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Teacher Motivation to Engage in the Individual Education Plan Process

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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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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