

**IMPACT OF TEACHERS' INTRINSIC MOTIVATION
ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS WITH
AUTISM IN KICUKIRO AND GASABO DISTRICTS.**

BY:

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DECLARATION

I, Kayitete Francine, do hereby declare that this research is my own work and has never been presented to any university or institution for any academic award or a degree. All sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my research with sincere gratitude and the utmost consideration to Almighty God, my cherished family, my mentor, my students, and all those who have assisted me in reaching this point. I may now live a happy and wealthy life because of the excellent education you helped to me.

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' intrinsic motivation plays a crucial role in the academic success of students with autism, creating an environment where students feel supported, engaged, and motivated to reach their full potential. This study investigates how teachers' intrinsic motivation influences the academic achievements of these students, focusing on identifying key motivations and examining their impact on student performance. Using a quantitative research design with 60 respondents (20 students with autism, 20 teachers, and 20 parents), data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS software. Key intrinsic motivations identified include passion for teaching, self-motivation, and love for children. A strong positive correlation was discovered between teacher motivations and student performance across multiple dimensions. Strong positive correlation was identified between teacher motivations and various dimensions of student performance. The correlation coefficients between Passion for Teaching and academic skills, engagement and social-emotional development were 0.941, 0.761, and 0.836, respectively. Similarly, Self-Motivation correlated with academic skills, engagement, and social-emotional development with correlation coefficients of 0.756, 0.742, and 0.729, respectively. Love for Children showed correlation coefficients of 0.898, 0.762, and 0.864 with academic skills, engagement, and social-emotional development, respectively. All correlations were significant at $p < .01$. The findings underscore the importance of fostering these intrinsic motivations to enhance educational outcomes for students with autism. Future research should explore interventions to strengthen teachers' intrinsic motivation and collaborate with education stakeholders to address practical challenges and further support student success.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorder

DOS: Director Of Studies

HT: Head Teacher

HVP: Humanitarian Assistance for the Vulnerable Population

IEP: Individual Education Plan

SDG: Sustainable Development Goal

VSO: Voluntary Service Overseas

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the study's history, issue statement, purpose, particular goals, and research questions. The study's importance, conceptual and theoretical frameworks, research hypothesis, study limitations and delimitations, and assumptions are presented in the end.

1.2 Background of the study

In general, motivation is understood to be the rationale behind a certain course of action or behavior, a collection of evidence and justifications for a claim. According to Ryan and Deci (2020), motivation is the energy that piques your interest and drives you to succeed. It is what keeps you moving forward and doing action. It involves providing incentives and piquing attention in order to influence a student's performance in the intended manner. The difficulties faced by school administrators are finding highly motivated educators who are actively involved in teaching and learning activities, receptive to novel concepts and methods, devoted to the diversity of their students, and prepared to embrace changes throughout their teaching careers (Urhahne & Wijnia 2023).

Teacher motivation is crucial to student success in school, particularly in settings where students with autism are served, such as the Tubiteho Day Care Centre in Kicukiro District and HVP humura located in Gasabo district. Deci and Ryan (2000) assert that improving student engagement and achievements as well as creating a positive learning environment depend heavily on the motivation of teachers. Deci and Ryan (2000) The decision to engage in an activity for its own sake is known as intrinsic motivation, without regard to benefits from other sources. Intrinsic motivation in the classroom refers to a teacher's sincere interest in their subject matter and desire to make a good difference in the lives of their students (Bouffard et al., 2017).

Importance of teacher's intrinsic motivation was discussed by different researchers. For example, the study by Reeve and Cheon (2014) found that teachers that are intrinsically motivated are more likely to put in the time and energy necessary to enhance their methods, look for novel ways, and keep up with the latest findings and advancements in them. Furthermore, according to research by Reeve and Yu-Lan su (2006), genuinely driven teachers develop a supportive learning environment in the classroom that encourages student motivation, engagement, and academic success. For students with autism, teacher intrinsic motivation becomes even more critical. According to research by Bieg et al. (2010), instructors who possess these

qualities—patience, empathy, and understanding—benefit pupils with autism. These traits are also frequently linked to educators who are genuinely driven. Furthermore, de Boer and Minnaert (2012) emphasize the importance of personalized instruction and individualized support for students with autism, which aligns with the adaptability and responsiveness of intrinsically motivated teachers. There are several things that encourage instructors to be more motivated in their work. For instance, Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) reported in a research report on the motivation of teachers in poor nations in 2002 that one of the key results was that teachers' motivation was brittle and dwindling. The study found a significant correlation between academic success and instructors' motivation. However, a research conducted in Nigeria by Ofoegbu (2004) on teachers' motivation as a determinant for classroom efficiency and school development discovered that low teacher enthusiasm lowers classroom effectiveness and has an impact on academic success in schools.

In addition, unfavorable working conditions and inadequate pay demotivate educators employed in African nations (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). According to Muvunyi (2016), the issue of demotivation has led to low teacher commitment, teacher strikes, inadequate instructional preparation, underutilization of teaching time, and job discontent. Research conducted in Tanzania has demonstrated that low salary, subpar facilities for instruction, or subpar administration all contribute to the problem of teacher demotivation among those employed in government secondary schools (Bennel & Mukyanuzi, 2005; Mkumbo, 2011; Kalega, 2016; Nyamubi, 2017). Therefore, educators employed by government schools are not happy in their positions. The impact of teachers' motivating elements on work satisfaction has been studied by a number of African scholars. For example, Shafiwu and Salakpi's (2013) study on the impact of teachers' motivation on the general performance of public basic schools in Ghana found that factors influencing teachers' job satisfaction and performance included their workload, working conditions, and opportunities for professional advancement and promotion.

Research on the motivating variables that might increase teachers' work satisfaction has been done extensively in Tanzania. When Mark (2015) looked at what factors affect teachers' motivation and job performance in Kibaha District, for example, the study discovered that teachers' motivation is affected by things like job security, enjoyable working conditions, acknowledging top performance, respecting the teaching profession, good pay, fringe benefits, opportunities for training, positive interpersonal relationships, and opportunities for promotion. Mkumbo (2016) conducted a study to examine the motivation and job satisfaction of primary school teachers in Tanzania. The results indicated that teachers who were driven by non-financial factors, like housing, student-teacher relationships, administrative support, and job security, were more content with their

jobs than those who weren't. Similar to this, Shenyagwa's (2014) study on job satisfaction and motivation among secondary school teachers in Kinondoni Municipality found that teachers in public secondary schools were content with their jobs due to a variety of motivating factors, including employer recognition, training and development opportunities, protection plans, health and safety initiatives, and employment security.

In Rwanda, the ability and desire of instructors to give it their all determines how well children succeed (William, 2010). Motivated workers translate into loyalty to the organization and staff retention, which will eventually lead to the expansion and advancement of education (Jishi, 2009). The growth, development, and success of all students—disabled or not—depend greatly on the motivation of their teachers. Maximizing the potential of kids with autism and guaranteeing their academic achievement may be achieved via understanding and encouraging teacher intrinsic motivation. Using Tubiteho Day Care Centre in Kicukiro District and HVP Humura in Gasabo District as case studies, which educate kids with autism, this study examines the link between teachers' intrinsic motivation and academic success among students with autism.

1.2 Problem statement

In Rwanda, despite the commitment to inclusive education for children with disabilities, including autism, as approved in 2008 by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, challenges persist in delivering quality education. Teacher motivation, a critical factor influencing student learning outcomes, remains a significant issue. Research, including a World Bank survey (2011) and studies by Ntahomvukiye (2012), highlights ongoing challenges such as low job satisfaction and motivation among teachers, which adversely affect educational quality and student outcomes, particularly for students with special educational needs like autism, as noted by (Nzabalirwa and Nkiliye, 2012).

However, there is a notable lack of research on the specific intrinsic qualities teachers need when working with students with autism and how these qualities impact student performance. This research gap underscores the need to explore how teacher intrinsic motivation impact the performance of students with autism. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of teachers' intrinsic motivation on student performance, focusing on Tubiteho Day Care Center in Kicukiro District and HVP Humura in Gasabo District. By examining this relationship, the study seeks to enhance inclusive education practices and support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4, which aims to provide inclusive and equitable quality education for all in Rwanda, including those with special needs. The insights gained will inform evidence-based interventions to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for students with autism.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of this study is to examine the impact of teacher's intrinsic motivation on academic achievement of students with autism

1.3.2 Specific objectives

1. Identify intrinsic motivations of teachers working with students with autism.
2. Examine relationship between teacher's intrinsic motivation and student's performance

1.4 Research questions

1. What are the key intrinsic motivations of teachers working with students with autism?
2. What is the impact of teachers' intrinsic motivation on student's performance for students with autism?

1.5 Research hypotheses

The following hypothesis was tested

There is no relationship between a teacher's intrinsic motivation and academic achievement of students with autism.

1.6 Significance of the study

Since teachers' intrinsic motivation is the cornerstone of every learning action, the research findings will assist education stakeholders in Kicukiro and Gasabo districts in comprehending the significance of intrinsic motivation in the teaching and learning process. This will enable them to carry out their duties in an effective and efficient manner, thereby improving the academic achievement of elementary school students with autism and helping them realize their full potential.

The results of this study should provide the ministry of education with a clear understanding of the need for specialists, inclusive education, and special needs education. These findings should also help teachers understand the needs of their autistic students and develop positive attitudes toward them. It will also benefit the community at large since it will demonstrate to parents and teachers that children with autism can learn and contribute significantly to society.

1.7 Scope of the study

1.7.1 Geographical scope

The investigation was carried out in the Gasabo district's HVP Humura and the Kicukiro district's Tubiteho day care. This is due to data gathered by the National Assessment of Rwanda's centers that provide care for children with impairments, which revealed that normal advancement is not always attained and that children with disabilities, including autism, may repeat classes many times in primary school. All parents and professionals are aware that certain children may develop differently, nevertheless. The majority of childcare facilities are said to be situated in rural regions, which is why I chose to focus on two urban centers: HVP Humura, which is located in Gasabo district, and Tubiteho, which is located in Kicukiro district.

1.7.2 Time scope

The study was conducted within two years from September 2020 to September 2022. It examined the impact of teacher's intrinsic motivation on academic performance of students with autism within two academic years of 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

1.7.3 Delimitation of the study

This study was affected by several factors, including teachers' fear of providing effective information because they were afraid the researcher was investigating their effectiveness in teaching. There was also the ignorance of some teachers who don't have some characters that can help them to support students with autism which also hindered the researcher from getting the required information.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The literature from Tubiteho day care center in Kicukiro district and HVP Humura in Gasabo district on the effect of teachers' motivation on the academic success of primary school pupils with autism is covered in this chapter. The theoretical underpinnings of intrinsic motivation, the influence of teachers' intrinsic motivation on the academic accomplishment of their autistic primary school children, and the definition of important words are among the topics covered.

2.2 Definition of key terms

Understanding how instructors' intrinsic motivation affects the academic success of kids with autism requires a clear definition of important words used in this study. Definitions of many concepts are given in this section, including teacher, academic accomplishment, motivation, intrinsic motivation in teachers, and autism.

Teacher: Per Lal (2016), a teacher is a qualified specialist who transfers information to assist students in creating their identities and gaining necessary life skills. Furthermore, the definition of a teacher includes delivering instructional programs, evaluating student involvement, and exercising consistent and significant leadership in the classroom.

Academic Performance: Grades, test scores, and other evaluation instruments are commonly used to gauge how well a student is meeting their learning objectives. It covers a range of learning outcomes for students, including comprehension of the material, application of information, and overall academic success (Steinmayr et al., 2014). Murdock and Anderman (2006) pointed out that elements including motivation, study habits, and classroom participation might also have an impact on academic success.

The psychological mechanisms that propel people to start, lead, and maintain goal-oriented actions are referred to as motivation. It includes extrinsic elements like outside demands and incentives as well as internal elements like personal interest and fulfillment (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Schunk, Meece, & Pintrich, 2014). According to Atkinson, J. W. (1964), motivation is the process that starts, directs, and sustains goal-oriented activities. It has the power to motivate students to act and perform to expectations.

The urge to participate in things for their own purpose because of an innate interest, pleasure, or fulfillment is known as intrinsic motivation.

It is the drive that originates from within a person as opposed to demands or incentives from outside sources (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Higher degrees of involvement, inventiveness, and perseverance in projects are linked to intrinsic motivation (Pink, 2011). World Bank Group (2018) defined motivation in the context of teachers as the drive to take on challenges, fulfill one's curiosity, uphold principles, or fulfill a mission. It also occurs when an educator engages in any activity only for personal fulfillment rather than expecting a certain outcome. Autism: According to Pennington and Southern (2014), autism is a developmental disorder that frequently manifests before the age of three and affects a child's behavior, communication, and academic performance. . On the other hand, according to Levy and Schultz (2009), autism also known as Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a set of neurodevelopmental disorders characterized by abnormalities in social skills, communication, and repetitive behaviors. Conversely, Levy and Schultz (2009) state that autism, commonly referred to as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), is a collection of neurodevelopmental diseases marked by irregularities in social skills, communication, and repetitive activities.

The effects of teachers' intrinsic motivation on academic achievement of students with autism.

Deci and Ryan (2017) said that when teachers are driven, passionate, and enjoy what they do for a living without the need for outside incentives or pressure, this is known as intrinsic motivation. The study highlighted that teachers' intrinsic motivation is influenced by autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy allows teachers to control methods and classroom environment, while competence enhances their sense of success in facilitating student learning. Relatedness strengthens teachers' sense of purpose and commitment to teaching. According the research, teachers that are intrinsically driven have a strong sense of purpose in their job, are passionate about teaching, and are genuinely devoted to their career.

In the field of education, the intrinsic motivation of teachers has a significant impact on how well autistic kids perform academically. When people are motivated by their own inner desires and joys during an activity, as opposed to being compelled by outside incentives or demands, they are said to be motivated by intrinsic motivation. Teachers that possess intrinsic drive exhibit a sincere love of teaching and a dedication to the success of their students (Deci & Ryan, 2017).

According to Howlin (2016), teachers who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to use successful teaching techniques and establish welcoming classroom environments that meet the various needs of autistic pupils. Also these educators exhibit increased empathy, tolerance, and dedication to assisting their pupils in overcoming obstacles. He concluded saying that this kind of motivation can have a big impact on the learning experiences and accomplishments of students, especially those with special needs like autism. Additionally, Reichow and Volkmar, (2014) asserted that teachers with intrinsic motivation employ specialized instruction, sensory supports, and visual aids as part of personalized learning strategies and argued that when taught by

intrinsically driven teachers, students with autism are more likely to succeed academically.

Research by Jang and Reeve (2016) highlights that teachers driven by intrinsic motivation can significantly enhance student outcomes. These educators employ effective teaching strategies, offer valuable feedback, and cultivate a positive learning environment. Their intrinsic motivation also supports the development of students' social and emotional skills, self-esteem, and sense of community. Conversely, Ryan and Deci (2017) found that a lack of intrinsic motivation among teachers can undermine their engagement and enthusiasm, negatively impacting student learning outcomes. In such cases, particularly for students with special needs, including those with autism, the absence of intrinsic motivation in teachers can result in insufficient support, leading to lower student achievement and engagement.

2.2.1 Supportive learning environment

A supportive learning environment is essential for the success of students with autism, addressing their unique needs and promoting their overall well-being and social inclusion (Brookman-Frazee et al., 2009). This environment involves providing necessary accommodations, structures, and relationships to support students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Teachers must set high expectations for students' individual learning abilities and create a classroom atmosphere free from discrimination, built on mutual respect and support. Such an environment encourages students to engage actively and feel comfortable making mistakes as part of the learning process (Hinde-McLeod & Reynolds, 2007). In practice, creating a supportive environment involves incorporating group activities that foster social skills and provide opportunities for students to build relationships with peers. These activities help students with autism understand that errors are a natural part of learning and encourage their participation (Hinde-McLeod & Reynolds, 2007). Furthermore, addressing sensory sensitivities is crucial, with adjustments to lighting, sound, and tactile stimuli helping to reduce stress and enhance comfort (Kern et al., 2007). The establishment of clear routines, visual schedules, and consistent expectations contributes to a structured and predictable environment, which is vital for students with autism to navigate their day with confidence and reduce anxiety (Brookman-Frazee et al., 2009). Positive relationships and empathetic interactions from teachers also play a critical role in fostering an inclusive and supportive environment (Odom et al., 2013).

2.2.2 Student choice and goal setting

Motivational speaker Tony Robbins has pointed out that the first step in making the invisible apparent is to set goals. By adopting a few strategies and utilizing the two fundamental goal-setting models in the classroom,

any instructor may include goal-setting into their lesson plans (warden University). Learning a task, skill, or approach is the aim of mastery objectives. Setting goals for academic success helps students focus, create motivation in their schoolwork, and allow new, more positive behaviors to form. These can lead to a "deeper level of engagement and motivational pattern," according to University of Nebraska professor Aleidine Moeller. Performance-based objectives motivate pupils to take on and successfully finish a task. Performance objectives emphasize a person's aptitude and sense of value, according to Moeller. "Being better than others and, more significantly, receiving recognition for exceptional performance are the metrics used to measure achievement."

2.2.3 Engaging learning experiences

Learning experiences that are engaging have the ability to boost intrinsic motivation. Teachers need to present content in a way that attracts the attention of their learners - for example, teachers could employ members of the school community, hold sessions outside of the classroom or have students dress up as certain characters. According to Handley (2010), involving students can aid in the battle against demotivation, topic aversion, and disturbances of the classroom order. Innovative teaching strategies, texts that are relevant to the students' interests, and an abundance of excellent resources may all have a significant influence on students' engagement with the material (NSW DET, 2004).

2.2.4 Teacher's passion and enthusiasm for learning

Engaging learning environments have the power to increase intrinsic motivation. Instructors must present their content in a way that piques students' attention. Some ideas include hiring community people, holding extracurricular activities, or having students dress up as specific characters. According to Handley (2010), involving students can aid in the battle against demotivation, topic aversion, and disturbances of the classroom order. Students' involvement may be greatly impacted by innovative teaching methods, interest-based texts, and a wealth of high-quality resources, all of which can help students make connections to the curriculum (NSW DET, 2004). Inspiring students with autism is possible when teachers design classes that take into account their skills, past knowledge, and preferred methods of learning. This shows that they are motivated themselves. Poor academic accomplishment may result from a teacher's inability to inspire their autistic pupils to study if they have no intrinsic desire for teaching, as demonstrated by their lack of enthusiasm in the field (Metcalf & Game, 2006).

2.3 Advantages of Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation provides substantial long-term benefits across various domains, including education, professional life, and personal goals. It transcends mere attraction to a task, contributing to enhanced cognitive processes, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence. One notable advantage is the increased persistence and resilience it fosters. Teachers who are intrinsically motivated display greater determination and are better equipped to overcome challenges. Research by Klassen et al. (2012) highlights that intrinsic motivation is positively associated with persistence in teaching tasks and resilience in the face of setbacks. Another significant benefit of intrinsic motivation is its impact on creativity and innovation. Intrinsically motivated individuals often generate novel ideas and approaches, fostering greater creativity and originality in their work. Studies, such as those by Patrick et al. (2016), have shown that teachers motivated by internal factors are more likely to employ creative teaching strategies and develop innovative solutions to instructional challenges.

Additionally, intrinsic motivation enhances the process of mastering skills and expanding knowledge. It drives teachers' curiosity and engagement in professional development, leading to deeper learning and skill acquisition, as evidenced by Taylor and Parsons (2019). Moreover, intrinsic motivation has a role in long-term contentment and happiness. Assor et al. (2019) found that teachers who possess intrinsic motivation have more job satisfaction and overall well-being due to their increased work satisfaction. Additionally, it lowers the likelihood of stress and burnout while promoting emotional well-being. According to Howard and Guay (2017), intrinsic motivation improves educators' psychological well-being by being linked to decreased levels of stress, emotional weariness, and turnover intentions.

2.4 Summary and gaps identified

Motivation is a key component in a student's learning and development. One aspect of teacher pedagogy is cultivating in pupils an inner motivation to learn—a desire for new knowledge and comprehension. Teachers may have a significant influence on students' self-expression and engagement by utilizing a variety of motivational techniques since each student is unique. Teachers have the power to empower pupils to learn, which makes the classroom environment exciting and full of anticipation for every student.

When a youngster is driven by external factors, such as fear of punishment from parents or instructors, they learn. A youngster may also learn if they want to receive praise, grades, a fun trip, and Christmas clothes from their parents. Promises of prizes of this kind are a common way for parents to extrinsically motivate their kids. The motivation of kids is largely influenced by their teachers and parents, and this contributes to their

academic achievement. More extrinsic motivation is required for students who have lost interest in their studies. Many studies looked at the connection between teachers' motivation and kids' academic performance in general; however, not as many have looked at the impact of teachers' desire on the academic accomplishment of autistic children, especially in Rwanda.

2.5 Elements of intrinsic motivation to the academic performance of learners with autism.

2.5.1 Enhancing intrinsic motivation

A student's low academic performance may stem from expectations that they would perform badly on a given assignment or from their perception that school staff and activities pose a danger to their feeling of competence, self-determination, or relatedness (Adelman & Taylor, 1990). In light of this, the intervention should concentrate on methods to substitute work and circumstances that are frightening or scary. This might be accomplished in two ways: (a) by getting rid of or reducing external pressures.

2.5.2 Suggested applications

Researchers studying teacher motivation while dealing with autistic kids are few in number, according to special education professionals (Gottfried, 2016). They have proposed that curriculum material, evaluation techniques, and rules should all be sufficiently adaptable to accommodate the demands of every student in the classroom. Particularly for educators who work with autistic kids, the activities need to pique pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm. Students with autism are expected to benefit socially and academically from these techniques. Some of the factors that are used to gauge instructors' intrinsic motivation have been found by researchers. According to Ryan and Deci (2017), relatedness, autonomy, and competence can all have an impact on a teacher's intrinsic motivation. When an educator is enthusiastic about their work, confident in their skills, and feels a close bond with both their pupils and coworkers, they are considered motivated. The guidelines that follow are grounded in empirical data and aim to improve intrinsic motivation in educators who work with pupils who have autism. There is a dearth of study on motivation among kids with learning disabilities (Adelman & Taylor, 1986; Deci & Chandler, 1986). To increase the effectiveness of education for kids with LD, researchers and educators have said that more needs to be done to extend the range of instructional approaches and investigate psychophysiological therapies (Adelman & Taylor, 1986). It has been argued that policies and processes pertaining to evaluation, curricular material, and teaching methods should all be sufficiently adaptable to accommodate the demands of every student in the classroom. Activities ought to pique pupils' curiosity and attention, particularly those with learning disabilities. Attention span and

perseverance (Brophy, 1983; Gottfried, 1983); desire to learn (Brophy, 1987; Gottfried, 1983); sense of efficacy (Gottfried, 1983; Schunk, 1991; Smith, 1994); and choice of activity (Brophy, 1983) can all have an impact on academic intrinsic motivation. When a student decides to dedicate time to an activity until it is finished, picks an activity only to learn more about related topics, and feels a boost in self-esteem upon finishing that task or mastering a skill, that student is said to be motivated. The guidelines that follow, regardless of skill level, are grounded in scientific data and aim to improve intrinsic motivation in all learners.

2.5.3 Involving learner in the acquisition journey

By giving students the impression that they are in charge of their own education, teachers can increase their intrinsic motivation (Boggiano, Main, & Katz, 1988; Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990). It's important to take care that advice doesn't get confused with monitoring. As the instructor guides the student toward learning, the learner shouldn't feel like they are being dominated.

Once each stage of germination is achieved, the instructor might then invite the kids to write or draw about how their own plant is growing. Every time the desired result is met, the text or artwork might be shown on a school bulletin board. By providing students with a variety of potential outcomes for as many activities as feasible, the instructor should give them some leeway. It has been demonstrated that putting restrictions on the pupils reduces their internally motivated motivation (Koestner, Ryan, Bernieri, & Holt, 1984).

2.5.4 Respond Positively

Answers that are encouraging to students' inquiries can increase their internal push (Gottfried, 1983). The pupils could inquire anything the circumstance else subject matter being discussed, for instance. In these situations, the instructor ought to give a constructive response while also assisting the learner in returning to the present situation. For instance, during a lesson about the Battle of Gettysburg, a student inquires about the price of lunch at the school from the teacher. The instructor informs the pupil that they will discuss it with her or him after that time. After then, the educator asks question to the pupils that is probably connected to the subject and for which the student already knows the answer. Additionally, giving the pupil encouragement rather than criticism would allow them to keep their high self-esteem.

2.5.5 Praise Students

A learner's sense of competence is bolstered by praise (Brophy, 1981; Gottfried, 1983; Swann & Pittman, 1977). When a pupil demonstrates the required conduct, give them a verbal reward. For instance, if the learner attempts resolving a multiplication question twice with finding the solution, the teacher may commend them by saying, "Well done!" According to Cameron and Pierce (1994), verbal praise has been proven to improve

intrinsic drive. Praise, however, must not be bestowed carelessly or so frequently that it becomes insignificant. In certain situations, encouragement may be more appropriate. For instance, if the student is making an effort to obtain the desired objective but has not yet succeeded.

2.5.6 Promote Mastery Learning

The learner becomes intrinsically motivated when they reach mastery (Borkowski et al., 1988). Give students who turn in assignments that fall short of expectations one or more chances to try again, along with instructions on how to get the intended outcome this time. Assisting the student in segmenting the assignment into feasible parts and establishing objectives for finishing each phase is one method to do this. As each goal is accomplished, this will also provide the pupil a sense of accomplishment. Research has demonstrated that proximal goal formulation fosters a sense of competency in learners, which in turn makes them more self-motivated (Bandura & Schunk, 1981).

2.5.7 Challenge and Stimulate

It is likely that a range of engaging and difficult tasks will draw in and maintain the student's interest in the assignment (Harter, 1974, 1978). It has been demonstrated that pupils with mental delays as well as those without impairments enjoy difficult assignments (Harter, 1977). For students, learning in school should be both engaging and difficult. Obstacles may increase in learners (Pittman, Emery, & Boggiano, 1982). The assignment shouldn't, however, be so difficult that it is impossible for the student to complete. According to Mastropieri and Scruggs (1994), tasks have to be created with a certain degree of success in mind, guiding the learner toward increasingly challenging levels. Whenever a learner succeeds, verbal encouragement should be offered rather than a material prize. Additionally, it's critical that students believe they are in charge of their education.

For example, when given task-contingent rewards, they demonstrated a choice for the least difficult tasks (Harter, 1978; Pittman et al., 1982). However, when learners felt that they were in control of their own learning, they became more receptive to challenging school tasks (Boggiano et al., 1988). It is educators' responsibility to give work that students find difficult yet have a good chance of succeeding at. If a student's assignments are too simple, they could get bored.

2.5.8 Evaluate the Task, Not the Student

The assignment itself should be the basis for evaluation, not how well the student performed in relation to others. Studies by Butler (1989) and Harackiewicz, Abrahams, & Wageman (1987) have demonstrated that this type of appraisal increases intrinsic motivation. According to Epstein and Harackiewicz (1992),

interpersonal rivalry has been demonstrated to lower students' intrinsic motivation. Therefore, competition should be centered on the task's outcome rather than placing students against one another. Give the pupil comments about the work they completed. By assisting students in attributing good results to their own work, effort feedback has also been demonstrated to increase intrinsic motivation (Schunk & Cox, 1986). Instructors should advise pupils to depend on their own initiative to achieve their goals.

2.6 Conceptual framework

This part describes the key variables in the study, their relationships and their effects on academic achievement of students with autism. The illustration below shows how teachers' intrinsic motivation impact students' academic achievement

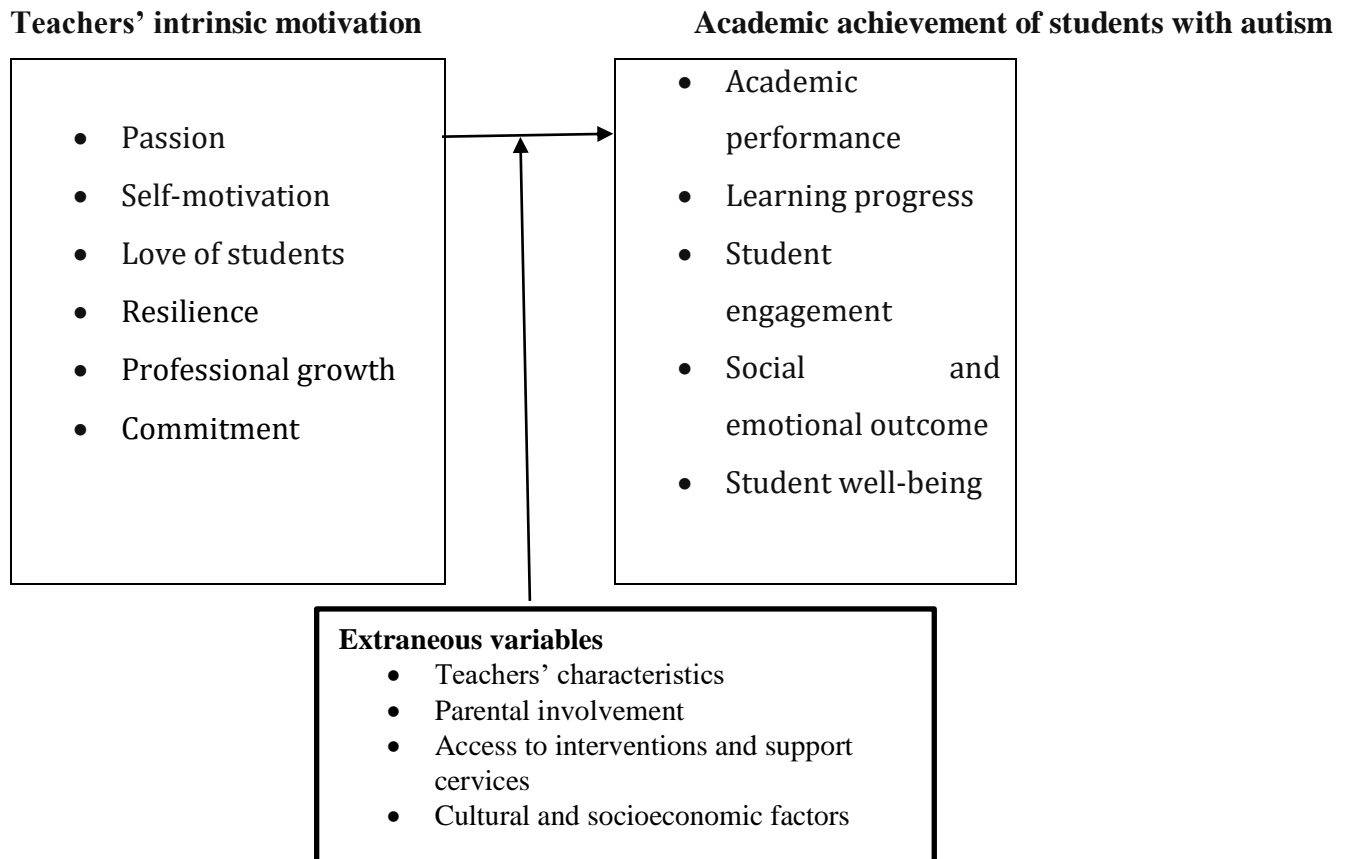


Figure 1 : Conceptual framework

Source: Primary data 2023

It is The link between the dependent and independent variables in the study is explained in Figure 1 by the conceptual framework; the dependent variable is taken into consideration since motivation depends on the

results of several factors. Academic accomplishment is influenced by a number of distinct elements that work individually and together on instructors and students. These factors include intrinsic drive.

2.6.1 Theoretical framework

Based on the self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2000), this study highlights that one of the main sources of motivated behavior is the fulfillment of fundamental human needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Several theories of motivation, such as goal-setting theory, place more emphasis on the quantity of motivation than on the premise that quality distinctions in motivation also important. SDT stresses the latter point. One of SDT's main contributions is that it illustrates a continuum wherein objectives may be pursued for a variety of reasons, from extrinsic motivation at one end to intrinsic motivation at the other. Although the theory contends that these various incentives may all spur people to action, their effects on output and wellbeing may differ.

Interesting, pleasurable, and impulsively pursued tasks are those that are intrinsically motivated, according to SDT. According to Deci and Ryan (2000), this kind of drive is perceived as independent and self-determined. In order to explain how a teacher's enthusiasm and self-determination might either favorably or adversely affect their students' performance, the researcher in this study applied the self-determination theory.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodological strategies employed by the researcher are explained in this chapter. The study's location, target population, sample size, basic size, instrument, data collecting process, data analysis methods, logistical and ethical considerations, and research design are all included.

3.2 Research design

The study used quantitative research design to identify the influence of teachers' intrinsic motivation on the academic achievement of students with autism at Tubiteho Day Care Centre in Kicukiro District and HVP humura in Gasabo district. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a quantitative research design is a systematic approach that collects and analyzes numerical data to quantify variables and explore relationships, differences, or trends. It uses structured tools like surveys or tests to gather measurable data, which is then analyzed statistically to identify patterns, test theories, and produce generalizable findings. Quantitative methods approach was used. This involved administering surveys or questionnaires to assess teachers' intrinsic motivation levels, along with collecting quantitative data on student academic performance.

3.3 Sampling technics

This study was conducted at Tubiteho Day Care Centre in Kicukiro District and HVP Humura in Gasabo District, Kigali City. The target population comprised teachers, parents of students with autism, and the students themselves. To accurately represent this population, a purposive sampling technique was employed, as described by Kothari (2004). This method involves deliberately selecting participants with specific characteristics relevant to the study. A total of 60 respondents were included: 20 students with autism who could communicate verbally, 20 teachers, and 20 parents from the Parent Committee. This aimed to gather comprehensive data on the effect of teachers' intrinsic motivation on the autistic students' achievement.

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents

Category of respondents	Number of respondents
Teacher	20
Students	20
Parents	20
Total	60

Source: field data (2022)

3.4 Data collection tools

This study primarily used questionnaires for data collection. The researcher gathered primary data from teachers, students, and parents through structured questionnaires designed to obtain information about teachers' intrinsic motivation and students' academic achievement. The questions were formulated to be clear, concise, and relevant, allowing respondents to provide detailed and thoughtful answers. This method attempted to offer insightful information on several facets of teacher motivation and how it affects students' academic performance, especially those with autism.

3.5 Validity of the instrument

The extent to which techniques and instruments for gathering data measure the objectives for which they are designed is what Kothari (1990) described as the validity of an instrument. A fraction of the respondents from each group—parents, instructors, and students—participated in a pilot study conducted by the study's researcher to ascertain the effectiveness of each instrument. The researcher additionally addressed the questions with the supervisor before drafting the final version to ensure the instruments' validity.

3.6 Reliability of the instrument

The degree to which an instrument or data collection process yields consistent results across all accessions is known as reliability (Bell, 1993). Because of the small sample size in this study, conventional reliability measures like test-retest reliability and Cronbach's alpha could not be computed. Nevertheless, the supervisor discussion and pilot study of the instrument offered insightful information about the validity and effectiveness of the instruments, which enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings despite the limitations posed by the small sample size.

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis is a systematic procedure that involves dealing with data, categorizing them, and dividing them into manageable components, according to Bogdan and Birklen (1992). The data acquired for this investigation was analyzed using quantitative methodologies. The Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 23 was used to compile all of the data that was gathered from instructors, students, and parents, from which statistical data was produced. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were employed in the study to determine the intrinsic motivations of teachers and investigate the link between instructor intrinsic motivation and student performance.

3.8 Ethical issues to consider

Tubiteho Day Care in Kicukiro District and HVP Humura in Gasabo District have given their ethical approval for this study. Each participant gave informed consent before to data collection, ensuring both their voluntary participation and the privacy of their answers. Additionally, precautions were made during the study procedure to protect participants' privacy and identity.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter focuses on identifying the intrinsic motivations of teachers working with students with autism. Through detailed analysis of questionnaire responses, we categorize the primary motivational factors driving teachers. Subsequently, we evaluate the impact of these intrinsic motivations on student performance, examining aspects such as academic skills, engagement, social interactions, and overall development.

4.1 Exploring the Intrinsic Motivations of Teachers Working with Students with Autism

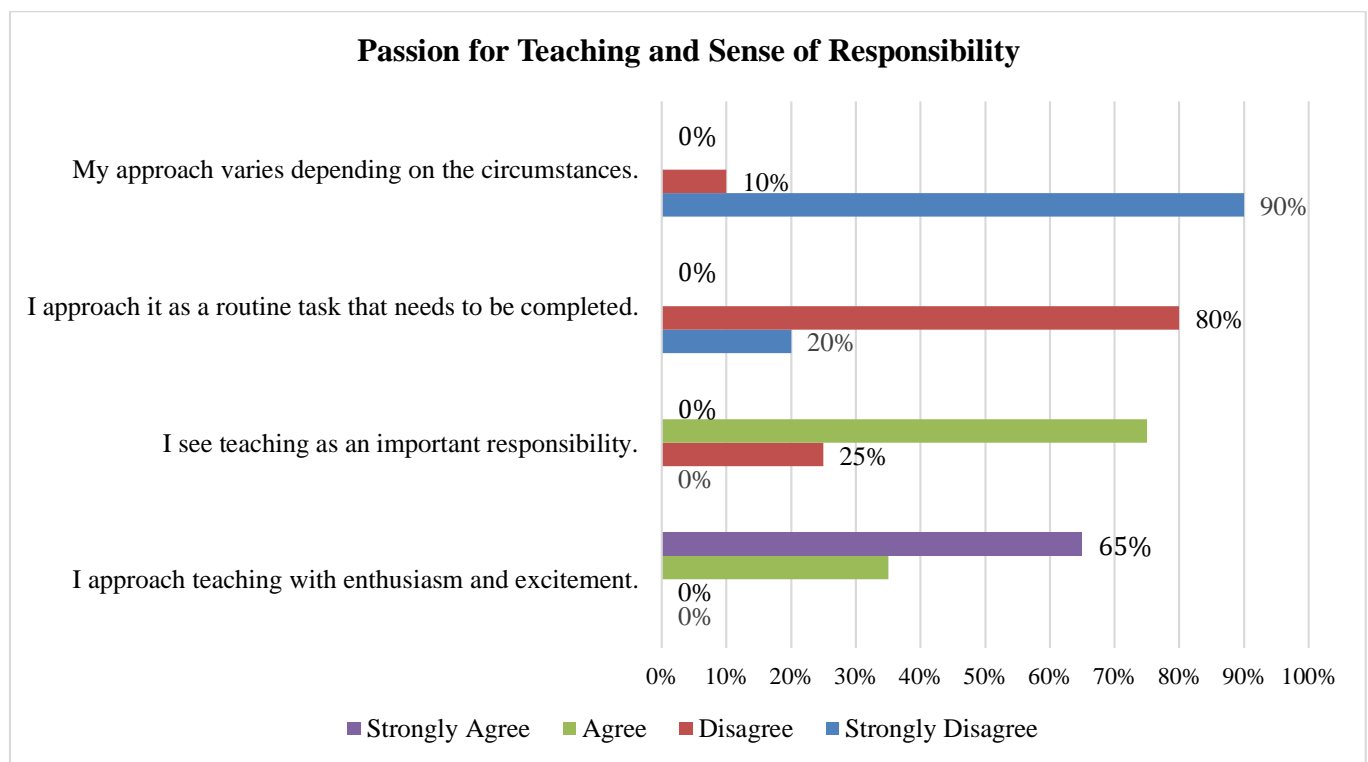


Figure 2: Passion for Teaching and Sense of responsibility

Figure 2 shows the different intrinsic motivations among teachers. As the figure reveals, all teachers disagreed that their teaching approaches vary depending on the circumstances and disagreed that teaching they consider teaching as routine activity they have to perform. These results highlight that teachers are motivated and dedicated to support students with autism. Additionally, a significant number of teachers agree that they see teaching as an important responsibility (75%), indicating a strong sense of commitment to their role. Moreover, all teachers disagree with the idea that teaching is just a routine task (100% disagree), suggesting they are driven by deeper, personal reasons beyond merely fulfilling a job requirement. Most importantly, the

strong agreement with the statement that teachers approach teaching with enthusiasm and excitement (35% agree, 65% strongly agree) reflects that passion for teaching is the most prominent motivation among those surveyed. Results presented align with Ryan and Deci's (2000) assertion that intrinsic motivation, particularly passion for teaching, significantly influences educators' dedication and effectiveness.

Table 2: Commitment to Student Well-being and Support

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I talk with the student to understand their needs and offer support.	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (25.00%)	15 (75.00%)
I refer the student to the appropriate support services.	0 (0.00%)	1 (5.00%)	6 (30.00%)	13 (65.00%)	0 (0.00%)
I focus on academic tasks and provide help if the student asks.	4 (20.00%)	11 (55.00%)	4 (20.00%)	1 (5.00%)	0 (0.00%)
I wait for the student to approach me with their concerns.	10 (50.00%)	10 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)

The data reveals insightful patterns regarding teachers' intrinsic motivations. A significant majority of teachers strongly agree (75%) with the statement that they talk with students to understand their needs and offer support, and agree (65%) with the idea that they refer students to the appropriate support services. This shows a proactive approach to student care and support. In contrast, the substantial proportion of teachers who strongly disagree (50%) and disagree (50%) with the statement about waiting for students to approach them with concerns indicates a preference for addressing student needs proactively rather than reactively. These patterns collectively suggest that teachers' primary intrinsic motivation is their deep-seated love for children, as evidenced by their commitment to actively understanding, supporting, and ensuring the well-being of their students. After this, we wanted to evaluate how teachers are motivated in seeking out new teaching strategies when teaching students with autism and results are presented in Figure 3 below.

The findings align with literature highlighting the intrinsic motivations of teachers working with students with autism. Ryan and Deci (2000) emphasize that intrinsic motivation drives educators to proactively address student needs, a sentiment echoed by Brophy (2010), who notes that caring teachers are more likely to implement supportive strategies. Additionally, Guskey (2002) underscores the importance of emotional investment in students, while Desimone (2009) points out that motivated teachers actively engage in collaborative efforts to refer students to appropriate support services.

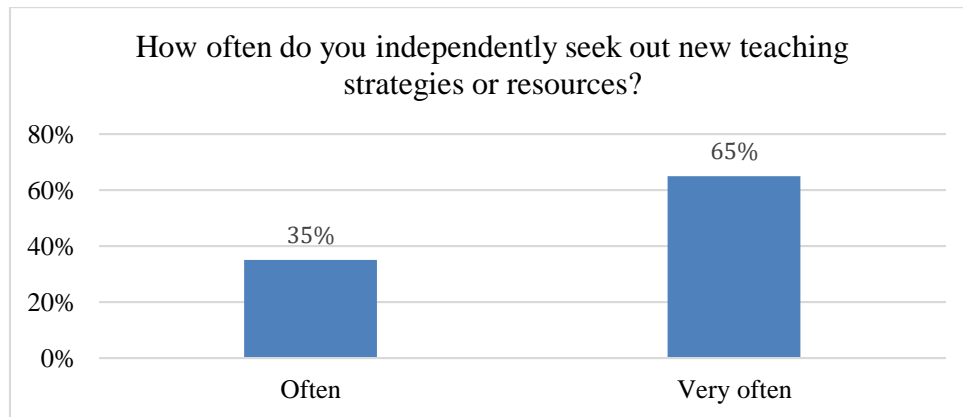


Figure 3: Self-motivation in seeking new teaching strategies

Figure 3 illustrates how frequently teachers of students with autism seek out new teaching strategies or resources, highlighting their proactive engagement in professional development. Specifically, 35% of teachers reported that they often seek out new methods or resources, while 65% indicated that they do so very often. This high level of activity shows that these teachers are deeply committed to improving their teaching practices and addressing the specific needs of their students with autism. This frequent pursuit of innovative strategies and resources clearly reflects their strong self-motivation and dedication to enhancing their educational impact. This high level of self-motivation observed in this study resonates with Desimone's (2009) assertion that motivated teachers actively engage in professional development to better meet their students' unique needs. Additionally, Guskey (2002) underscores the essential role of self-directed learning in improving teaching practices, particularly for educators working with diverse learners such as students with autism.

Table 3: Drive for Professional Growth and Skill Enhancement

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I actively seek opportunities to grow and improve.	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	9 (45.00%)	11 (55.00%)
I participate when opportunities are available or required.	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (20.00%)	15 (75.00%)	1 (5.00%)
I attend occasionally when it is convenient.	0 (0.00%)	12 (60.00%)	4 (20.00%)	4 (20.00%)	0 (0.00%)
I rarely engage in professional development activities.	17 (85.00%)	3 (15.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)

The data provides a clear picture of teachers' engagement with professional development and their drive to improve skills. A majority of teachers strongly agree (55%) and agree (45%) that they actively seek opportunities to grow and improve, reflecting a strong intrinsic motivation for personal and professional development. Additionally, 75% of teachers agree and 5% strongly agree that they participate when opportunities are available or required, further indicating a proactive attitude toward professional growth. However, the data shows that 60% of teachers disagree and 20% are neutral about attending professional development only occasionally when convenient, suggesting that convenience is not the primary motivator for their engagement. Furthermore, a substantial 85% strongly disagree with the statement that they rarely engage in professional development activities, which emphasizes their commitment to ongoing learning. Collectively, these results affirm that teachers possess a significant intrinsic motivation for self-improvement and skill development. The findings align with Ryan and Deci (2000), who emphasize intrinsic motivation as essential for educators working with students with autism, fostering personal growth and professional engagement. They support Brophy's (2010) view that teachers who find meaning in their work with these students are more likely to seek professional development opportunities. Additionally, the results resonate with Guskey's (2002) focus on self-directed learning and Desimone's (2009) assertion that motivated teachers actively participate in training, which is particularly important in enhancing their effectiveness in supporting students with autism.

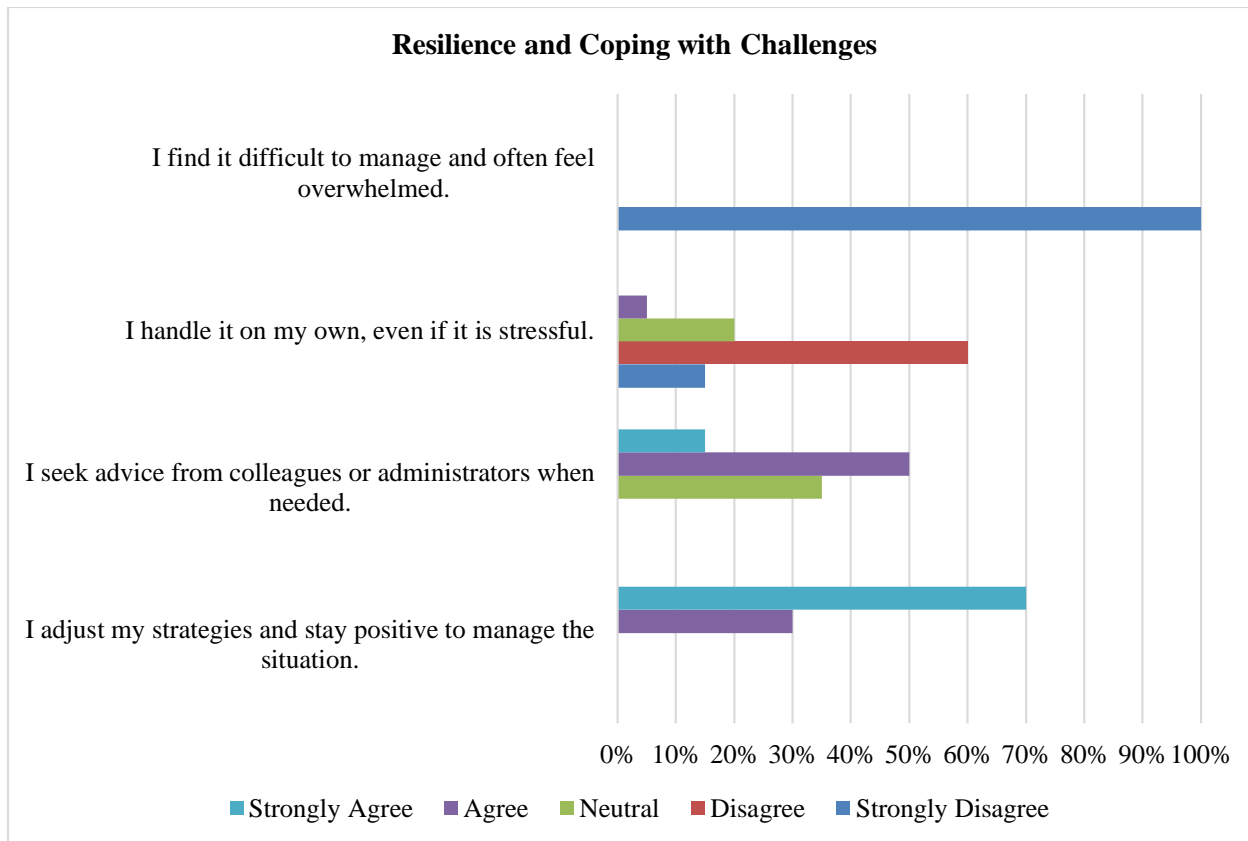


Figure 4: Resilience and Coping with Challenges

The results indicate that teachers of students with autism exhibit a high level of resilience and a collaborative spirit in their professional practice. A significant majority (70%) strongly agree that they adjust their strategies and maintain a positive outlook when faced with challenges, demonstrating their ability to remain adaptable and committed despite the complexities of teaching students with autism. This resilience is further highlighted by the unanimous disagreement with feeling frequently overwhelmed, suggesting that these teachers have developed strong coping mechanisms and confidence in managing their responsibilities. Additionally, the results show a collaborative approach, with 65% of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing that they seek advice from colleagues or administrators when needed. This openness to seeking support and engaging with peers reflects their recognition of the importance of teamwork in overcoming the unique challenges they face. It can be noted from results also that rather than handling stress alone, most teachers prefer to work together, emphasizing their commitment to professional growth and effective teaching practices. These findings presented here underscore the critical role of resilience and collaboration among educators in fostering improved instructional practices and positive student outcomes. This is further supported by Hattie’s (2009)

meta-analysis, which emphasizes that effective teacher collaboration significantly impacts student learning and overall school performance.

Table 4: Teachers' assessment of the usefulness of intrinsic motivations for teaching students with autism

Intrinsic Motivation	Absolutely Essential	Very Necessary	Important	Preferable	Not Necessary	Not Very Important
Passion	17 (85)	3 (15)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Self-Motivation	4 (20)	16 (80)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Love for Students	0 (0)	15 (75)	5 (25)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitment	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (10)	18 (90)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Drive to Skills	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (25)	9 (45)	6 (30)	0 (0)
Resilience	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (15)	11 (55)	0 (0)	6 (30)

The data reveals that teachers place varying degrees of importance on different intrinsic motivations in their work with students with autism. A significant 85% of teachers consider passion to be absolutely essential, while 15% regard it as very necessary. Self-motivation is also highly valued, with 20% of teachers finding it absolutely essential and 80% considering it very necessary. When it comes to the love for students, 75% of teachers deem it very necessary, and 25% rate it as important. For the intrinsic motivation of commitment, 90% of teachers consider it preferable, whereas 10% see it as important. Drive to skills appears to be less critical, with 45% rating it as preferable, 25% as important, and 30% as not necessary. Resilience is categorized as preferable by 55% of teachers, important by 15%, and not very important by 30%.

These results illustrate a clear prioritization among intrinsic motivations. Passion for teaching, self-motivation, and love for students are most frequently rated as essential or necessary by the majority of teachers. Commitment, drive to skills, and resilience are valued to a lesser extent but still recognized as important factors. This insight into teachers' intrinsic motivations underscores the factors they find most crucial for effective teaching and support of students with autism. The data reveals that teachers place varying degrees of importance on different intrinsic motivations in their work with students with autism. A significant 85% of teachers consider passion to be absolutely essential, while 15% regard it as very necessary. Self-motivation is

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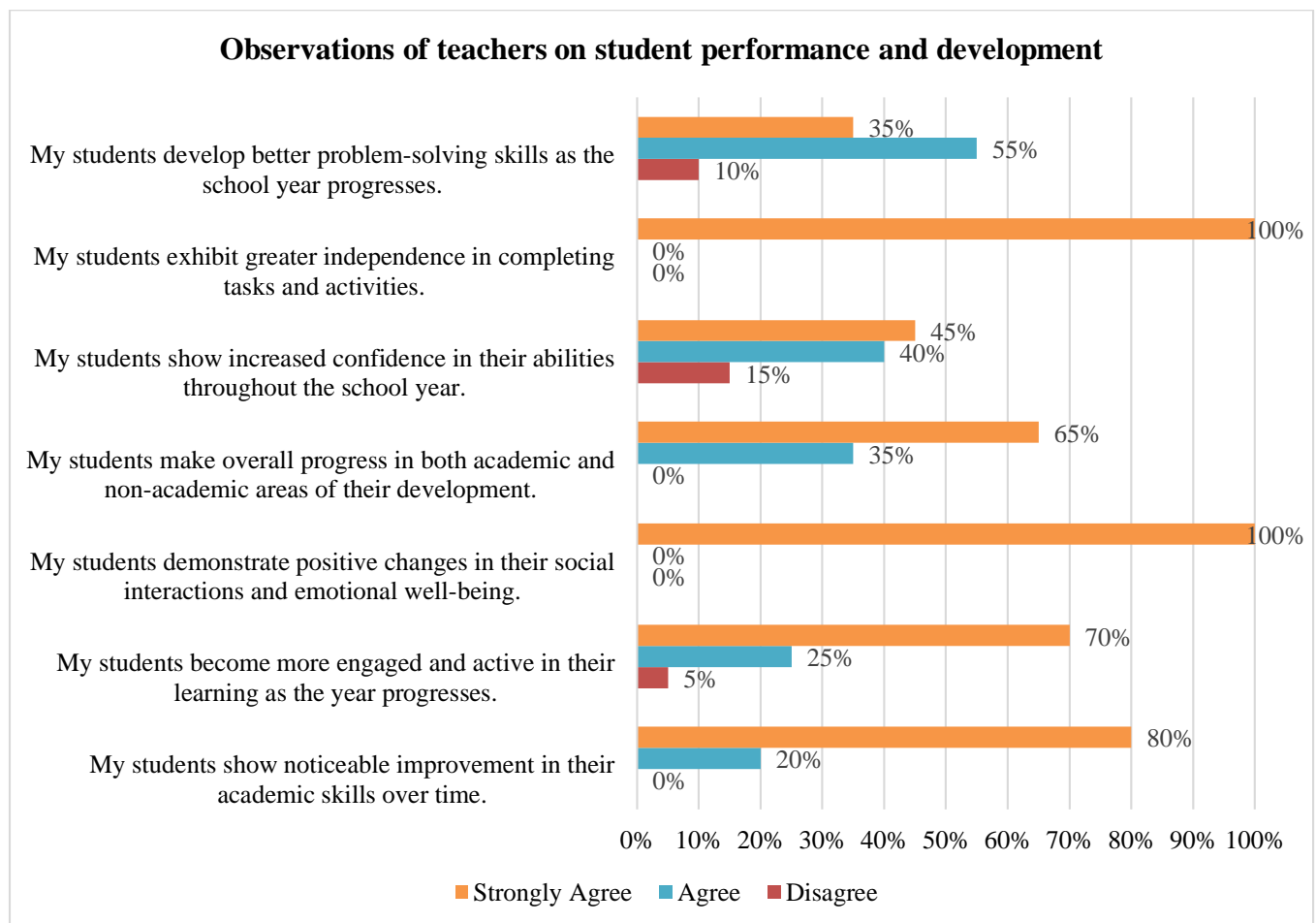


Figure 5: Teachers' Observations of student performance and development

The results from teachers who instruct students with autism provide a comprehensive view of observed student development. A strong majority of teachers (80%) strongly agree that their students with autism show noticeable improvements in academic skills over the school year, with the remaining 20% also in agreement. This indicates a broad consensus on the progress made in academic areas for these students. Regarding student engagement, 70% of teachers strongly agree that students become more engaged and active in their learning as the year progresses, with only 5% disagreeing. This suggests that the teaching approaches employed are effective in fostering greater student involvement and interest. In terms of social interactions and emotional well-being, all teachers (100%) strongly agree that students exhibit positive changes, reflecting a supportive educational environment. Teachers also note that students make overall progress in both academic and non-academic areas, with 65% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing. This points to a well-rounded approach that addresses various facets of student growth. Additionally, 45% of teachers strongly agree and 40% agree that students gain increased confidence throughout the year, although 15% disagree, suggesting variability in confidence development among students. Furthermore, 100% of teachers strongly agree that students show greater independence in completing tasks and activities, highlighting significant progress in self-reliance. However, 10% of teachers disagree that students develop better problem-solving skills as the year progresses, indicating potential areas where further focus or support may be needed. These results offer a detailed perspective on the progression observed in students with autism, highlighting notable improvements in academic skills, engagement, social interactions, emotional well-being, and independence. The results presented align with Odom et al. (2010) on improvements in academic and social skills through evidence-based interventions. Ryan and Deci (2017) highlight the role of autonomy in increased engagement and independence. Variability in confidence matches Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2019) findings on teacher influence, while gaps in problem-solving echo Reeve and Cheon's (2014) call for adaptive teaching methods, underscoring the need for individualized approaches and teacher development.

4.2 Evaluating Relationship between Student performance and intrinsic motivation

This section explores how teachers' intrinsic motivation identified specifically Passion for Teaching, Self-Motivation, and Love for Children affects student performance. Students performance was assessed in terms of Academic Improvement, Engagement, and Social and Emotional Development and Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine how these motivational factors influence educational results.

Table 5: Correlation between teacher’s intrinsic motivation and Student performance

Intrinsic motivation		Student performance dimensions		
		Improvement in academic skills	Engagement	Social and emotional development
Passion	Pearson Correlation	.941**	.761**	.836**
	Sig.nificance(2-tailed)	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001
Self-motivation	Pearson Correlation	.756**	.742**	.729**
	Significance(2-tailed)	< 0.001	< 0.001	0.000
Love for Children	Pearson Correlation	.898**	.762**	.864**
	Significance(2-tailed)	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001

** . Correlation at 0.01(2-tailed): ...

Table 8 presents the correlations between intrinsic motivation factors and various dimensions of student performance. Results presented reveal that Passion for Teaching has a very strong positive correlation with improvement in Academic Skills ($r = .941, p < .01$), Engagement ($r = .761, p < .01$), and Social and Emotional Development ($r = .836, p < .01$). These high correlation values indicate that teachers' enthusiasm and excitement about teaching have a considerable positive impact on their students' academic success, engagement in learning, and overall emotional well-being. Self-motivation also demonstrates substantial positive correlations with all three dimensions: Improvement in Academic Skills ($r = .756, p < .01$), Engagement ($r = .742, p < .01$), and Social and Emotional Development ($r = .729, p < .01$). This suggests that teachers' drive to improve their own skills and seek new strategies positively influences their students' academic performance, engagement, and emotional growth. Additionally, love for children is strongly correlated with Improvement in Academic Skills ($r = .898, p < .01$), Engagement ($r = .762, p < .01$), and Social and Emotional Development ($r = .864, p < .01$). This indicates that teachers who genuinely care about their students have a profound effect on their academic progress, level of engagement, and emotional development. These findings align with literature that underscores the vital role of teachers' intrinsic motivations in shaping student outcomes. Ryan and Deci (2000) highlight the importance of intrinsic motivation in fostering engagement and academic success. Brophy (2010) further emphasizes that passionate educators create meaningful learning experiences, significantly impacting students' emotional and social development.

Similarly, Guskey (2002) notes that teachers who are self-motivated and genuinely care for their students contribute to a positive classroom environment, promoting better academic performance and emotional well-being.

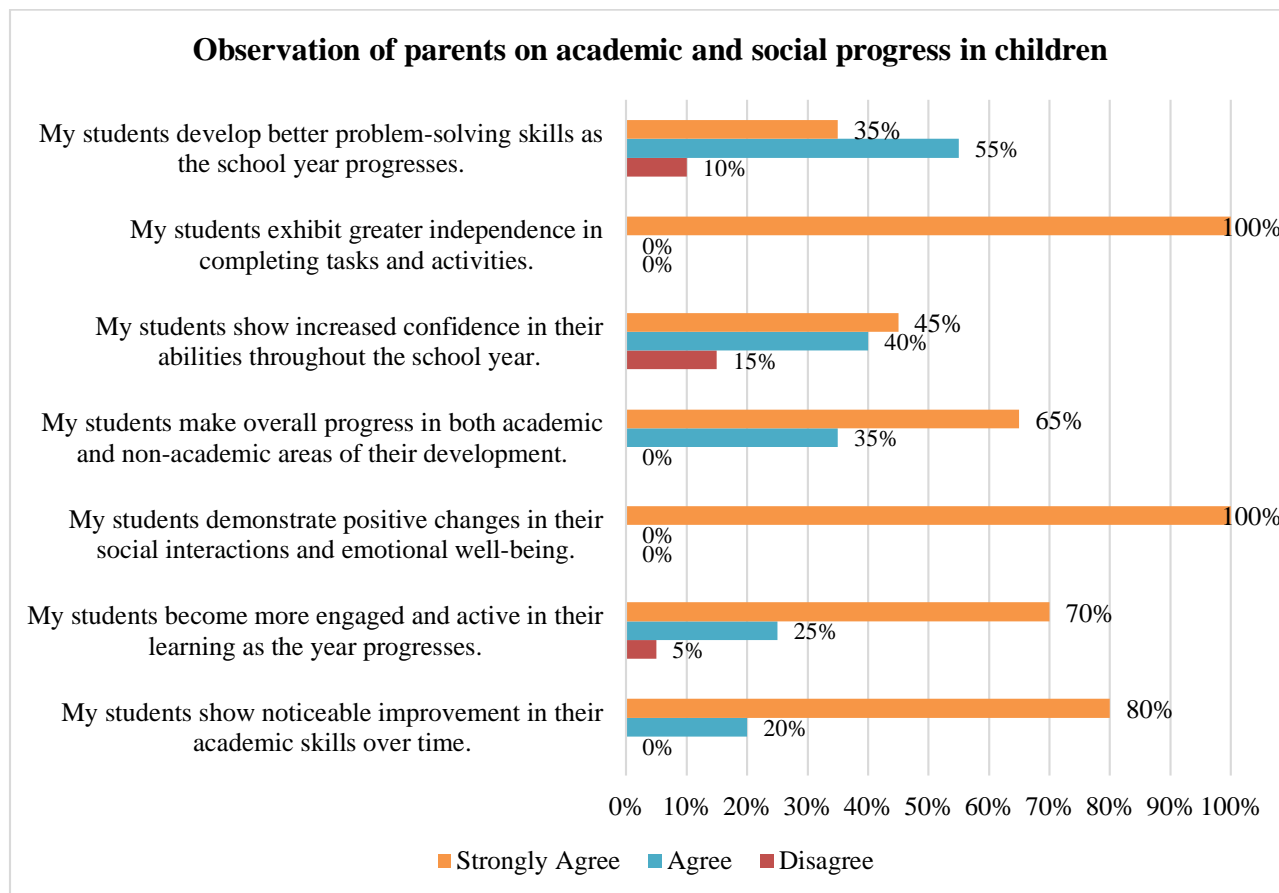


Figure 6: Parental Observations of Academic and Social Progress in Their Children

The results from the parent surveys as presented in Figure 5 highlight a generally positive perception of their children’s development across various domains. A significant majority of parents report noticeable improvements in their children’s academic skills, with 70% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing that their children have shown substantial academic progress. This positive trend is reinforced by 80% of parents who strongly agree that their children effectively grasp and understand new concepts. However, perceptions of progress in completing tasks independently vary somewhat, with 60% agreeing and 25% strongly agreeing, while 15% disagree. Regarding engagement and participation, 55% of parents strongly agree that their children are more engaged in learning activities, with 30% agreeing and 15% disagreeing. Additionally, 75% of parents strongly agree that their children exhibit increased interest in learning and school activities, with

minimal disagreement. Social and emotional well-being is notably positive, with all parents agreeing or strongly agreeing that their children show positive changes in social interactions and express happiness with their school experience. Feedback and communication from the school are also highly rated, with 100% of parents strongly agreeing that they receive regular feedback and feel well-informed about their children’s development. Furthermore, 55% of parents agree and 45% strongly agree that the school effectively communicates about their children’s needs and progress. These findings reveal that parents see significant improvement in their children’s academic and social development, attributing these improvements to the current educational practices.

Table 6: Parents' assessment of the usefulness of intrinsic motivations for teaching students with autism

Intrinsic Motivation	Absolutely Essential	Very Necessary	Important	Preferable	Not Necessary	Not Very Important
Passion	17 (85)	3 (15)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Self-Motivation	4 (20)	16 (80)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Love for Students	0 (0)	3 (15)	17 (85)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Commitment	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (25)	15 (75)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Drive to Skills	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5)	11 (55)	8 (40)
Resilience	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (25)	0 (0)	15 (75)

The survey results on parents' assessment of intrinsic motivations for teaching students with autism highlight a clear preference for certain qualities. Passion is overwhelmingly regarded as "Absolutely Essential" by 85% of parents, reflecting its crucial role in effective teaching. Self-Motivation is also highly valued, with 80% of parents viewing it as "Very Necessary," though fewer consider it "Absolutely Essential." Love for Students is rated as "Important" by 85% and "Very Necessary" by 15%, indicating its importance but to a lesser extent compared to passion and self-motivation. On the other hand, Commitment is seen as "Preferable" by 75% and Important by 25%, suggesting it plays a supportive but less central role. Drive to Skills and Resilience are perceived as less critical, with the majority of parents rating them as "Not Necessary" (55%) or "Not Very Important" (40%) for Drive to Skills, and "Not Very Important" (75%) or "Preferable" (25%) for Resilience. This indicates that while Passion, Self-Motivation, and Love for Students are viewed as the most crucial intrinsic motivations, Drive to Skills and Resilience are considered less essential in the context of teaching students with autism.

Student Responses on Teacher Support and Classroom Environment

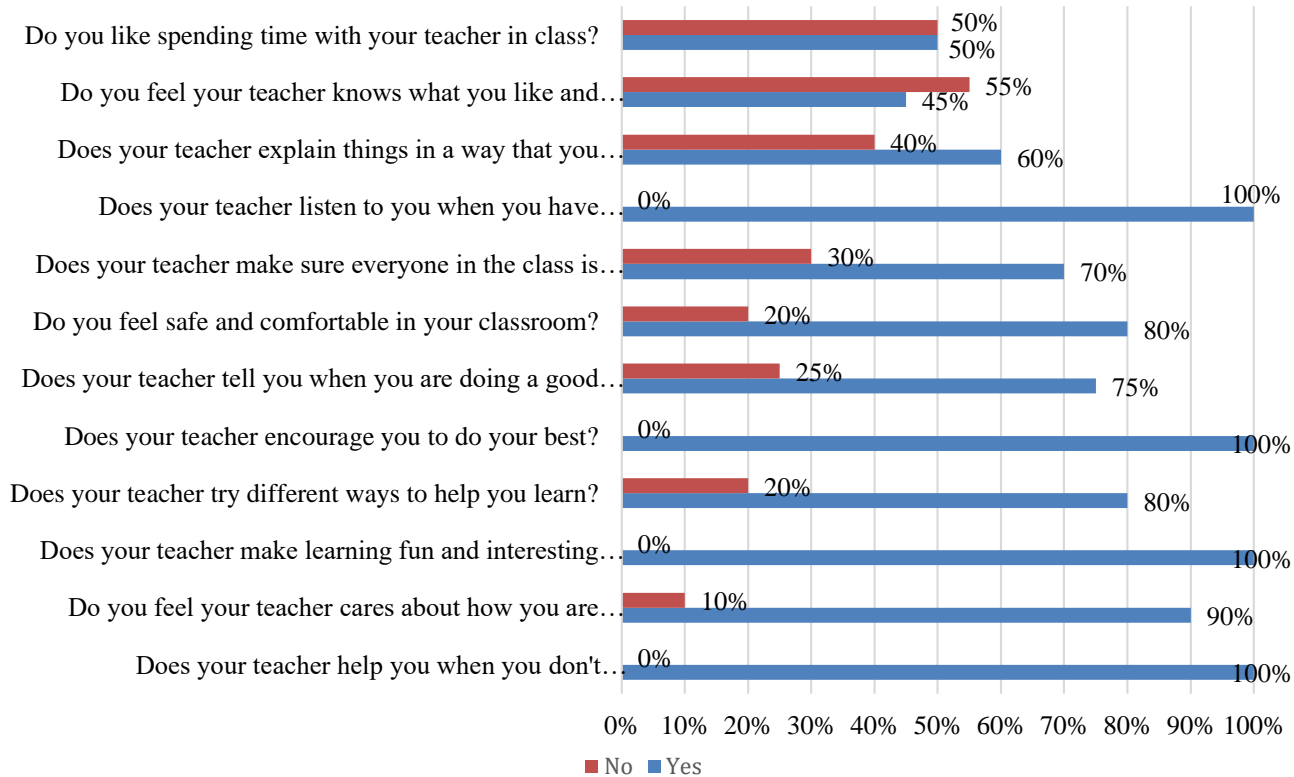


Figure 7: Student Responses on Teacher Support and Classroom Environment

Figure 6 Presents responses from questions asked students with autism regarding teacher support and classroom environment. Results presented reveal a positive overall experience in their classroom environments. All students indicated that their teachers consistently assist them when they do not understand something and make learning fun and engaging. Similarly, all respondents felt encouraged to do their best and believed that their teachers listen to them attentively and ensure that they feel safe and comfortable in the classroom. The majority of students also reported that their teachers use various methods to support their learning. Additionally, 95% of students expressed that they enjoy spending time with their teachers. However, there were some variations in responses 75% of students felt that their teachers frequently provide positive feedback on their performance, and 70% noted that their teachers ensure everyone in the class is treated nicely.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the findings from Chapter 4, focusing on the impact of teacher intrinsic motivation on the performance of students with autism, using Tubiteho Day Care and HVP Humura in Gasabo District as case studies. The analysis includes a comparative review of the study's results against the literature discussed in Chapter 2 and findings from other empirical studies, aligning with the study's objectives and research questions to draw well-organized conclusions and recommendations. The study identified three critical intrinsic motivations among teachers working with students with autism: passion for teaching, self-motivation, and love for children. Passion for teaching is highlighted as the most crucial intrinsic motivation, enhancing educators' engagement and effectiveness, consistent with the research by Ryan and Deci (2020) and Schunk (2016), which underscores its role in shaping teaching practices. Self-motivation is another significant factor, supporting ongoing professional development and the adoption of innovative teaching methods. Gagné and Deci (2005) and Hattie and Timperley (2007) emphasize how self-motivation influences teachers' commitment to continuous improvement and effective instruction. Love for children is essential for building supportive teacher-student relationships and addressing individual needs. Pianta and Stuhlman (2004) and Hamre and Pianta (2005) highlight the importance of genuine care in fostering both emotional and academic growth in students.

Table 4 illustrates that teachers place the highest value on passion for teaching, followed by self-motivation and love for children. Passion for teaching is deemed absolutely essential, aligning with Schunk and Mullen's (2013) findings that teacher enthusiasm significantly impacts student engagement and achievement. Self-motivation is recognized for its role in enhancing teaching practices, which is supported by Gagné and Deci (2005), who discuss how self-motivation drives professional growth. Love for students, though important, is slightly less prioritized, consistent with Hughes et al. (2017), who argue that genuine concern for students positively influences their emotional and academic development.

Regarding student performance, as detailed in Figure 5, teachers report notable improvements in academic skills, engagement, social interactions, and emotional well-being. This observation aligns with Hattie and Timperley's (2007) research, which shows the positive effects of motivated teachers on various student outcomes. Despite some variability in the development of problem-solving skills, overall progress is evident, reflecting the findings of Skinner and Belmont (1993), who emphasize the role of teacher involvement and support in enhancing student motivation and development.

Table 5 presents the relationship between teachers' intrinsic motivations and student performance. The findings reveal that passion for teaching is strongly associated with improvements in students' academic skills, engagement, and social-emotional development. This correlation supports Schunk and Mullen's (2013) research on the impact of teacher enthusiasm on student outcomes. Self-motivation is shown to positively influence these dimensions, echoing Gagné and Deci's (2005) findings on the impact of teachers' drive for personal growth. Love for children is also significantly related to enhancements in academic progress, engagement, and emotional well-being, aligning with Hughes et al. (2017), who emphasize the importance of teacher-student relationships.

Feedback from parents and students corroborates these findings, with both groups identifying passion for teaching, self-motivation, and love for children as key intrinsic motivations affecting teachers' practices. Schunk and Mullen (2013) and Lazarus (2018) highlight the importance of these motivations in fostering resilience, dedication, and effective teaching. Parents observed improvements in their children's academic performance and social skills, attributing these to the intrinsic motivations of their teachers. Students reported positive classroom experiences, further supporting the impact of teachers' passion, self-motivation, and love for children on their learning outcomes.

Additional research supports these findings, with Zou et al. (2023) identifying mediating factors such as teacher-student relationships in explaining the link between teacher intrinsic motivation and student motivation. Skinner and Belmont (1993) highlight the reciprocal effects of teacher behavior on student engagement, reinforcing the importance of teacher involvement. Griffin et al. (2018) and Kasari and Smith (2013) also underscore the role of teacher enthusiasm and intrinsic motivation in enhancing student outcomes and effectively implementing interventions for students with autism.

5.1 Conclusion

The study conducted at Tubiteho Day Care Centre and HVP Humura offers valuable insights into why teachers teach and how it impacts student performance. Firstly, it shows that all teachers at the daycare and HVP Humura have a strong passion for teaching, demonstrating their commitment to their profession. However, while many teachers are self-motivated, not all of them express the same level of affection towards children with autism. This indicates that teachers have different reasons for teaching, which suggests the need for personalized approaches to support effective teaching practices.

Furthermore, the study examines how teacher motivations impact student performance. It finds that when teachers are passionate, highly self-motivated or deeply care about children with autism, students tend to

perform better. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the hypothesis of the study says that there is no relationship between teacher's intrinsic motivation and performance of students with autism is rejected to conclude that performance of students with autism is influenced by teacher's intrinsic motivation. This highlights the importance of understanding and nurturing teacher's internal motivations to improve educational practices and enhance student outcomes.

5.2 Recommendations

Schools:

- Provide professional development opportunities that focus on intrinsic motivation and effective implementation of interventions for students with special needs.
- Create supportive environments that encourage collaboration, creativity, and autonomy among teachers, fostering their intrinsic motivation.
- Implement systems for ongoing feedback and reflection to help teachers understand the impact of their intrinsic motivation on student performance and adjust their practices accordingly.

Government:

- Allocate funding and resources to support teacher training programs that focus on fostering intrinsic motivation.
- Develop policies that promote a supportive and empowering school culture, encouraging teachers to feel valued and motivated in their roles.
- Establish incentives and recognition programs to reward teachers who demonstrate high levels of intrinsic motivation and positive impacts on student performance.

Further researchers: Investigate the effectiveness of intervention programs designed to enhance teacher intrinsic motivation, including professional development initiatives, organizational interventions, and motivational interventions tailored to specific teaching contexts. Additionally, they have to collaborate with educators and education stakeholders to co-design research studies that address practical challenges related to fostering teacher intrinsic motivation and improving student performance in real-world educational settings.

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APPENDICES

Teacher's questionnaire

Passion for Teaching

Question 1: How would you describe your approach to teaching on most days?

- a) I approach teaching with enthusiasm and excitement.
- b) I see teaching as an important responsibility.
- c) I approach it as a routine task that needs to be completed.
- d) My approach varies depending on the circumstances.

Self-Motivation

Question 2: How often do you independently seek out new teaching strategies or resources to enhance your teaching?

- a) Very often
- b) Often
- c) Occasionally
- d) Rarely

Commitment to Student Success

Question 3: When a student struggles with understanding a concept, how do you usually respond?

- a) I provide extra support and alternative explanations.
- b) I encourage the student to keep trying and offer additional resources.
- c) I allow the student to work independently and check in later.

- d) I move on and revisit the concept later.

Love for Children

Question 4: How do you usually respond when a student appears to be struggling emotionally or socially?

- a) I talk with the student to understand their needs and offer support.
- b) I refer the student to the appropriate support services.
- c) I focus on academic tasks and provide help if the student asks.
- d) I wait for the student to approach me with their concerns.

Drive to Improve Skills

Question 5: How would you describe your engagement in professional development?

- a) I actively seek opportunities to grow and improve.
- b) I participate when opportunities are available or required.
- c) I attend occasionally when it is convenient.
- d) I rarely engage in professional development activities.

Resilience and Coping with Challenges

Question 6: How do you typically handle challenging situations in your classroom?

- a) I adjust my strategies and stay positive to manage the situation.
- b) I seek advice from colleagues or administrators when needed.
- c) I handle it on my own, even if it is stressful.
- d) I find it difficult to manage and often feel overwhelmed.

Question 7: Based on your experience, which three aspects of teachers' intrinsic motivation do you believe are most important for supporting students with autism? (Select three in order)

- a) Passion for Teaching
- b) Self-Motivation
- c) Commitment to Student Success
- d) Love for Children
- e) Drive to Improve Skills
- f) Resilience and Coping with Challenges

Section B: Observations on Student Performance

1. My students with autism show noticeable improvement in their academic skills over time.
2. My students with autism become more engaged and active in their learning as the year progresses.

3. My students with autism demonstrate positive changes in their social interactions and emotional well-being.
4. My students with autism make overall progress in both academic and non-academic areas of their education.
5. My students with autism show increased confidence in their abilities throughout the school year.
6. My students with autism exhibit greater independence in completing tasks and activities.
7. My students with autism develop better problem-solving skills as the school year progresses

Parent Questionnaire

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your child's experiences and performance by selecting one of the options provided. (**Strongly Agree** (5), **Agree** (4), **Neutral** (3), **Disagree** (2) and **Strongly Disagree** (1))

Section A: Academic Improvement

1. My child with autism has shown noticeable improvement in their academic skills over time.
2. My child with autism is able to grasp and understand new concepts in their studies.
3. My child with autism has made progress in completing academic tasks independently.

Section B: Engagement and Participation

4. My child with autism appears more engaged and interested in learning activities.
5. My child with autism is more interested about their learning and school activities.

Section C: Social and Emotional Well-being

7. My child with autism demonstrates positive changes in their social interactions with peers.
8. My child with autism seems more emotionally secure and comfortable in social situations.
9. My child with autism expresses happiness and satisfaction with their school experience.

Section D: Overall Progress

10. My child with autism shows progress in both academic and non-academic areas.
11. My child with autism is developing skills that contribute to their overall educational growth.

12. My child with autism is making meaningful progress towards their personal and educational goals.

Section F: Feedback and Communication

16. I receive regular feedback from the school about my child's progress and achievements.

17. The school effectively communicates with me regarding my child's needs and progress.

18. I feel well-informed about my child's academic and social development.

SECTION G: Teacher's Quality

Question: Based on your observations, which three aspects of teachers' intrinsic motivation do you believe are most important for supporting students with autism? (Select three in order)

- g) Passion for Teaching
- h) Self-Motivation
- i) Commitment to Student Success
- j) Love for Children
- k) Drive to Improve Skills
- l) Resilience and Coping with Challenges

Student's questionnaire

Use yes or no to answer the following questions about your teacher and about your feeling at school

1. Does your teacher help you when you don't understand something?
2. Do you feel your teacher cares about how you are doing in school?
3. Does your teacher make learning fun and interesting for you?
4. Does your teacher try different ways to help you learn?
5. Does your teacher encourage you to do your best?
6. Does your teacher tell you when you are doing a good job?
7. Do you feel safe and comfortable in your classroom?
8. Does your teacher make sure everyone in the class is treated nicely?
9. Does your teacher listen to you when you have something to say?
10. Does your teacher explain things in a way that you can understand?
11. Do you feel your teacher knows what you like and what you don't like?
12. Do you like spending time with your teacher in class?

