The focus of the above items was on the teacher being a reflective practitioner who frequently evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community), and who actively looks for opportunities to grow professionally (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.29 (0.70), 6.27 (0.82), and 6.22 (0.71). Going by the sizes of the means, the seniors who completed student teaching have the largest mean followed by the seniors who were on campus and then the juniors, in that order. But with regard to standard deviation, the seniors who completed student teaching have the smallest standard deviation followed by the juniors, and then the seniors who were on campus. Thus, it appears, on the average, the seniors who completed student teaching indicated they frequently evaluated the effects of their choices and actions on students and stakeholders; and they actively look for opportunities to grow professionally, more than the other two groups. In addition, judging from the sizes of the means and standard deviations, it seems the seniors who were on campus indicated they felt like reflective practitioners more than the juniors (see Table 5.6).

Relationships. Four items addressed the subscale on relationships, the tenth principle. The items are as follows:

46. I can share instructional responsibility for students with disabilities and can work to develop well-functioning collaborative teaching relationships.
47. I understand the purposes/roles of, and am an effective member of, the different types of teams within the special education process.
48. I understand the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and other paraprofessionals, and can collaborate with these staff members to foster the safety, health, academic, and/or social learning of students with disabilities.
49. I can accept families as full partners in planning appropriate instruction and services for students with disabilities.

The four items focused on the teacher's ability to develop relationships with school colleagues, families, and agencies in the larger community to support students' effective learning and well-being (INTASC, 2001).

Table 5.5 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.13 (0.61), 6.10 (0.83), and 5.95 (0.91). The mean for the seniors who completed student teaching is the largest. The mean for the seniors who were on campus is larger than that of the juniors. In the same way, the standard deviation of the seniors who completed student teaching is the smallest; and the standard deviation of the seniors who were on campus is smaller than that of the juniors. The relatively larger size of the juniors' standard deviation may signify that their individual data values are more spread out than those of the senior groups. Consequently, it appears generally,

that more seniors who completed student teaching stated they felt they had the capability to develop relationships with school colleagues, families, and agencies in the larger community to support students' effective learning and well-being than the other groups. The seniors who were on campus and the juniors followed, in that order (see Table 5.6).

Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale

In this section, I examined the attitudes of preservice general education teachers about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom. The total number of items on the scale is 16, and the scale is divided into four subscales (Wilczenski, 1992). And each subscale has a total of four items. The subscales are: social accommodation (Items 4, 6, 14, and 16), physical accommodation (Items 3, 7, 10, and 11), academic accommodation (Items 1, 5, 9, and 13), and behavioral accommodation (Items 2, 8, 12, and 15). The 16 items are on a 7-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932) with 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*disagree somewhat*), 4 (*neutral*), 5 (*agree somewhat*), 6 (*agree*), and 7 (*strongly agree*) as the levels of agreement. I present the results on the attitudes of the preservice general education teachers about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom below.

Social accommodation. The four items addressed the subscale on social accommodation. The items (4, 6, 14, and 16 respectively) are:

- Students who are shy and withdrawn should be in regular classes.
- Students whose speech is difficult to understand should be in regular classes.
- Students who cannot hear conversational speech should be in regular classes.
- Students who are frequently absent from school should be in regular classes.

The four items focused on the attitudes of preservice general education teachers toward teaching students with disabilities who need social accommodations in the general education classroom.

Table 5.7 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 6.02 (0.68), 5.71 (1.07), and 5.97 (0.61). The seniors who completed student teaching have the largest mean and the mean of the juniors is larger than that of the seniors who were on campus. With regard to standard deviation, the juniors have the smallest, followed by the seniors who completed student teaching.

Although, the mean of the seniors who were on campus is comparatively lower than those of the juniors and the seniors who completed student teaching, the relatively higher standard deviation of the seniors who were on campus may suggest that the data for the seniors who were on campus include an outlier or two. This may, in effect, mean few of the seniors who were on campus indicated negative attitude toward teaching students with disabilities who need social accommodations in the general education classroom. However, considering the means and the standard deviations, it appears more seniors who completed student teaching indicated more positive attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities who need social accommodations in the general education classroom than the other two groups. Next in line are the juniors (see Table 5.8).

Table 5.7

Summary analysis of responses to ATIES (1992)

Subscale	Senior with ST		Senior on Campus		Junior	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Social	6.02	0.68	5.71	1.07	5.97	0.61
Physical	5.45	0.98	5.27	1.38	5.63	0.78
Academic	4.98	0.67	5.25	0.88	4.78	0.81
Behavior	3.70	0.98	4.27	1.30	3.90	1.16

Note. Senior with ST = seniors who completed student teaching; Senior on Campus = seniors on campus, who will do student teaching in the future; Junior = juniors; M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

Table 5.8

Summary rank order of preservice teacher's self-perceived attitudes: ATIES (Wilczenski, 1992)

	Estimated Rank		
Subscale	1st	2nd	3rd
Social	Senior w. ST	Junior	Senior on Cp
Physical	Junior	Senior w. ST	Senior on Cp
Academic	Senior on Cp	Senior w. ST	Junior
Behavioral	Senior on Cp	Junior	Senior w. ST

Note. Senior w. ST = seniors who completed student teaching; Senior on Cp = seniors on campus, who will do student teaching in the future; Junior = juniors. Social = social accommodations; Physical = physical accommodations; Academic = academic accommodations; Behavioral = behavioral accommodations.

Physical accommodation. The four items addressed the subscale on physical accommodation. The items (3, 7, 10, and 11 respectively) are:

- Students who cannot move without help from others should be in regular classes.
- Students who cannot read standard print and need to use Braille should be in regular classes.
- Students who need training in self-help skills and activities of daily living should be in regular classes.
- Students who use sign language or communication boards should be in regular classes.

The four items focused on the attitudes of preservice general education teachers toward teaching students with disabilities who need physical accommodations in the general education classroom.

Table 5.7 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 5.45 (0.98), 5.27 (1.38), and 5.63 (0.78). The mean of the juniors is larger than the means of the seniors who completed student teaching and the seniors who were on campus. The standard deviation of the juniors is also smaller than those of the two senior groups. The small standard deviation of the juniors may

denote that the individual data values of the group are concentrated around the mean. Thus, in relative terms, more of the juniors indicated they had positive attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities who need physical accommodations in the general education classroom than the other two groups. Furthermore, from all indications, the seniors who completed student teaching seem to have more positive attitudes toward students with disabilities who need physical accommodations in the general education classroom than the seniors who were on campus (see Table 5.8).

Academic accommodation. The four items addressed the subscale on academic accommodation. The items (1, 5, 9, and 13 respectively) are:

- Students whose academic achievement is 4 or more years below the other students in grade should be in regular classes.
- Students whose academic achievement is 1.5 years below the other students in the grade should be in regular classes.
- Students who have difficulties expressing their thoughts verbally should be in regular classes.
- Students who need an individualized functional academic program in everyday reading and math skills should be in regular classes.

The four items focused on the attitudes of preservice general education teachers toward teaching students with disabilities who need academic accommodations in the general education classroom.

Table 5.7 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 4.98 (0.67), 5.25 (0.88), and

4.78 (0.81). The mean of the seniors who were on campus is the largest; but their standard deviation is also the largest. Their slightly higher standard deviation may denote one or two outliers, meaning just a few of them indicated negative attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities who need academic accommodations in the general education classroom. The mean of the seniors who completed student teaching is larger than that of the juniors; and the seniors who completed student teaching have the smallest standard deviation. This may mean the individual data values of the seniors who completed student teaching are more concentrated around the mean than those of the two other groups. In view of the means and the standard deviations, it seems that on the average, more of the seniors who were on campus indicated that they had positive attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities who need academic accommodations in the general education classroom than the other groups. Furthermore, it appears more of the seniors who completed student teaching appear to have indicated positive attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities who need academic accommodations in the general education classroom than the juniors (see Table 5.8).

Behavioral accommodation. The four items addressed the subscale on behavioral accommodation. The items (2, 8, 12, and 15 respectively) are:

- Students who are physically aggressive toward their peers should be in regular classes.
- Students who are verbally aggressive toward their peers should be in regular classes.
- Students who cannot control their behavior and disrupt activities should be in regular classes.
- Students who do not follow school rules for conduct should be in regular classes.

The four items focused on the attitudes of preservice general education teachers toward teaching students with disabilities who need behavioral accommodations in the general education classroom.

Table 5.7 shows the summary of the responses of the preservice teachers. The mean and standard deviation (in parenthesis) for the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors, respectively, are as follows: 3.70 (0.98), 4.27 (1.30), and 3.90 (1.16). The mean of the seniors who were on campus is the largest followed by the mean of the juniors. The mean of the seniors who completed student teaching is the smallest. The reverse is the case with their standard deviations. The seniors who completed student teaching have the smallest standard deviation followed by the juniors, and then the seniors who were on campus. The mean and the standard deviation of the seniors who completed student teaching show that the individual data values of the group are concentrated around the mean. Thus, it appears most of the seniors who completed student teaching indicated they did not have positive (*disagree somewhat*) attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities who need behavioral accommodations in the general education classroom.

In addition, despite the high standard deviation of the seniors who were on campus, their relatively large mean points to the fact that they are more favorable toward teaching students with disabilities who need behavioral accommodations in the general education classroom than the other two groups. In the same vein, given the mean and the standard deviation of the juniors, the juniors seem to be more favorable toward teaching students with disabilities who need behavioral accommodations in the general education classroom than the seniors who completed student teaching (see Table 5.8).

Summary

Results for Research Question 3 are summarized below. Research Question 3 states: "Do preservice general education teachers believe they are fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom?" Research Question 3 results are in three parts, according to the parts of the questionnaire.

Respondent background information questions. The respondents were not able to specify the number of content knowledge courses, methods courses, and inclusive education courses they took to date for two main reasons. First, due to the large number of courses they took, it was not possible for them to remember all of them. Second, because they took combinations of both content knowledge and methods courses they might not know how to classify them as content knowledge or methods courses. Thus, the number and types of courses the preservice teachers took were based on the course sequence for ELED program, course sequence for ECHD program, curriculum guide for ELED program, curriculum guide for ECHD programs, and curriculum guide for SSCI program (see Chapter 4).

In general, the more advanced the preservice teachers were in the program the more confident they felt teaching students with disabilities. For example, for the seniors who completed student teaching, a majority, 11 (78.57%) stated they felt *confident* teaching students with disabilities and two (14.29%) stated they felt *very confident* teaching students with disabilities. For seniors who were on campus, a majority, 18 (54.55%) indicated they felt *somewhat confident* teaching student with disabilities and 11 (33.33%) indicated they felt *confident* teaching students with disabilities. Only two (6.06%) of the 33 seniors who were on campus indicated that they felt *very confident* teaching students with disabilities. And for the

juniors, a majority, 11 (73.33%) felt *somewhat confident* teaching students with disabilities and three (20%) felt *confident* teaching students with disabilities.

Another noteworthy finding was in regard to whether the preservice general education teachers felt fully prepared to teach diverse students. All the seniors who completed student teaching (14, 100%) stated that they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their programs. This is a remarkable feat. Little wonder, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education awarded "National Recognition" to the ECHD, English/language arts, and SSCI programs recently. But six (18.18%) of the seniors who were on campus stated that they thought they would not be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Thus 27 out of the 33 (81.82%) seniors who were on campus indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Concerning the juniors, seven out of the 15 (46.67%) indicated they thought they would not be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their programs. As a result, the rest of the juniors, eight (53.33%) thought they would be fully prepared.

The above results suggest that the more advanced the preservice general education teachers were in the program, the more the number of them who indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Going by Schmidt et al.'s (2011) understanding, the more content knowledge courses the preservice general education teachers took in relation to other courses, the more the number of them who indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students.

INTASC sub-questionnaire. For seven (70%) out the 10 competencies, the seniors who completed student teaching indicated they met the competencies the general education preservice teachers should meet to teach in classrooms that included all students, including students with disabilities more than the seniors who were on campus and the juniors. The competencies are concepts, tools, and structures of discipline (which is about content knowledge and thus very crucial to this study); learning and development; communication technologies; instruction planning; assessment strategies; reflective practitioner; and relationships. The seniors who were on campus took the second position. They indicated they met seven (70%) out of 10 competencies more than the juniors. The competencies are the same as those the seniors who completed student teaching met more than the seniors who were on campus and the juniors. Consequently, the juniors took the third position. They indicated they had the worst understanding of all the competencies, with the exception of one. The competencies are concepts, tools, and structures of discipline; learning and development; instructional strategies; motivation and behavior; communication technologies; instruction planning; assessment strategies; reflective practitioner; and relationships (see Table 5.6).

Another noticeable finding of the analysis of responses to INTASC sub-questionnaire is that the three groups—the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors—all recorded roughly the lowest mean for motivation and behavior, the fifth principle. In other words, perceived in relation to the other principles, the groups were least conversant with how to use an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to build a learning environment that promotes positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation (Gao & Mager, 2011; Sharma et al., 2003).

Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES; Wilczenski, 1992). Unlike the results pertaining to the analysis of responses to the INTASC sub-questionnaire, the results pertaining to the analysis of responses to the ATIES (1992) are not well defined. Specifically, it is not easy to determine which group—seniors who completed student teaching, seniors who were on campus, or juniors—showed more positive attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Several reasons may account for this. It could be an issue of social desirability (over-reporting positive attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities, especially on the part of the juniors); or that the respondents, the juniors in particular, did not take the time to read carefully the ATIES section of the questionnaire. The seniors who completed student teaching placed first in positive attitudes toward student who need social accommodations, second toward students who need physical and academic accommodations, and third toward students who need behavioral accommodations. The seniors who were on campus placed first in regard to positive attitudes toward students who need academic and behavioral accommodations, and third toward students who need social and physical accommodations. The juniors were first in positive attitudes toward students who need physical accommodations, second toward students who need social and behavioral accommodations, and third toward students who need academic accommodations (see Table 5.8).

Similar to the finding of the analysis of responses to the INTASC sub-questionnaire, the responses to the analysis of the ATIES (1992) showed that the three groups recorded the lowest mean for behavioral accommodations, out of the four types of accommodations. That is to say, the groups were relatively more negative about having students with behavior problems in the classroom than having students with social, physical, and academic problems in the classroom (Gao & Mager, 2011; Sharma et al., 2003).

How Decisions Teacher Educators Make Affect Preservice Teachers: Research Question 4

Research Question 4 focused on the connection between the decisions the teacher educators made while training the preservice general education teachers and how prepared the preservice general education teachers felt about teaching diverse students, including students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The results pertaining to Research Questions 1 and 2 are about the decision the teacher educators made, and the results pertaining to Research Question 3 are in regard to whether the preservice general education teachers felt fully prepared to teach diverse students.

On the one hand, Research Question 1 addressed the number of content knowledge, methods, and inclusive education courses the preservice general education teachers took; and Research Question 2 asked faculty members to state the inclusive education components (e.g., content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge/methods) they thought should be emphasized more than others and why. Schmidt et al. (2011) suggest that the number of content knowledge courses preservice general education teachers take in relation to methods and inclusive education courses, for example, determine how effective preservice general education teachers could be in the classroom; and content knowledge is the most important of all the components of inclusive education, according to UNESCO, IDEA, NCLB, INTASC, and ARRA. On the other hand, Research Question 3 asked the preservice general education teachers if they believed they were fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom. Therefore, to answer Research Question 4 effectively, I revisit the analysis of results for Research Questions 1, 2, and 3.

Research Question 1

As already detailed in Chapter 4, the results of the document analysis indicated that the preservice general education teachers in the ELED program may have taken a total of 32 courses, at the end of their junior years. Of these, 14 are content knowledge only (CK) courses, three are methods only (M) courses, and 14 are a combination of both content knowledge and methods (CK+M) courses. For the seniors who have finished all courses prior to student teaching, they may have taken a total of 39 courses. Breaking this figure down, this particular group of seniors may take 15 content knowledge only (CK) courses, three methods only (M) courses, 18 combination of both content knowledge and methods (CK+M) courses, and two inclusive education (IE) courses.

Similarly, at the end of their junior year, the ECHD preservice general education teachers might have taken a total of 34 courses. Of these, 15 are CK courses, six are M courses, 11 are CK+M courses, and one IE course. For the seniors who have finished their first semester (the semester prior to student teaching), they might have taken a total of 41 courses. This results in this group of seniors taking 16 CK courses, six M courses, 15 CK+M courses, and three IE courses.

What is implied from to the available information is that the SSCI program does not have a combination of both content knowledge and methods (CK+M) courses. In addition, I found out from the curriculum guide of the program that preservice general education teachers in the SSCI program may take about the same inclusive education courses with the other preservice general education teachers. Furthermore, I ascertained from the curriculum guide that the seniors who have finished taking all courses before student teaching may have taken a total of 113 credit hours, which is similar to 110 credit hours for ELEM and 112 credit hours for ECHD.

Nonetheless, I was not able to indicate with certainty the exact number of methods and content knowledge courses the SSCI preservice general education teachers take.

Overall, I found that preservice general education teachers in the three programs take roughly the same total number of CK, M, CK+M, and IE courses put together. As could be seen from Table 4.1, out of a total of 38 courses that preservice general education teachers in ELED take, 15 (39.47%) are CK courses, 3 (7.89%) are M courses, 18 (47.37%) are CK+M courses, and 2 (5.26%) are IE courses. Correspondingly, out of a total of 40 courses that preservice general education teachers in ECHD take, 16 (40%) are CK courses, 6 (15%) are M courses, 15 (37.5%) are CK+M courses, and 3 (7.50%) are IE courses.

Research Question 2

Question 1 of the interview protocol for faculty members asked the faculty members to pick the component(s) of the teacher education program they thought was or were the most important to prepare teacher candidates for inclusive classrooms, including those with students with disabilities? A detailed analysis is found in Chapter 4. The 14 participants made a total of 33 individual responses. A summary of the responses showed that teaching method (10, 30.30%), field experience (9, 27.27%), or inclusion coursework (8, 24.24%) was either the most important or important. According to ARRA (2009), IDEA (2004), INTASC (2001), NCLB (2001), and UNESCO IBE (2008), content knowledge is the most important of all the components of inclusive education. However, only 5 responses (15.15%) indicated content knowledge was the most important or important. Of the 5 responses, three were from faculty members from the same discipline; and they indicated, specifically, that content knowledge was the most important.

Research Question 3

Question 7 of the background information section of the Preservice General Education Teacher Questionnaire asked respondents if they thought that they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their teacher education program. A detailed analysis is above in this chapter.

All the seniors who completed student teaching (14, 100%) stated that they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Unlike the seniors who completed student teaching, six (18.18%) seniors who were on campus stated that they thought they would not be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Hence 27 out of the 33 (81.82%) seniors who were on campus indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Regarding the juniors, seven out of the 15 (46.67%) indicated they thought they would not be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in their classrooms at the end of their programs. The rest of the juniors, eight (53.33%) thought they would be fully prepared.

These results suggest that the more advanced the preservice general education teachers were in the program, the more the number of them who indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. And taking Schmidt et al.'s (2011) line of argument, the more content knowledge courses the preservice general education teachers took in relation to other courses, the more the number of them who indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs.

Closely, related to Question 7 of the background information section of the Preservice General Education Teacher Questionnaire, is Question 6. Question 6 asked respondents how confident they felt teaching students with disabilities. To me, how confident a respondent felt and how prepared a respondent felt are related. Gao and Mager's (2011) findings agree with the above viewpoint. For the seniors who completed student teaching, a majority, 11 (78.57%) stated they felt *confident,* two (14.29%) stated they felt *very confident,* and one (7.14%) stated s/he felt *somewhat confident.* For seniors who were on campus, a majority, 18 (54.55%) indicated they felt *somewhat confident* and 11 (33.33%) indicated they felt *confident*. Only two (6.06%) out of the 33 seniors who were on campus indicated that they felt *very confident* and the remaining two (6.06%) stated they felt *not confident*.

And for the juniors, a majority, 11 (73.33%) felt *somewhat confident*, three (20%) felt *confident* and one (6.67%) felt *not confident*. These results correspond with those of Question 7 above. Like for Question 7, these results suggest that the more advanced the preservice general education teachers were in the program, the more confident they felt teaching student with disabilities. In other words, this may mean, the more courses (content knowledge only, methods only, combination of both content knowledge and methods, inclusive education, and even student teaching) the preservice general education teachers take, the more confident they felt teaching students with disabilities.

Summary and Conclusions

A number of results are apparent from the above analysis. First, without a doubt, the TEP emphasizes content knowledge more than all other components of inclusive education. Second, only three out of the 14 faculty members indicated content knowledge was the most important of the inclusive education components. Third, the more advanced the preservice general education

teachers were in the program, the more the number of them who indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. By the same token, the more advanced the preservice general education teachers were in the program, the more confident they felt teaching student with disabilities. Thus it can be argued further that, the more courses the preservice general education teachers took, the more prepared and the more confident they felt to teach diverse students.

To conclude, the TEP emphasizes content knowledge, as expected, and this might have resulted in the preservice general education teachers indicating how fully prepared they would be and how confident they felt teaching diverse students depending on their levels in the program, the number of faculty members indicating content knowledge was/was not the most important element of inclusive education notwithstanding.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the discussions and conclusions of the study. First, the chapter presents the purpose of the study. Second, the chapter states the research questions. Third, the chapter presents the summary of the results of the study. Fourth, the chapter discusses how the decisions the teacher educators made influenced how prepared the preservice general education teachers felt about teaching diverse students. Fifth, the chapter discusses the relationship of this study to previous studies. Sixth, the chapter presents the theoretical implications for the study. Seventh, the chapter presents recommendations for teacher education programs. Eighth, the chapter presents the implications for practice. Ninth, the chapter outlines the recommendations for future research. Last, the chapter presents the conclusions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this concurrent mixed methods study was to explore the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice general education teachers for inclusive classrooms and examine how those decisions may influence the preparedness of the preservice general education teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities, in general education settings.

Research Questions

The research questions developed for this study include:

1. What components does the teacher education program emphasize while preparing preservice general education teachers for inclusive classroom?

2. In preparing preservice general education teachers for inclusive education, what components (e.g., content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge/methods) do faculty members think should be emphasized more than the other? Why?
3. Do preservice general education teachers believe they are fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom?
4. How do the decisions teacher educators make affect how prepared preservice general education teachers feel about teaching diverse students?

Summary of the Results

This section presents the summary of the results pertaining to the components the TEP emphasizes, the components faculty members emphasized, and how prepared preservice general education teachers felt teaching diverse students at the end their programs.

Components TEP Emphasizes

Preservice general education teachers in the three programs of the TEP take about the same total number of content knowledge only (CK), methods only (M), combination of both content knowledge and methods (CK+M), and inclusive education (IE) courses put together. Out of a total of 38 courses that preservice general education teachers in ELED take, 39.47% are CK courses, 7.89% are M courses, 47.37% are CK+M courses, and 5.26% are IE courses. In the same way, out of a total of 40 courses that preservice general education teachers in ECHD take, 40% are CK courses, 15% are M courses, 37.5% are CK+M courses, and 7.50% are IE courses. The courses preservice general education teachers in SSCI take appear to follow a similar pattern. Considering the percentage of courses devoted to CK, CK+M, and/or M courses, it appears from the analysis that the TEP emphasizes content knowledge more than methods and inclusive education coursework.

Components Faculty Members Emphasize

A summary of the responses from the participants revealed that teaching methods (10, 30.30%), field experience (9, 27.27%), or inclusion coursework (8, 24.24%) was either the most important or important. Only five responses (15.15%) indicated content knowledge was the most important or important. Three of the five responses were for faculty members (all from the same discipline) who indicated specifically that content knowledge was the most important. In addition, the participants stated that content knowledge was the most important because without a thorough knowledge of content, a teacher might not teach effectively in inclusive classrooms.

Preservice Teachers' Responses

Results for whether the preservice general education teachers believed they were fully prepared to teach diverse students are in three parts, according to the parts of the questionnaire. The parts of the questionnaire are respondent background information questions, INTASC sub-questionnaire, and ATIES (Wilczenski, 1992).

Respondent background information questions. On the whole, the more advanced the preservice teachers have progressed through the TEP, the more confident they felt teaching students with disabilities in general education settings. For the seniors who completed student teaching, a majority, 11 (78.57%) stated they felt *confident* teaching students with disabilities and two (14.29%) stated they felt *very confident* teaching students with disabilities. A majority of the seniors who were on campus, 18 (54.55%) indicated they felt *somewhat confident* teaching student with disabilities and 11 (33.33%) indicated they felt *confident* teaching students with disabilities. Only two (6.06%) of the 33 seniors who were on campus indicated that they felt *very confident* teaching students with disabilities. Additionally, for the juniors, a majority, 11

(73.33%) felt *somewhat confident* teaching students with disabilities and three (20%) felt *confident* teaching students with disabilities.

Furthermore, all the seniors who completed student teaching 14 (100%) and twenty-seven out of the 33 (81.82%) seniors who were on campus stated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. As regards the juniors, eight (53.33%) thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students. These results suggest that the more advanced the preservice teachers have progressed through the TEP, the more the number of them indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Consequently, it appears that the preservice teachers believe that the more experience they acquire with diverse students and with the accompanying knowledge, the more prepared they will be in this arena.

INTASC sub-questionnaire. For seven (70%) out the 10 competencies, the seniors who completed student teaching indicated they met the competencies the general education preservice teachers should meet to teach in classrooms that included all students, including students with disabilities more than the seniors who were on campus and the juniors. The competencies, the seniors who completed student teaching indicated they met more than the others are concepts, tools, and structures of discipline; learning and development; communication technologies; instruction planning; assessment strategies; reflective practitioner; and relationships. In the second position were the seniors who were on campus. They also indicated they met the seven competencies, listed above, more than the juniors. Subsequently, the juniors took the third position. With the exception of one competency, diversity, the juniors indicated the worst understanding of all the competencies. Thus the more experience the preservice teachers have in the program, the more competencies they believe they met.

Another vitally important finding of the analysis of responses to the INTASC sub-questionnaire is that the three groups—the seniors who completed student teaching, the seniors who were on campus, and the juniors—all recorded approximately the lowest mean for motivation and behavior. That is to say, all the groups were least conversant with the fifth principle.

Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES; Wilczenski, 1992). The results pertaining to the analysis of responses to the ATIES (1992) are not well defined. Specifically, it is not easy to determine which preservice general education teacher group showed more positive attitudes toward teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom. The seniors who completed student teaching placed first in positive attitudes toward students who need social accommodations, second toward students who need physical and academic accommodations, and third toward students who need behavioral accommodations. The seniors who were on campus placed first in regard to positive attitudes toward students who need academic and behavioral accommodations, and third toward students who need social and physical accommodations. The juniors were first in positive attitudes toward students who need physical accommodations, second toward students who need social and behavioral accommodations, and third toward students who need academic accommodations.

Although the results concerning the analysis of responses to the ATIES (1992) are not well defined, I have made two important observations. First, the findings of the analysis showed that the three groups recorded the lowest mean for behavioral accommodations just as the INTASC sub-questionnaire analysis showed for motivation and behavior. Studies have found that preservice general education teachers were not willing to include students with behavior problems in the classroom (e.g., Gao & Mager, 2011; Sharma et al., 2003) because disruptive

behavior interferes with the teaching and learning process (Walker et al., 2005). Second, the juniors placed third toward students who need academic accommodations just as the INTASC sub-questionnaire analysis showed for concepts, tools, and structures of discipline; which is content knowledge, the most important inclusive education component.

How Decisions Teacher Educators Make Affect Preservice Teachers

The TEP emphasizes content knowledge more than all other components of inclusive education. However, only five out of the 14 faculty members indicated content knowledge was an important/the most important of the inclusive education components. I made two observations from the analysis. First, the more advanced the preservice teachers have progressed through the TEP, the more they indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Second, the more advanced the preservice teachers have progressed through the TEP, the more confident they felt teaching students with disabilities. Therefore, it is appears that the TEP emphasizes content knowledge, as expected, and this might have resulted in the preservice general education teachers indicating how fully prepared they would be and how confident they felt teaching diverse students in accordance with the more experience they had in the program, in spite of the fact that only three faculty members indicated, explicitly, that content knowledge was the most important element of inclusive education.

Relationship of this Study to Previous Studies

This section discusses the relationship of this study to previous studies. The section discusses the relationship with regard to the components the TEP emphasizes, the components faculty members emphasized, and how prepared preservice general education teachers felt teaching diverse students at the end their programs.

Components TEP Emphasizes

The results of this study showed that the TEP emphasizes content knowledge more than the other components of inclusive education. Overall, at the end of their programs, the preservice general education teachers take a considerable larger number of content knowledge courses more than methods courses and inclusive education courses. This position is akin to that of Wolsey et al. (2013). The authors found that preservice teachers indicated that their own literacy skills were important for students' meaningful performance and further stated that the content and design of coursework was very crucial in the training of teachers. The TEP's position is also in line with those of federal laws, teaching standards, and organizations (e.g., ARRA, 2009; IDEA, 2004; INTASC, 2001; NCLB, 2001; UNESCO IBE, 2008) that content knowledge is the most important of all the components of inclusive education.

Components Faculty Members Emphasize

The results of this study showed that faculty members did not think that content knowledge should be emphasized more than other components of inclusive education. These results are similar to those of Cooper et al. (2008) and Harvey et al. (2010). The results (of the two studies) suggest that faculty members may not be very conversant with the principles of inclusive education. It should be noted, however, that the participants of the two studies were faculty members from special and general education fields but the participants of the current study were from only the general education field.

Nevertheless, the results of this study also showed that on the following questions that are related to emphasizing content knowledge such as

- stating why the component was the most important,
- discussing effective teaching strategies for teaching in inclusive classrooms,

- discussing appropriate classroom management skills and behavior interventions in inclusive classrooms,
- indicating methods of formal and informal assessment used (or discussed) in the classroom,
- stating the types of effective communication and collaboration skills used with families and other professionals,
- describing current knowledge and skills level to prepare general education teachers,
- stating any training or professional development designed to improve inclusive education skills, and
- listing any suggestions that could place the college inclusive education program in a better position to effectively train preservice general education teachers,

the faculty members provided responses that showed that, to a great extent, they were teaching the preservice general education teachers in accordance with the principles of inclusive education.

Two main results of this study, pertaining to the above, are similar to those of previous studies. For example, in regard to describing current knowledge and skills level to prepare general education teachers, Cooper et al. (2008) found that a large percentage of the participants described their knowledge and skill base for preparing preservice teachers to work with students with disabilities in general education settings as "somewhat or extremely limited." In the same study, Cooper et al. (2008) also found that faculty members suggested seeking funding, seeking effective ways of preparing preservice teachers, creating collaborative activities across disciplines, and identifying university-wide resources as means to make the program better.

My search did not find any literature related to the other questions. Thus, this study brings to light some of the areas for future study.

How Prepared Preservice Teachers Feel

This section discusses the relationship of this study to previous studies in respect to how prepared preservice general education teachers felt teaching diverse students at the end their programs. The section discusses the relationship with regard to respondent background information questions, INTASC sub-questionnaire, and Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale.

Respondent background information questions. The results of this study showed that respondents having a family member or a relative with disabilities did not affect the respondents' attitudes toward inclusive education. This result is in contrast to the results of Parasuram's (2006) study, which found that only prior contact with a person with a disability affected teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education.

The results of this study showed that the seniors who completed student teaching felt more confident and fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, than seniors on campus and juniors. Several other studies address similar issues. For example, Claflin et al. (2012), Gao and Mager (2011), Hamre and Oyler (2004), Hemmings and Woodcock (2011), Jenkins and Ornelles (2007), Lancaster and Bain (2010), and Sharma et al. (2003) addressed how prepared preservice teachers feel about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Gao and Mager's (2011) results, in particular, are closely related to those of this study. The authors found that, in general, respondents showed positive teacher efficacy, and positive attitudes toward inclusive education. In addition, like in this study, respondents' confidence increased as they advanced in the program**.**

INTASC sub-questionnaire. The results of this study showed that the seniors who completed student teaching indicated that they met seven out the 10 competencies, the general education preservice teachers should meet to teach in inclusive classrooms, more than the seniors who were on campus and the juniors. Jenkins and Ornelles (2007) conducted a similar survey that was based on the 10 principles of the INTASC. However, whereas, Jenkins and Ornelles (2007) compared preservice teachers in a general education program with preservice teachers in a dual teacher preparation program, this study compared the three levels the preservice general education teachers completed (the stages they reached) in the TEP. The authors found that the preserve teachers in the general education program obtained significantly lower scores in all the variables compared with the scores of the preservice teachers in a dual teacher preparation program.

Furthermore, in the literature I reviewed, a couple of studies addressed also some of the competencies. For example, the studies have found that preservice general education teachers were either negative about having students with behavior problems in the classroom or unwilling to include students with behavior problems in the classroom (e.g., Gao & Mager, 2011; Sharma et al., 2003). Additionally, Sharma et al. (2003) found that preservice general education teachers were unwilling to include students with academic problems in the classroom. The majority of the competencies were not addressed in the literature I reviewed. Thus this study brings to light the competencies that were not addressed, such as learning and development, diversity, instructional strategies, communication technologies, instruction planning, assessment strategies, reflective practitioner, and relationships.

Attitudes toward Inclusive Education Scale. From the results of this study it is not easy to determine, in general, the preservice general education teacher group that performed best in

the four subscales namely, attitudes toward students requiring social, physical, academic, or behavioral accommodations in the classroom. However, Wilczenski (1992, 1995) surveyed both in-service and preservice teachers and found that the respondents agreed with statements describing social and physical accommodations than they did with academic and behavioral problems. Similar to the situation with the INTASC sub-questionnaire (Jenkins and Ornelles, 2007) above, Wilczenski's (1992, 1995) respondents and/or unit of analysis were a little bit different from those of this study.

Additionally, the literature I reviewed showed that Sharma et al. (2003) found that preservice general education teachers from Australia were more willing to include students with social integration problems and students with physical disabilities into regular schools than include students with academic and students with behavior problems.

Theoretical Implications for the Study

To some extent, the results of this study seem to be consistent with the conceptual framework I developed based on Bandura's (1977) social learning theory/social cognitive theory. The results of this study showed that the TEP emphasizes content knowledge and, on the whole, the preservice general education teachers indicated that they would be fully prepared and they also felt confident teaching diverse students depending on their levels in the program. The above results appear consistent with my conceptual framework.

However, most of the faculty members did not indicate that content knowledge was the most important element of inclusive education. In other words, the faculty members did not think content knowledge should be emphasized more than the other components. Whereas a number of studies (e.g., Lortie, 1975; Watanabe & Huntley, 2010; Wilson et al., 2005) support Bandura's (1977) theory, it appears that in this study, the decisions of the faculty members did not have any

direct impact on the preservice general education teachers' feeling and/or confidence about teaching diverse students.

According to Bandura's (1977) theory, individuals learn social behavior by observing and copying the actions/behaviors of others. It should, however, be noted that the theory is not without criticisms. One of the criticisms is that the theory is not a theory of development. Thus according to Coates and Hartup (1969), the theory ignores the important fact that human behavior changes as children grow older. In addition, as a modeling theory, Bandura's theory is based on the understanding that the learner learns from the model if s/he identifies some quality in the model and decides to have it. Thus the learner's decision also counts before learning can effectively take place.

The results pertaining to the faculty members could mean that the faculty members emphasize content knowledge without realizing it. Most probably, because the TEP emphasizes content knowledge (by way of curriculum), the faculty members demonstrated or provided the preservice teachers with useful information regarding what they should teach and how they should teach it (Wilson et al., 2005) without realizing that what they did amounted to emphasizing content knowledge.

Recommendations for Teacher Education Programs

Based on the findings of this study, I offer two major recommendations that could place teacher education programs in a better position to effectively prepare preservice general education teachers. A majority of the faculty members in this study suggested that they thought professional development for faculty members could place the college inclusive education program in a better position to effectively train preservice general education teachers for a more diverse P-12 student population. In addition, over 35% of the faculty members stated they had no

training or professional development in inclusive education. Professional development on concepts, processes, and skills of inclusive education could immensely benefit the faculty members and the program.

The second major recommendation hinges on collaboration. Although the TEP is doing relatively well currently, and actually won a recognition of excellence from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education recently, not all the programs of the TEP are included in the award. Thus internal collaboration (i.e., collaboration between coordinators of ECHD, ELEM, and SSCI) may result in program enhancement in form of revising existing courses or adding new ones (Peterson & Beloin, 1998) in order to meet the needs of a more diverse P-12 student population. Furthermore, the results of this study showed that both the faculty members and the preservice general education teachers greatly emphasized the importance of field experience in the training of the preservice teachers for inclusive education. Establishing a strong connection between the university/department and collaborative local schools may improve the field experience of the preservice general education teachers and the program.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study have implications for practice in relation to the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice general education teachers for inclusive classrooms and the preparedness of the preservice general education teachers to teach all students. With regard to the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice general education teachers, the TEP emphasizes content knowledge more than methods and inclusive education courses (as required by inclusive education) and this might have resulted in preservice general education teachers indicating that they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students. Teacher education programs, for example, should note that for the program to

be effective, content knowledge courses should be emphasized more than methods courses and inclusive education courses.

However, whereas studies have shown that students teach the way they were taught (e.g., Lortie, 1975; Watanabe & Huntley, 2010; Wilson et al., 2005), most of the faculty members in this study did not seem to model inclusive education, especially with regard to indicating that content knowledge was more important than other components of inclusive education. Although in this study, it is possible that the faculty members emphasized content knowledge without knowing it, teacher education programs should be aware that a conscious effort toward the training of preservice general education teachers may be more beneficial to them than an unconscious one. Thus teacher education programs should provide the appropriate inclusive education training/professional development to faculty members to make them more effective in training preservice teachers.

Last, this study showed that the seniors who completed student teaching, according to the INTASC sub-questionnaire, met more of the competencies than the seniors on campus and juniors. In addition, all the seniors who completed student teaching indicated they were fully prepared and, with the exception of only one, stated they felt either very confident or confident teaching diverse students. Teacher education programs should emphasize the competencies of INTASC, which are closely related to the competencies of inclusive education, so that the preservice general education teachers may have a thorough and well-rounded training that may allow them to be fully prepared to be effective in the classroom.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this study I explored the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms and examined how those decisions may influence the

preparedness of preservice teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities, in general education settings. In the study, I noticed that preservice general education teachers in the TEP take content knowledge only, methods only, and combination of both content knowledge and methods courses. First, my search did not find any studies that have determined which of the two options (content knowledge only/methods only or combination of both content knowledge and methods) courses benefits preservice general education teachers more, or the types of benefits derived from them. It is recommended that future research should determine if content knowledge only/methods courses only benefit preservice teachers more than combination of both content knowledge and methods courses. In addition, studies should also focus on the types of benefits each option offers preservice general education teachers.

Second, the literature I reviewed did not address how the experience and title (professor, instructor, teaching assistant), for example, affect the inclusive education decisions they make while teaching preservice general education teachers. Studies that address how experience and title affect the decisions faculty members make may help in determining the group to target for professional development and the type of professional development to provide for the individual groups, should the need arises.

Third, this study is, in part, about how prepared preservice general education teachers believe they are to teach all students. A more appropriate study should examine the academic outcomes of students taught by the preservice general education teachers. To determine the actual effectiveness of a teacher education program, studies should focus on the academic outcomes of students taught by the preservice general education teachers. Thus, it is recommended that longitudinal cohort studies be conducted with the aim of observing the

academic performance of students taught by the preservice general education teachers who may become inservice general education teachers.

Last, there is very limited literature concerning the decisions teacher educators make while preparing preservice teachers. My search found only two related articles on the perceptions of teacher educators while preparing preservice teachers. It is recommended that more studies be conducted in the area. Studies in the area will shed light on how the decisions of faculty members affect teacher education programs and thus narrow the gap in the literature.

Conclusions

Research Question 1: What components does the teacher education program emphasize while preparing preservice general education teachers for inclusive classroom?

The preservice general education teachers in the three programs take roughly the same total number of content knowledge only, methods only, a combination of both content knowledge and methods, and inclusive education courses. Considering the percentage of courses devoted to content knowledge only, methods only, a combination of both content knowledge and methods courses, it is clear from the analysis that the TEP emphasizes content knowledge more than methods and inclusive education coursework. The order is content knowledge first, methods second, and then inclusive education coursework. To conclude, the TEP emphasizes content knowledge, as expected.

Research Question 2: In preparing preservice general education teachers for inclusive education, what components (e.g., content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge/methods) do faculty members think should be emphasized more than the other? Why?

The faculty members did not indicate that content knowledge should be emphasized more than the other components of inclusive education. Instead, they indicated that teaching methods,

field experience, and inclusion coursework should be emphasized more than the other components. Only three out of the 14 faculty members, all from the same discipline, indicated categorically that content knowledge was the most important of all the inclusive education components.

Additionally, the participants who indicated that content knowledge was the most important of all the components also indicated that without a thorough knowledge of content, a teacher might not teach effectively in inclusive classrooms. The ultimate goal of inclusive education is to teach the right content to all students, including students with disabilities so that they can live a better quality of life and contribute positively to society. This means the few content knowledge teachers who indicated content knowledge was the most important also appear to have a clear idea why content knowledge is the most important in inclusive education.

Research Question 3: Do preservice general education teachers believe they are fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom?

In general, the more advanced the preservice teachers have progressed through the TEP, the more confident they felt teaching students with disabilities in general education settings; and the more the number of them who indicated they thought they would be fully prepared to teach diverse students in their classrooms at the end of their programs. Moreover, for the INTASC sub-questionnaire (in particular) and ATIES, although mean scores of the seniors are, in most cases, a little bit higher than those of the juniors, in most instances the mean scores of the juniors are within the *agree* level of agreement. To me, this is also a testimony to the high standard of operation of the TEP. Little wonder, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education awarded recognition of excellence to some programs of the TEP recently. From my

point of view, the preservice general education teachers' indication that they would be fully prepared and that they felt confident teaching diverse students might explain the seemingly high standard of the TEP.

Research Question 4: How do the decisions teacher educators make affect how prepared preservice general education teachers feel about teaching diverse students?

The TEP emphasizes content knowledge, as expected, and this might have resulted in the preservice general education teachers indicating how fully prepared they would be and how confident they felt teaching diverse students, consistent with their levels in the program. Nonetheless, only three (21.43%) faculty members indicated content knowledge was the most important element of inclusive education. This could mean the faculty members understood inclusion, and taught and served students with disabilities in inclusion classrooms effectively. This could also mean that, as far as this study is concerned, the decisions of the faculty members did not have any direct influence on the preservice general education teachers' feeling and/or confidence about teaching students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

REFERENCES

Akers, R. L. (1998). *Social learning and social structure: A general theory of crime and deviance*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.

Akers, R. L., & Jensen, G, F. (2006). The empirical status of social learning theory of crime and deviance: The past, present, and future. In F. Cullen, J. P. Wright, & K. R. Blevins (Eds.), *Taking stock: The status of criminological theory. Advances in criminological theory* (Vol. 15), (pp. 37–76). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Altheide, D. (1996). *Qualitative Media Analysis.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Ball, D. L, Hill, H. C. & Bass, H. (2005). Knowing mathematics for teaching. *Am Educ 29*(3), 14–46.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Berlin, D. F., & White, A. L. (2012). A longitudinal look at attitudes and perceptions related to integration of mathematics, science, and technology education. *School Science and Mathematics, 112*(1), 20-30.

Bitsch, V. (2005). Qualitative research: A grounded theory example and evaluation criteria. *Journal of Agribusiness*, *23*(1), 75-91.

Bocala, C., Morgan, C., Mundry, S., & Mello, D. (2010). *Do states have certification requirements for preparing general education teachers to teach students with disabilities? Experience in the Northeast and Islands Region* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2010–No. 090). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance,

Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs

Boone, H. N. Jr., & Boone, D. A. (2012). Analyzing Likert data. *Journal of Extension, 50*(2). Retrieved from http://www.joe.org/joe/2012april/tt2.php

Bowling, A. (2002). *Research methods in health: Investigating health and health services.* Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.

Brantlinger, E., Jimenez, R., Klingner, J., Pugach, M., & Richardson, V. (2005). Qualitative studies in special education. *Council for Exceptional Children, 71*(2), 195-207.

Bryman, A. (2001). *Social research methods.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (2006). *Mixed methods: A four volume set.* London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Burdette, P. (2007). *INTASC Principles: How they are addressed by five specialty program association standards*. Project Forum at NASDSE. Retrieved from http://www.projectforum.org

Campbell, D. T., & Fiske, D. W. (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix. *Psychological Bulletin, 56,* 81-105.

Chou, C.-H. (2008). *Ontology structure of elements for web-based natural disaster management systems: developments, management, evaluation, and application* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest LLC. (UMI Number: 3332167).

Claflin, M. S., Eddins, B., & Eicher, D. (2012). Looking through an inclusive lens: Training secondary education student teachers to apply principles of universal design. *National Social Science Journal, 39*(1), 8-17.

Clason, D. L., & Dormody, T. J. (1994) Analyzing data measured by individual Likert-type items. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 35*(4), 31- 35.

Coates, B., & Hartup, W. W. (1969). Age and verbalization in observational learning. *Developmental Psychology, 1,* 556-562.

Cooper, J. E., Kurtts, S., Baber, C. R., & Vallecorsa, A. (2008). A model for examining teacher preparation curricula for inclusion. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 35*(4), 155-176.

Cortiella, C. (2005). No Child Left Behind: Determining appropriate assessment accommodations for students with disabilities. Retrieved from http://www.ldonline.org/article/10938/

Cottrell, R. R., & Mckenzie, J. F. (2011). *Health promotion and education research methods: Using the five-chapter thesis/dissertation model* (2nd ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett.

Creswell, J. W. (1999). Mixed method research: Introduction and application. In T. Cijek (Ed.), *Handbook of educational policy* (pp. 455–472). San Deigo, CA: Academic Press.

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed.).Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J., Fetters, M., & Ivankova, N. (2004). Designing a mixed methods study in primary care. *Annals of Family Medicine, 2,* 7–12.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M. L., & Hanson, W. E. (2003). Advanced mixed methods research designs. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 209–240). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DeSimone, J. R., & Parmar, R. S. (2006). Issues and challenges for middle school mathematics teachers in inclusion classrooms. *School Science and Mathematics, 106*, 338-348.

de Vaus, D. A. (2002). *Surveys in social research* (5th ed.). Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin.

Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. New York. NY: Praeger.

Drever, E. (1995). *Using semi-structured interviews in small-scale research: A teacher's guide*. Edinburgh, United Kingdom: Scottish Council for Research in Education.

Elliott, J. (2005) *Using narrative in social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* London, United Kingdom : Sage.

Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2006). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Fullerton, A., Ruben, B. J., McBride, S., & Bert, S. (2011). Development and design of a merged secondary and special education teacher preparation program. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 38*(2), 27–44.

Gans, H. J. (1963). *Urban villagers: Group life and class in the life of Italian-Americans*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Gao, W., & Mager, G. (2011). Enhancing preservice teachers' sense of efficacy and

attitudes toward school diversity through preparation: A case of one U.S. inclusive teacher education program. *International Journal of Special Education, 26*(22), 89-104.

Gottfredson, M., & Hirschi, T. (1990). *A general theory of crime*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Greene, J. C. (2006). Toward a methodology of mixed methods social inquiry. *Research in the Schools, 13*(1), 93-98.

Greene, J. C., Caracelli, V. J., & Graham,W. F. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 11,* 255-274.

Grusec, J. E. (1992). Social learning theory and developmental psychology: The legacies of Robert Sears and Albert Bandura. *Developmental Psychology, 28*(5), 776-786. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.28.5.776

Hamre, B., & Oyler, C. (2004). Preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms: Learning from a collaborative inquiry group. *Journal of Teacher Education, 55*, 154-163.

Harvey, M. W., Yssel, N., Bauserman, A. D., & Merbler, J. B. (2010). Preservice teacher preparation for inclusion: An exploration of higher education teacher-training institutions. *Remedial and Special Education, 31*(1), 24-33. doi: 10.1177/0741932508324397

Hemmings, B. & Woodcock, S. (2011). Preservice teachers' views of inclusive education: A content analysis. *Australasian Journal of Special Education, 35*(2), 103-116.

Hollingshead, A. B. (1949). *Elmtown's youth*. New York, NY: John Wiley.

Hsieh, H. -F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis.

Qualitative Health Research, 15(9), 1277-1288.

Hunter, A., & Brewer, J. (2003). Multimethod research in sociology. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 577-594). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004, Pub. L. No. 108–446, § 612, 118 Stat. 2677. Retrieved from http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/lr/ideareathztn.asp

Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (2001). *Model standards for licensing general and special education teachers of students with disabilities: A resource for state dialogue*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved from http://www.ccsso.org/intasc.html

Jacoby, J. R. (2013). Race-conscious charter schools and the antibalkinization perspective of equal protection. *Journal of Constitutional Law, 15*(5), 1561-1580.

Jahoda, M., Lazarsfeld, P. F., & Zeisel, H. (1931/2003). *Marienthal: The sociography of an unemployed community*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Jenkins, A., & Ornelles, C. (2007). Preservice teachers' confidence in teaching students with disabilities: Addressing the INTASC principles, *Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education, 2*(2). Retrieved from http://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1085&context=ejie

Jick, T. D. (1979). Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 24*, 602-611.

Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher, 33*(7), 14-26.

Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A., & Turner, L. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1*, 112-133.

Kondracki, N. L., &Wellman, N. S. (2002). Content analysis: Review of methods and their applications in nutrition education. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, *34*, 224-230.

Kyngas, H., &Vanhanen, L. (1999). Content analysis as a research method [Finnish]. *Hoitotiede, 11*, 3-12.

Lancaster, J., & Bain, A. (2010). The design of pre-service inclusive education courses and their effects on self-efficacy: A comparative study. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, *38*(2), 117-128.

Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology, 22*(140), 1-55.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Luck, L., Jackson, D., & Usher, K. (2006). Survival of the fittest, or socially constructed phenomena? Theoretical understandings of aggression & violence towards nurses. *Contemporary Nurse*, *21*(2), 251-263.

Lynd, R. S., & Lynd, H. M. (1929/1959). *Middletown: A study in modern American culture*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace.

Maxwell, J. A. (1996). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Merriam, S. B. (2007). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Morgan, D. L. (1998). Practical strategies for combining qualitative and quantitative methods: Applications to health research. *Qualitative Health Research, 8,* 362-376.

Morse, J. (1991). Approaches to qualitative-quantitative methodological triangulation. *Nursing Research, 40,* 120-123.

Morse, J. M., & Niehaus, L. (2009). *Principles and procedures of mixed methods design.* Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common core state standards.* Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107–110, § 1116 *et seq*. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1116

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2013). *PISA 2012 results in focus: What 15-year-olds know and what they can do with what they know*. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-overview.pdf.

Parasuram, K. (2006). Variables that affect teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusive education in Mumbai, India. *Disability and Society, 21*(3), 231-242.

Patkin, D., & Timor, T. (2010). Attitudes of mathematics teachers towards the inclusion of students with learning disabilities and special needs in mainstream classrooms. *Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education, 2*(6), 1-22. Retrieved from http://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods.* Thousand Oaks,

CA: Sage.

Paulhus, D. L. (1984). Two-component models of socially desirable responding. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46*(3), 598-609.

Pavri, S. (2004). General and special education teachers' preparation needs in providing social supports: A needs assessment. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 27*, 433-443.

Peterson, M., & Beloin, K. S. (1998). Teaching the inclusive teacher: Restructuring the mainstream course in teacher education. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 21*(4), 306-318.

Plano Clark, V. L., & Galt, K. (2009, April). *Using a mixed methods approach to strengthen instrument development and validation*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Pharmacists Association, San Antonio, TX.

Powell, D., Higgins, H. J., Aran, R. & Freed, A. (2009). Impact of No Child Left Behind on curriculum and instruction in rural schools. *The Rural Educator, 31*(1), 19-28.

Priest, J., McColl, B. A., Thomas, L. & Bond, S. (1995). Developing and refining a new measurement tool. *Nurse Researcher, 2*, 69–81.

Rattray, J., & Jones, M. C. (2007). Essential elements of questionnaire design and development. *Journal of Clinical Nursing 16*, 234–243.

Ringwalt, C., Hanley, S., Ennett, S. T., Vincus, A. A., Bowling, J. M., Haws, S. W., & Rohrbach, L. A. (2011). The effects of No Child Left Behind on the prevalence of evidence-based drug prevention curricula in the nation's middle schools. *Journal of School Health, 81*(5), 265-272.

Robertson, M. (2006). Why novice teachers leave. *Principal Leadership, 6*(8), 33-36.

Sampson, R. J. (1999). Techniques of research neutralization. *Theoretical Criminology 3*(4), 438–451.

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Combining qualitative and quantitative sampling, data collection, and analysis techniques in mixed method studies. *Research in Nursing and Health, 23,* 246-255.

Sandelowski, M. (2003). Tables or tableaux? The challenges of writing and reading mixed methods studies. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 321-350). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schmidt, W., Cogan, L. & Houang, R., (2011). The role of opportunity to learn in teacher preparation: An international context. *Journal of Teacher Education, 62,*138-153.

Sharma, U., Ee, J., & Desai, I. (2003). A comparison of Australian and Singaporean preservice teachers' attitudes and concerns about inclusive education. *Teaching and Learning, 24*(2), 207-217.

Sobel, D. M., Iceman-Sands, D., & Basile, C. (2007). Merging general and special education teacher preparation programs to create an inclusive program for diverse learners. *The New Educator, 3,* 241-262. doi: 10.1080/15476880701484113

Stayton, V. D., & McCollum, J. (2002). Unifying general and special education: What does the research tell us? *Teacher Education and Special Education, 25*(3), 211-218.

Steckler, A., McLeroy, K. R, Goodman, R. M., Bird, S. T., & McCormick, L. (1992). Toward integrating qualitative and quantitative methods: An introduction. *Health Education Quarterly, 19,* 1-8.

Stemler, S. (2001). *An introduction to content analysis*. (Report No. EDO TM 01 06). Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (ERIC

Document Reproduction Service No. ED 458 218)

Strauss, A. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches* (Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 46). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (Eds.). (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2006). A general typology of research designs featuring mixed methods. *Research in the Schools*, *13*(1), 12-28.

Teddlie, C. & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of mixed methods research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. (2008). *International Conference on Education - 2008*. Retrieved from http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/ice/48th-ice-2008.html

U.S. Department of Education. (2009). *Race to the Top program executive summary*. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/executive-summary.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2014). *1990–2013 Mathematics and Reading Assessments.* Retrieved from http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/state-gains

Walker, H. M., Ramsey, E. & Gresham, R. M. (2005). *Antisocial behavior in school: Evidence based practices* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Watanabe, T., & Huntley, M. A. (2010). Connecting mathematics and science in undergraduate teacher education programs: Faculty voices from the Maryland collaborative for teacher preparation. *School Science and Mathematics, 98*(1), 19-25.

Webb, E. J., Campbell, D. T., Schwartz, R. D., & Sechrest, L. (1966). *Unobtrusive measures*. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally.

Wilczenski, F. L. (1992). Measuring attitudes toward inclusive education. *Psychology in the Schools, 29,* 306-312.

Wilczenski, F. L. (1995). Development of a scale to measure attitudes toward inclusive education. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 55*, 291-299.

Wilson, P., Cooney, T., & Stinson, D. (2005). What constitutes good mathematics teaching and how it develops: Nine high school teachers' perspectives. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*. *8*(2) 83–111.

Wilson, S. M., Floden, R. E., & Ferrini-Mundy, J. (2002). Teacher preparation research: An insiders' view from the outside. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(3), 190-204.

Wolfberg, P., Lepage, P., & Cook, E., (2009). Innovations in inclusive education: Two teacher preparation programs at the San Francisco State University. *International Journal of Whole Schooling, 5*(2), 16-27.

Wolsey, T. D., Young, J., Scales, R., Scales, W. D., Lenski, S., Yoder, K. K., ... Chambers, S. (2013). An examination of teacher education in literacy instruction and candidate perceptions of their learned literacy practices. *Action in Teacher Education, 35,* 204–222. doi: 10.1080/01626620.2013.806230

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL
Faculty Member

Part One: Background Information

Please indicate:

Your age _____

Your sex _____

Your ethnicity _____

Your title _____

Your specialty area and/or courses you teach _____

The number of years you have taught at the university level _____

Part Two: Faculty Member Inclusive Education Decisions

Of these components of the teacher education program (collaboration, inclusion coursework, content knowledge, teaching methods, field experiences) which do you think is or are the most important to prepare teacher candidates for inclusive classrooms, including those with students with disabilities?

Why do you think these are the most important?

Do you discuss effective teaching strategies for teaching in inclusive classrooms?
If so, what are they?

Do you discuss appropriate classroom management skills and behavior interventions for teaching in inclusive classrooms?

If so, what are they?

What methods of formal and informal assessments (if any) do you use (or discuss) in your classroom when preparing general education teachers?

What types of effective communication and collaboration skills (if any) do you discuss in classroom or use with families and other professionals when preparing general education teachers?

How would you describe your current knowledge and skills level to prepare general education teachers to teach students with disabilities in inclusive settings?

Have you had any training or professional development designed to improve your skills in preparing teacher candidates for inclusive classrooms?

Please list any suggestions that you think could place the college inclusive education program in a better position to effectively train preservice general education teachers.

APPENDIX B

PRESERVICE GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please indicate your:

Age _____

Sex _____

Ethnicity _____

Major/specialty area _____

Year in College _____

How many courses on inclusion have you taken so far?

How many content knowledge courses have you taken so far?

How many methods courses have you taken so far?

Do you have any family members or relatives with disabilities?

Do you have any friend(s)/acquaintance(s) with disabilities?

How confident do you feel teaching students with disabilities? Check one:

_____ Not confident

_____ Somewhat confident

_____ Confident

_____ Very confident

Do you think that you will be fully prepared to teach diverse students, including students with disabilities, in your classroom at the end of your teacher education program? Why/Why not?

INTERSTATE NEW TEACHERS ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT CONSORTIUM (INTASC) COMPETENCIES QUESTIONNAIRE

The Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) general education principles—*Model Standards for Licensing General And Special Education Teachers of Students with Disabilities: A Resource for State Dialogue*—provides the form of guidance in regard to standards that all general and special education teachers should meet to teach in classrooms that include all students, including students with disabilities. The competencies below are based on the 10 principles of INTASC.

Instructions

On the blank line, please place the number indicating your reaction to every item according to how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Please provide an answer for every item.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree Somewhat	Neutral	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Understanding the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) taught

_____ 1. I have a solid base of understanding of the major concepts, assumptions, issues, and processes of inquiry in my subject matter content areas.

_____ 2. I know which key concepts, ideas, facts, and processes in my content area students should understand at different grades and developmental levels.

_____ 3. I understand that students with disabilities may need accommodations, modifications, and/or adaptations to the general curriculum depending on their learning strengths and needs.

_____ 4. I have knowledge of the major principles and parameters of federal disabilities legislation.

_____ 5. I know about and can access resources to gain information about state, district, and school policies and procedures regarding special education.

Understanding how children learn and develop

_____ 6. I have a sound understanding of physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development from birth through adulthood and I am familiar with the general characteristics of the most frequently occurring disabilities.

_____ 7. I can continually examine my assumptions about the learning and development of

individual students with disabilities and I have realistically high expectations for what students with disabilities can accomplish.

_____ 8. I recognize that students with disabilities vary in their approaches to learning depending on factors such as the nature of their disability, their level of knowledge and functioning, and life experiences.

_____ 9. I am knowledgeable about multiple theories of learning (e.g., behavioral theory and behavior analysis, socio-cultural theory of cognitive development) and research-based teaching practices that support learning.

Understanding how students differ in their approaches to learning

_____ 10. I can build students' awareness, sensitivity, acceptance, and appreciation for students with disabilities who are members of my classroom, school, and community.

_____ 11. I recognize that a specific disability does not dictate how an individual student will learn. (One size does not fit all).

_____ 12. I understand that a disability can be perceived differently across families, communities, and cultures and I seek to understand and use these insights when working with students and families within their cultural communities.

_____ 13. I understand that lack of attention to cultural, ethnic, gender, and linguistic differences can lead to inappropriate assessment of students, over- and under identification of students for special education services, and inappropriate instruction of students.

Understanding and using a variety of instructional strategies

_____ 14. I have a shared responsibility for the education of students with disabilities; thus I can work collaboratively and individually to provide effective instruction for students with disabilities.

_____ 15. I understand how different learning theories and research contribute to effective instruction for students with disabilities.

_____ 16. I can use research-based practices including explicit instruction and planned maintenance and generalization to support initial learning and generalization of concepts and skills for students with disabilities.

_____ 17. I understand that it is particularly important to provide multiple ways for students with disabilities (and all students) to participate in learning activities.

_____ 18. I can provide a variety of ways for students with disabilities to demonstrate their learning.

_____ 19. I can adjust my instruction in response to information gathered from ongoing monitoring of performance and progress of students with disabilities.

_____ 20. I can use strategies that promote the independence, self-control, and self-advocacy of students with disabilities.

_____ 21. I expect and support the use of assistive and instructional technologies to promote learning and independence of students with disabilities.

Using an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior

_____ 22. I can identify the interests and preferences of students with disabilities and use this information to design activities that encourage students with disabilities to make positive contributions to the learning community.

_____ 23. I can help students with disabilities develop positive strategies for coping with frustrations in the learning situation that may be associated with their disabilities.

_____ 24. I can take deliberate action to promote positive social relationships among students with disabilities and their age-appropriate peers in the learning community.

_____ 25. I can recognize factors and situations that are likely to promote (or diminish) intrinsic motivation, and create learning environments that encourage engagement and self-motivation of students with disabilities.

_____ 26. I can participate in the design and implementation of individual behavioral support plans and be proactive in responding to the needs of individual students with disabilities within the learning community.

Using knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication technologies

_____ 27. I have knowledge of the general types of communication strategies and assistive technologies that can be incorporated as a regular part of my instruction to benefit students with disabilities.

_____ 28. I can collaborate with speech/language pathologists and other language specialists to identify the language and communication skills that need to be developed in students with disabilities, and can work cooperatively to teach those skills across settings.

_____ 29. I understand that linguistic background has an impact on language acquisition as well as communication content and style and I can use this knowledge to interact with and plan instruction for students with disabilities.

_____ 30. I can provide multiple opportunities to foster effective communication among

students with disabilities and other members of the classroom as a means of building communication and language skills.

_____ 31. I am sensitive to the verbal and non-verbal messages I may convey to students with disabilities and I can monitor the messages to ensure their positive impact on students with disabilities.

Planning instruction based on knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

_____ 32. I can contribute my expertise as a member of a collaborative team to develop, monitor, and periodically revise individualized educational plans for students with disabilities.

_____ 33. I can plan ways to modify instruction, as needed, to facilitate positive learning results within the general curriculum for students with disabilities.

_____ 34. I can collaborate to plan instruction related to expanded curriculum in general education classrooms for students with disabilities who require such curriculum.

_____ 35. I can design the learning environment so that the individual needs of students with disabilities are accommodated.

_____ 36. I can monitor student progress and incorporate knowledge of student performance across settings into the instructional planning process.

Understanding and using formal and informal assessment strategies

_____ 37. I understand the purposes, strengths, and limitations of formal and informal assessment approaches for making eligibility, placement, and instructional decisions for students with disabilities.

_____ 38. I can use a variety of assessment procedures to document students' learning, behavior, and growth within multiple environments appropriate to the student's age, interests, and learning.

_____ 39. I can collaborate with others to incorporate accommodations and alternate assessments into the ongoing assessment process of students with disabilities when appropriate.

_____ 40. I can engage all students, including students with disabilities, in assessing and understanding their own learning and behavior.

_____ 41. I understand that students with disabilities are expected to participate in district and statewide assessments and that accommodations or alternate assessments may be required when appropriate.

Being a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others

_____ 42. I can regularly use reflection and evaluation strategies to reflect on how individual students with disabilities are functioning in the classroom and how alternative instructional decisions and interactions might influence the student's progress or behavior.

_____ 43. I can continually challenge my beliefs about how students with disabilities learn and how to teach them effectively.

_____ 44. I can actively seek out current information and research about how to educate students with disabilities, including information that will help me understand the strengths and needs of students with disabilities.

_____ 45. I can reflect on the potential interaction between a student's cultural experiences and his/her disability, and regularly question the extent to which I may be interpreting the student's responses wrongly (i.e., not based on the student's culture).

Fostering relationships with school colleagues, families and agencies in the larger community

_____ 46. I can share instructional responsibility for students with disabilities and can work to develop well-functioning collaborative teaching relationships.

_____ 47. I understand the purposes/roles of, and am an effective member of, the different types of teams within the special education process.

_____ 48. I understand the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and other paraprofessionals, and can collaborate with these staff members to foster the safety, health, academic and/or social learning of students with disabilities.

_____ 49. I can accept families as full partners in planning appropriate instruction and services for students with disabilities.

ATTITUDE TOWARD INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SCALE

This scale concerns inclusive education, which is a philosophy that focuses on educating students with disabilities in the *least restrictive educational environment*. This means students with disabilities must be educated, to the *maximum extent appropriate,* in regular education classroom by the regular education teacher in collaboration with specialists (e.g., special education teacher).

Instructions

On the blank line, please place the number indicating your reaction to every item according to how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Please provide an answer for every item.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree Somewhat	Neutral	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

_____ 1. Students whose academic achievement is 4 or more years below the other students in grade should be in regular classes.

_____ 2. Students who are physically aggressive toward their peers should be in regular classes.

_____ 3. Students who cannot move without help from others should be in regular classes.

_____ 4. Students who are shy and withdrawn should be in regular classes.

_____ 5. Students whose academic achievement is 1.5 years below the other students in the grade should be in regular classes.

_____ 6. Students whose speech is difficult to understand should be in regular classes.

_____ 7. Students who cannot read standard print and need to use Braille should be in regular classes.

_____8. Students who are verbally aggressive toward their peers should be in regular classes.

_____ 9. Students who have difficulties expressing their thoughts verbally should be in regular classes.

_____ 10. Students who need training in self-help skills and activities of daily living should be in regular classes.

_____ 11. Students who use sign language or communication boards should be in regular classes.

_____ 12. Students who cannot control their behavior and disrupt activities should be in regular classes.

_____ 13. Students who need an individualized functional academic program in everyday reading and math skills should be in regular classes.

_____ 14. Students who cannot hear conversational speech should be in regular classes.

_____ 15. Students who do not follow school rules for conduct should be in regular classes.

_____ 16. Students who are frequently absent from school should be in regular classes.

Please list any suggestions you think could help prepare you to teach students with disabilities in inclusive settings more effectively.

APPENDIX C

Permission to use ATIES

Felicia L Wilczenski <Felicia.Wilczenski@umb.edu>
Tue 9/9/2014 4:11 PM
To: Lawrence Kofi Ametepee <lamet@siu.edu>;
2 attachments (224 KB)ATIES Scan001.PDF; ATIES References.docx;

Hello Lawrence,

Thank you for your interest in my work.

The ATIES is attached. You may copy or adapt it as needed for your project.

Best wishes in your doctoral studies.
--
Felicia L. Wilczenski, Ed.D.
Professor and Associate Dean
College of Education and
Human Development
School for Global Inclusion and
Social Development
University of Massachusetts Boston

From: Lawrence Kofi Ametepee <lamet@siu.edu>
Date: Tuesday, September 9, 2014 5:21 PM
To: UMassBoston <Felicia.Wilczenski@umb.edu>
Subject: Request for Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES)

Dear Dr. Wilczenski,

I believe you are doing well. I am Lawrence Ametepee, a doctoral student in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Carbondale, Illinois. I intend to conduct a study, which in part addresses preservice general education teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education.

Please may I have your permission to use your scale - Attitude Toward Inclusive Education (ATIES, 1995)? I will be very grateful if this request is given a thorough consideration.

Sincerely,

Lawrence

APPENDIX D

Course Sequence for New Elementary Program

Freshman 1	Freshman 2	Sophomore 1	Sophomore 2	Junior 1	Junior 2	Senior 1	Student Teaching
			Diversity EDUC 311 CK	Instructional Planning & Mgt EDUC 313 M	English Language Learners EDUC 319 CK + M	SPED EDUC 308 IE	
		Human Development EDUC 314 CK + M		Instructional Practices (Field) EDUC 301 M	Instructional Practices (Field) EDUC 302 CK + M	Instructional Practices (Field) EDUC 303 CK + M	
Academic Success UCOL 101	Intro to Oral Communica-tion SPCM 101 CK	Fine Arts (A course from Fine Arts) CK	Assessment of Child Development CI 337 M	Art & Music in the Elementary Classroom CI 325 CK + M	Engaging Children, Families, Communities CI 419 CK + M	Critical Issues in the Profession of Teaching CI 418 CK	
English Composition ENG 101 CK	English Composition ENG 102 CK	Human Health HED 101 CK	P.E. in the Elementary Classroom KIN 202 CK + M	Literacy Foundations & Instructional Models CI 431 CK + M	Literacy Development and Assessment (Preschool-4th) CI 432 CK + M	Literacy Development and Assessment (4th - 8th) CI 433 CK + M	
C20th America HIST 110 CK	Intro American Politics POLS 114 CK				Social Science Methods (P-4th) CI 361 CK + M	Literacy Diagnosis and Interventions CI 434 IE	
Number Systems CI/Math 120 CK + M	Math Operations and Structures CI/MATH 220 CK + M	College Algebra MATH 108 CK	Statistics MATH 282 CK	Math Methods (Preschool-4th) CI 388 CK + M	Math Methods (4th - 8th) CI 389 CK + M	Social Science Methods (4th -8th) CI 362 CK + M	
Humanities (A courses from Humanities) CK	Humanities (A courses from Humanities) CK	Integrated Sci SCI 210A CK	Integrated Sci SCI 210B CK	Science Methods (Preschool-4th) CI 426 CK + M		Science Methods (4th-8th) CI 427 CK + M	
15 hours	15 hours	15 hours	15 hours	16 hours	16 hours	18 hours	12
Total hours for Elementary Program = 122 hours							

Note: CK = content knowledge only; M = methods only; CK + M = combination of both content knowledge and methods; IE = inclusive education

APPENDIX E

Course Sequence for New Early Childhood Program

Freshman 1	Freshman 2	Sophomore 1	Sophomore 2	Junior 1	Junior 2	Senior 1	
			Diversity EDUC 311 CK	Instructional Planning & Mgt EDUC 313 M	English Language Learners EDUC 319 CK + M	Teaching Exceptional Children (SPED) EDUC 308 IE	
		Human Development EDUC 314 CK + M		Instructional Practices (Field) EDUC 301 M	Instructional Practices (Field) EDUC 302 CK + M	Instructional Practices (Field) EDUC 303 CK + M	
Academic Success UCOL 101	Intro to Oral Communica-tion SPCM 101 CK	Fine Arts (A course from Fine Arts) CK	Assessment of Child Development CI 337 M	Art & Music in the Elementary Classroom CI 325 CK + M	Engaging Children, Families, Communities CI 419 CK + M	Critical Issues in the Profession of Teaching CI 418 CK	
English Composition ENG 101 CK	English Composition ENG 102 CK	Human Health HED 101 CK	Language Development CI 413 CK	Literacy Foundations & Instructional Models CI 431 CK + M	Literacy Development and Assessment (Preschool-4th) CI 432 CK + M	Literacy Diagnosis and Interventions CI 434 IE	Student Teaching
C20th America HIST 110 CK	Intro American Politics POLS 114 CK			Infant/Toddler Development CI 405A CK	Intro to Early Childhood SPED SPED 405 IE	Social Science Methods (P-4th) CI 361 CK + M	
Number Systems CI/Math 120 CK + M	Math Operations and Structures CI/Math 220 CK + M	College Algebra Math 108 CK	P.E. in the Elementary Classroom KIN 202 CK + M	Guiding Play and Building Learning Communities CI 317 CK + M	Early Childhood Curriculum CI 318A M	Math Methods (Preschool-4th) CI 388 CK + M	
Humanities (A courses from Humanities) CK	Humanities (A courses from Humanities) CK	Integrated Sci SCI 210A CK	Integrated Sci SCI 210B CK	Clinical at Child Dev Lab CI 405B M	Clinical at Child Dev Lab CI 318B M	Science Methods (Preschool-4th) CI 426 CK + M	
15 hours	15 hours	15 hours	15 hours	17 hours	17 hours	18 hours	12
Total hours for Early Childhood Program = 124 hours							

Note: CK = content knowledge only; M = methods only; CK + M = combination of both content knowledge and methods; IE = inclusive education

APPENDIX F

COVER LETTER
Preservice General Education Teacher Questionnaire

Dear Student:

I am a graduate student seeking my PhD degree in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

The purpose of my study is to explore the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms and how those decisions may influence the preparedness of preservice teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities, in general education settings.

All juniors and seniors in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction will receive a copy of this questionnaire. You were selected to participate in this study because as a junior or senior you have reached a significant stage of your training as a teacher.

The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. I will ensure your confidentiality. No identifying information is on the questionnaire.

Completion and return of this questionnaire indicate voluntary consent to participate in this study.

Questions about this study can be directed to me or to my supervising professor, Dr. D. John McIntyre, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, SIUC, Carbondale, IL 62901-6899. Phone: 618-5362441. (SIUC mail code: 4610).

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this research.

Name: Lawrence Kofi Ametepee
Phone number: 940-4538886
E-mail: lamet@siu.edu

This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Human Subjects Committee. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Committee Chairperson, Office of Sponsored Projects Administration, SIUC, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone (618) 453-4533. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu

APPENDIX G

CONSENT FORM
Faculty Member

My name is Lawrence Kofi Ametepee. I am a graduate student at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

I am asking you to participate in my research study. The purpose of my study is to explore the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms and how those decisions may influence the preparedness of preservice teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities, in general education settings.

Participation is voluntary. If you choose to participate in the study, it will take approximately 30 minutes of your time. You will either take part in an interview or fill out the faculty member interview protocol.

All your responses will be kept confidential within reasonable limits. I am the only person who will have access to the data.

You have read the material above, and any questions you asked have been answered to your satisfaction. You understand a copy of this form will be made available to you for the relevant information and phone numbers. You realize that you may withdraw without prejudice at any time.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact me, Lawrence Kofi Ametepee (940-5438886, lamet@siu.edu) or my advisor, Dr. D. John McIntyre (618-5362441, johnm@siu.edu)

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this research.

_____

Participant Signature and Date

This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Human Subjects Committee. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Committee Chairperson, Office of Sponsored Projects Administration, SIUC, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: (618) 453-4533. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu

APPENDIX H

COVER LETTER
Faculty Member

Dear Faculty Member:

I am a graduate student seeking my PhD degree in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

The purpose of my study is to explore the decisions teacher educators make while training preservice teachers for inclusive classrooms and how those decisions may influence the preparedness of preservice teachers to teach all students, including students with disabilities, in general education settings.

All faculty members in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction who teach in the Teacher Education Program will receive a copy of this survey. You were selected to participate in this study because you are involved in the training of preserrvice general education teachers.

The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. All your responses will be kept confidential within reasonable limits. I am the only person who will have access to the surveys.

Signing the accompanying consent form indicate voluntary consent to participate in this study. Please use the return envelope provided.

Questions about this study can be directed to me or to my supervising professor, Dr. D. John McIntyre, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, SIUC, Carbondale, IL 62901-6899. Phone: 618-5362441. (SIUC mail code: 4610).

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in this research.

Name: Lawrence Kofi Ametepee
Phone number: 940-4538886
E-mail: lamet@siu.edu

This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Human Subjects Committee. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Committee Chairperson, Office of Sponsored Projects Administration, SIUC, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone (618) 453-4533. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu

VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Lawrence K. Ametepee

lamet77@yahoo.co.uk

Africa University
Bachelor of Arts in Education, English and Religious Studies, May 2002

Texas Woman's University
Master of Business Administration/Master of Health Systems Management, May 2007

Special Honors and Awards:

Mary Wakeland Scholarship Award, International Students and Scholars, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 2010

Dissertation Title:

A Case Study: Exploring the Inclusive Education Decisions Teacher Educators Make and Examining how Prepared Preservice Teachers Feel to Teach Diverse Students

Major Professor: Dr. D. John McIntyre

Publications:

Ametepee, L. K., & Anastasiou, D. (2015). Special and inclusive education in Ghana: Status and progress, challenges and implications. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *41*(2015), 143–152.

Ametepee, L. K., Tchinsala, Y., & Agbeh, A. O. (2014). The No Child Left Behind Act, the Common Core State Standards, and the school curriculum. *Review of Higher Education and Self-Learning (RHESL), 7*(24).

Abu, S., Adera, B., Kamsani, S. R. & Ametepee, L. K. (2012). Addressing the increasing

college student attrition rate by creating effective classroom interaction. *Review of Higher Education and Self-Learning (RHESL), 5*(16).

Ametepee, L., Adera, B., Abu, S., & Farquharson, G. (2011). Working with minority parents and their children with disabilities: Are parents satisfied? *International Journal of Social Health Information Management – IJSHIM. 4*(9).

Chitiyo, M., Rumano, M., Chitiyo, G, Ametepee, L., & Chitiyo, J. (2010). Zimbabwe education system: Emerging challenges and the implications for research and policy. *Journal of Global Intelligence & Policy – JGIP*, *3*(3), 35-42.

Chitiyo, M., Park, M., Makweche-Chitiyo, P. T., Ametepee, L. K., & Chitiyo, J. (2010). Examining the effect of positive behavior support on academic achievement of students with disabilities. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs.*

Ametepee, L. K., Chitiyo, M., & Abu, S. (2009). Examining the nature and perceived causes of indiscipline in Zimbabwean secondary schools. *British Journal of Special Education, 36*(3), 155-161.

Ametepee, L. K. & Chitiyo, M. (2009). What we know about autism in Africa: A brief research synthesis. *Journal of the International Association of Special Education, 10*(1), 11-13.