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Are special needs qualifications and teaching experience factors in teacher attitudes towards collaborative action plans?

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ARE SPECIAL NEEDS QUALIFICATIONS AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE
FACTORS IN TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARDS COLLABORATIVE
ACTION PLANS?

BY

T. Spittle B.A. (Education)

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Award of

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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this exploratory study was to ascertain if teachers who have special needs training or teaching experience have a statistically significant difference in their attitude towards the implementation of the Western Australian Education Department's Collaborative Action Plans. Using a stratified random sampling method a sample of teachers ($N = 2 \times 50$) was generated from regular primary schools and education support facilities within the Perth metropolitan area. Survey variables canvassed were source reliability, time, efficacy, collaboration, assessment measures, information types and summary issues. A mailed questionnaire produced a response rate of 66%. Survey data indicated that in terms of whom they would consult, 85% of teachers would consult with teachers, 89% would consult with parents, 56% would consult with the student and 84% would prefer to observe a student's skill performance before referring to the Collaborative Action Plan. Using t-tests, a multi-variate analysis of variance and a post hoc Scheffé test, statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) occurred in five variables. Teachers with special needs qualifications rated principals, students and parents as moderate to very reliable sources of information; they did not perceive that Collaborative Action Plans would interfere with "duties other than teaching"; or reduce a teacher's contact time with non-special needs students and viewed socioeconomic and family structure not very relevant to instructional planning. Experienced teachers (more than 10 years experience) rated specialist teachers and students higher as sources of information. Education support teachers (less than 10 years teaching experience) indicated that Collaborative Action Plans had utility, saw the collaboration process as beneficial and would use them frequently. Using Wilson

and Silverman's (1991) construct teachers with special needs qualifications and experienced teachers (>10 years) appear to be preventative. The results suggest that while teachers with special needs qualifications had a more positive attitude towards Collaborative Action Plans in some variables, the differences are insufficient to reject the null hypotheses. While Collaborative Action Plans present logistical, resource and pedagogical challenges in regular primary schools, in education support they are concomitant with existing practices. Given that this study used a small sample, further study about the implementation and utility of Collaborative Action Plans over time is recommended to clarify the veracity of the present study's findings.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signature

Date 26.8.96

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Introduction

Introduction

This chapter describes the background and purpose of the present study, the research questions, and the development of a conceptual framework to underpin the present study.

For students who have either a disability or a specific learning difficulty and attend Western Australian Government schools, the Education Department's Strategic Plan (Education Department of Western Australia, 1995) represents in part, a change in the type and level of service delivery they currently receive. It is a system-wide attempt to fill perceived gaps in the current framework to establish the best practice in service delivery for these students. It reflects the intent of the Social Justice Policy (Education Department of Western Australia, 1993b) which in principle states;

Schools will ensure that all students, irrespective of the degree of sensory, physical or intellectual disability, have the opportunity to be educated in the most enhancing environment consistent with the provision of a quality education which best meets the needs of the individual student (p. 3)

The Strategic Plan (EDWA, 1995) follows the tabling of the Task Force On The Education of Students With Disabilities And Specific Learning Difficulties (Education Department of Western Australia, 1993a) (from henceforth to be referred to as the Task Force) and the Education Department's Ministerial Statement on the Report Of The Task Force On The Education Of Students With Disabilities And Specific Learning Difficulties (Education Department of Western Australia, 1994a). One particular component within the Strategic Plan (EDWA, 1995) in the section

entitled Curriculum Responsiveness Strategic Issue, is the development and use of an educational planning strategy referred to as the Collaborative Action Plan (from henceforth to be referred to as the CAP) by 1998. The document states that schools will "implement collaborative action plans for students with disabilities and students with specific learning difficulties" (EDWA, 1995). This represents the introduction of a system wide planning methodology for students who present some form of special educational need.

While there is no current definitive statement about CAPs, communication with Annette Sale, Learning Difficulties Project Coordinator (1995) indicates that such a planning strategy involves an ongoing process of assessment, development of strategies and evaluation to meet an individual student's need. The collaborative aspect of the planning strategy may be seen as an "interactive process which enables people with diverse expertise to generate creative solutions to mutually defined problems" (Idol, Paolucci-Whitcomb & Nevin, 1986, p. 6). It is envisaged that these solutions will be developed by a collaborative team. This team will most likely include teachers, parents, the student in need, psychologists, and where needed, occupational and speech therapists, physiotherapists, social workers and medical doctors. Westwood and Palmer (1993) see this approach as a "competency of great importance" (p. 39). While the definition is inferred and draws its framework from current collaborative consultation literature, it is noted (Hall, 1992) that innovations without clear definition can be a source of confusion. It is expected that the Education Department of Western Australia will shortly produce a definitive document as part of their Learning Difficulties Project.

Background

Disabilities and specific learning difficulties in an educational context represent an ongoing challenge to the education system in terms of the type and level of service provision that is made available. The intention reflects the growing awareness that these students require a more comprehensive approach to learning than previously given. As Elkins (1992a) exhorts us;

The fundamental issue is that access to education, school experiences and outcomes should not be systematically different for students from any group, including those with disabilities. This does not deny that individual differences exist among students, nor that these differences will be reflected in differences in their educational experience. However factors known to produce disadvantage such as isolation, gender, ethnicity or disability should not be the reason for reduced educational opportunity (p. 10).

In the Western Australian context, the government education system uses a five-tiered framework to cater for acknowledged students with special needs. Students with disabilities are described as manifesting either “an intellectual or physical disability, sensory impairment or autism” (EDWA, 1993b). Students who present a specific learning difficulty are defined by the Task Force (EDWA, 1993a) as,

students whose achievement levels in mathematics and/or language (literacy) are below some specified benchmarks, where these results cannot be attributed to intellectual or physical disability, sensory impairment, emotional difficulties, low socioeconomic background, geographic isolation, cultural background or lack of appropriate educational experiences. (p. 19)

On the basis of meeting this set of criteria, these students may attend one of a range of facilities subject to availability and need. These facilities are either a separate school, a satellite class within the school, an education support centre, or an education support unit adjacent to the school. Alternatively a visiting teacher may provide support in the regular classroom.

Given this background, the intended use of CAPs reflects a growing trend in Australia towards team planning as the best practice to address the individual educational needs of people with disabilities and specific learning difficulties. Carter, Cassar, Dule, Hook, Korner, Wiese and Williams (1995) suggest that while “a team approach involves considerable time, good will and effort, and initially may not be an easy path” (p. 47), it is an “investment in future services”. An analysis of currently used individualized planning approaches found mixed results (Hudson & Cummins, 1991; Shaddock & Bramston 1991). The methodology was in some instances time consuming (Bennett, Shaddock & Bennett, 1991). In addition participants demonstrated a differential interpretation about needs and the intent of the objectives written. Where the notion of collaboration was encouraged in team planning the research base is rather scant and indeterminate (Fields, 1994) about its veracity.

The design of CAPs are in part attributable to the American planning strategy equivalent, the Individual Education Plan (from henceforth to be known as the IEP) which has been in use since the mid 1970's (Goodman & Bond, 1993; Dudley-Marling, 1987; Morgan & Rhode, 1983; Morrissey & Safer, 1977; Safer, Morrissey, Kaufman & Lewis, 1978). In this American service delivery model, IEPs have been accompanied by a legal mandate with its implied administrative requirements.

While this alone is a major discriminative feature between the American model and the proposed Western Australian model, there are many aspects in the American model implied in CAPs. On this basis it is instructive to consider the findings of research into IEPs.

Research findings regarding IEPs have been largely negative (Banbury, 1987). Practitioners have tended to stick to the letter not the spirit of the law because of the restrictive nature of the legislative framework (Goodman & Bond, 1993; Nadler & Shore, 1980; Smith, 1990a; Smith, Slattery & Knopp, 1994). The level of resources and time played a pivotal role in their effective use (Gerardi, Grohe, Benedict & Coolidge, 1984; Hayes & Higgins, 1978; & Quinn, 1982). Serious questions were raised about the congruence between assessed needs and IEP goals (Fielder & Knight, 1986; Rieher, 1992). Congruence between diagnostically constructed goals and instruction was difficult to establish (Engelmann, 1967; Margolis & Truesdall, 1987; Schenck, 1980). Ultimately the quality of the IEP was queried (Hunt & Farron-Davis 1992; Hunt, Goetz & Anderson, 1986; Lynch & Beare, 1990; Pyl, De Graaf & Emanuelsson, 1988). Given the range of factors that research has identified as impediments to the effective use of IEPs, how will the Education Department give the CAP utility?

Teacher Attitudes

Teachers as the key stakeholders in the proposed use of CAPs are perceived as having a potentially major influence on the success of this innovation. Their attitudes are invariably complex. The CAP is expected to affect the teacher's planning, instruction, evaluation and style of peer interaction. As a consequence the CAP may either be seen as conflicting with or enhancing their current practice and

preferred teaching style. The notion of utility is also relative to their existing school or system wide arrangements. So while they may have a preference for the use of CAPs, there may be constraints within the system that do not allow an alternative approach.

Discourse about innovation and policy implementation similar to CAPs is extensive (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Hall & Hord, 1987). They suggest that it is imperative that the organization proposing the innovation develop close links with the end users, the classroom teachers. It is recognized that in this interactive environment all stakeholders can develop a sense of ownership and clarity. Phillips and McCulloch (1990) state: "Our experience suggests that when district level administrators become actively involved in the program's development (e. g., coordinating and attending training, participation in/conducting site visits, publicizing team efforts, consistently communicating with principals, and teams, and accessing resources) increased levels of program maintenance and replication result" (p. 297). In doing this it hopefully avoids what Weatherley & Lipsky (1977) see as a multitude of innovation interpretations where teachers become street level bureaucrats developing their own definitions. This occurs particularly when the implementation is top-down and bereft of discussion. Where teachers have been treated to this top-down scenario their attitude to the introduction of yet another innovation is often guarded, if not cynical about its practical merit. Weatherley & Lipsky (1977) suggest that if it is inclusive of teacher generated ideas then teachers will be more likely to use it. In addition Hall (1992) points out that the utility of the innovation is increased where there are "discernible qualitative differences between new and traditional programs" (p. 888). To that end

the Education Department of Western Australia has been trialing CAPs. This has occurred over three years from 1994 to 1996 and has involved offering seeding grants and funding for coordinators throughout the state. In doing this it has enabled all parties the opportunity to see the process in operation and adjust it to local conditions where necessary. Hall (1992) describes this as mutual adaptation.

Disability is also perceived as a factor that can affect a teacher's attitudes towards CAPs. It is evident that not all teachers feel comfortable in dealing with the educational needs of special needs students (Center & Ward, 1987, Thomas, 1988). This discomfort is not always an emotional prejudice. Frequently it is due to the absence of appropriate teaching skills. Jordan, Kircaali-iftar and Diamond (1993) suggest that a teacher's acceptance and comfort level for these students is relative to their perceived self-efficacy and the level of assumed responsibility they accept for these students. Born out of this perception evolves their perceived idea of an appropriate mode of service delivery. Wilson and Silverman (1991) observe that teachers may also perceive that disability and learning difficulties are "absolute instead of relative to the ecological context" (p. 205). Where it is absolute, the teacher will defer to strategies conducted outside the normal classroom. Where it is relative, the teacher will attempt to resolve the perceived needs within the classroom.

Where the teacher is coerced to act contrary to their preferred teaching, their job satisfaction can be affected. Teachers like any other grouping of people are heterogeneous in their skills repertoire. They will not all have the ability to work with a wide range of student abilities. As a result, where the teaching environment is not ideal, it can be a source of stress (Forlin, 1995) and perhaps induce a sense of failure. Lobosco and Newman (1992) observe; "Responses indicate that teaching

students who are gifted/talented is related to increased job satisfaction, whereas working with students who have learning difficulties is related to decreased job satisfaction, especially for those teachers not specifically trained to work with students with special needs" (p. 28).

The teaching location can also influence attitude. Since a teacher can either teach in a regular primary or education support classroom, their attitude may be influenced by their current location and practices. In the regular classroom where some students may have a specific learning difficulty but not usually a disability, the teacher will not be familiar with such an approach. Their class is typically larger, heterogeneous and whole-class planning predominates. As Truesdall (1988) states, "the typical organisational structure of schools is largely devoted to coordination and control of large numbers of students. Meeting individual needs therefore, is difficult because it is contrary to the school's primary task and organisation" (p. 43). In this environment CAPs represent a significant departure from their current focus, and require additional training to be effective and efficient when planning for the individual student (Banbury, 1987).

Alternatively it is reasonable to assume that the majority of education support teachers are trained to work with children with special needs and have a working knowledge of such a planning framework. Their classroom is exclusively composed of students with various forms of disability. The notion of CAPs is not unfamiliar and they have most likely employed similar planning strategies for these students in recent years. However Davis and Kemp (1995) qualify this by saying that while these teachers have a skill base in behaviour analysis, direct instruction and

curriculum based assessment, “it should not be assumed that ‘qualified’ special educators/support teachers have been trained in collaborative consultation”, (p. 24). Given the apparent differences in the classroom environment between regular primary and education support, how will the CAP be able to transcend the differences and be equally effective?

A case of premises

The utility of CAPs as an educational tool assumes that teachers and other professionals linked to the classroom can effectively incorporate the process into their day-to-day routine with minimal disruption. Pyl et al (1988) proffer two premises that are germane to the Western Australian government's education system-wide proposal. In the first premise, they suggest that it is assumed that a team using a range of current diagnostic measures can produce decisions that can be put into operation in the classroom instruction. Can all team members be effective and efficient? Will they use appropriate data and generate appropriate CAP objectives and instructional outcomes? (Engelmann, 1967). In the second premise, they suggest that it is assumed that a teacher will plan, teach and evaluate within the parameters specified by the objectives. However, can the teacher perceive the link between the CAP objectives and instruction, and formulate appropriate instruction? (McKellar, 1991).

In the Western Australian context it is evident that these assumptions cannot be applied system wide. Submissions to the Task Force (EDWA, 1993a) identified that teachers did vary in their ability to provide parents with “accurate, honest and specific feedback” (p. 57). Secondly, their ability to identify and provide appropriate strategies for children who had special needs is questioned. As a result, two of the

report's major recommendations were that a restructuring of undergraduate and post-graduate courses was essential. Teachers also needed to acquire more experience with children who had special needs. To achieve this it is necessary that tertiary institutions put in place the most appropriate structures and objectives to resolve this perceived shortfall in pre-service teacher training. As McKellar (1991) suggests paradoxically, it is first necessary to develop adult skills in an attempt to achieve better outcomes for children that the system is designed for. This is a position supported by Westwood (1995) and Elkins (1992b).

While the Task Force (EDWA, 1993a) identified this skills deficit, no particular teacher group was specified. So where did the majority of this deficit lie? Were teachers who currently have disability training any more favourably disposed than other teachers? Do these teachers who have training in disabilities also have a significantly different attitude towards the implementation of CAPs ? If there is a difference, is it related to training or professional experience or a combination of the two? The answer to these questions do have implications for the Education Department, given its intention to introduce CAPs as a classroom innovation for both education support and regular classroom teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to establish if teachers who have either special needs training and experience have a significantly different attitude than other teachers towards the use of CAPs. Two null hypotheses are advanced that reflect this proposition. The first null hypothesis postulates that the possession of special needs qualifications will not affect a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of

CAPs. The second null hypothesis postulates that the level of teaching experience will not influence a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs.

Research Questions

The present study proposes to measure teacher attitudes towards the implementation of CAPs by using the following research questions.

1. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular and education support facilities, in their rating of the variable source reliability?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular and education support facilities in their rating of the variable time?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular and education support facilities in their rating of the variable efficacy?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular and education support facilities in their rating of the variable collaboration?
5. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular and education support facilities in their rating of the variable assessment measures?
6. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular and education support facilities in their rating of the variable information types?
7. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of

teachers in regular and education support facilities in their rating of the summary issue?

Definition of Terms

There are several terms that occur in the text that require explanation.

Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP is an American multi-disciplinary developed planning strategy designed to meet the needs of students who have a disability or a learning difficulty. The multi-disciplinary team is composed of teachers, psychologists, therapists and the parent. The composition and use of the IEP is enshrined in federal American Law in the Public Law 94-142.

Collaborative Action Plan (CAP). It is a term developed by the Western Australian Education Department. It is a multi-disciplinary developed plan designed to cater for the special needs of students who have a disability or learning difficulty. The multi-disciplinary team is expected to be composed of teachers, psychologists, therapists and parents. Ideally the development of the plan will use an interactive process which enables people with diverse expertise to generate creative solutions to mutually defined problems.

Education Support Teacher. This term refers to specialist teachers who either visit and assist teachers into the classroom or teach in a satellite class, an education support unit or centre, or in a separate school that caters for the educational needs of students with disabilities or learning difficulties.

Regular Primary Teacher. This term denotes teachers who teach in a primary school with students from Kindergarten to Year 7 (K - 7). These teachers do not have a high level of contact with students with disabilities or learning difficulties.

Duties Other Than Teaching (D. O. T. T.). This term describes teacher time that occurs in the school day that does not involve student contact. This may include planning, meetings and administrative activities.

Source Reliability. This form of reliability describes the level of accuracy that specified groups within the CAP team attribute to the information provided by other members of the CAP team.

Efficacy. This is the level of benefit that the CAP is perceived to provide to students who have a disability or learning difficulty.

Assessment Measures. These are the various types of assessment measures that teachers employ in the classroom to ascertain the student's level of performance at any given stage or over time. They may be seen as both formative and summative. Methods may be anecdotal, involve the use of checklists, the collection of work samples or the use of class tests.

Information Types. These are the types of information that collectively form a student's profile. A teacher will use one or more of these information types to guide their planning of classroom instruction.

Summary

The introduction chapter has discussed the background to the present study, the purpose of the study and stated the research questions. The next chapter will provide a detailed account of relevant literature relating to individual education planning and collaboration for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties.

Review of Literature

Introduction

In this chapter the review of literature will examine several issues related to CAPs. Reference will be made to definitions, research findings and trends germane to the subject. It is considered that the topic is complex. There are several issues that are integral to educational planning strategies similar to CAPs

Discourse and research about teacher culture and the teacher as the synthesiser of the process (Westwood, 1993) is discussed in terms of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. Secondly, critical notions and processes that are relevant to individual planning strategies are discussed under the areas of individualization, the utility of multidisciplinary teams, collaborative consultation as a methodology, time as a resource proposition and congruence in terms of diagnosis and instruction.

The author has attempted where possible in the review of literature to validate international research findings with replications or similar studies conducted in Australia. Conway (1991) cautions; "By importing our knowledge base, we have assumed that the status, policies and practices that exist and operate successfully elsewhere are applicable to Australian society" (p. 272). While it has been possible in some instances to find equivalent studies, the research base in Australia is limited numerically.

Teacher Culture in Change

Teacher culture in part encompasses the organization, dissemination and assessment of student performance. Whilst these elements remain constant, the teacher's type and level of performance is frequently the subject of scrutiny and policy driven change. As Sarason (1987) states, "schools are in a transactional

relationship with society that has changed and will continue to change in significant ways, predictable or unpredictable" (p. 118). Integral to this transactional relationship is the shift in planning away from an *ad hoc* inferential approach (Pyl, et al, 1988). As teachers are becoming more aware of the needs of students with disabilities and learning difficulties, it is apparent that their planning skills are not always sufficient to deal with these diverse needs. Westwood and Palmer (1993) suggest from their research that teachers are finding that they need additional teaching skills. Pugach and Johnson (1995) support this view. This is particularly so in curriculum planning adaptation, instructional procedures for special needs students, the nature of the learning processes; evaluating student progress over time and teacher involvement in collaborative ventures.

Given that CAPs are similar to IEPs which implied less actual student contact time, the sharing of responsibility, increased external accountability, additional demands on personal time and the acquisition of specific skills (Safer et al. 1978) current literature appears divided about the necessity of mainstream teachers to acquire specialist skills. At one end of the spectrum Otto (1986) and Smelter, Rasch and Yudewitz (1994) suggest that teachers are under considerable stress and are expected, though not justifiably to "perform miracles" (p. 179). Smelter et al (1994) state that it is a big ask to say that teachers "must learn a monumental number of additional skills in order to deal with both special and regular education students" (p. 38). In contrast Elkins (1992b) argues that a teacher skill base in the Australian context is eroded by the established practices of student referral. He suggests that while teachers can and do acquire the requisite skills, they are not encouraged or enabled to use them. In another dimension Wiener and Davidson (1990) in their

analysis of the in-school team found that many learning problems could be solved by the regular teacher in collaboration with their peers. However this presupposes that the current educational system encourages and assists teachers who wish to deal with special needs. As Westwood (1995) indicates it is relative, as the rate of success appears to be positively correlated to the teachers ability to use curriculum content, produce quality teaching, employ an appropriate instructional style and elevate their expectancy about student performance. Westwood (1995) also suggests that while it is desirable that teachers have these skills, current school pedagogy may be in conflict. "The student centred philosophy does not favour direct or explicit teaching, but rather advocates an 'immersion' approach" (Westwood, 1995, p. 10). Student who have difficulties in learning do not advance in this type of environment. So when teachers are asked to collaborate about specific student needs they may not have the requisite skills to be effective (Chaney, 1990).

These requisite skills are also frequently being redefined by petitions and submissions to government, fiscal planning and the outcomes of educational research (EDWA, 1993a). More data both empirical and anecdotal is now necessary to establish the needs of these students. It is also argued that it is a task which teachers can no longer effectively hope to achieve in isolation. However to cater for these needs by employing a collaborative approach such as the CAP design, it requires the suspension of teacher autonomy, and the embracing of teamwork, concession and compromise. This shift in its most negative form is tantamount to the surrender of independence, the invasion by peers and the elevation of external accountability (Banbury, 1987). However, in contradistinction it can represent the opportunity for teachers as professionals to share methodologies in planning and instruction. A

common language (Cater et al, 1995; Wiener & Davidson, 1990) can developed both vertically to follow the student through their schooling and horizontally by the replication of methodologies by teachers in the same year level. An important benefit can be the alleviation of teacher stress. Solutions can be found, tasks can be open to negotiation and a definite course of action can be established.

However for teachers to modify their culture it requires what Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) describe as identifiable congruence. Does it achieve the desired outcome? Is the cost justified (Yoshida, 1983)? What of its instrumentality? Is the structure user friendly and does it have operational meaning? Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) also state that; “True collaborative cultures, according to Hargreaves, are ‘deep, personal and enduring’. They are not mounted just for specific projects or events. They are not strings of one-shot deals. Cultures of collaboration are constitutive of, absolutely central to a teacher’s daily work” (p. 136). The implications of this are two fold. For CAPs to be successful and effective, teachers have to embrace the notion of collaboration as a significant feature of their culture. Secondly, teachers who are involved in CAP procedures must be able to see the intrinsic value in team generated solutions and also see justification in additional resource allocations being earmarked for a relatively small percentage of the school population.

Teacher culture is also affected by the unique history of each educational system. The type of structures that were set up specifically for adopting change in the past gives teachers a measure of what to expect with each new innovation. A frequent characteristic of the change process is the lack of consultation with the end user. Forlin (1995) observes that teachers have had in the Western Australian

context, “little control over decisions regarding implementing the policy” (p. 183). Darling-Hammond (1990) states; “teachers prior learning, beliefs and attitudes are rarely considered as an essential ingredient in the process of teaching itself, much less in the process of change” (p. 238). It is suggested that as a way of overcoming these conditions communication should be improved. An acknowledgment should be made that new policies land on top of other policies in the school. In addition, the teacher skill base present in the school should be examined, appreciated and woven into the change process with teachers as change-agents.

However, educational change is also frequently the legacy of government-in-transition. With each new government administration alterations to departmental processes and policies are made to reflect the governments political perspective (Bain, 1992, Elkins, 1992b). Stereotypical perceptions of the political process and its attendant industrial issues frequently overshadow and thwart the intent and implementation of innovations. Sarason (1987) observes that change invokes an “adversarial context in which the combatants vary widely in terms of attitudes, goals, self interest, turf, professional status, power” (p. 119). If this condition could be dispelled and a bipartisan approach can be established in both the political and educational arena, it will bode well for the innovation. It is considered that such a condition has prevailed in the case of CAPs, given the fact that extensive consideration of teachers, parents and significant others was made by the Task Force (EDWA, 1993a). Secondly, it has survived two governments and nearly three years of planning and trialing. In summary, if CAPs are to be used it is beneficial that teacher culture adopt collaborative ventures as apart of their normal teaching

repertoire, i.e. collaborative cross curricular planning. If that is possible then it can only increase the chances of CAPs being effective.

Individualization

The notion of individualization for students with special needs in an educational context is the process of identifying individual educational needs, and responding by enabling unique teacher-student interactions (Martin, 1972,). As Warnock (1991) suggests "Once you embrace the project of educating everyone, the most severely disabled as well as the potentially brilliant, within the context of meeting their educational needs then this becomes obvious, for the idea of an educational need is and must be extremely flexible" (p. 147). The assumed benefit of this individualized interaction is the attainment of no significant differences in educational outcomes (EDWA, 1993a, p. 13). This has been styled a needs-based approach which strongly emphasizes strategies driven by individual rather than categorical need. Current language (EDWA, 1993a) attests to this perspective. The literature refers to the system being responsive to the right of the child and the provision of diverse strategies to best meet the specific needs of the child. The ultimate aim being to maximize their educational outcomes.

While there is agreement about who is in need, the processes to be used are the subject of pedagogical polemics. The integrity of diagnostic methods is questioned. Discourse suggests that methodologies that cater for individual need are frequently associated with either behaviourist strategies or developmental inventory approaches (Feilder & Knight, 1986; Goodman & Bond, 1993; Lynch & Beare, 1990; Weisenfeld, 1987). As a result clear differences emerge as to what should be analyzed to determine need (Linehan & Brady, 1995). Pyl et al (1988) claim that

some diagnostic instruments are misapplied in practice. In some cases emphasis is placed on determining expectations about learning potential from intelligence tests, instead of developing methods to enhance the teaching method. They also question some of the techniques used to cater for individual need. For example ability training which focuses on the remediation of specific skill deficits. While it suggests that this process will resolve these deficits, discourse is not so emphatic.

“Assumptions about the existence of the abilities, their relevance to learning, the reliable and valid measurement of the abilities, the remediation possibilities and the consequence of teaching are questioned” (Pyl et al, 1988, p. 68). Other educationists prefer a more eclectic approach. Bower (1992) perceives that while treatment approaches are defined and driven by these professional pedagogical strategies, in some cases particularly the behavioural task analysis approach, they have an “almost religious fervour” (p. 49). Bower (1992) suggests that such approaches particularly for pre-school children can be counter-productive and states that “such highly structured programs tend cheat some children out of their childhood experiences” (p. 49). Where the developmental inventory guides diagnosis and instruction Goodman and Bond (1993) suggest that it is a tenuous assumption that developmental continua are always a valid approach. Not all individual needs are defined in terms of a specific vertical level on a developmental inventory.

Another perception is that individualisation need does not need to be catered for isolation. Group activities can cater for some needs. Socialization skills which such students tend to have a deficit in, can only be successfully taught through the modeling from other children in a group situation. Kehle & Guidubaldi (1980) and Hofmeister (1990) see group instruction as an avenue for individual need,

particularly in the affective domain. Frequently objectives generated to cater for individual need have an academic emphasis. Weisenfeld (1987) perceives that this focus can be overemphasized to the detriment of social and life skills acquisition. Several elements that should be inclusive in objectives are “a) the setting of instruction was either a natural setting or an approximation of a natural setting, and b) the instructional materials were age-appropriate and useful to the learner’s interaction with the environment and / or subsequent environments” (p. 282). It is argued that if these elements are applied it can enable such students to leave school with skills that can be more easily generalised. In addition Conway (1991) perceives that if the students are involved in task application in a generalised setting they can become “active modifiers of their environment” (p. 278).

In summary, the notion of individualization while being a typically teacher - student interaction is founded on different premises and has various meanings in practice. While variations exist it is clear that the primary focus should be the individual need, be it functional, academic, vertical or horizontal in aspect. Another factor in catering for individual need is the use of team planning that is multi-disciplinary in design.

Multi-disciplinary Teams

Individual planning that is multi-disciplinary in design assumes the position that a group of stakeholders can come together and generate appropriate and valued outcomes. As a group it usually comprises teachers, administrators, therapists, psychologists, parents and possibly the student. The purpose of this process is the development of solutions in the form of an action plan. Research findings suggest that there are many factors that need to be acknowledged to enable the process to be

effective. Studies have investigated parent participation in the IEP team (Gerber, Banbury, Miller & Griffin, 1986), participant perceptions of other team members (Gilliam & Coleman, 1981; Goldstein, Strickland, Turnbull & Curry, 1980; Scanlon, Arick & Phelps, 1981; Vaughn, Bos, Harrell & Lasky, 1988) and team characteristics (Bailey, 1984; Kehle & Guidubaldi, 1980; Wood, 1984).

Given that teachers are relatively autonomous but may vary in their locus of control (Westwood, 1995) with respect to students with special needs, the shift from individual decision making to the group does present several scenarios. Where multi-disciplinary team dysfunction occurs, it is diverse in its type and its origins. Bailey (1984) conceptualizes these dysfunctional types in three axes. They are seen as team development, team subsystems and team functions. In the first axis which is termed as team development, participant perspectives, team processes and the procedural maturation of the team are identified. Participant perspectives can be seen as a source of polemics, frequently being paradigmatic or pedagogical, reductionist or constructivist in nature. In addition the attainment of team maintenance, the state of professional collegiality and equity, can be achieved if all the participants can work with a united focus. For example the expert-novice dynamic can be suspended in favour of parity and reciprocity (West & Idol, 1990).

In the second axis which is termed team sub-systems, there are eight possible sub-systems that may cause dysfunction. The team can be either ideal, or contain individual or multiple forms of dysfunction. These may be manifested as a dominant leader or team member, an inferior team member, a conflict between two members or one team member conflicting with the rest of the team. The team may also harbour factions within the team or have an isolated member. Yoshida (1983)

suggests that where a dominant member's view carries the day "powerful individuals rather than the MDT team should have responsibility for decision making" (p. 140). Of course this conclusion implies in this case that the multi-disciplinary team is redundant. An antidote to this dynamic is the development of mechanisms that the team can use to anticipate current or emerging dysfunctional dynamics. In the absence of these mechanisms Kehle and Guidubaldi (1980) perceive that the subsequent outcome of team planning can be decisions that are ill informed, consensus driven ignoring minority views which sometimes may be more appropriate.

In the third axis which is termed team functions, team functioning is perceived as either ideal, under-performing, over-structured, replete with ambiguous roles or disorganized. Bailey (1984) conceptualises that the notion of team is differential for the participants. Where there are no agreed guiding principles, is it difficult to establish continuity and a shared vision. If as he says " the interdisciplinary team is a complex entity designed to accomplish a specific task" (p. 24) then it is requisite of all members to suspend the differential aspects they bring to the team and work on developing a common approach.

Arthur, Butterfield and White (1995) and Reeve and Hallahan (1994) suggest that the dysfunctional variables can be resolved if specific conditions are established. They refer to the maintenance of clarity of purpose, overlapping interests, communication and trust, shared ownership, focused action, adequate resources, innovative administrative leadership, team training and an appreciation of each team members philosophical foundations. The majority of these principles would have to

be engendered from the beginning. Phillip and McCullough (1990) refer to participant receptiveness to each others philosophical foundation as pivotal.

In the literature appraised, parents as participants in a the team are perceived by a high percentage of the other members as ineffectual at best. This is not to say that their perception was immune to professional prejudices or bigotry. Gerber et al (1986) found that only half the other team members thought that the presence of the parents at the meeting was necessary; seventy percent thought that parents should waive their right; sixty eight percent thought that their absence would not be detrimental to the planning process; and forty three percent thought that the process was just a formality. While other team members had this view, Witt, Miller, McIntyre and Smith (1984) concluded that “parents are more likely to be supportive of the total education program for their child if they are active participants”(p. 32). While this may be most desirable, parents have historically had low attendance and little contribution to the planning process. This low level of participation McNamara (1986) and Bower (1992) both identify as the result of the professional language used and the inability of the professionals to take the parents on board as partners. Baxter (1989) in an analysis of parent perceptions of service providers found that there were four dimensions that parents expected would exist. Service providers should manifest helpfulness, professional interest, consideration and respect for parent views and should demonstrate a professional commitment to parents. As Baxter (1989) says; “ services may fail if the attributes of service providers become a barrier to effective service delivery” (p. 268). The necessity of establishing this level of partnership is because parental contributions are useful. Family members can bring to the meeting information about the student’s “personality, likes and dislikes,

which may be essential to the development of an educational program” (Carter et al, 1995, p. 40).

So where shared conceptualisations exist and there is the development of common professional mores all members can have an unobscured common purpose, the needs of the student. The focus is holistic. These solutions or guidelines for team functioning fit well with the notion of collaboration which has gained currency in Australia in recent years (Fields, 1994). Given the acknowledged need by the Education Department to amend current planning practices the ideal parity and reciprocity (West & Idol, 1990) of collaborative ventures may well serve the student more successfully.

Collaborative Consultation

Collaborative consultation operationally defined is a “a reciprocal arrangement between individuals with diverse expertise to define problems and develop solutions” (Pugach & Johnson, 1988, p. 3). Idol (1994) adds to this definition by suggesting that through a collaborative approach “the outcome is enhanced, altered, and different from the original solutions that any team member would produce independently” (p. 3). The definition implies that for collaborative consultation to be of value, it must be qualitatively better than the existing strategies. Its presence as a working methodology for team functioning, several writers see as a natural consequence of the inappropriateness of previous models such as the outsider expert consultant role that has its roots in the medical model. Significant proponents of the collaborative consultation model in the literature are Friend (1988), Idol (1993), Paolucci-Whitcomb and Nevin (1986), Pugach and Johnson (1988) West and Idol (1990).

While literature about collaborative consultation is extensive, the veracity of the methodology is still to be determined (Fields, 1994). Discourse in part has suggested that collaborative consultation may just be *Zeitgeist*. But if it is of value, is it best practice? While the Education Department uses the term best practice, Bower's (1992) suggests that this may be misnomer, and may receive the same criticism that top-down innovations have attracted (Fullan, 1992; Hall & Hord, 1987). In a general sense she suggests that the quest for best practice lacks definition and can impede the use of alternative practices.

Given the idealistic terminology of reciprocity and parity (West & Idol, 1991) which are integral to collaborative consultation, can it be replicated in the school environment? In many cases this has not occurred (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1992). It is apparent that the validity of collaborative consultation as an educational tool is relative to the capacity of the team to emulate the principles embedded in the definition. Pugach and Johnson (1988) suggest that this relativity is specific to three dimensions. These dimensions are firstly, the level of congruence in participant perspectives about the process and its perceived outcomes. Secondly, the degree that participants reach beyond what Pugach and Johnson (1988) call "Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' "(p. 3) and embrace new skills and ideas. Thirdly, the ability of the team to capitalize on the differential skills they each possess to produce creative solutions.

Dettmer, Thurston and Dyck (1993) in an analysis of various multi-disciplinary models perceive that the collaborative consultation model is "emerging as a model in which the consultant and the consultee are equal partners" (p. 89). While these advantages are promising, they are tempered by several general

conditions. Dettmer et al (1993) find that team members must be given adequate collaborative training, team interaction time should not be limited, educators should be encouraged to see the advantage of working with their peers and support must be effective and ongoing. Finally and perhaps the condition that all participants should be aware of, is that results are not immediate and do take time to evolve (Darling-Hammond, 1990; Fullan & Steigelbauer, 1991).

Research has also investigated the relationship between consultation and collaboration (Pugach & Johnson, 1988), its appropriateness for specific disability groups (Luckner, Rude & Sileo, 1989; West & Idol, 1990), its use as a school ethic (Davis & Kemp, 1995; Phillips & McCullough, 1990), its perceived limitations (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1992), teacher attitudes (Fields, 1994) and meta-analysis (Friend, 1988; Fuchs, Fuchs, Dulan, Roberts & Fernstrom, 1992; Nevin, Thousand, Paolucci-Whitcomb & Villa, 1990; Phillips & McCullough 1990; Reeve & Hallahan, 1994).

Fields (1994) in his research of Queensland classroom and support teachers found that they chose the collaborative model over the mental health, clinical, and expert models. It was apparent that while the choice of model was in line with current trends about decision making processes (Westwood & Palmer, 1993), teachers were “relatively unfamiliar with the process of working collaboratively, particularly where traditional withdrawal models of remedial education operated” (Fields, 1994, p. 23). This implied that while they are disposed to the idea, it could necessitate a quantum shift in thinking and practice for the approach to be successful.

Where Fields (1994) suggests that this model engenders a collegial atmosphere of trust, respect and parity, Fuchs and Fuchs (1992) are cautious indicating that this collegial spirit can obscure the purpose, objective analyses and

the production of creative solutions. Where the purpose is lost it amounts to nothing more than a “feel-good approach”(p. 93) with emphasis on the style of interaction, not the outcome. Fuchs and Fuchs(1992) in defence of their claims also cite the lack of empirical data to support the notion that these collaborative ventures have treatment integrity. They suggest that this low level is explained by the prevalence of a constructivist approach to the collaborative process, which they argue tends to be informal and driven by consensus rather than hard data. Reeve and Hallahan (1994) tend to concur with Fuchs and Fuchs (1992) in their commentary and find that empirical literature about collaborative consultation is limited. Even among proponents of the process it is apparent that there is a lack agreement about definition and the methodologies employed. As a result of this loosely defined approach it is apparent that key concepts are necessary to guide collaborative ventures effectively. In line with this Lopez, McKenna-Dalal and Yoshida (1993) infer that it is requisite;

that professionals from different cultures (e.g., general education, special education, and school psychology) and subcultures (e.g., scientists, trainers and practicing professionals) should continue to examine their respective paradigms. Professionals such as general education teachers, special education teachers, school psychologists must evaluate whether they approach the consultation situation within their own paradigms, limiting the content as well as the process of collaboration (p. 210).

In summary the use of a collaborative consultative methodology is impressive in its aims, however if the potential outcomes are to be efficacious then there must be checks and balances. The nature of collaboration must be explicit

between all the participants. Notions of the outsider/insider, expert/novice and super-ordinate/subordinate dynamics must be set aside so that the model can work effectively. Phillips and McCullough (1990) assert that collaborative consultation must be “met in terms of effect, not merely intent” (p. 301). An effect that Davis and Kemp (1995) overcomes the “traditional barriers” (p. 26). In the next section time as a resource will be discussed.

Time

Time as a resource in an educational context is finite. As a result any innovation that has a high demand for time must have a sound basis. Research is replete with findings that indicate individual planning strategies demand a great deal of time to develop. The causal nature is multi-dimensional. Data collection is extensive, diagnosis requires coordination of specific professional groups, individual and multidisciplinary objective planning takes time, and planning for individual students is carried out alongside other whole-class based planning.

As an example of the effect that individual planning strategies have had on a system over time, it is pertinent to consider the IEP. This planning model has been in place for at least two decades, and remains a high consumer of school time. This level of time allocation has predominantly been seen as a top-down legalistic mandatory structure set up to enforce the delivery of individual education plans. The time devoted to scheduling of meetings and planning have meant a considerable reduction in time for other teacher activities, such as instructional contact with students.

From the early implementation phase of IEPs in America, the amount of time allocated varied from district to district. Time tasks involved data gathering,

telephone calls, the IEP team conference, consultative activities with other professionals, writing the IEP document and instructional planning. While the studies by Price and Goodman (1980) and Quinn (1982) suggest that teachers with more experience were more efficient, they noted that an IEP took on average six and half hours to develop. Concern was raised that teachers appeared to have a "casual acceptance of this state of affairs without regard to both immediate and long range consequences and without regard to support services and/or training needs of the instructional personnel who are critical to the IEP process"(p. 452).

Given that the American IEP model did consume a lot of time, was the time seen as valid by the practitioners in the classroom? Morgan and Rhode (1983) in their study would suggest that teachers after two years of using IEPs perceived that the "IEP process puts seemingly excessive demands on their time" (p. 66). Gerardi et al (1984) agreed by stating that "meetings have been the largest single consumer of educators' time"(p. 41). The position of these studies indicated that the IEP framework took on a very legalistic and administrative nature at the expense of the people it was intended to provide for.

If the practitioners found the task onerous and self defeating because of its design, did the utility of the document cancel out these procedural difficulties? Dudley-Marling (1985) in their study found that eighty-five percent of the teachers in the sample kept IEPs in a locked cabinet and did not or could not consult them for up to twelve months. So even if experienced teachers took the equivalent of one day per child to develop the IEP, and then it was not consulted as a daily or even a weekly procedure, what purpose did it serve? Did the shuffling of papers and the discussion of participants about needs and objectives become meaningless? There

are perhaps several explanations. As the initial design process of the IEP framework was cathartic in its attempt to accede to societal pressure for educational reform, there was little allowance given for teachers to comprehend the intent of the IEP. Goodman and Bond (1993) perceived that from a teaching perspective the IEP entailed a radical shift from established practices. A shift that was too quick for legislators and practitioners to ready themselves for. A shift that Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) and Hall (1992) have in retrospect styled counterproductive.

It could be argued that contextually the findings so far considered are essentially American, shrouded in legislature and top-down in practice. However Bennet et al (1991) in their study of New England teachers in New South Wales (where no legal mandate exists) found that teachers while viewing the process as time consuming, did not see the process without merit. "Several respondents, however, mentioned that IEPs were 'time-consuming' (as distinguished from time wasting) because of the required after-school meetings and the development of the program." (p. 27). Whilst their sample was small ($n = 39$) the qualitative difference to the American model suggests that it is how teachers initiate and engage in the process that determines its value. While it may be time-consuming the initial planning did in their case sort out needs and proposed actions. Coupled to this is the fact that the teachers in this study had initiated the IEP, had ownership of the process and were not restricted in terms of resources availability. Wiener and Davidson (1990) in their Canadian study found that "only 10% of team members claimed that the IST (in-school team) was an 'unwarranted infringement' on their time independence"(p. 437).

In summary where time as a resource is finite and it is desirable that the teacher as the practitioner should be involved in all aspects of the process, it is incumbent that administrative paperwork is minimal and the documentation is functional and ultimately portable in the classroom context. So given this variation in the use of time was this any indication of the quality of the document generated? What level of congruence was there between the effort by planners and the objectives and instruction given?

Congruence

Evaluating the strength of individual planning congruence is governed by the purpose and parameters specified before the planning system is implemented.

Ideally if the plan is to have any lasting benefit these factors need to be acknowledged and accepted by all participants. So in the case of Collaborative Action Plans strategies chosen need to have checks and balances to confirm the link between diagnosis and instruction, be it in the psychomotor, cognitive or affective domain.

Retrospectively, congruence, particularly with IEPs, has produced varied levels of congruence. This may be explained in several ways. Firstly, the validity of some diagnostic measures have been questioned in specific environmental contexts, ie. American measures-Australian context (Conway, 1992). Secondly, where appropriate diagnostic measures are employed, research findings suggest that team members don't always have the skills required to interpret and translate the results of the psycho-educational assessment (Pyl et al, 1988; Schenk & Levy, 1979). If educators have difficulty at this stage, the type of objectives written and instruction given will be tenuous. Research specific to IEP congruence has demonstrated over

the last twenty years that the diagnostic instructional link has been poor. In the early stages of IEP use Schenk and Levy (1979) and Schenk (1980) identified that among 300 special education teachers, there was little or no psycho-educational assessment support to justify the IEP generated objectives. As Schenk (1980) states, there was an "inability to trace goals and objectives back to diagnosed needs" (p. 342). The findings of both studies had clear implications for special educators at the time and teachers now, in that special education appeared to lack the ability to understand the importance of psycho-educational assessment results in the production of objectives. The irony was that the whole purpose of the special education system was reliant on teachers and non-teaching professional having such skills. It is possible as Engelmann (1967) observed, that the types of measures used by psychologists and other professionals were actually difficult to translate or not relevant in an educational instructional context.

Westwood (1995) contends that congruence can be the result of a mismatch between teaching style and student need. He cites current teaching styles and preferred system wide learning processes such as the whole language approach, which uses an immersion process that is predominantly student centred. As this is contrary to strategies used for children who have learning difficulties, the teacher's perspective about learning is perceived by both Elkins (1992) and Westwood (1995) as inappropriate and inadequate.

Congruence is also affected by the type of data collected when generating a student profile. Weiner and Davidson (1990) suggest that student need can be defined by the use of ecological observations. In their analysis of the in-school team model they found that teachers gained the highest level of utility from a student

profile that came predominantly from systematic ecological observations. Linehan, Brady and Hwang (1991) and Linehan and Brady (1995) support this premise and suggest that an ecological observation can lead to a higher expectancy of student performance by the teacher as well as providing information relevant to instructional planning.

Fielder and Knight (1986) using their assessment criteria determined that there was a range of fourteen and twenty five percent congruence between recommendations and IEP goals, with sixty four percent of the IEP goals having no link to assessment material. They postulate that;

This may result from two possibilities: (a) little of the information transmitted is actually understood, or (b) the information is understood but, for unknown reasons, is not acted upon. Either possibility might be due to a variety of teacher related factors (training, experience, personal bias), as well as the nature of the communication system (p. 26)

Smith (1990b) using The Program for Procedural and Substantive Efficacy (PEPSE) to measure congruence in a category-delivery system factorial design established that congruency occurred for no more than sixty two percent of the assessment/IEP goals. While the level which was substantially higher than Fielder and Knight's (1986) study, it was still unacceptably low. Smith (1990b) observed that the implications of the measure worked two ways. Where little attention was given to the initial assessment the objectives did not relate to needs. In addition, where the objectives were valid they did not govern the instruction given. Smith

(1990) summarizes the situation by saying that “The results of this study substantiate past findings questioning the validity, reliability and accuracy of the IEP document” (p. 98). In contrast in Australia Hudson and Cummins (1991) found that educational objectives written for people with disabilities, when compared to a range of vocational life skill objectives had the highest level of congruency (87%). While they were not perfect they represent a higher level than found in the American studies.

Weisenfeld (1987) and Lynch and Beare (1990) view congruence in a slightly different perspective. They examined if the assessment criteria and objectives reflected functionality, were relevant, fostered interaction, encourages generalization of skills, were taught in a natural setting, had specificity and employed parent involvement. They found that while the congruency between assessment and objective may be substantive, the choice of strategy was not always appropriate. Weisenfeld (1987) suggests that IEPs should include functional real life objectives to enable the generalisation of skills. The findings of the study suggest little attention to the teaching of functional tasks. He states that “the lack of emphasis on life skills, social skills and learning strategies, in combination with the reliance on age-appropriate or grade appropriate academics, raises questions as to the utility of the examined IEP objectives” (p. 54).

Where differences in the educational environment have been suspected of causing variance in objective congruence, Hunt et al (1986), Hunt and Farron-Davis (1992) found differences between regular and special education facilities. Hunt et al (1986) found that “Teachers whose programs are based on segregated sites tend to make comparisons between students ‘in relation to degrees of handicap rather than

comparing skill performance' " (p. 129). Hunt and Farron-Davis (1992) also found that teachers were influenced by the homogeneous nature of the special education population and tended to generate a narrow range of objectives.

Bateman (1992) proffers another perspective about congruence. Even if the IEP team employs the preferred approach, devise a range of suitable solutions, individual needs may be lost because the necessary level and type of support services are not available. So there is lowered congruence between needs and services provided. While the lack of available resources may have been unavoidable, Bateman (1992) suggests that more often than not, resource availability has been frequently been driven by pragmatic and fiscal policies. It is suggested that this could be overcome if the process was reconfigured. Instead of the current process which is sequentially referral-placement-program, program should precede placement decisions. This would enable program development to be driven by solely by student need. Pyl et al (1988) concur by suggesting that in many cases "situational constraints (like the availability of resources) are more relevant in IEP construction" (p. 67).

Congruence can also be influenced by pre-performance information. This is the information generated from diagnostic and anecdotal sources. Teachers may associate varying levels of expectancy dependent on the nature and level of the specific disability. Several researchers (Cooper, 1979; Delclos, Burns, & Vye, 1993; Guttman & Boudo, 1988; Heubner, 1987; Johnson, 1980; Knoff, 1983; Morrow, Powell, & Ely, 1976; Safran, Safran and Orlansky, 1982) have noted that the manner and type of information that has been appraised by a multi-disciplinary team can vary. This variance they suggest can have a differential effect on their

programming and placement decisions. The commonality in these studies is the role that professional perspectives bring to bear on the merit of different information sources in the planning process. As Delclos et al (1993) suggest, "the usefulness of an assessment report depends on a number of factors, including type of assessment conducted, the contents of the report, and the theoretical perspective of the consumer of the report" (p. 53). While it is idealistic that a team can achieve a commonality in educational perspective's, it is reasonable to expect that all participants should be mindful of where the other members particular perspective's are based.

Congruence is also relative to the student's performance over time. If needs change, then the objectives also need to do this to maintain their validity. However in the case of IEPs which have a mandatory requirement that is locked into a six or twelve months plan, objectives are not so easily modified. In some instances this situation has encouraged the use of vague or broad objectives in attempt to subvert the parameters of time. To obviate this Goodman and Bond (1993) suggest that objectives should be tentative with a view to alternate final objectives where a student's needs change. In line with this Pyl et al (1988) suggest that a log book could be used to record intuitive strategies and objectives could be reviewed frequently.

In summary, congruence is affected by several factors which occur at specific stages in the IEP process. The defining of need requires appropriate diagnostic measures, a team who is capable of interpreting the data and generate valid objectives. The objectives need to attend to wide range of student learning. Teachers also need to be able to develop and deliver instruction based on the objectives. The

objectives should not be overly influenced the location or resources available to the school.

A Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework developed to underpin the present study is taken from several sources. They are teacher attitudes towards disability, individual planning strategies and the implementation of innovations into the classroom. The framework graphically described in Figure 1 attempts to explain a teacher's attitude using a descending vertical pathway. The findings of Center and Ward (1987, 1989), Harvey (1985, 1992), Jordan, Kircaali-Iftar & Diamond (1993), Larivee (1982), Thomas (1988) and Wilson and Silverman (1991) are integrated into the framework.

At the first level Center and Ward (1987, 1989), Harvey (1985, 1992), Larivee (1982), Thomas (1988) tender several factors that their research explains as antecedents of current teacher attitudes. The identified factors are grouped in one of two dimensions, experience and knowledge. In the first dimension experience, experiences are either categorised as either pre-service or in-service. In pre-service Hatton (1988) suggests observational experiences of teacher behaviour by students who themselves become teachers, can be influential. It is seen as a de facto form of teacher training which Hatton (1988) styles as the "invisible apprenticeship in pedagogy" (p. 343). It is argued that this apprenticeship can predispose and perpetuate attitudes and beliefs unconsciously, be they enhancing or detrimental to future teacher behaviours. In addition it is perceived that there are other socioeconomic and cultural factors at play in belief and attitude development.

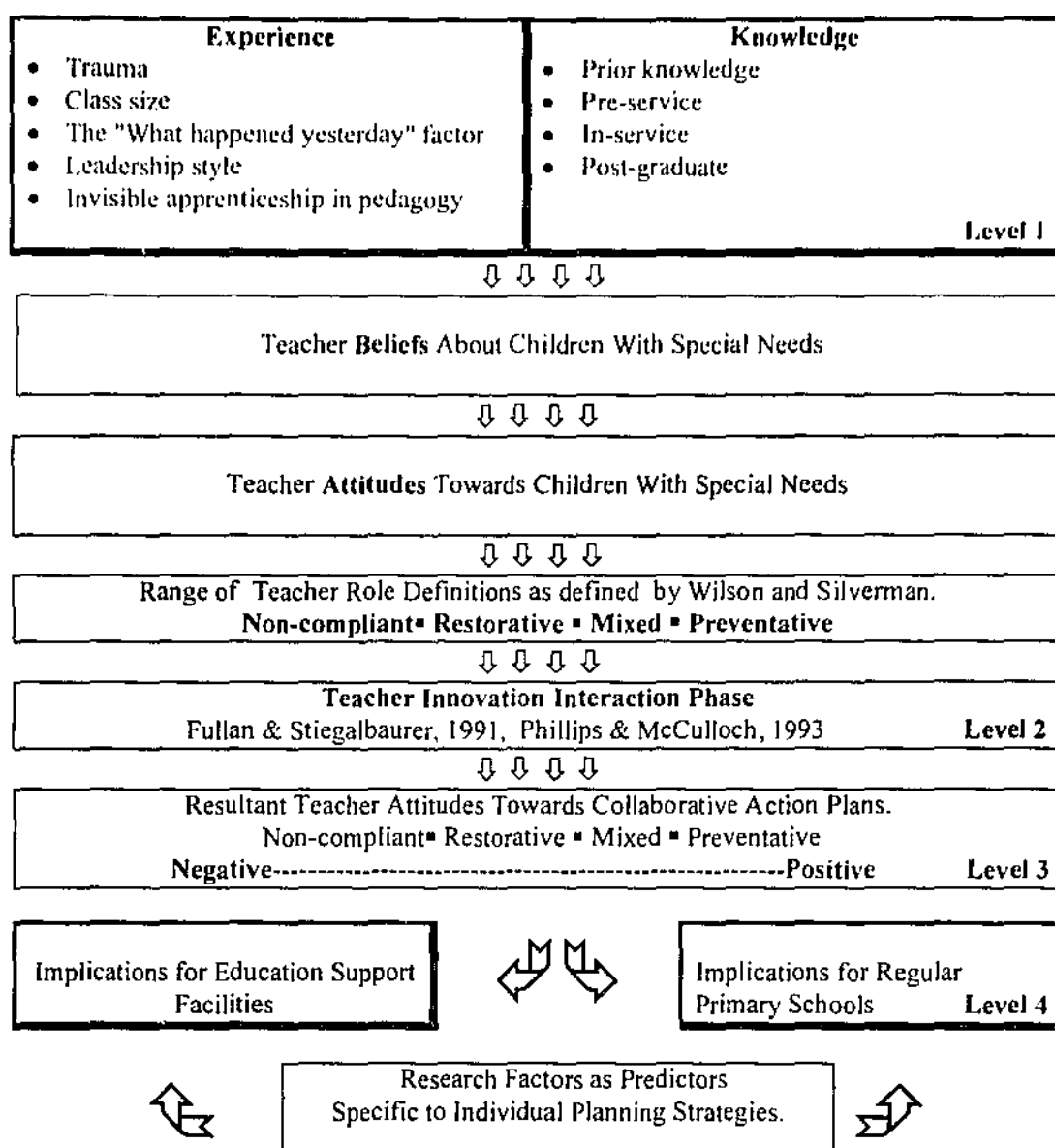


Figure 1. A Conceptual Framework of Teacher Attitudes Towards Collaborative Action Plans.

Thomas (1988) and Larivee (1982) suggest that in-service experiences may be specific traumas. Incidents occur in the school environment that radically modify attitude; temporary attitudinal shifts due to what happened yesterday. Leadership style is identified as another influence. It is quite pervasive given its super-ordinate/subordinate dynamic (Wood, 1984). Finally the effect of classroom size can impose restraint on activities that threaten the existing status quo.

Knowledge as the second dimension encompasses prior knowledge, pre-service, in-service or post graduate sources. The combinations resulting from this knowledge can be legion. Just as the pathways of training are diverse, so will a teacher's outlook based on them be. Attainment of knowledge may also be formal or informally based. It is acknowledged that these dimensions are not mutually exclusive. There are varying levels of interaction and resultant phases of disequilibrium producing subsequent revised attitudinal positions. Knowledge modifies impressions and experience clarifies the sterile and naive nature of knowledge formed in isolation. The outcome of this process is an evolving attitude towards disability and school practices. It has been observed by Wilson and Silverman (1991) that teachers tend to act in one of four distinct ways when faced with the prospect of dealing with students who have special needs. They have advanced a construct to categorize these behaviours, and have styled them as non-compliant, restorative, mixed or preventative. Non-compliant is characterised as complete disinterest in dealing with the educational needs of the students when they manifest some form of learning deficit. Where the teacher recognises the problem but refers the student to an outside source, it is described as restorative. In the mixed mode a teacher will attempt to resolve the problem in an unsystematic fashion which ultimately leads to an outside referral. Teachers who are described as preventative take a proactive approach (Davis & Kemp, 1995). They set up links with other teachers and the parents, conduct a variety of skill assessments and put in place classroom strategies to assist the student. Jordan et al (1993) in their replication of Wilson and Silverman's (1991) state;

The results suggest that teachers who score low on the restorative-

preventative scale and therefore, by definition, tend to locate problems as beyond their own domain of responsibility..... Conversely, preventatively-rated teachers do not rate the withdrawal of pupils, and tend to prefer in-class consultative support particularly as a resource for reviewing student's progress (p. 61).

Given Wilson and Silverman's (1991) construct, it is arguable that teachers within the Western Australian government system will manifest a similar range of behaviours. These are behaviours that Hatton (1988) and Pugach and Johnson (1988) suggest are frequently embedded in work practices and are somewhat intractable.

At the second level, it is conceptualised that there will be an interaction between the teacher current attitude towards disability and the notion of CAPs. At the third level teacher's will through their responses to the survey produce attitudes ranging from positive to negative. At the extremes of the continuum they will be either positive if they are preventative or in antithesis non-compliant and negative. At the fourth level, their response in either direction will have implications for both regular and education support structures. The style and purpose of the implementation should be structured to deal with teacher attitudes towards to the innovation. Underpinning these four levels in the framework is the body of research about teacher attitude, innovations and individual planning strategies. While their applicability is not complete, they can provide some guidelines for the way in which the implementation process is conducted.

Summary

In summary the implications for the use of collaborative action plans in Western Australia government schools are multi-factorial. The premises for using a team work approach that is collaborative in nature have to be clearly understood by all participants. The expectations that the department demands of teachers must be unambiguous. While notional ideas integral to the IEP may be a useful guide for the CAP, they are not exemplary. As Banbury (1987) says, "Unfortunately, the majority of research studies examining the IEP system point out the negative aspects of the process" (p. 47). The underpinnings of IEPs have not been supported by administrative and classroom practice. To avoid the problematic qualities of the IEP, a framework has to exist to enable a non-threatening transition to collaboration. The demands of the process should be no greater than the resources in terms of time and teacher support. Professional development should be designed to encourage a high level of congruence diagnosis and instruction. The notion of individual need must be more representative of social justice issues than a reflection of current resources. Finally, there needs to be a mechanism in place to monitor the implementation process and make adjustments when necessary. Banbury (1987) states that there is a need to develop pre-service or in-service programs for educators and parents that draw from the theories of group dynamics, decision making, interpersonal perception, and stress techniques for facilitating and promoting the open and free exchange of information necessary for the active and equal participation required of all the members (p. 47).

In the next chapter the method for the research study will be stated, giving details about the sample, the design and instrument used, questionnaire design with

an explanation about the research questions, face and content validity and the procedure of the study. Finally, a statement will be made about the limitations of the study.

Method

Introduction

This chapter describes the method employed to measure teacher attitudes towards the implementation of CAPs. Detail is provided about the sample; the design rationale are the dependent and independent variables integral to the study. The choice and structure of the instrument is explained and results from the pilot study are discussed. Finally research limitations are acknowledged and a summary of the chapter is provided.

Sample

A stratified sample of 100 metropolitan regular primary ($n = 50$) and education support teachers ($n = 50$) was selected from the Education Department's Schools and Staffing (1994) book using a random number table in Gay (1992). Teacher populations for each group were manually numbered, with the exclusion of principals and deputies. The population from which the sample selected was perceived to be currently classroom based. Rockingham and Peel districts were excluded on geographic grounds.

Education support teachers. Education support teachers were randomly selected from metropolitan education support schools, centres and units. The number and percentages of males and females within the sample for education support were males $n = 6$ (12%) and females: $n = 44$ (88%). These percentages are similar to the Education Department's published statistics which were male (16.8%) and female (83.2%) in 1992-1993 (Ministry of Education, 1993).

Regular primary teachers. Regular primary teachers were randomly selected from metropolitan primary schools. The number and percentages of males and females within the sample were males $n = 7$ (14%) and females $n = 43$ (86%). These percentages differ by at least 10% from the Education Department's published statistics for 1992-1993 (Ministry of Education, 1993); which were males 28.6% and females 71.4%.

Design

The present study employs a predominantly quantitative approach to measure specific teacher group attitudes toward the implementation of CAPs. By choosing dependent variables identified in previous research as factors affecting the use of individual planning strategies, and then measuring specified group responses (grouped according to independent variables) to these variables, the research design is able to test the two null hypotheses. The first null hypothesis states i) the possession of a special needs qualifications will not affect a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. The second null hypothesis states that ii) a teacher's level of teaching experience with special needs children will not affect their attitude towards the implementation of CAPs.

Dependent variables were selected on the basis of their occurrence in previous research. The variables were source reliability (Banbury, 1987; Lopez, et al, 1993); time (Price & Goodman, 1980; Gerardi et al, 1984; Quinn, 1989), efficacy (Goodman & Bond, 1993), collaboration (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1992; Smith, 1990;), assessment measures (Pyl et al, 1988) and information types (Safran et al, 1982; Pyl et al, 1988).

Table 1

Arrangement of Dependent and Independent Variable x Items

Dependent variables	Item numbers
Source Reliability	9 to 17
Time	18 22 ^a 26 ^a 30
Efficacy	19 ^a 23 27 31 ^a
Collaboration	20 24 28 32 ^a
Assessment Measures	21 ^a 25 29 ^a 33
Information Types	34 to 42
Ranking of CAP Issues	43
Summary	44 ^a 48 ^a 49 50 ^a 51 ^a
Independent variables	
School type	1 & 1a
Age	2
Teaching experience	3
General Teaching Qualification Level	4
Special Needs Qualifications	5
Awareness of CAPs	6
Use of CAPs	7
Collaboration	8

Note. ^a reverse scored.

The independent variables selected were school type, age,, general education qualification level, awareness or use of CAPs and involvement in collaboration about children with special needs. These independent variables were designed to provide a general profile of each teacher as well as serving the basis for cross tabulations with specific variable items. The independent variables teaching experience and special needs qualification provide the study with two specific independent variable groupings suitable for statistical analysis. Table 1 indicates how the dependent and independent variables are arranged in the questionnaire.

Instrument

A search of the CD-ROM data base, both national and international did not elicit any past or present quantitative instrument used to specifically measure teacher attitudes prior to the implementation of Collaboration Action Plans or its equivalent more well known form, the Individual Education Plan. There are at least two reasons for the lack of similar studies. Firstly, Collaborative action plans are a recent product of the Western Australian Education Department. Secondly, most research has been focused on an evaluation of planning strategies after implementation. It is only in recent times (Hall, 1992) that consultation and evaluation with the end user before implementation has been seen as essential for the innovation's success. Where pre-implementation studies were conducted, qualitative interview techniques were employed (Safer et al, 1978; Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977). A survey of post-implementation studies indicated that the questionnaire was the most commonly used instrument (Bennett, Shaddock & Bennett, 1991; Margolis & Truesdell, 1987; Morgan & Rhode, 1983; Scanlon et al, 1981).

Questionnaire package design. The present study uses a mailed, self-administered, questionnaire instrument as described by Cohen and Manion (1989) which can be an effective instrument (Deschamp & Tognolini, 1988) when the population is geographically spread and large in number, or where time and resources are limited. Foddy (1993) also suggests that this type of questionnaire can provide the teacher with more time to respond, removes interviewer bias and may increase the teacher confidence because of the inherent anonymity and confidentiality that the questionnaire provides.

The survey incorporates effective research based features that are known to maximize the response rate (Anderson, 1990; Cohen and Manion, 1989; Dillman, 1979). Teachers were sent a pre-survey stamped letter using high quality stationary. The survey itself included a return-addressed stamped envelope enabling it to be easily returned. A follow-up letter and a reminder call to each teacher in the sample was organised and the survey informed teachers that their responses would remain private and confidential.

All relevant background information was arranged on a fold out sheet, so that as the teachers responded to each item they could obtain clarification about specific issues with ease. On each page clear and explicit instructions were made to enable a successful completion of the survey. The final page thanked the teacher for their valued effort. Previous research into questionnaire design would indicate that in terms of size, number of items and the number of pages (the instrument has six section with fifty one items spread over seven pages) was well within the parameters of acceptability. Dillman (1979) states; "Thus we tentatively conclude that 11 pages,

125 items, represent plateaus beyond which response rate reductions can be expected” (p. 55).

Research Questions

A explanation of the research questions follows providing information about which items are used, the type of terms used for each rating category and the nominated coding values.

Research question 1. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in education support and regular primary schools in their rating of the variable source reliability, as measured by responses to items 9 to 17? Using a four point interval rating scale teachers are asked to select one of the following categories: very reliable, moderately reliable, not very reliable and not at all reliable to separately rate teachers, principals, specialist teachers, students, parents, therapists, social workers, psychologists and guidance officers and medical doctors, in terms of their source reliability as contributors to the CAP team.

Research question 2 to 5. Research questions 2 to 5 each have a specific variable that is measured via four items each. A four point Likert type scale is used for all four variables. The categories in the scale are (from left to right) strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree and are scored from 4 to 1 unless reverse scored. While teachers have not been given a neutral category, there is a comment section after each item to account for indecision or qualitative responses. The removal of the neutral category was done to reduce what Foddy (1993) refers to as “teacher-centred effects” (p. 167).

Research question 2. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in education support and regular primary schools in their

rating of the variable time, as measured by responses to items 18, 22, 26 & 30? The variable time as measured by the four items addresses the CAP effect on teacher planning time, D. O. T. T. (duties other than teaching), contact time for regular students and students with disabilities.

Research question 3. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in education support and regular primary schools in their rating of the variable efficacy, as measured by responses to items 19, 23, 27 & 31? The variable efficacy is measured by the four items and deals with the practical benefits of the CAP for the students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties and its usefulness as a transferal document when a student moves between schools.

Research question 4. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in education support and regular primary schools in their rating of the variable collaboration, as measured by responses to items 20, 24, 28 & 32? The variable collaboration is measured by the four items addresses the question of the effectiveness and efficiency of a team approach in terms, access for parents to professional advice and its ability to respond to the immediate needs of the student.

Research question 5. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in education support and regular primary in their rating of the variable assessment measures, as measured by responses to items 21, 25, 29 & 33? The variable assessment measures is measured by four items and addresses the merits of classroom records, anecdotal information, terminology: need or problem and observational confirmation of students skills.

Research Question 6. Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in education support and regular primary schools in their rating of the variable information types, as measured by responses to items 34 to 42? The research question to measure teacher perceptions about the variable information types: The information types are socioeconomic background; racial background; cultural background; physical ability; intellectual ability; social & emotional development; medical needs; academic performance and family structure. The bank of items allow the teacher to make a comparative rating of the different categories. The rating scale range from high to low, with the values starting from the left as a 4. A comment section is provided after every item.

Research question 7. How do teachers rate the concept of CAPs as measured by responses to items 44, 48-51? The research question using a four point rating scale, asked teachers to respond to summary ideas about CAPs. Teacher are asked if they perceive that the CAP would be reliable, accurate and not restrictive. Secondly, would teachers use the CAP if it was optional and do they perceive that in summary it is an excellent idea.

Teacher Responses to CAP Issues

To determine what teacher attitudes are about specific CAP issues (item 43), seven issues are presented to the teacher to rank. The issue they perceive to be the most important should be ranked as a 1. An allowance is made for the teachers to allocate the same value for more than one issue. In addition teachers are also able to make a comment. These issues are CAP impact on teacher planning time; CAP impact on teacher instruction time; CAP benefit to the student with special needs; CAP benefit to the teacher; Collaboration with other people to devise

and implement a CAP; the accuracy of student descriptions in a CAP and the relevance of different types of student information in a CAP.

To obtain an overall impression of the degree to which teachers would use the CAP, they are presented with the scenario: You have just received a CAP from another school about a student who will soon become a member of your class (items 45-47). They are then asked to indicate the degree to which they would rely on CAPs; with whom they would consult; if they were to consult with someone about the CAP; at what stage would they refer to the CAP, and did they perceive that the CAP description of the child be the same as the child's performance in the classroom.

Face Validity

Expert opinions were sought from Dr. Ruth Shean, Chairperson of the Task Force (EDWA, 1993a), Dr. David Evans, lecturers at Edith Cowan University Mrs Janet Williams and Mr John Gardiner to establish if the questionnaire was actually consistent with the purpose of the study.

Content Validity

Content validity was determined by the findings from previous studies about equivalent forms of planning to the CAP, particularly the Individual Education Plan (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1992; Gerardi et al, 1984; Goodman & Bond, 1993; Lopez et al, 1993; Price & Goodman, 1980; Pyl et al, 1988; 1980; Quinn, 1982; Smith, 1990a, 1990b). Information specific to the Western Australian context were derived from published government documents and reports such as the Task Force (EDWA, 1993a), the Social Justice Policy (EDWA, 1993b).

The Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out in the last two weeks of the Education Department's second term, 1994. The principal at each of the nine schools selected, was requested by the researcher to see if two teachers (most likely volunteers) from the school could fill out the questionnaire and make an evaluation about the design and content. Eighteen surveys (See Appendix A) were personally delivered to nine schools in close proximity to Mount Lawley campus of Edith Cowan University. Sixteen surveys were completed within fourteen days. Data and comments derived from the survey indicated that modifications were required to improve the instrument's reliability. Alpha coefficients were calculated for the preliminary sample response to the variables time, efficacy, collaboration and assessment measures. They ranged from .09 to .59 and were considered to be too low (Gay, 1992). Revision was made to a number of items to improve reliability.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire procedure began in the third week of the Education Department's third term, 1994. A mailing list was generated using the Education Department's Schools and Staffing 1994 book (EDWA, 1994b). Questionnaires were mailed to all the teachers in the sample, in line with the Education Department's policy on research conducted in Western Australian Schools. The procedure for this survey was derived from the survey guidelines found in Anderson (1990) and Cohen and Manion (1989). Table 2 demonstrates the sequence of events carried out during the data collection period. The surveys included a stamped addressed envelope for return.

Table 2

Data Collection Sequence

Day	Procedure
1	Pre-survey letter ^a sent to 100 teachers
3	Survey ^b sent to 100 teachers
8	Follow-up telephone call to confirm the receipt of survey
28	Final date for the return of completed surveys

^a See appendix B and C. ^b See appendix D.

Limitations

The sample was not sufficiently large to make generalisations about the population. The sampling of the population did not stratify for school type, sex, age or qualifications. The use of a mailed questionnaire could not control for collusion among teachers. Primary teachers were not completely representative of the gender percentages in the population.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter has described the design of the study including the rationale for the design and the variables. The procedures for data distribution and collection have been delineated in terms of a sequence. In the next chapter the results of the study will be provided including the response rate, a descriptive and inferential analysis of the data and a qualitative analysis of written teacher responses.

Results

Introduction

In this chapter the results of the survey are presented. The procedures for analysis, data coding and data categorizations are detailed. An explanation is given concerning the response rate, reliability coefficients and the demographic profiles. The results presented are quantitative and qualitative. In the first analysis section it is quantitative. Descriptive statistics are stated. Following this the results of the inferential analysis used for each research question are detailed. As there are two null hypotheses, the analysis for each question is conducted twice. This is achieved by categorizing the sample data using different criteria (see Table 4 & 5). At the end of each research question there is a summary statement and at the end of the quantitative section there is a final summary statement. In the next section a qualitative analysis is carried out concerning sample written responses to the opened ended sections in the survey questionnaire.

As this research study was of an exploratory nature several statistical analyses were conducted. This was done in attempt to identify if special needs qualifications or teaching experience were factors that contributed to statistically significant differences in teacher attitudes towards the implementation of collaborative action plans. It is acknowledged that this process does increase the probability of the findings being the result of chance, thereby diminishing their integrity.

Response Rate

Four weeks after the mailed questionnaires were sent out fifty five teachers had responded to the survey questionnaire. Data analysis was then conducted.

Table 3 indicates how the sample of 100 teachers was categorised in terms of their response to the survey. Of those that did respond to the survey and were categorised as valid subjects ($n = 55$, 66%), the response for education support teachers was $n = 29$, and regular primary teachers was $n = 26$.

Table 3

Sample Response Rate

Teachers	$n = 55$
Non-responding Teachers	$n = 28$
Teachers not teaching	$n = 13^a$
Teachers on leave	$n = 3^a$
Unqualified teachers	$n = 1^a$
Total	$n = 100$

Note. ^a treated as invalid when calculating the response rate percentage.

Data analysis

SPSS 4.0 for Macintosh was used as the statistical tool to analyze the data. All statistical tests used an alpha level of $p < .05$ to determine statistically significant differences between specified groups. Where an inferential analysis is specific to two groups a t-test was conducted. A Multi-variate analysis of variance or analysis of variance and a post-hoc Scheffé test were used when there were more than two groups under analysis.

Data Coding

Data coding was conducted using SPSS (1994) and ED Stats (Knibb, 1994). Data verification was conducted with an assistant, in which a print out of the data was compared against the original coded sheet. In interval items where teachers

ticked between values, it was coded at the lower value. While four teachers were found to have missing data, their responses were retained in the other sections of the survey. The variables described in the survey, the respective items, scale type and value range are provided in the appendix (see Appendix E).

Data Category Groupings for Analysis

Data generated from fifty five teachers for items 9 to 42 were configured in reference to the two null hypotheses. In the first Category Grouping (1), teacher responses for items 9, 42, 44, 48-51 were grouped on the basis of having a special needs qualification (item 5). In the second Category Grouping (2), teacher responses for items 9, 42, 44, 48-51 were grouped in terms of their teaching experience (item 2). Table 4 and 5 display the two data categories.

Table 4

Data Category Grouping 1: Special Needs Qualifications

Group 1	No special needs qualifications	n = 34
Group 2	Special needs qualifications	n = 21

Table 5

Data Category Grouping 2: Teaching Experience

Ed. Support	Group 1: Teaching Experience categories	1-3 ^a	n =11
Ed. Support	Group 2: Teaching Experience categories	4 -10 ^b	n =17
R. Primary	Group 3 Teaching Experience categories	1-3 ^a	n = 9
R. Primary	Group 4: Teaching Experience categories	4-10 ^b	n =17

Note. ^a 1-10 years ^b 11- 41 years.

Reliability

Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for the four main variables time, efficacy, collaboration and assessment measures. Three of the four variables were found to be moderately reliable (Gay, 1992) (see Table 6). The alpha coefficient for the fourth variable assessment measures was considered too low (Gay, 1992), so no grouped item analysis was conducted.

Table 6

Reliability: Internal Consistency of Questionnaire Variables

Variable	Item grouping	Alpha Coefficient
Time	18 22 [@] 26 30	.63
Efficacy	19 [@] 23 27 31 [@]	.70
Collaboration	20 24 28 32 [@]	.66
Assessment measures	21 [@] 25 29 [@] 33	.12

Note. [@] item is reverse scored.

Demographic Data

Teachers were asked a range of questions to obtain a profile of the respondents; previous type of teaching locations; teaching experience; age; highest teaching qualification; special needs qualification; awareness and experience in the use of collaborative action plans or individual education plans and if they had collaborated in planning for students with special needs. The results are provided in Table 7.

Less than half of the teacher sample had special needs qualifications or were aware of CAPs or use CAPs or similar planning strategies. Three quarters of teachers were involved in some level of collaboration (see Table 7). The sample also reveals that teachers in education support had a higher level of special needs

qualifications and an awareness and use of CAP type planning. The results are provided in Table 8 and 9 provide an alternative profile according to the two data Category Groupings 1 and 2 (as described in Table 4 and 5).

Table 7

Demographic Profile of Sample

Item	Category	n	%
1. Have you taught in another type of school?	Yes (1)	32	58
a) Which type of school?	Primary School (mode)	41	75
2. Teaching experience.	11-15 years (average)	29	53
3. Current age.	36-43 years (average)	47	85
4. Teaching Qualifications.	Dip. Teaching. (1)	23	42
	B. Arts (2)	12	22
	B. Ed (3)	20	36
5. Special Needs Training		24	44
6. Awareness of CAPs		29	53
7. Use of CAPs		24	44
8. Involved in Collaboration		41	75

Table 8

Demographic Profile Category Grouping 1

	Group 1		Group 2	
	n	%	n	%
5. Special Needs Training	0	0	21	100
6. Awareness of CAPs	13	38	17	81
7. Use of CAPs	10	29	14	66
8. Involved in Collaboration	23	68	19	90

Table 9

Demographic Profile Category Grouping 2

Item	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3		Group 4	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
5. Special Needs Training	8	73	10	91	0	0	2	12
6. Awareness of CAPs	10	91	15	88	0	0	4	24
7. Use of CAPs	9	82	13	76	1	11	1	6
8. Involved in Collaboration	11	100	16	94	5	55	9	53

Descriptive Data For Items 43 and 45-47

In item 45 teachers indicated that they (100%) would consult another person when they received a CAP. In item 46 they stated that they would consult Teachers (85%), Parents (89%), the Student (56%), Non-Teaching Professionals (65%) and Others (11%). The majority of teachers (n = 46, 84%) would utilize

the CAP after they had seen the student carry out a range of tasks. A third indicated that they would use the CAP when the student entered the classroom ($n = 15, 27\%$), while at least half would consult the CAP before they saw the student ($n = 28, 51\%$). Several would only use the CAP only if a problem arose ($n = 9, 16\%$). All the teachers indicated that they would use the CAP information. For further details see Appendix F .

To determine how teachers in the sample ranked the issues relating to the implementation of collaborative action plans, the means were ranked (see Table 10) with the lowest mean having the highest rank. Teachers were instructed too rank the most important issue as a 1.

Table 10

Mean Ranking of Collaborative Action Plan Issues

Issue	\bar{X}	Rank
CAP benefit to the student with special needs	1.26	1
Collaboration with others to devise and implement a CAP	2.75	2
CAP impact on teacher planning time	3.06	3
CAP impact on instruction time	3.11	4
Accuracy of student descriptions in CAP	3.29	5
CAP benefit to the teacher	3.61	6
The relevance of different types of information in CAPs	3.92	7

Research Question 1

Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in education support and regular primary in their rating of the variable, source reliability, as measured by responses to items 9 to 17?

Null hypothesis 1. The null hypothesis was that the possession of special needs qualifications would not affect a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using the data Category Grouping 1 a two tailed t-test indicated that three of the nine items in the variable source reliability, had statistically significant differences (see Table 11). The analysis reveals that Group 2 rated principals (item 10), students (item 12) and parents (item 13) as more reliable than Group 1 (see Appendix G).

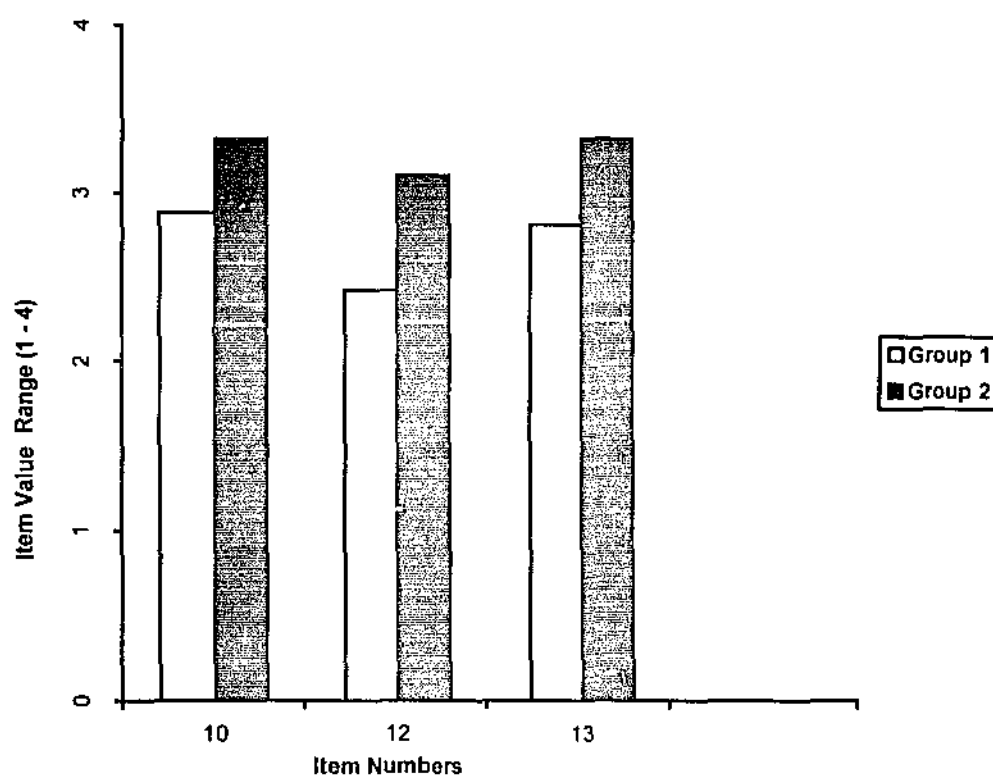


Figure 2. Category grouping 1 item means (10, 12, 13) in the variable source reliability.

Table 11

Variable Source Reliability Category Grouping 1

Item	t	degrees of freedom	significance
9	-1.33	39.53	ns
10	-2.56	47.21	*
11	-1.44	31.11	ns
12	2.65	36.11	*
13	-2.62	46.29	*
14	-1.39	43.78	ns
15	.00	34.69	ns
16	- .37	37.27	ns
17	-1.12	33.11	ns

Note. * $p < .05$

Null hypothesis 2. The null hypothesis was that teaching experience would not influence a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using data Category Grouping 2 a One-way analysis of variance indicated that two of the nine items in the variable source reliability, had statistically significant differences between the four groups of teaching experience (see Table 12). Using the post-hoc Scheffé test a statistically significant difference was measured between a) Group 4 and 3, with Group 4 having a higher rating for specialist teachers (item 11) whom they perceived to be very reliable. Secondly Group 1 and 2 differed in their rating of students (item 12), with Group 2 having a higher rating for students (see also Appendix H).

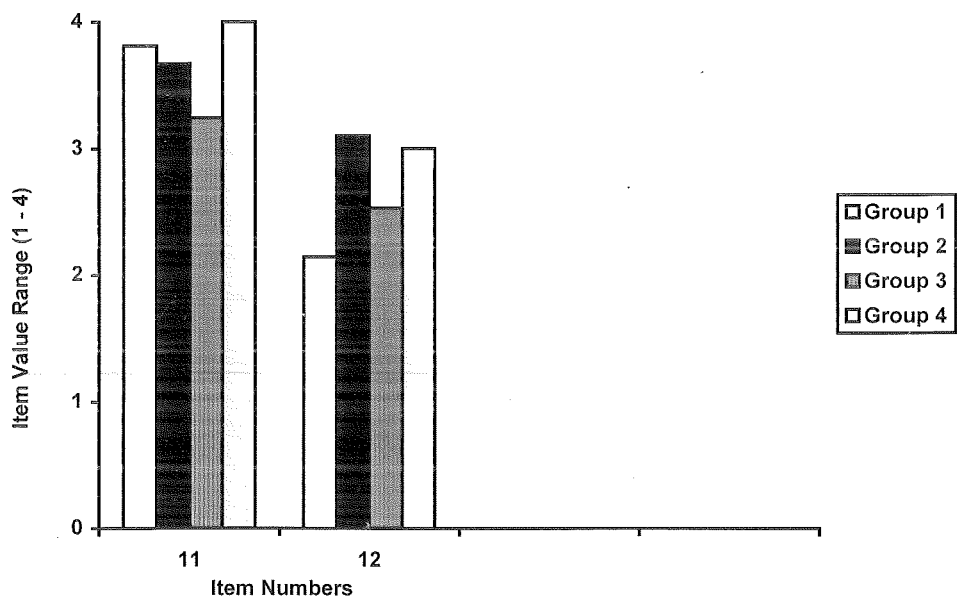


Figure 3. Category grouping 2 item means (11, 12) in the variable source reliability.

Table 12

Variable Source Reliability Category Grouping 2

Item	degrees of freedom	F probability	significance
9	3, 49	.16	ns
10	3, 49	.03	ns
11	3, 48	.01	*
12	3, 47	.01	*
13	3, 47	.12	ns
14	3, 47	.56	ns
15	3, 44	.47	ns
16	3, 48	.86	ns
17	3, 43	.98	ns

Note. * p< .05

Research question 1 summary statement. Teachers as a complete sample rated teachers as very reliable. Principals, parents, therapists, psychologists and medical doctors were moderately reliable, whilst social workers were considered the least reliable. Where statistically significant differences were measured, teachers with more teaching experience had a higher rating for specific categories as source of information.

Research Question 2

Is there a statistically significant difference in specified groups within Education Support and Regular Primary in their rating of the variable time, as measured by responses to items 18, 22, 26 and 30?

Null hypothesis 1. The null hypothesis was that the possession of special needs qualifications would not affect a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using data Category Grouping 1 a two tailed t-test indicated that two out of the four items grouped for the variable time, were found to have statistically significant differences between the four teaching experience groups (see Table 13). The analysis indicates that Group 2 had a higher rating for both item 22 and 26. They had a more positive view about the impact of CAPs on D. O. T. T. time and other children in the classroom. See also Appendix C.

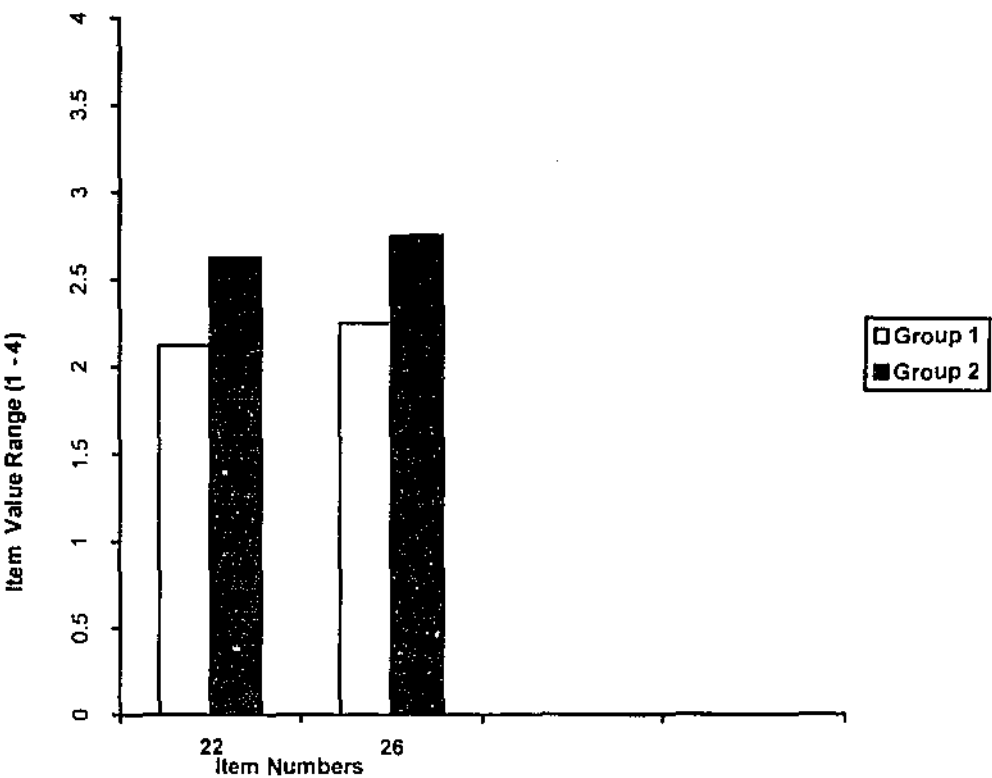


Figure 4. Category grouping 1 item means (22, 26) in the variable time.

Table 13

Variable Time Category Grouping 1

Item	t	degrees of freedom	significance
18	-1.05	40.58	ns
22	-2.09	36.01	*
26	-2.19	35.40	*
30	-0.48	41.58	ns

Note. * p< .05

Null Hypothesis 2. The null hypothesis was that teaching experience would not influence a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs towards planning strategies designed to assist students with special needs. Using data Category Grouping 2 a multi-variate analysis of variance indicated that two of

the four items in the variable time had statistically significant differences between the four groups of teaching experience (see table 14). The post-hoc Scheffé test indicated that only item 30 showed a significant difference between groups.

Teachers in education support (group 1) had a higher rating than teachers in Regular Primary (group 3), perceiving that CAPs would be effective in improving teacher contact time with children with special needs. See also Appendix H.

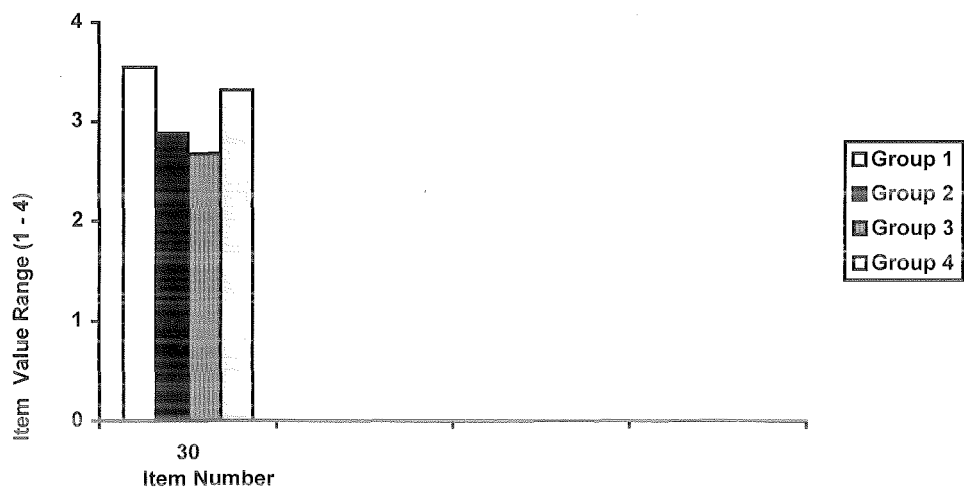


Figure 5. Category grouping 2 item mean (30) in the variable time.

Table 14

Variable Time Category Grouping 2

Item	degrees of freedom	sig. of F	significance
18	3, 45	.95	ns
22	3, 45	.29	ns
26	3, 45	.03	*
30	3, 45	.02	*

Note . * p< .05

Research question 2 summary statement. An analysis of the items concerning the impact on D. O. T. T.(item 22), contact time for other students

(item 26) and children with disabilities (item 30) produced the most difference among the teacher sample. Teachers who had special needs qualifications (Group 2) were more positive about the CAP effect on D. O. T. T. time and the impact on other students. Teachers with more experience of children with special needs (Group 1) in education support indicated that the CAP would be effective for children with special needs (item 30).

Research Question 3

Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular primary and education support in their rating of the variable efficacy, as measured by responses to items 19, 23, 27 and 31?

Null hypothesis 1. The null hypothesis was that the possession of special needs qualifications would not affect a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using data Category Grouping 1 a two tailed t-test indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups between the two groups of special education needs (see Table 15).

Table 15

Variable Efficacy Category Grouping 1

Item	t	degrees of freedom	significance
19	.10	47.71	ns
23	-.56	42.63	ns
27	-1.49	41.99	ns
31	-1.90	36.11	ns

Null hypothesis 2. The null hypothesis was that teaching experience would not influence a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using data Category Grouping 2 a multi-variate analysis of variance indicated that two of the four items in the variable efficacy had statistically significant differences (see table 16). Using the post-hoc Scheffé test none of the four items were found to have a statistically significant difference in their rating of the variable, Efficacy.

Table 16

Variable Efficacy Category Grouping 2

Item	degrees of freedom	sig. of F	significance
19	3, 46	.24	ns
23	3, 46	.05	ns
27	3, 46	.04	ns
31	3, 46	.12	ns

Research question 3 summary statement. Teachers as a complete sample indicated that CAPs would be of benefit (item 23) and should assist children with special needs when transferring between schools (item 27). In contrast teachers were spread in their ratings about the practicality (item 31) and effectiveness of CAPs (item 19).

Research Question 4

Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular primary and education support facilities in their rating of the variable collaboration, as measured by responses to items 20, 24, 28 and 32?

Null hypothesis 1. The null hypothesis was that the possession of special needs qualifications would not affect a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using data Category Grouping 1, a two tailed t-test indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between the four groups of teaching (see table 17). See also Appendix 1.

Table 17

Variable Collaboration Category Grouping 1

Item	t	degrees of freedom	significance
20	1.43	46.17	ns
24	-.49	43.10	ns
28	-1.51	48.16	ns
32	- .19	30.22	ns

Null hypothesis 2. The null hypothesis was that teaching experience would not influence a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs towards planning strategies designed to assist students with special needs. Using data Category Grouping 2 a multi-variate analysis of variance indicated that two of the four items had statistically significant differences (see table 19).

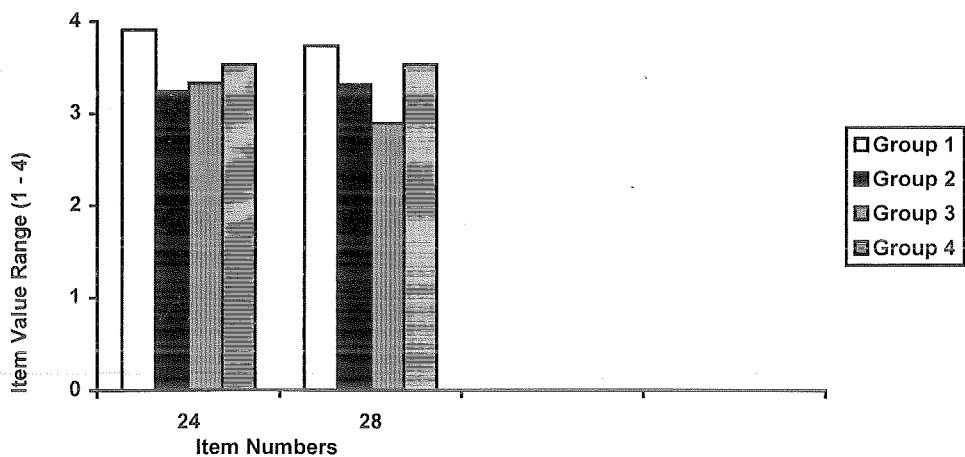


Figure 6. Category grouping 2 item means (24, 28) in the variable collaboration.

Using the post-hoc Scheffé test two items were found to have a statistically significant difference; items 24 and 28. In both cases the less experienced education support teachers (Group 1) had a higher rating about the benefit of a team approach for parents than Group 2. Secondly, they had a higher rating for the effectiveness of the team approach then group 3. See also Appendix D.

Table 18

Variable Collaboration Category Grouping 2

Item	degrees of freedom	sig. of F	significance
20	3, 49	.15	ns
24	3, 49	.01	*
28	3, 49	.01	*
32	3, 49	.58	ns

Note. * p< .05

Research question 4 summary statement. Teachers indicated that while they considered the team approach to be effective, they were not in agreement about parent access to the team or how efficient the team would be. The majority of the sample agreed with the statement that the team approach would be too slow to respond to the immediate needs of the child.

Research Question 5

Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular primary and education support facilities in their rating of the variable, assessment measures, as measured by responses to items 21, 25, 29 and 33?

Due to a low alpha coefficient of .122 an analysis of the data was restricted to a consideration of the complete sample means. See Appendix I.

Research question 5 summary statement. The sample was undecided about the value of classroom records (item 21), in agreement that anecdotal information is relevant in the planning process (item 25), the student's needs, not the problem that should be the focus of the CAP (item 29) and that information about the student needs to confirmed by observation (item 33).

Research Question 6

Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular primary and education support facilities in their rating of the variable, information types, as measured by responses to items 34 to 42?

Null hypothesis 1. The null hypothesis was that the possession of special needs qualifications would not affect a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using data Category Grouping 1 a two tailed t-test

indicated that two out of the nine items had statistically significant differences. Of the nine items within the dependent variable information types, two items, socioeconomic (item 34) and family structure (item 42) were found to have a statistically significant difference. Group 1 had a higher mean than Group 2 for both items. Table 19 illustrates this finding. See also Appendix G.

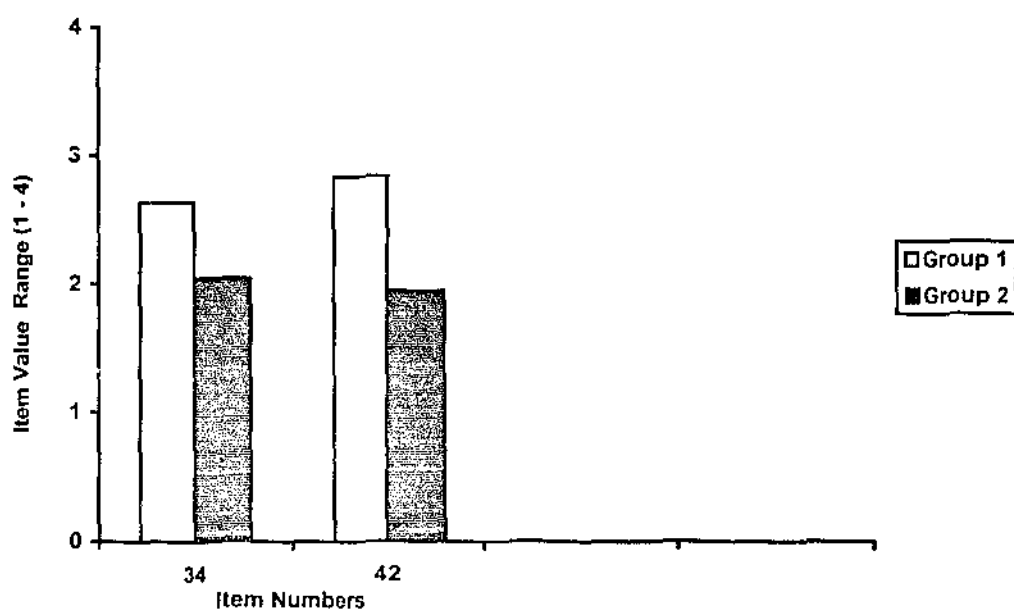


Figure 7. Category grouping 1 item means (34, 42) in the variable information types.

Table 19

Variable Information Types Category Grouping 1

Item	t	degrees of freedom	significance
34	2.15	43.41	*
35	1.21	44.17	ns
36	1.58	41.25	ns
37	.56	30.34	ns
38	1.31	23.99	ns
39	.86	29.43	ns
40	1.68	37.14	ns
41	-.24	40.78	ns
42	3.83	39.80	*

Note. * $p < .05$

Null hypothesis 2. The null hypothesis was that teaching experience would not influence a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs towards planning strategies designed to assist students with special needs. Using data Category Grouping 2 a One-way analysis of variance indicated that two out of the nine items had statistically significant differences between the four groups of teaching experience (see Table 20). Using the post-hoc Scheffé test two items were found to have statistically significant differences. Group 3 (Regular Primary Teachers) had a higher rating than Group 2 (Education Support Teachers) for the categories socioeconomic and family structure as instructional planning factors. See also Appendix H.

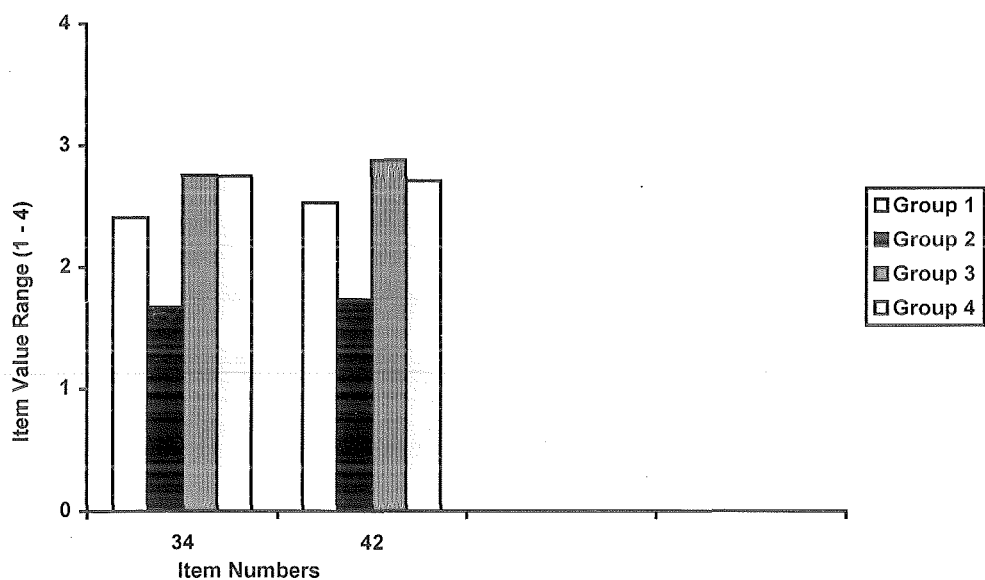


Figure 8. Category grouping 2 item means (34, 42) in the variable information types.

Table 20

Variable Information Types Category Grouping 2

Item	degrees of freedom	F probability	significance
34	3, 50	3.56	*
35	3, 50	2.2	ns
36	3, 50	2.0	ns
37	3, 50	.34	ns
38	3, 50	.74	ns
39	3, 50	1.1	ns
40	3, 50	.81	ns
41	3, 50	.59	ns
42	3, 48	4.46	*

Note. * $p < .05$

Research question 6 summary statement. An analysis using both data Category Groupings 1 and 2 indicated that socioeconomic and family structure were rated higher by regular primary teachers(Group 3) than teachers in education support (Group 2). A ranking of the item means indicated that teachers rated the categories in the following order: intellectual ability, social and emotional development, academic performance, physical ability, medical needs, cultural background, family structure, socioeconomic background and racial background.

Research Question 7

Is there a statistically significant difference between specified groups of teachers in regular primary and education support facilities in their rating of the concept of CAPs as measured by items 44, 48 to 51?

Null hypothesis 1. The null hypothesis was that the possession of special needs qualifications would not affect a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using data Category Grouping 1, a two tailed t-test indicated that there were no statistically significantly differences between the specified groups (see Table 21 and Appendix I).

Table 21

Summary Issues Category Grouping 1

Item	t	degrees of freedom	significance
44	-.60	38.42	ns
48	-.82	40.65	ns
49	-1.24	48.53	ns
50	-1.39	42.75	ns
51	-.33	45.58	ns

Null hypothesis 2. The null hypothesis was that teaching experience would not influence a teacher's attitude towards the implementation of CAPs. Using the data Category Grouping in Table 5 a One-way analysis of variance indicated that a statistically significant difference existed in item 50 between Group 1 and both Regular Primary groups (3,4). Refer to Table 22 & Appendix H.

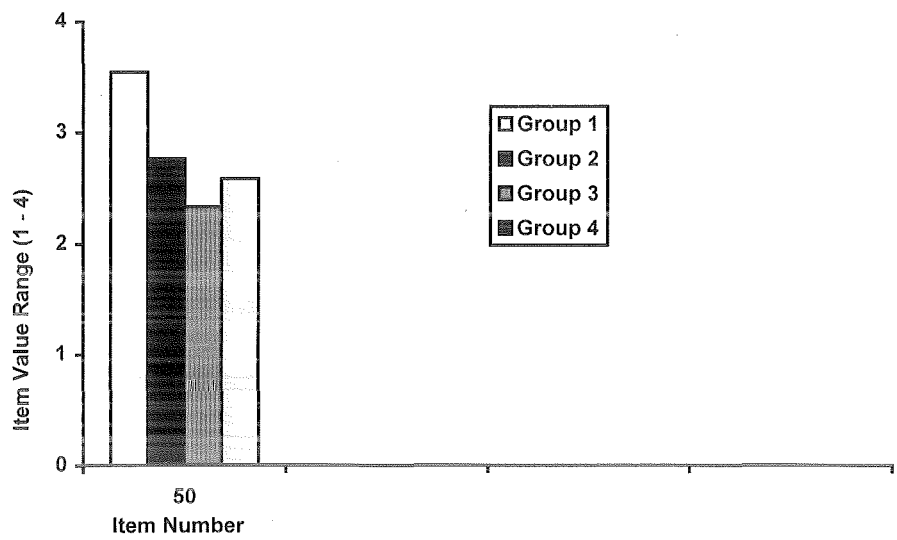


Figure 9. Category grouping 2 item mean (50) in the variable summary issues.

Table 22

Summary Issues Category Grouping 2

Item	degrees of freedom	F probability	significance
44	3, 50	.98	ns
48	3, 49	.1141	ns
49	3, 49	1.0	ns
50	3, 50	4.93	*
51	3, 49	1.34	ns

Note. * $p < .05$

Research question 7 summary statement. Teacher ratings indicate that they would at the very least partially use the CAP. Their perceived level of congruence between stated and actual student performance would be minimal. The use of a CAP would moderately restrict their professional decisions about the student. Given the option to use the CAP teachers were undecided, however using data Category Grouping 2, teachers with less teaching experience would at the very least use the CAP frequently. In the summary question teachers indicated that CAPs were a good idea, but had some negatives.

Quantitative Summary:

As the research question summary statements have stated, an extensive analysis of teacher responses to the questionnaire has indicated statistically significant differences when using both data Category Groupings 1 and 2. Whilst these findings exist, their relevance as an indication of teacher attitudes towards CAPs is governed by the mean rankings generated by teacher responses to item 43. As Foddy (1993) suggests the ranking of issues integral to the issue affords the researcher with a sorting tool to prioritize the factors built into the questionnaire.

In summary the teacher sample indicated that Collaborative Action Plans as a planning strategy were a good idea, but had some negative aspects. The practical arrangements associated with the innovation such as time allocation for planning and collaborative activities, given the present organizational schools structures, produced a mixed response. In the next section, a qualitative analysis of written teacher responses reveals a clear contrast between teachers who have an

experiential knowledge of planning strategies like CAPs and teachers who have only a notional understanding of them.

Qualitative Data

Within the survey questionnaire teachers were able to make written responses to amplify their position on specific variables and items. These responses were collated and coded on a purely numerical level into three categories positive (+VE), conditional (CON) and negative (-VE) and then grouped into two groups; education support and regular primary. While it is acknowledged that these responses were voluntary and do not reflect the opinions of all the teachers in the sample, they do however suggest which items produced a strong response, as well as their attitudinal direction. The written comments are also useful in that they enable a qualitative comparison to be carried out between education support teachers who have had experience with planning strategies similar to CAPs, and regular primary teachers who have only a notional idea of CAPs based on the description in the survey. To demonstrate the category and frequency of responses for teachers in both groups, a graphical presentation was chosen.

Variables: time, efficacy, collaboration and assessment measures. Figure 2 provides a comparison between education support and regular primary teachers. The graphs suggest that education support teachers are more positive about efficacy, collaboration and assessment measures than regular primary teachers. Conversely education support teachers were divided about time as a variable in the use of CAP type planning strategies.

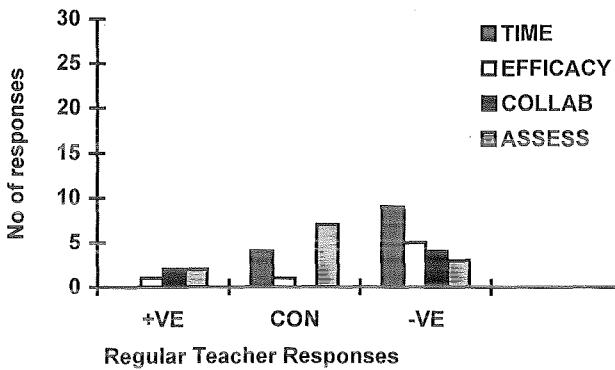
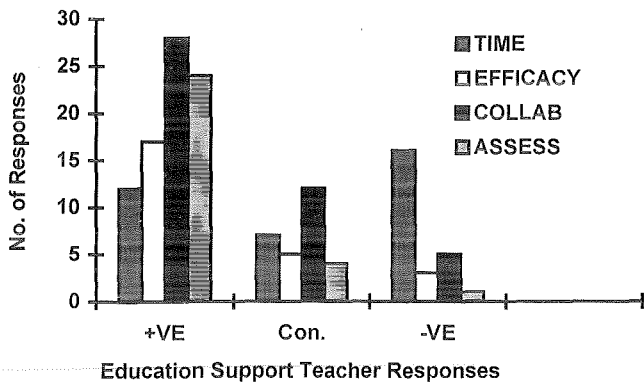


Figure 10. Teacher responses to variables: time, efficacy, collaboration and assessment measures.

Education support teachers writing from an experiential perspective negatively perceived the impact of CAPs on D. O. T. T. time. For example “There are many other things you must do to plan lessons during D. O. T. T. time. CAP planning at our school occurs during a separate meeting” and “extra time allocation is needed to develop CAPs”. From a hypothetical position one regular primary teacher commented, “I feel it would take up extra time (initially). Also what happens if you have numerous children with special needs?”

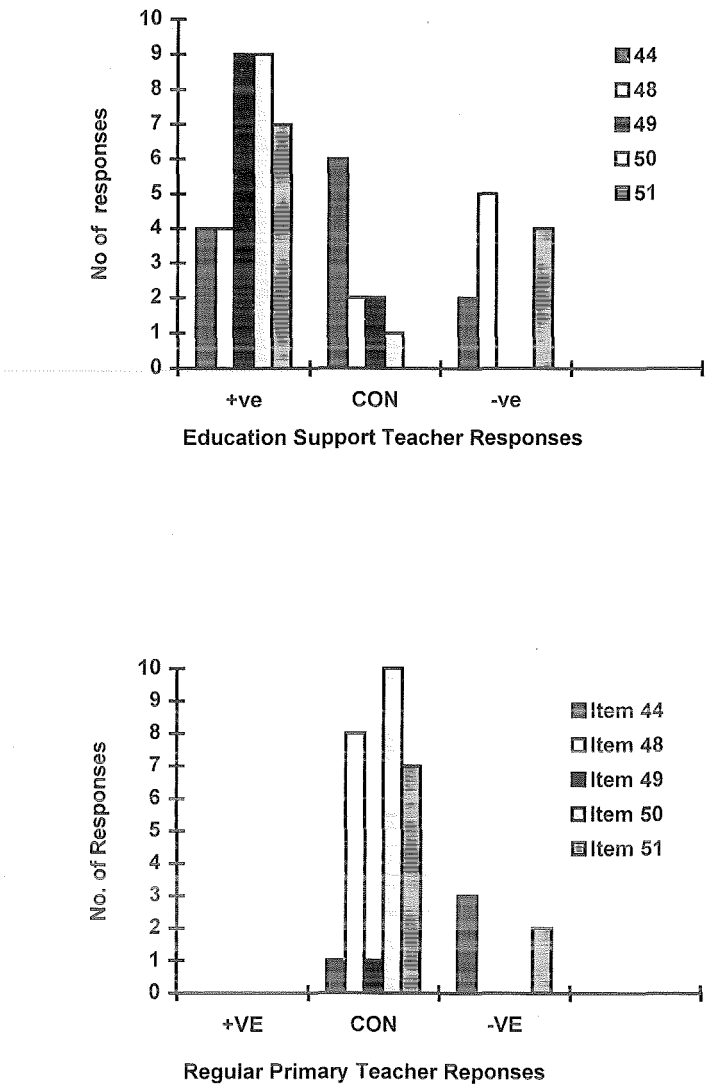


Figure 11. Teacher written responses to Items 44,48-51.

Summary issues. Responses to five of the summary items in Figure 3 suggest that education support teachers are positive about the effect of CAPs on their professional decision making and whether they would use the CAP if it was optional. However they were spread in their concerns about relying on the document, congruence between the CAP document and the student’s actual performance in the new classroom and also their overall attitude toward the concept of CAPs.

In contrast regular primary teachers took a conditional position using expressions such as if, depends, provided and only effective if. No positive comments were associated with these items. These teachers were in agreement with education support teachers with regard to a perceived lack of congruence between CAP stated and actual student performance. One regular primary teacher stated; “I can see that they would benefit children but I feel that special children need help and guidance from those who have been specially trained to teach these children. It is not fair to assume the ordinary classroom teacher would be equipped to teach these children”.

Qualitative Summary

The teacher responses suggest a contrast between teachers who do and don't have experience with CAP type planning strategies. While teachers in either group had concerns about various facets of CAPs, teachers from education support were consistently more expressive textually and positive than their regular primary peers.

Summary of Chapter

This chapter has presented the results of a quantitative and qualitative analysis. Descriptive and inferential findings about the sample have been detailed and summaries for each research question have been stated. The next chapter will discuss the strength of the two hypotheses, enter into comparative discussion about the findings of this study with regard to previous findings, and finally make recommendations for future directions research specific to collaborative action plans.

Discussion

Teacher attitudes towards the implementation of collaborative action plans as measured by this study suggest several things. Statistically significant differences occurred in the variables source reliability, time, collaboration, information types and summary issues. Where statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) have occurred in the major variable areas, teachers with special needs qualifications have had a more positive attitude. Differences also occurred in terms of teaching experience which suggests that less experienced education teachers (10 years or less teaching experience) were frequently more positive. While their positive level was suspected of being the result of a high frequency of teachers in the group possessing special needs qualifications, the more experienced education support group had a similar level of qualifications (refer to Table 10). It is considered that since the statistically significant differences did not occur in the majority of variables, there is insufficient statistical evidence to support the rejection of either or both of the hypotheses. As a result, individual items not variables are the focus of discussion in this chapter. Secondly, due to the exploratory nature of the study, the sample size and composition and the numbers of analyses conducted, further research is required to confirm the veracity of current findings.

From the demographic and descriptive data it is evident that there are noticeable differences between regular primary teachers and education support teachers in terms their level of special needs training and collaboration. The majority of education support teachers did have special needs qualifications and were involved in collaborative ventures. While the majority of regular primary teachers did not have such qualifications, they were involved in a significant level

of collaboration. As the data did not ask teachers to specify the frequency of their collaboration or if it was ongoing, it was assumed that their collaboration occurred once and was in recent times. In terms of the difference in special needs qualifications, it is perhaps a reflection of the dichotomous nature that exists between regular primary and education support. Even though the literature (Elkins, 1992; Westwood, 1995) suggests that regular primary teachers require skills associated with special needs the demographic data from the survey does not support this preference. Given that regular primary teachers do not have such training it appears that they are at a disadvantage if and when they will be required to develop CAPs.

Using Foddy's (1993) ranking of issues it was evident that the sample was in agreement that the most important issue was the benefit that the student with special needs would derive from CAPs (See Table 10). A more recent study using the same survey produced the same ranking results (Spittle, 1995) in terms of the three most important issues. The importance of benefit for the student was reflected in the mean ratings for the variable efficacy (2.87- 3.28). They perceived that the CAP would be effective and benefit the student, assist them when moving to another school. A contrary position is noted. While they perceived the CAP to be efficacious, its practicality was questioned. It is interpreted that this relates to how staff and the administration are going to put the CAP into action.

Where qualitative comments were found in the survey, education support teachers had a higher frequency and with their responses being predominantly positive in type (refer to Figure 2 & 3). It is interpreted that this was due to their

current involvement in CAP type activities and their level of interest (Lobosco & Newman, 1992).

In the variable source reliability, special needs qualifications as an independent variable appeared to be a factor in teacher rating of principals, parents and students. One interpretation would be that as these teachers were predominantly education support teachers and are involved in collaborative ventures, their frequent contact and focus with these groups would explain this difference. A lower rating by teachers without special needs qualifications, who are mainly regular primary teachers, for principals is perceived to be the result of the differences that exist in their workplace . As Forlin (1995) found in a study concerning principal and teacher beliefs about inclusion practices, differences do exist between principals and regular primary teachers. The findings in this study may infer that teachers perceive principals to be not as reliable due to their reduced contact time in the class with students generally. A lower rating by these same teachers for students may be a result of class room practice. They have less to do with the students on an individual basis. Alternatively given that the type of student who would require a CAP has some form of disability, they may have assumed that the student would have a reduced ability to communicate. Their lower rating for parents is typical given the literature already considered (Baxter, 1989; Carter et al, 1995). While parents may not contribute empirical type data, their ecological observations are invaluable (Lynch-Linehan & Brady, 1995). Information provided by parents may be perceived to be emotive and lacking objectivity. Parental involvement may also be seen as biased, inaccurate and a form of external accountability (Banbury, 1987).

Teaching experience as a factor also produced differences in source reliability. While specialist teachers were rated lowest by the less experienced regular primary teachers, all the teacher groups had a relatively high mean rating (3.24 -4.00) for them (See Appendix H, item 11). It may be implied that more teaching experience produces more reliance on specialist teachers. Differences concerning students as reliable information sources appears to imply that as become more experienced their perceived reliability of students increases. Given that teachers have demonstrated a differential rating of possible members of a CAP, it appears essential particularly in regular primary schools, that the purpose and value of data, both empirical and anecdotal provided by a range of sources be explained adequately. Notions of parity and reciprocity and shared conceptualisations will only exist where the entire team are perceived by each other as capable of making reliable contributions.

Time as a dependent variable produced statistically significant differences. Teachers who had special needs qualifications saw CAPs as more positive and manageable within day-to-day practices. However it is interpreted that since the majority of these teachers have special needs qualifications, have worked in education support and routinely conducted CAP type planning, the notion of CAP impact on regular students or D.O.T.T. is less relevant. As one education support teacher stated; "I imagine so. I can't see how teachers in regular classes could devote the time to individual programmes for special needs students without support". It is evident that teachers perceive that unless there are adequate resources and staffing, regular primary teachers will not have a positive attitude towards any inclusive practices like CAP. The impact of CAPs on D.O.T.T. time

generated various implied definitions of D.O.T.T. time. "D.O.T.T. time is supposed to be used to plan additional work, not to have a 'cuppa and a smoke'" and "teachers work load is already sky high, without adding anything else". Given the problematic nature that schools had in organizing time in the IEP process and the effect that it had on other teacher activities, it not surprising the teachers would have such views. Where teaching experience produced statistically significant differences for the variable time, it related to the increased effectiveness that the CAP would have for teacher contact time with students with special needs. One interpretation is that less experienced teachers are more familiar with current trends. More experienced teachers in education may perceive that they have over time developed methods that work just as effectively.

While the variable collaboration produced statistically significant differences, the means were positive and ranged from 2.89 to 3.91.(See Appendix H). Although it is interpreted that all teachers are quite positive about the process, it was not seen as an adequate way of dealing with immediate student needs. As Carter et al (1995) suggest, school logistics can limit the intent of strategies like CAPs. If a meeting can be organized, it can efficiently deal with the students needs. While in the variable source reliability there were differences in how teachers viewed parents as sources of information, in this variable they perceived that the team approach was a helpful source of information for parents. It is seen that as the information is mainly from teacher to parent and not the reverse, teachers are appear more positive.

Where teachers were asked to rate particular information types that they might use in planning, statistically significant differences occurred for

socioeconomic background and family structure. While these information types are perceived by the author to be peripheral when compared to other information types used in the survey such as academic performance, intellectual ability and social and emotional development, differences occurred for both the independent variables special needs qualifications and teaching experience. It was found that teachers who do not have special needs qualifications and who work in the regular primary school rated these information types higher. This may in part support what Hunt and Farron-Davis (1992) identified in their study, that teachers in the special education environment have a more restricted set of objectives types. They are objectives which are more rudimentary. Socioeconomic background and family structure for these teachers may appear superfluous. One education support teacher did however say that the socioeconomic factor is "important only in so far as following the programme at home - eg. Would be useless to teach student to communicate only using expensive high tech equipment which would be too expensive for parents to purchase thus student learns without communicating with own family".

Where teachers were hypothetically given the option to use CAPs the less experienced education support teacher had a statistically significantly higher rating. They would frequently, if not always use the CAPs. It is interpreted that their rating is in part due to the high frequency of special needs qualifications as a group they possess, and secondly they have entered the education support environment in a time when there have been a succession of changes occurring.

Collaborative Action Plan or Individual Education Plan?

During the duration of this research study the Education Department of Western Australia has changed the name of the planning strategy. It was initially was referred by the Task Force (1993a) as an IEP, then in mid-1994 the term Collaborative Action Plan (CAP) was preferred and reiterated in the Strategic Plan (1995). In 1996 they are referred to as IEPs. While Alison Bevan of the Education Department (1994) indicated that they would not use the term IEP because of its problematic history, is it now the case that the term CAPs is more problematic? What ever the reason, it may be difficult for teachers to appreciate the purpose of name changing, given that it is the effect, not the intent that matters (Phillips & McCullough, 1990). Qualitative responses in the survey incidentally did include references querying the use of the term CAP. As one education support teacher stated; “ I don’t agree with the term CAP at all. I will continue to refer to them as IEPs, as I consider the word education to be the central point of the phrase”. In a wider perspective it is symptomatic of the difficulties involved in any change process.

Summary and Conclusions

In summary the findings of this study are suggestive, but not conclusive. Given the size of the sample and data groupings further research with a larger sample is required. Teacher responses to the survey appear to suggest that teachers in regular primary schools do not feel entirely capable of utilising the CAP for either logistical or pedagogical reasons. As one regular primary teacher asserted;

My experience after nine years is that the ministry comes up with great

ideas but fails to implement them or fund them adequately eg Better Schools! Partial integration of physically/mentally handicapped into classrooms - what happened to this great initiative? No money! Our school has no Ed Support teachers who are qualified to teach children with special needs. If I was given a child with major learning difficulties or disabilities I would refuse to teach him/her until I had adequate services and resources available to me. Virtually every school psychologist I've worked with has been ineffectual. So in schools their input is not often valued. To initiate a CAP there must be available * adequate planning/discussion time, not DOTT time, that is used for whole class planning/phoning parents/filling out forms/ photocopying etc etc * adequate funding for resources * teacher training *adequate staff at the district level."

In contrast teachers in education support who have been using strategies similar to CAPs appear more positive. However the notion of CAPs/IEPs is not unfamiliar and not a departure from current teaching practices. Their attitudes may be quite different if they had to take their students and work in a more inclusive class environment. The concerns that are common to both groups are the role of classroom records. This to some extent reflects the concerns of Smith (1990a) about congruence. The equivocal response by teachers about the response time of the CAP team to cater for immediate student needs is well documented (Carter et al, 1995). Given that teachers will only partially rely on the CAP information does imply that they perceive a written document while being a guide is not definitive. Their caution is supported by the fact that they will only defer to the CAP after they have observed the student carry out a series of tasks in the

classroom. In summary, teacher attitudes towards collaborative action plans is conditional. It is a good idea, although it presents some logistical, resource problems.

With respect to the conceptual framework advanced in the present study, the results of the survey suggest two things. As a high percentage of teachers in education support facilities have special needs training and currently use CAP type planning, it is perceived that a preventative mode of teacher class operation is engendered. In contrast as the majority of regular primary teachers do not have special needs training or involvement in CAP planning activities, they are restorative in operation. It is acknowledged that their mode of operation may in part result from specific types of school organization and favoured forms of pedagogy as outlined the review of literature. The implications appear to be that in the mainstream regular primary environment significant changes will need to be implemented to allow teachers access to sufficient in-servicing to acquire skills to profitably use Collaborative Action Plans.

Future Research

As the present was concerned with teacher attitudes prior their general use, it would be considered appropriate to follow on by conducting some form of longitudinal study. As the majority of teachers who did not have special needs qualifications taught in the regular primary school and had no working knowledge of Collaborative Action Plans, research could investigate their attitudes towards these plans after they fully implemented. In addition if a larger sample was used it may confirm or clarify the findings of the present study. Key stake holders such as parents could as part of the research process be consulted to ascertain their

perceptions about the effect of Collaborative Action Plans on the service delivery process. Future research could may also be able to identify factors within the school environment that encourage and support the use of Collaborative Action Plans.

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Appendix A

Date: ____ / ____ / ____ S R ____ A B

Mr Timothy J. Spittle
 Edith Cowan University
 Faculty of Education
 2 Bradford Street
 Mount Lawley, 6050, W. A.
 June, 1994.

Dear Participant,

I am doing a Bachelor of Education Honours degree and I am interested in children who have special needs. As part of my study programme I am conducting a survey about the Education Department's recent announcement, that students with disabilities will be provided with Individual Education Plans (IEP). Over the next three years teachers will conduct a pilot study to develop strategies to enable the implementation of IEPs. My particular interest in IEPs is how the information is going to be used, and if it will assist students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties in the classroom.

I realize that you may receive a number of research letters at this time of the year, so I have tried to make the survey as easy as possible to use. Each page is numbered and has instructions which indicate what you need to read or answer. I feel that it would take no more than about fifteen minutes to complete. Please be assured that the information you provide will remain confidential. Your assistance in this research will be greatly appreciated. Incidentally, if you would like to receive a summary of the results, please tick the box below.

With many thanks,

(Mr T. J. Spittle)

1. Have you taught in any other type of educational facility ?

Yes No

If yes, what type ? _____

2. How many years have you been teaching ?

< 1	1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	21 - 30

3. What is your age ?

20-27	28-35	36-43	44-51	52-59	60-65

4. What are your teaching qualifications ?

Diploma of Tchg	B.A. Education	B.Ed	M.Ed
PhD	Grad Dip.	Other	

5. Are you currently doing any education study?

Part time	B.A.Ed	B.Ed	M.Ed
Full time	PhD	Other	Short course

Individual Education Plan (IEP): A BRIEF EXPLANATION

The aim of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is to provide students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties with a focused form of education based, on an individual plan. The IEP is intended to be formulated by a team, most likely consisting of a school psychologist, principal, teacher, doctor, parent, student and other professionals (speech-physio-occupational-therapists).

A teacher will receive an Individual Education Plan from which to plan instruction. *There may be additional funding for the implementation the IEPs. It is most likely that it would contain the following features:

- i) present level of educational performance. (physical, social & academic).
- ii) suggested long term educational aims(1 yr), short term aims and an evaluation process.
- iii) identification of educational facilities and resources needed to assist the student to meet the educational aims.
- iv) a statement of how the aims are going to be achieved.

6. Have you heard about Individual Education Plans previously ?

Yes__ No__

Comment _____

SOURCE RELIABILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF IEPs

If you were to receive an IEP based on the description given, how would you rate each of the following sources of information in terms of their reliability ?

	Very reliable	Moderately reliable	Not very reliable	Not at all reliable
Teachers				
Principals				
Specialist Teachers				
Students				
Parents				
Therapists				
Social Workers/Welfare Officers				
Psychologists/Guidance Officers				
Medical Officers				

BASED ON THE IEP DESCRIPTION, I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW YOUR VIEWS ABOUT THE FOLLOWING ISSUES.

PLEASE TICK IN YOUR PREFERRED CATEGORY and MAKE A WRITTEN RESPONSE IN THE SPACE PROVIDED.

(STRONGLY AGREE=SA, AGREE=A, DISAGREE=D, STRONGLY DISAGREE=SD)

THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS!!

16. An IEP should reduce the time needed to plan instruction for students with disabilities.

SA A D SD

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

17. IEP will be done to appease administrators rather than help classroom teachers.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

18. A team approach is a more efficient way to focus on a student's needs.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

19. A student's report cards should be a valid indication of the student's future performance.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

20. An IEP would be too demanding of a teacher's D.O.T.T time.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

21. IEPs should benefit student with disabilities & specific learning difficulties.

SA A D SD

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

22. A team approach should enable parents to have more access to a range of professional advice.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

23. Anecdotal information about the student should be considered in the planning of an IEP.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

24. The use of IEPs will mean less teacher time for students without disabilities.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

25. A student's IEP should make their transfer to another school easier.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

26. A team approach may generate professional differences that might slow planning for the student.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

27. Sources of student information should be credible.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

28. If a teacher uses an IEP as the basis for instruction, contact time with students with disabilities will be more efficient.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

29. IEPs sound good on paper, but they are not very practical.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

30. Organizing team meetings may be too slow in responding to immediate needs.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

31. Information about the student needs to be confirmed by actual observations of the student.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

INFORMATION TYPES IN IEPs

How would you rate the following categories of student information found in IEPs, in terms of their importance to you as a teacher when planning instruction.

	LOW			HIGH
32. Socioeconomic Background	1	2	3	4

COMMENT _____

33. Racial Background	1	2	3	4
-----------------------	---	---	---	---

COMMENT _____

34. Cultural Background	1	2	3	4
-------------------------	---	---	---	---

COMMENT _____

35. Physical Ability	1	2	3	4
----------------------	---	---	---	---

COMMENT _____

36. Intellectual Ability	1	2	3	4
--------------------------	---	---	---	---

COMMENT _____

37. Social and emotional Development	1	2	3	4
--------------------------------------	---	---	---	---

COMMENT _____

38. Medical Needs	1	2	3	4
-------------------	---	---	---	---

COMMENT _____

39. Academic Performance	1	2	3	4
--------------------------	---	---	---	---

COMMENT _____

SCENARIO

You have just received an IEP from another school about a student who will soon become a member of your class.

40. To what degree would you rely on this information ?

not at all
partially
to a considerable extent
totally

Please comment:

41. How would you use this information ? (You may tick more than one category.)

On my own
In consultation with other teachers
In consultation with the parents
In consultation with the student
In consultation with other professionals
I would not use this information

Please comment:

42. When would you use this information ?

Never
Only if a problem arises
Before I see the student
When the student enters the classroom
After I have observed the child carry out a range of tasks

Please comment:

43. Would you expect the student's actual performance in the classroom to be the same as the student descriptions and performance levels stated in the IEP ?

no
partially
mostly
yes

Please comment:

44. To what extent do you feel that an IEP will restrict your own professional judgment about the student ?

Not at all
Minimally
Moderately
A great deal

Please comment:

45. If IEPs were optional, would you use them ?

Not at all
Sometimes
Frequently
Always

Please comment:

46. This survey has been designed to obtain your views about IEPs. In summary, do you think that IEPs are a good idea ?

They are an excellent idea
They are a good idea but they have some negatives
They are not a good idea although they have some positives
They are not a good idea

Please comment:

If you wish to make any further comments, please use the space below.

Thankyou for completing the survey

Appendix B

Mr Timothy J. Spittle,
Edith Cowan University,
Faculty of Education,
2 Bradford Street,
Mount Lawley, W.A. 6050.

5.8.94.

Dear ,

I am currently doing my Bachelor of Education (Hons) programme which entails completing a research project. The area I have chosen to research concerns how you feel as a professional about the Education Department's proposed plan (February, 1994) to introduce Collaborative Action Plans for students who have disabilities.

The Collaborative Action Plan involves the forming of a team to determine the individual needs of students with disabilities. The term "students with disabilities" pertains to a physical, intellectual, hearing or sight impairment as well as autism and specific learning difficulties. As a result, it is likely that you will have one or more of these students in your class from time to time.

I have written this letter to inform you that in a few days you will receive a survey seeking your attitude towards of your profession to determine your attitudes and concerns about Collaborative Action Plans (formerly called Individual Education Plans). I feel it is essential that teachers have an opportunity to express their point of view before any changes are made. I intend to make a submission to the Education Department based on the responses I obtain from this survey. So I would urge you to participate to make your point of view heard. If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me on 272 5097.

Many thanks,

Timothy J. Spittle

Appendix C

Mr Timothy J. Spittle,
Edith Cowan University,
Faculty of Education,
2 Bradford Street.
Mount Lawley, W.A. 6050.

5.8.94.

Dear _____,

I am currently doing my Bachelor of Education (Hons) programme which entails completing a research project. The area I have chosen to research concerns how you feel as a professional about the Education Department's proposed plan (February, 1994) to introduce Collaborative Action Plans for students who have disabilities.

The Collaborative Action Plan involves the forming of a team to determine the individual needs of students with disabilities. The term "students with disabilities" pertains to a physical, intellectual, hearing or sight impairment as well as autism and specific learning difficulties. Since you are currently working in the educational support area, it is most likely that you would be involved in the production and use of numerous Collaborative Action Plans throughout the school year.

I have written this letter to inform you that in a few days you will receive a survey seeking your attitude towards Collaborative Action Plans. To date there has not been a survey of your profession to determine your attitudes and concerns about Collaborative Action Plans (formerly called Individual Education Plans). I feel it is essential that teachers have an opportunity to express their point of view before any changes are made. I intend to make a submission to the Education Department based on the responses I obtain from this survey. So I would urge you to participate to make your point of view heard. If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me on 272 5097.

Many thanks,

Timothy J. Spittle

Appendix D

Mr Timothy J. Spittle
Edith Cowan University
Faculty of Education
2 Bradford Street
Mount Lawley, 6050, W.A.
August, 1994.

Dear

As I stated in my first letter, I am doing a Bachelor of Education Honours degree and I am interested in children who have special needs. As part of my study programme I am conducting a survey about the Education Department's recent announcement, that students with disabilities will be provided with Collaborative Action Plans (CAPs). Over the next three years teachers will conduct a pilot study to develop strategies to enable the implementation of CAPs. My particular interest in CAPs is the possible impact that they will have for you as a teacher, and whether you think that they will assist students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties in the classroom.

I realize that you may receive a number of research letters at this time of the year, so I have tried to make the survey as easy as possible to use. Each page is numbered and indicate what you need to read or answer. I feel that it would take about fifteen minutes to complete. Please be assured that the information you provide will remain confidential and your anonymity will be protected.

Your assistance in this research will be greatly appreciated. If you have any queries please contact me on 272 5097. Incidentally, if you would like to receive a summary of the results, please tick the box below.

With many thanks,

⇐ TURN HERE!

(Mr T.J.Spittle)

QUESTIONNAIRE1

Please read the information on the opposite page before you answer the questions in the survey.

1. Have you taught in any other type of school than the one you are currently teaching at ?

Yes___ No___ IF Yes, indicate in which type you have taught.

Primary Support	Primary Regular	Secondary Support
Secondary Regular	Tertiary	TAFE

Other _____

2. How many years have you been teaching ?

<1	1 -5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41>

3. What is your age ?

20-27	28-35	36-43	44-51	52-59	60-65

4. What is your highest teaching qualification ?

Diploma of Tchg	B .A. Education	B. Ed or higher	Other
-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-------

5. Have you completed a course specifically concerning the education of children with special needs ?

Yes___ No___

If Yes , please specify:

6. Have you heard about CAPs (formerly called Individual Education Plans) before ?

Yes___ No___

If Yes, please specify

7. Have you ever had to use a CAP (formerly called an Individual Education Plan)?

Yes___ No___

8. Have you ever had to formally collaborate with other professionals in planning for students with special needs?

Yes___ No___

CONTINUE ONTO THE NEXT PAGE

QUESTIONNAIRE**2****Please answer every question.***Please tick (✓)***SOURCE RELIABILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAPs**

If you were a member of a CAP team, how would you rate each of the following sources of information in terms of their reliability?

	Very reliable	Moderately reliable	Not very reliable	Not at all reliable
9. Teachers				
10. Principals				
11. Specialist Teachers				
12. Students				
13. Parents				
14. Therapists				
15. Social Workers				
16. Psychologists/ Guidance officers				
17. Medical Doctors				

Based on the CAP description, what are your views about the following issues

PLEASE TICK IN YOUR PREFERRED CATEGORY and MAKE A WRITTEN RESPONSE IN THE SPACE IF DESIRED.

(STRONGLY AGREE = SA, AGREE = A, DISAGREE = D, STRONGLY DISAGREE = SD)

THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS!!

- | | SA | A | D | SD |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 18. A CAP should reduce the time needed to plan instruction for students with disabilities.
Comment _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. Students would learn just as effectively without CAPs.
Comment _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. A team approach is a more efficient way to focus on a student's needs.
Comment _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. A student's classroom records are the best source from which to identify their education needs.
Comment _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. A CAP would be too demanding of a teacher's D.O.T.T time.
Comment _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

CONTINUE ONTO THE NEXT PAGE

QUESTIONNAIRE

3

SA A D SD

23. CAPs should benefit student with disabilities & specific learning difficulties.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

24. A team approach should enable parents to have more access to a range of professional advice.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

25. Anecdotal information about the student should be considered in the planning of a CAP.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

26. The use of CAPs will mean less teacher time for regular students.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

27. A student's CAP should make their transfer to another school easier.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

28. A team approach will be more efficient in addressing the needs of the student.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

29. CAP information should categorize a student's problem rather than describe their needs.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

30. Using a CAP will improve the effectiveness of teacher contact time with students with disabilities.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

31. CAPs sound good on paper, but they are not very practical.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

32. Organizing team meetings may be too slow in responding to immediate needs.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

33. Information about the student needs to be confirmed by actual observations of the student.

--	--	--	--

Comment _____

CONTINUE ONTO THE NEXT PAGE

QUESTIONNAIRE

4

INFORMATION TYPES IN CAPs

How would you rate the following categories of student information, in terms of their importance to you as a teacher when planning instruction.

HIGH LOW

4 3 2 1

34. Socio-economic Background

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

4 3 2 1

35. Racial Background

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

4 3 2 1

36. Cultural Background

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

4 3 2 1

37. Physical Ability

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

4 3 2 1

38. Intellectual Ability

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

4 3 2 1

39. Social & Emotional Development

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

4 3 2 1

40. Medical Needs

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

4 3 2 1

41. Academic Performance

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

4 3 2 1

42. Family Structure.

--	--	--	--

COMMENT _____

CONTINUE ONTO THE NEXT PAGE

QUESTIONNAIRE5

43. How would you rank the following CAP issues in terms of their importance to you as a teacher ? (Rank the most important as 1. You may allocate the same number for more than one category)

CAP impact on teacher planning time	
CAP impact on teacher instruction time	
CAP benefit to the student with special needs	
CAP benefit to the teacher	
Collaboration with other people to devise and implement a CAP	
The accuracy of student descriptions in a CAP	
The relevance of different types of student information in a CAP	

Comment:

SCENARIO For Questions 44 to 47.

You have just received a CAP from another school about a student who will soon become a member of your class.

44. To what degree would you rely on this information ?

not at all	
partially	
to a considerable extent	
totally	

Please comment:

45. Would you consult with anyone about the CAP ?

Yes___ No___

If you answered "NO", go to Q47. If Yes go to Q46.

46. Which of the following groups would you consult ? (You may tick more than one category)

other teachers	
the parents	
the student	
non-teaching professionals	
other	

Please comment:

CONTINUE ONTO THE NEXT PAGE

QUESTIONNAIRE6

47. When would you use this information ? (You may select more than one category)

Never	
Only if a problem arises	
Before I see the student	
When the student enters the classroom	
After I have observed the child carry out a range of tasks	

Please comment:

48. Would you expect the student's actual performance in the classroom to be as the student descriptions and performance levels stated in the CAP ?

no	
partially	
mostly	
yes	

Please comment:

49. To what extent do you feel that a CAP will restrict your own professional decisions about the student ?

Not at all	
Minimal	
Moderate	
Excessive	

Please comment:

CONTINUE ONTO THE NEXT PAGE

QUESTIONNAIRE7

Please tick ()

50. If CAPs were optional, how often would you use them ?

Not at all	
Sometimes	
Frequently	
Always	

Please comment:

51. In summary, do you think that CAPs are a good idea ?

Not a good idea	
Not a good idea , but have some positives	
Good idea, but have some negatives.	
Excellent idea	

Please comment:

Please make sure you have answered all the questions.**Thank you for completing the survey**

0 1 ____ A B (This coding is done to ensure your anonymity)

The following is an extract from the Minister's response (February, 1994) to the Shean Report (1993) recommendations.

Shean Report Recommendation 16

That schools implement a system of Individual Education Plans* at least for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties; and

- a) that in every school, Individual Education Plans for all students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties be developed and regularly reviewed in conjunction with the student, the parents, the student's teachers and any relevant specialist teacher;
- b) the Individual Education Plans move with students as they progress through the school or move from one school to another.
- c) that a per capita grant be available to schools for materials to develop and implement the Individual Education Plans and that schools be expected to augment the grants from school funds.

Ministerial Response

The Education Department will develop strategies over the next three years to enable this recommendation to be implemented and to report on its implementation in its annual report.

*The term "Individual Education Plan" is now referred to as the "Collaborative Action Plan".

A BRIEF EXPLANATION

The most likely aim of a Collaborative Action Plan (CAP) is to provide students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties with a focused form of education based on an individual plan. The CAP will most likely be developed by a collaborative consultation team consisting of the teacher of the student with special needs, the special needs student, their parents, a school psychologist, the principal, and any other professionals who have specific skills that are relevant to the student's needs. The CAP will document the student's needs and a list of objectives to meet those needs. It is most likely that the CAP will contain the following features:

- i) present level of educational performance, (physical, social & academic).
- ii) suggested long term educational aims, short term aims and an evaluation process.
- iii) identification of educational facilities and resources needed to assist the student to meet the educational aims.
- iv) a statement of how the aims are going to be achieved.

Example only

Possible components of a CAP objectives list

Academic area	Conditions	Behaviour	Criterion
Reading	In (no. of weeks until review), when given a randomly selected passage from (level and name of reading series).	Student will read aloud	At (number of words per minute correct/# of errors.
Maths	In (no of weeks until review), when given randomly selected problems from (level and name of maths series) for two minutes.	Student will write	No. of correct digits.

Possible CAP Goals/Outcomes Sheet

Name: _____ School Year: _____ Domain _____
 Method of Evaluation: _____ Goals: _____

Priority	Annual Goals	Date	Short Term Objectives	Status Report	Strategies Used	Responsibility Time line
1				<i>Periodic</i>		<i>Who & When</i>
2				<i>Evaluation</i>		
3						
4						

Appendix E

Coding of Questionnaire Items

Variable	Item number	Scale type	Value Range
Source reliability	9 to 17	Interval	1-4
Time	18 22* 26* 30	Interval	1-4
Efficacy	19* 23 27 31*	Interval	1-4
Collaboration	20 24 28 32*	Interval	1-4
Assessment measures	21* 25 29 33	Interval	1-4
Information types	34 to 42	Interval	1-4
CAP issues	43	Nominal	1-7
Reliance	44*	Interval	1-4
Consultation	45 to 46	Nominal	0-1
Use	47	Nominal	0-1
Student performance	48*	Interval	1-4
Decision making	49	Interval	1-4
Summary	50* to 51*	Interval	1-4

* These are reverse scored items.

Appendix F

Sample Frequencies and Percentages For Item 45, 46 and 47

Item	Category	n	%
45	Would you consult with anyone about the CAP?	55	100
46	Which of the following groups would you consult?		
	Other teachers	47	85
	Parents	49	89
	The Student	31	56
	Non-teaching professionals	36	65
	Other	6	11
47	When would you use this information?		
	Never	0	0.0
	Only if a problem arises	9	16
	Before I see the student	28	51
	When the student enters the classroom	15	17
	After I have seen the student carry out a range of tasks	46	84

Appendix G
Configuration 1 Means and Standard Deviations

Item	10		12		13		22	
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
Group 1	2.88	.74	2.42	.83	2.81	.78	2.12	.74
Group 2	3.35	.59	3.10	.80	3.32	.58	2.62	.92

Item	26		34		42	
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
Group 1	2.25	.72	2.64	.99	2.84	.81
Group 2	2.75	.85	2.05	.97	1.95	.83

Appendix H

Configuration 2 Means and Standard Deviations

Item	11		12		24		28	
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
Group 1	3.81	1.56	2.14	1.24	3.91	.30	3.73	.47
Group 2	3.67	.34	3.1	.79	3.24	.66	3.31	.47
Group 3	3.24	.53	2.53	.71	3.33	.71	2.89	.60
Group 4	4.00	.64	3.00	.88	3.53	.51	3.53	.61

Item	30		34		42		50	
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
Group 1	3.55	.69	2.41	1.04	2.53	1.09	3.54	.69
Group 2	2.88	.70	1.67	.92	1.73	.96	2.76	.79
Group 3	2.67	.70	2.76	1.06	2.88	.49	2.33	1.00
Group 4	3.31	.60	2.75	1.81	2.71	.79	2.58	.62

Appendix I

Sample Means, Standard Deviations And Frequencies For Items 9-42, 44, 48-51

Item	\bar{X}	SD	n
9	3.74	.49	53
10	3.06	.72	53
11	3.62	.63	52
12	2.65	.87	51
13	3.00	.75	51
14	3.33	.59	51
15	2.83	.60	48
16	3.00	.77	52
17	3.13	.77	47
18	2.80	.99	55
19	2.87	.80	54
20	3.51	.54	55
21	2.46	.69	54
22	2.31	.84	54
23	3.42	.60	55
24	3.47	.60	55
25	3.44	.54	54
26	2.44	.80	52
27	3.28	.60	54
28	3.33	.58	54
29	3.07	.72	54
30	3.13	.73	54
31	2.69	.92	52
32	2.07	.70	54
33	3.29	.69	55
34	2.42	1.02	54
35	2.32	1.08	54
36	2.81	1.02	54
37	3.46	.77	54
38	3.74	.65	54
39	3.67	.58	54
40	3.24	.82	54
41	3.50	.57	54
42	2.51	.92	52
44	2.71	.50	55
48	2.59	.74	54
49	2.96	.67	54
50	2.80	.85	55
51	3.26	.73	54