Teacher Motivation to Engage in the Individual Education Plan Process

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Abstract

This thesis investigated teachers’ motivation to engage in the IEP process. It examined the key factors that research has identified as influencing teachers motivation and explored the potential barriers to teacher engagement in the IEP process. Teachers’ motivation and their perceptions of the success of the IEP goals were also examined. The target population was year 1-8 teachers who had been engaged in an IEP in the last 12 months.

This research design utilised a mixed methods approach, where quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used. The first phase of this study consisted of an online questionnaire where there were 267 responses. This was followed by four semi-structured interviews with four participating teachers, where the common findings identified from the questionnaire were explored in more depth.

Results indicated that the value teachers place in the IEP process, the self-efficacy that teachers hold regarding their ability to engage in the IEP process and their view of inclusive teaching philosophies were all related to teachers’ motivation to engage in the IEP process. The key barriers to teacher engagement in the IEP process were the time constraints associated with the various tasks of the IEP process. This study also found that teachers who had high self-efficacy in implementing the IEP goals and who felt that the appropriate goals had been set in the IEP process were more likely to believe that students could achieve the IEP goals.

This research highlights the need for professional learning and support for teachers to develop their understanding of the IEP process, establishing and writing appropriate goals, and identifying school-based support systems for teachers to engage intentionally and meaningfully within the IEP process.
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Table of Contents

Abstract ......................................................................................................................... i
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................ ii
Table of Contents .......................................................................................................... iv
   List of Figures ............................................................................................................ iv
   List of Tables ............................................................................................................. iv

1 Introduction .............................................................................................................. 1
   1.1 Inclusive education ............................................................................................. 1
   1.2 Individual education plans .................................................................................. 3
   1.3 Teacher motivation ............................................................................................. 5
   1.4 Rationale for the study ....................................................................................... 6
   1.5 Organisation of thesis ....................................................................................... 7

2 Literature Review .................................................................................................... 8
   2.1 Motivation .......................................................................................................... 8
   2.2 IEPs and teacher motivation .............................................................................. 16
   2.3 Summary .......................................................................................................... 23
   2.4 Research questions ......................................................................................... 24

3 Methodology .......................................................................................................... 25
   3.1 Theoretical framework ..................................................................................... 25
   3.2 Ethical considerations ....................................................................................... 29
   3.3 Target population ............................................................................................. 31
   3.4 Phase one - Questionnaire ............................................................................. 31
   3.5 Phase two - Semi-structures interviews ......................................................... 36
   3.6 Summary .......................................................................................................... 41

4 Results .................................................................................................................. 43
   4.1 Phase One: Questionnaire results ................................................................... 43
   4.2 Semi-structured interview results ................................................................... 62
   4.3 Summary .......................................................................................................... 70

5 Discussion ............................................................................................................ 71
   5.1 Research Question One ................................................................................... 71
   5.2 Research Question Two .................................................................................. 78
   5.3 Research Question Three .............................................................................. 81
   5.4 Concluding statement .................................................................................... 84

6 Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 85
   6.1 Key findings ..................................................................................................... 85
   6.2 Recommendations .......................................................................................... 86
   6.3 Limitations ...................................................................................................... 88
   6.4 Implications for future research ................................................................... 89
   6.5 Summary ........................................................................................................ 90

7 References ............................................................................................................ 91

8 Appendices .......................................................................................................... 104
   Appendix A – Low Risk Ethics Notification ...................................................... 104
Appendix B – Questionnaire information sheet ......................................................... 105
Appendix C – Interview information sheet ............................................................... 107
Appendix D – Interview consent form ..................................................................... 109
Appendix E – Transcriber confidentiality form .......................................................... 110
Appendix F – Transcript consent form ................................................................... 111
Appendix G – Invitation email to schools to participate in questionnaire ............... 112
Appendix H – Questionnaire .................................................................................... 113
Appendix I – Data taxonomy questionnaire example .............................................. 127
Appendix J – Interview schedule .......................................................................... 128
Appendix K – Data taxonomy interview example .................................................... 129

List of Figures
Figure 1-1: Diagram of the IEP process .......................................................... 4
Figure 2-1: The Self-Determination Continuum ........................................... 14
Figure 3-1: Quota sampling process used for semi-structured interviews .......... 38
Figure 4-1: The number of IEPs participants have been involved in in the last 12 months ........................................................................................................ 46
Figure 4-2: Participants self-rated motivation levels for engaging in the IEP process .... 46
Figure 4-3: Participant responses to the question ‘Do you have school IEP guidelines?’ ....................................................................................................... 54
Figure 4-4: Release time that participants receive from their school to either participate in IEPs or prepare for IEPs ..................................................... 54

List of Tables
Table 3-1: Summary information of interview participants .................................... 39
Table 3-2: Summary of the research procedure .................................................. 42
Table 4-1: Summary of questionnaire participant’s demographic data ............... 43
Table 4-2: Pearson’s correlation results on teacher motivation and the worthwhileness of the IEP process ................................................................. 49
Table 4-3: Questionnaire results to the question ‘what do you find useful about the IEP process?’ .................................................................................. 50
Table 4-4: Pearson’s correlation results on teacher motivation and teachers’ inclusive teaching philosophies ............................................................ 51
Table 4-5: Pearson’s correlation results on teacher motivation and teachers’ self-efficacy ................................................................. 52
Table 4-6: Pearson's correlation results on teacher motivation and teachers' autonomy and control in the IEP process ................................................................. 53

Table 4-7: Questionnaire result to the question ‘Please rank the main challenges of an IEP from most to least challenging’ ................................................................. 56

Table 4-8: Themes identified from the questionnaire results to the question ‘what do you find difficult and/or most challenging about the IEP process?’ .............................................. 57

Table 4-9: Questionnaire results to the question ‘what is the main purpose of an IEP?’ 61

Table 4-10: Examples of interview responses to the discussion around time constraints as a barrier to engaging in the IEP process .............................................................. 66