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**HOW DO INTERPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE TEAMS  
WORK TOGETHER TO IDENTIFY AND PROVIDE  
FOR GIFTED STUDENTS WITH MULTIPLE  
EXCEPTIONALITIES?**

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the degree of**

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## ABSTRACT

Whilst there is some international research regarding multidisciplinary collaboration as a means to identify and meet the needs of gifted learners with multiple exceptionalities, there is little New Zealand based information, much less research, on this practice.

This multiple case study research explored how gifted learners with multiple exceptionalities are supported in New Zealand by interprofessional (IPP) teams of teachers, special needs coordinators, gifted and talented coordinators, educational psychologists, school counsellors, resource teachers and others. The purpose of the study was to explore experiences and understandings around how IPP teams work against core competencies of interprofessional practice. These are shared values, roles and responsibilities, communication, and teamwork.

Key findings of this study were that the interprofessional practice team identity is still in its infancy, with core competencies not fully developed. Whilst there were shared values and a willingness towards recognising inclusive practices for gifted learners with multiple exceptionalities, these shared values were hampered by limited knowledge and expertise across the IPP team. Limited understandings of teamwork processes, and limited recognition of the importance of communication within the IPP team were common themes. Parents were seldom considered, and students were never considered part of the IPP team, which by its very name excludes parent and student voice.

Whilst not evaluative, these findings show that gifted learners with multiple exceptionalities in New Zealand may not have adequate support at a systems level. Recommendations include the development of interprofessional practice competencies as one way to ensure gifted learners with multiple exceptionalities and their whanau experience full inclusion in our education system, and more research to evaluate whether effective IPP teams translate to more positive student outcomes.

# CONTENTS

	<i>page</i>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	ii
<b>Abstract</b>	iii
<b>Contents</b>	iv
List of tables	v
List of figures	vi
List of appendices	vii
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction</b>	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Definitions and Terminology	2
1.3 Research Questions	3
1.4 Research Boundaries	4
1.5 Summary	4
<b>Chapter 2 Literature Review</b>	
2.1 Introduction	5
2.2 Characteristics of Gifted Learners with Multiple Exceptionalities	5
2.3 Undiagnosed gifted children with multiple exceptionalities: The prognosis	7
2.4 Identification and provision for gifted learners with multiple exceptionalities: Why is it an issue?	8
2.5 How should gifted learners with multiple exceptionalities be identified and provided for?	9
2.6 Interprofessional learning	10
2.7 Interprofessional practice competencies	11
2.8 Individual Education Plans (IEPs)	15
2.9 Structural organisation and interprofessional practice	16
2.10 Summary	16
<b>Chapter 3 Methodology</b>	
3.1 Introduction	19
3.2 Research design	20
3.3 Sample	23
3.4 Data generating instruments	24
3.5 Data analysis	32
3.6 Ethical considerations	34
3.7 Validity and reliability	36
3.8 Limitations	39
3.9 Summary	39
<b>Chapter 4 Results: Case Study</b>	
4.1 Introduction	40
4.2 Respondent Information	40
4.3 Case Studies	41

4.4	Summary	48
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Results: Emerging Themes</b>	
5.1	Introduction	49
5.2	Shared values	49
5.3	Roles and responsibilities	53
5.4	Communication	60
5.5	IEPs	63
5.6	Teamwork	65
5.7	Summary	67
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	
6.1	Introduction	68
6.2	Values and ethics	69
6.3	Roles and responsibilities	71
6.4	Communication	76
6.5	IEPs	79
6.6	Teamwork	79
6.7	Summary	81
<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	
7.1	Introduction	82
7.2	Contribution to research	82
7.3	Future recommendations for research, policy, and practice	83
7.4	Final thoughts	85

## TABLES

<b>List of Tables</b>		<i>Page</i>
<b>Table 1:</b>	Betts & Neihart 2E profile	6
<b>Table 2:</b>	Questionnaire overview	27
<b>Table 3:</b>	Interview guide for participants in an Interprofessional Practice team	31
<b>Table 4:</b>	An outline of how potential ethical issues were addressed in the research	35
<b>Table 5:</b>	Techniques for demonstrating validity	38
<b>Table 6:</b>	IPP team demographics	41
<b>Table 7:</b>	Identification route of the gifted learner with multiple exceptionalities	56
<b>Table 8:</b>	Frequency of whole IPP team meetings	61

## LIST OF FIGURES

	<i>Page</i>
<b>List of Figures</b>	
<b>Figure 1:</b> Number of IPP teams that recommended a teaching strategy for each type of learner	57
<b>Figure 2:</b> IPP team member confidence to identify and provide learning strategies for gifted learners with multiple exceptionalities	58
<b>Figure 3:</b> Participants in each professional specialism who had received teamwork training	66



## LIST OF APPENDICES

<b>List of Appendices</b>	<i>Page</i>
<b>Appendix A:</b> Advert/invitation to survey participants	100
<b>Appendix B:</b> Information sheet	102
<b>Appendix C:</b> Participant interview consent	104
<b>Appendix D:</b> Questionnaire	105