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Working with Children with Disabilities and with the General Education Teachers: Towards Recommendations for Successful Co-Teaching

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ABSTRACT

The effective inclusion of learners with special needs depends largely on the collaboration of special education teachers, both in working directly with these learners and in partnership with general education teachers. This study examined the practices of special education teachers in working with children with disabilities and with general education curriculum teachers, as assessed by parents, in order to formulate recommendations for successful co-teaching. Using a descriptive-correlational design, the study surveyed 30 parents of learners with disabilities at Manggahan Elementary School, Division of General Trias City, through a validated 28-item researcher-made questionnaire on a four-point scale. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage, weighted mean, the *t*-test, and Pearson's correlation coefficient. Most respondents were aged 45–49 (63%), female (67%), and parents rather than grandparents or guardians (57%). Respondents assessed teachers' practices in working with children with disabilities as "Often True" ($M = 3.23$, Somewhat Collaborative), with not labeling learners ($M = 3.33$) and verbal praise ($M = 3.30$) rated highest and giving one direction at a time ($M = 3.10$) rated lowest. Working with general education curriculum teachers was likewise rated "Often True" ($M = 3.26$, Somewhat Collaborative), led by planning ahead at least a week in advance ($M = 3.47$), while asking when one does not know the answer was rated lowest ($M = 3.10$). Assessments in both areas did not differ significantly by age or family role but differed significantly by sex ($t = 2.58$, $p = .02$; $t = 2.68$, $p = .01$). The two areas were not significantly related ($r = -.017$, $p = .929$), suggesting that parents evaluate teachers' special education strategies and their collaboration with general education teachers as independent domains. The study recommends single-step, multisensory instruction and a collaborative culture in which co-teachers openly seek and share knowledge, and proposes a co-teaching implementation matrix to support these practices.

Keywords: *co-teaching, inclusive education, children with disabilities, special education teachers, general education teachers, parent perceptions*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is an increasingly complex practice that requires professionals to engage continuously in reflective learning and in evolving best practices. In special education, teachers focus on the individual progress, achievement, and learning of students, and instruction must be tailored to each learner's needs according to the nature of his or her disability. Inclusive classrooms, in which teachers support individual children's learning outcomes within a shared classroom community, demand specialized teaching skills and strategies. Structured models of co-teaching—including station teaching, parallel teaching, teaming, and splitting the class—can

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improve teachers' attitudes toward inclusion and their use of differentiated strategies, while also improving outcomes for children with and without disabilities.

Education is recognized as a basic right of all children. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights holds that education should promote the full development of the human personality and respect for human rights (United Nations, 1948), and subsequent international commitments—the Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, and the Dakar Framework for Action—underscore the right to education regardless of gender, ethnicity, nationality, or ability (UNESCO, 1990, 1994, 2000). Inclusive education is the process of ensuring that children with disabilities attend regular classrooms without discrimination while receiving the support and respect they need. Realizing this goal depends on the collaboration of special education teachers, both in their direct work with learners with disabilities and in their partnership with general education teachers.

While the literature has described a range of strategies for teaching learners with special needs and for co-teaching, fewer studies have examined these practices from the perspective of parents, whose observations of teachers' work reflect the experience of learners at home and in school. This study therefore examined the practices of special education teachers in working with children with disabilities and with general education curriculum teachers, as assessed by parents, in order to formulate recommendations for successful co-teaching.

Specifically, the study sought to determine (a) the profile of the parent-respondents in terms of age, sex, and role in the family; (b) the respondents' assessment of teachers' practices in working with children with disabilities; (c) whether this assessment differs significantly when respondents are grouped by profile; (d) the respondents' assessment of teachers' practices in working with general education curriculum teachers; (e) whether this assessment differs significantly by profile; and (f) whether a significant relationship exists between the two assessments, as bases for (g) recommendations for successful co-teaching. Three null hypotheses were tested at the .05 level: that there is no significant difference in the respondents' assessment of working with children with disabilities when grouped by profile; that there is no significant difference in their assessment of working with general education curriculum teachers when grouped by profile; and that there is no significant relationship between the two assessments. The findings may inform learners with special educational needs about the benefits of co-teaching, give teachers insight into co-teaching practices, help principals provide quality co-teaching environments and training, guide Department of Education officials in considering co-teaching as a response to problems in special education, and serve as a reference for future researchers.

Literature Review

Teaching Learners with Special Needs in Inclusive Classrooms

Teachers use a range of strategies to support learners with special needs. Sewell (2025) argued that teachers should set high standards and encourage a growth mindset, emphasizing that equity means holding all students to high expectations and that modified assignments or alternative assessments are not about lowering expectations but about finding the best way for students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Tayco and Motus (2024) identified strategies that include adapting teaching methods and materials to individual needs, providing additional support and resources, and building positive relationships with learners and their families, noting that teachers who show empathy and understanding foster relationships that lead to improved academic and behavioral outcomes. Similarly, Branstetter (2020) advised teachers to put the relationship before academic rigor, to be creative with accommodations and supports, and to collaborate as a team, since a positive rapport is an essential ingredient of motivation and effort.

Studies also highlight access and structure. Hermanto and Pamungkas (2023) showed that inclusive elementary schools provide physical and non-physical access to learning based on students' special needs, supported by training that increases teacher competence and by the involvement of parents and experts from related disciplines. Subarna et al. (2022) suggested that working one-on-one with students, encouraging active involvement, maintaining a consistent daily classroom structure, and engaging with colleagues on innovative

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tactics can help learners with special needs succeed academically. Torres et al. (2024) examined classroom behaviors such as disruption, disengagement, transition difficulties, communication barriers, and social-emotional challenges, finding a potential disconnect between these behaviors and academic performance and suggesting that current educational strategies may support achievement despite such challenges.

Teacher competence develops through practice. Fernandez-Aguilar and Labadan (2025) found that, despite the absence of formal special needs education training, teachers reported high levels of inclusive education practice and self-perceived competence, particularly in parental involvement, and that inclusive practices and teacher competence were significantly and positively related. These studies suggest that effective teaching of learners with special needs combines high expectations, individualized and structured instruction, positive relationships, and continuing professional growth.

Positive Behavior Support and Praise

Verbal praise is a common means of managing classes and motivating students. Zhang et al. (2021) concluded that verbal praise in primary school classes affects students' behavior, but that its effects are typically shallow, emotional, and temporary, so teachers should consider its role in students' long-term development. Traver (2024) found that behavior-specific praise is an underused, evidence-based strategy that increases students' positive social and academic behaviors and academic engagement while reducing challenging or disruptive behaviors.

At the school level, Jamison (2024) found that schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) reduced behavioral disruptions and improved school culture when educators received strong training and implemented the program consistently. Iriyani et al. (2025) likewise reported that implementing positive behavior support made the learning environment more inclusive and conducive, increased mutual respect, empathy, and cooperation, improved the academic achievement of students with special needs, and reduced negative behavior, although challenges to sustaining the program remained.

Co-Teaching and Collaboration between Special and General Education Teachers

A shared sense of responsibility for the education of students with disabilities benefits both teachers and students. When special and general education teachers work together, inclusive delivery of services in the general education classroom can foster student achievement, motivation, self-esteem, and social growth. Sharma (2025) found that co-teaching leverages the complementary skills of teachers to create a dynamic environment for diverse learners, making differentiation, the application of Universal Design for Learning principles, and individualized support possible. In a systematic review of 20 studies, Saha and Subba (2025) found that differentiated instruction, collaborative methods, and assistive technologies support students' academic success, and that targeted professional development, teacher collaboration, technology integration, and differentiated pedagogy are central to successful inclusion.

Effective co-teaching, however, depends on deliberate structures. Ludwig (2025) found that effective co-teaching is linked to increased collaboration, shared responsibilities, and greater student access to the curriculum, although evidence on academic achievement remains inconclusive, highlighting the importance of co-planning time and pre-service and in-service training. Crooks (2025) argued that collaboration requires systems that prioritize shared planning time, clarify co-teaching roles, and normalize joint responsibility; without these, even skilled teachers default to parallel work or reactive problem-solving. Gaviola et al. (2024) showed that team-teaching collaboration, on-demand support, and structured consultation enhance the education of learners with autism, provided that communication difficulties, limited administrative support, and scheduling constraints are addressed. Jortveit and Kovač (2022) found that successful collaboration is embedded in instruction that supports inclusion and appreciation of diversity, and that professionals willing to bring their practices and professional identities closer together are better equipped for co-teaching.

Recommendations for practice follow from these findings. Spoden (2022) concluded that cohesive collaboration keeps students in the classroom and exposes them to grade-level curriculum alongside non-disabled

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peers, which is more impactful than pulling them out for services. Zamkowska et al. (2025) recommended peer coaching within evidence-based strategies, structured routines for planning and evaluation, continuous professional development, and the use of a variety of co-teaching models matched to students' needs. Alhossyan (2025) highlighted the role of professional development and school resources in enhancing collaboration, and Surender (2023) argued that truly inclusive schools require regular and special education teachers to work together, building inclusive practices, assigning roles, and distributing responsibilities so that students' intellectual, social, and emotional needs are better met.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory and Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory. Bioecological Systems Theory focuses on the interactions among process, person, context, and time in shaping individual development (El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022), providing a macro-level perspective on how nested environmental systems—the microsystem of family and school, the mesosystem linking them, such as parent-teacher communication about a child's progress, and the macrosystem of societal values, beliefs, and laws—influence inclusive education. The theory also helps identify systemic barriers in inclusive settings, such as limited administrative support and inadequate resources, at specific ecological levels (Kurto & Asaro-Saddler, 2025), and has been applied to center student and stakeholder voices in the design of individualized education programs (Fanshawe, 2025).

Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory holds that learning is an inherently social process in which cognitive development is fostered through interaction, collaboration, and structured support. Applied to inclusive education, it underscores that learning outcomes improve when educators structure environments to accommodate diverse learner profiles. Wibowo et al. (2025) showed that the zone of proximal development and scaffolding are highly relevant to differentiated learning that considers students' individual characteristics and potential. In this study, the theory frames how special education teachers collaborate with general education curriculum teachers to support students with disabilities, while Bioecological Systems Theory frames the parent's vantage point on these school-based interactions.

Research Gap and Conceptual Framework

The reviewed literature establishes the value of individualized instruction, positive behavior support, and structured collaboration between special and general education teachers, but most studies draw on teachers' perspectives. Less is known about how parents of learners with disabilities assess these teacher practices, whether their assessments differ by parent characteristics, and whether teachers' work with children and their collaboration with general education teachers are perceived as related. This study addresses these gaps in a Philippine public elementary school setting.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study. The profile of the parent-respondents in terms of age, sex, and role in the family was examined in relation to their assessment of teachers' practices in working with children with disabilities and in working with general education curriculum teachers. The study then determined the significant differences in these assessments when respondents were grouped by profile and the significant relationship between the two assessments, which served as the basis for recommendations for successful co-teaching.

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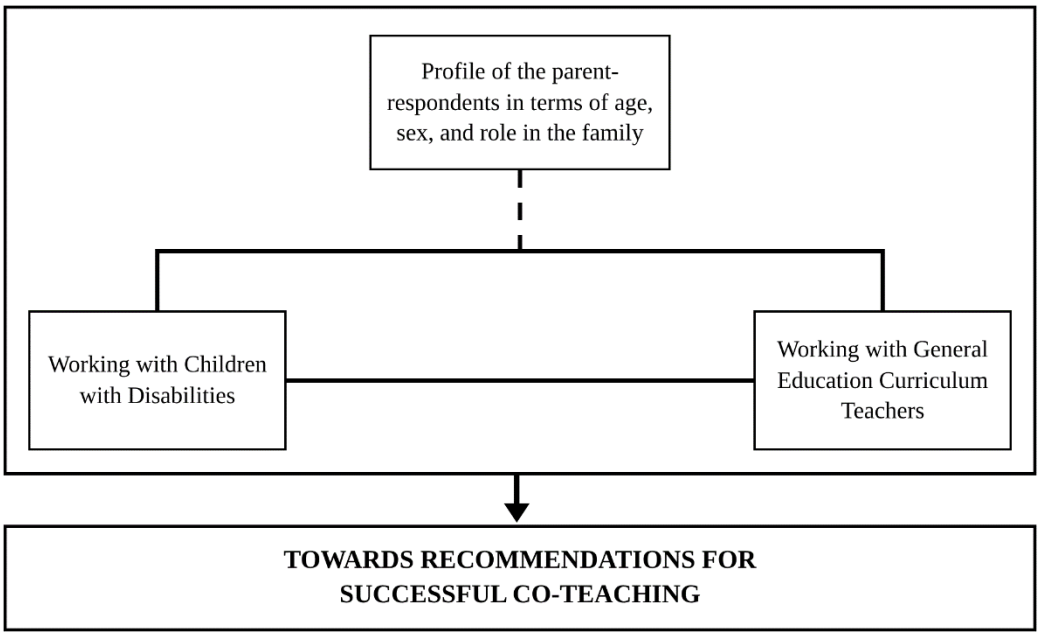


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework of the Study*

METHODS

Research Design

The study used a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component described the profile of the parent-respondents and their assessment of teachers' practices in working with children with disabilities and with general education curriculum teachers, and determined whether these assessments differed significantly when respondents were grouped by profile. The correlational component determined whether a significant relationship existed between the two assessments.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Manggahan Elementary School in the Schools Division of General Trias City, Cavite, Philippines. The locale was chosen because the researcher observed a need to encourage parents and teachers to take part in co-teaching, which allows them to see multiple teaching styles, classroom management strategies, and ways of working with learners with disabilities.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The respondents were 30 parents of learners with disabilities enrolled at Manggahan Elementary School. As shown in Table 1, most respondents were aged 45–49 (63%), and the rest were aged 50–54 (37%). Two-thirds were female (67%), and slightly more than half were parents (57%), while the rest were grandparents or guardians (43%).

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Table 1. *Profile of the Parent-Respondents*

Profile	f	%
Age		
45–49	19	63
50–54	11	37
Sex		
Male	10	33
Female	20	67
Role in the Family		
Parent	17	57
Grandparent/Guardian	13	43
Total	30	100

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a researcher-made survey questionnaire developed from a review of related literature and studies. Part I gathered the respondents' profile. Part II asked respondents to assess the teachers of their children on 28 indicators: items 2.1 to 2.14 covered working with children with disabilities, and items 2.15 to 2.28 covered working with general education curriculum teachers. Items were rated on a four-point scale (Salkind, 2012): 4 – Always True of the Teacher of My Kid/s (3.51–4.00, Highly Collaborative), 3 – Often True (2.51–3.50, Somewhat Collaborative), 2 – Sometimes True (1.51–2.50, Slightly Collaborative), and 1 – Never True (1.00–1.50, Not Collaborative). The questionnaire was validated by experts, revised with the help of the researcher's former graduate school professors, and further refined based on the comments and suggestions of the panel during the proposal defense.

Data Gathering Procedure

A letter requesting approval to conduct the study was sent to the Schools Division Superintendent, noted by the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon approval, the respondents were informed of the study and asked to sign an informed consent form before answering the survey questionnaire. The accomplished questionnaires were collected, and the data were tabulated and subjected to statistical treatment.

Data Analysis

Frequency count and percentage were used to describe the profile of the respondents. The weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the respondents' assessment of teachers' practices in working with children with disabilities and with general education curriculum teachers. The *t*-test was used to determine whether the assessments differed significantly when respondents were grouped by age, sex, and role in the family, and Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the two assessments. All tests were conducted at the .05 level of significance.

Ethical Consideration

The study was conducted with the approval of the Schools Division Superintendent. Respondents signed an informed consent form stating that they were aware of their participation in the study, that ethical standards and confidentiality would be observed, and that they could withdraw their participation at any time during the study. The information gathered was used solely for the purposes of the research.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Parent-Respondents

Table 1 shows that the respondents were predominantly middle-aged adults, with most in the 45–49 age bracket. The majority were female, indicating that caregiving and educational involvement in the household continue to rest largely with mothers, grandmothers, or female guardians. The substantial proportion of grandparents and guardians (43%) indicates a strong presence of extended or skip-generation caregiving within the community. Overall, the typical respondent was a female parent between 45 and 49 years old, suggesting that school-home collaboration initiatives are driven largely by mature female primary caregivers.

Assessment of Teachers' Practices in Working with Children with Disabilities

As shown in Table 2, the respondents assessed teachers' practices in working with children with disabilities as "Often True of the Teacher of My Kid/s," with a composite mean of 3.23 (*SD* = 0.42), interpreted as Somewhat Collaborative. All 14 indicators fell within this range. The highest-rated practice was trying not to label anyone (*M* = 3.33), followed by noticing learners being good and offering verbal praise or a small positive note (*M* = 3.30). Multisensory instruction, making tasks more challenging for learners ready to move ahead, planning for each learner's daily academic success, and holding high expectations for all learners each obtained a mean of 3.27.

Table 2. *Assessment of the Parent-Respondents on Working with Children with Disabilities*

The teacher of my child is…	Mean	SD
2.1 thinking about how one can make it visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic	3.27	0.45
2.2 meeting different learning styles	3.17	0.38
2.3 thinking about what is the most important all students need to learn and then think about how one can break the task into smaller parts	3.23	0.43
2.4 making more challenging for learners who are ready to move ahead	3.27	0.45
2.5 being keenly aware of learners' strength	3.17	0.38
2.6 planning to find a way for each learner to be successful academically every day	3.27	0.45
2.7 working with peer buddy is often a helpful strategy	3.23	0.43
2.8 mixing up the groups now and then	3.23	0.43
2.9 trying not to label anyone	3.33	0.48
2.10 giving precise directions	3.20	0.41
2.11 giving one direction at a time	3.10	0.31
2.12 being consistent	3.20	0.41
2.13 noticing learners being 'good' – offer verbal praise or perhaps a small positive note	3.30	0.47
2.14 having a high expectation for all learners	3.27	0.45
Composite Mean	3.23	0.42

Note. All indicators and the composite were interpreted as Often True of the Teacher of My Kid/s (2.51–3.50), Somewhat Collaborative. Scale: 3.51–4.00 Always True (Highly Collaborative); 2.51–3.50 Often True (Somewhat Collaborative); 1.51–2.50 Sometimes True (Slightly Collaborative); 1.00–1.50 Never True (Not Collaborative).

These results indicate that parents perceive teachers as empathetic, strengths-based, and focused on maintaining a safe and inclusive environment. The high ratings for non-labeling, praise, and high expectations are consistent with Sewell's (2025) emphasis on holding all students to high standards and with evidence that praise, particularly behavior-specific praise, promotes positive behavior and engagement (Traver, 2024; Zhang et al., 2021). They also reflect the relationship-centered strategies described by Tayco and Motus (2024) and Branstetter (2020).

Conversely, procedural delivery items received relatively lower ratings, most notably giving one direction at a time (*M* = 3.10), followed by meeting different learning styles and being keenly aware of learners' strengths

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(M = 3.17 each). While still within the Somewhat Collaborative range, these results suggest that classroom routines may at times outpace the step-by-step scaffolding and individualized adjustment that learners with special needs require. This finding points to the value of the consistent structure and individualized support described by Subarna et al. (2022) and Hermanto and Pamungkas (2023), and of the scaffolding emphasized in Vygotsky's theory (Wibowo et al., 2025). Overall, the results suggest an opportunity to move from somewhat collaborative to highly collaborative practice by strengthening accommodations for individual learning styles and step-by-step instruction.

Differences in the Assessment of Working with Children with Disabilities by Profile

Table 3 shows that the respondents' assessment of working with children with disabilities did not differ significantly by age (t = 1.96, p = .06) or role in the family (t = 1.53, p = .14); hence, the null hypothesis was accepted for these variables. Respondents in adjacent age brackets and caregivers regardless of biological relationship, who face similar daily demands, evaluated teachers' practices in a comparable manner. However, a significant difference was found by sex (t = 2.58, p = .02), and the null hypothesis was rejected. Male and female respondents therefore held distinct perceptions of how effectively teachers support children with disabilities, possibly reflecting differences in caregiving load and involvement between mothers and fathers. This suggests that gender-responsive communication channels and targeted parent orientation sessions may help align parental expectations with classroom strategies.

Table 3. *Difference in the Assessment of Working with Children with Disabilities Based on Profile*

Profile	Groups	t	p	Decision	Interpretation
Age	45–49 vs. 50–54	1.96	0.06	Accept H_0	Not significant
Sex	Male vs. Female	2.58	0.02	Reject H_0	Significant
Role in the family	Parent vs. Grandparent/Guardian	1.53	0.14	Accept H_0	Not significant

Note. Significant at α = .05.

Assessment of Teachers' Practices in Working with General Education Curriculum Teachers

Table 4 shows that the respondents assessed teachers' practices in working with general education curriculum teachers as "Often True of the Teacher of My Kid/s," with a composite mean of 3.26 (SD = 0.45), interpreted as Somewhat Collaborative. The highest-rated indicator was planning ahead with these teachers at least a week in advance (M = 3.47), indicating that structured, advance preparation is the strongest dimension of collaboration in the view of parents. Brainstorming solutions to challenges together and telling colleagues when one sees best practice followed (M = 3.33 each), showing that teachers engage in constructive feedback and shared problem-solving.

Table 4. *Assessment of the Parent-Respondents on Working with the General Education Curriculum Teachers*

The teacher of my child is…	Mean	SD
2.15 finding teachers who welcome the learners who enjoy working with if possible	3.27	0.45
2.16 being helpful to find co-teachers who have different strengths so one can complement each other	3.23	0.43
2.17 planning ahead with these teachers – at least a week ahead	3.47	0.51
2.18 being willing to do more than one share at first if necessary to get a solid footing for the year	3.23	0.43
2.19 keeping communication open and frequent	3.27	0.45
2.20 using positive language with each other as much as possible	3.30	0.47
2.21 brainstorming solutions to challenges together and trying different solutions	3.33	0.48
2.22 documenting the work one has to do with the learners	3.27	0.45
2.23 helping with assessment as much as possible	3.27	0.45
2.24 attending open houses, parent conferences and other similar activities so the parents view one as part of the classroom community	3.13	0.35

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The teacher of my child is…	Mean	SD
2.25 looking for the good in every teacher/s and student/s	3.20	0.41
2.26 telling them when one sees best practice	3.33	0.48
2.27 asking if one doesn't know the answer	3.10	0.55
2.28 being sure of doing something by blowing the mind through	3.23	0.43
Composite Mean	3.26	0.45

Note. All indicators and the composite were interpreted as Often True of the Teacher of My Kid/s (2.51–3.50), Somewhat Collaborative.

The strength of advance planning is consistent with literature identifying shared planning time and structured planning routines as foundations of effective co-teaching (Crooks, 2025; Ludwig, 2025; Zamkowska et al., 2025), and the ratings for joint problem-solving reflect the shared responsibility that Surender (2023) and Jortveit and Kovač (2022) associate with successful collaboration. Paccaud et al. (2021) likewise emphasized that joint planning and transparent communication between educators and families support positive outcomes for learners.

The lowest-rated indicator was asking when one does not know the answer ($M = 3.10$), suggesting some reluctance to acknowledge knowledge gaps during collaboration. Attending open houses, parent conferences, and similar activities was rated second lowest ($M = 3.13$), indicating a need for greater teacher presence in school-community gatherings. These results are consistent with Alhossyan's (2025) finding that targeted professional development and adequate resources enable teachers to engage more effectively in joint decision-making, and with Gaviola et al. (2024), who identified communication difficulties and scheduling constraints as obstacles to collaboration. Elevating collaboration to a highly collaborative level may therefore require a culture in which teachers openly seek help and more consistent participation in school-community activities.

Differences in the Assessment of Working with General Education Curriculum Teachers by Profile

As shown in Table 5, sex was the only profile variable associated with a significant difference in the assessment of working with general education curriculum teachers ($t = 2.68$, $p = .01$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Age ($t = 1.07$, $p = .29$) and role in the family ($t = 2.00$, $p = .06$) showed no significant differences, and the null hypothesis was accepted for these variables. Consistent with the previous result, male and female caregivers appear to observe and experience teachers' collaborative practices differently, while a respondent's age or status as parent or grandparent/guardian does not substantially alter the assessment. This underscores the importance of engagement strategies that actively involve both fathers and mothers in routine academic dialogue.

Table 5. *Difference in the Assessment of Working with the General Education Curriculum Teachers Based on Profile*

Profile	Groups	t	p	Decision	Interpretation
Age	45–49 vs. 50–54	1.07	0.29	Accept H_0	Not significant
Sex	Male vs. Female	2.68	0.01	Reject H_0	Significant
Role in the family	Parent vs. Grandparent/Guardian	2.00	0.06	Accept H_0	Not significant

Note. Significant at $\alpha = .05$.

Relationship between the Two Assessments

Table 6 shows that the Pearson correlation between the respondents' assessment of working with children with disabilities and their assessment of working with general education curriculum teachers was weak, negative, and not significant ($r = -.017$, $p = .929$). The null hypothesis was therefore accepted. The near-zero coefficient indicates that parents evaluate teachers' special education strategies and their collaboration with general education teachers as independent domains, so that success in collaborative planning with general education teachers does not automatically translate into parental satisfaction with special needs support, and vice versa.

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Table 6. *Relationship between the Assessments of Working with Children with Disabilities and with the General Education Curriculum Teachers*

Variables	r	p	Decision	Interpretation
Working with Children with Disabilities and Working with General Education Curriculum Teachers	−.017	.929	Accept H_0	Not significant

From a bioecological perspective, the two assessments reflect different layers of the child's environment: teachers' direct work with the learner in the microsystem, and the collaboration between teachers that parents observe only partially (El Zaatari & Maalouf, 2022). The result implies that efforts to strengthen co-teaching should address both domains deliberately rather than assume that improvement in one will carry over to the other.

Recommendations for Successful Co-Teaching

Based on the lowest-rated indicators, the study proposed recommendations for successful co-teaching that focus on two areas: giving one direction at a time (indicator 2.11) and asking when one does not know the answer (indicator 2.27). The recommendations aim to establish single-step, sequential communication routines between co-teachers to prevent cognitive overload; to foster a psychologically safe co-teaching dynamic in which educators openly consult one another and seek answers together; and to ensure consistent, clarity-focused instruction and open inquiry across special and general education settings. Table 7 summarizes the proposed co-teaching implementation matrix.

Table 7. *Co-Teaching Implementation Matrix*

Focus Indicator	Proposed Strategy	Actionable Steps	Expected Outcome	Evaluation
2.11 Giving one direction at a time	"One lead, one support" visual directives	Co-plan single-step task cards and visual checklists; one teacher gives a single verbal command while the co-teacher displays a visual cue; pause for a 5-second processing window before the next instruction	Learners with diverse needs process commands without cognitive overload, increasing task completion	Single-step checklist templates; lesson plans with directive pauses; observation checklist on instruction delivery
2.27 Asking if one doesn't know the answer	Tag-team modeling and professional query sessions	Model consulting the co-teacher or looking up answers together; hold 15-minute weekly co-teaching check-ins; maintain a shared inquiry log of unresolved questions	Teachers build trust, normalize asking for help, and model continuous learning for students and parents	Weekly co-teaching inquiry log; professional learning community debrief notes; student feedback on help-seeking

CONCLUSION

School-home collaboration in the study context is driven largely by mature, female primary caregivers, highlighting the need to sustain engagement with mothers while developing strategies to increase the involvement of fathers and extended guardians. Parents perceived teachers' practices in working with children with disabilities as somewhat collaborative, with strong emotional and behavioral support through non-labeling, praise, and high expectations, but with room to improve individualized accommodation of learning styles and step-by-step instruction.

Parents likewise perceived teachers' work with general education curriculum teachers as somewhat collaborative, with proactive planning and joint problem-solving as strengths and openness in seeking help and participation in school-community activities as areas for growth. In both areas, mothers and fathers held distinct perceptions, while age and family role did not affect assessments. Finally, the two areas were unrelated, indicating

that parents view teachers' special education strategies and their collaboration with general education teachers as independent domains. The study contributes parents' perspectives to the understanding of co-teaching and shows that strengthening co-teaching requires attention to both direct instruction for learners with disabilities and the quality of collaboration between teachers.

Recommendation

To optimize cognitive processing for learners with disabilities, special and general education teachers may adopt chunking strategies and multisensory instructional delivery, breaking complex tasks into sequential, single-step instructions delivered verbally and paired with visual cues such as written checklists, step-by-step pictorial guides, or digital slides. Quick check-for-understanding routines, such as having learners repeat or demonstrate a step before proceeding, may prevent information overload and help learners maintain focus. Co-teachers may adopt a "one lead, one support" approach in which one teacher gives a single verbal direction while the other displays the corresponding visual cue, with a brief processing pause before the next instruction.

School administrators may cultivate a culture of psychological safety and shared inquiry by encouraging reflective teaching practice and collaborative communication. Professional development activities may normalize acknowledging knowledge gaps and joint problem-solving, supported by peer-mentoring partnerships, shared resource repositories, weekly co-teaching check-ins, and open-dialogue forums during parent-teacher interactions. Schools may also develop communication and orientation strategies that actively involve both mothers and fathers, as well as grandparents and guardians, and encourage teacher participation in open houses and parent conferences. Future researchers may involve larger and more diverse samples, include teachers' own perspectives, and examine the factors underlying the observed differences between male and female caregivers.

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