

2021

Special Education Teachers' Perceptions of Reasons to Remain in the Teaching Field

Latrise McHaskell
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Latrise McHaskell

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Billie Andersson, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Derek Schroll, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Mary Lou Morton, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University

2021

Abstract

Special Education Teachers' Perceptions of Reasons to Remain in the Teaching Field

by

Latrise McHaskell

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2021

Abstract

General and special education teacher attrition, which contribute to the nation's teacher shortage, is a decades-long problem that can impede schools' ability to provide a quality education to all students. Studies have been conducted around teacher attrition; however, a gap in research literature exists regarding the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that may guide special education teacher retention. Utilizing the two-factor theory of motivation, this basic qualitative study explored the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that may influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom. Purposive sampling was used to select 12 special education teachers, at the ninth, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade levels, who have been teaching at least one year in Midwestern United States urban school district. A priori coding followed by open coding was used to code data and develop themes. Key results from the study extended current knowledge related to the two-factor theory of motivation. Results indicated teachers remain in teaching because of relationships they have developed with their students, coteachers, or department members. Teachers were also committed to improving their teaching strategies. They would like their administrators and district leaders to remove negative aspects of special education, such as too much paperwork, limited planning time with coteachers, and large caseloads. All but one participant expressed their desire to return to the classrooms for the next school year. Findings of this study may promote positive social change in urban schools by providing administrators with a better understanding of what influences teachers to remain in their positions, which may lower costs associated with replacing quality special education teachers.

Special Education Teachers' Perceptions of Reasons to Remain in the Teaching Field

by

Latrise McHaskell

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2021

Dedication

This proposal is dedicated to my family who have always stood by my decisions to continue my education. Even though there was no one in my family to pave the way for a college education, everyone in the family believed I could and would do it anyway. My parents encouraged me when I was down or feeling the pressure. They remind me I always succeed when I put in the effort. My sisters and brother have never doubted that I can do whatever I set my mind to accomplish. My sisters have been through some tough times, and they fuel me to push through mine. My brother, in his own quiet way, lets me know he is proud of me and that means the world to me. My grandmother has always been my biggest cheerleader and has always made me feel very special. As a grandmother, I model myself after the example my grandmother set before me. I also dedicate this proposal to my son, who makes me prouder every day. He kept me going on my darkest days and I am so thankful that God blessed me with him. Last, but certainly not least, I dedicate this to my husband, Fahim. He is amazingly positive and always there for me. He is my rock and gives me strength. He believes in me and pushes me to be a better me.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for giving me the strength to endure all that it took to see this through to completion. I would also like to thank God for placing people in my life who love me and support me. I would like to acknowledge my parents Barbara and Edgar because they help me get past myself. My mother passed before I could complete this phase of my life and will never know how much I owe her for believing in me. My father reminds me how much my mother and grandmother loved me and are still pulling for me. My father has picked up the torch and lights my way when I'm feeling lost. I acknowledge my sisters Deirdre, Aniella, and Kasey and brother Durrele for listening to my worrying, complaining, and crying and made me believe, in spite of it all. I acknowledge my son, who wrote me a letter once that pushed me to work even harder just so he knows that all things are possible and my grandchildren Kellen Jr and Leia who give me hope for the future. I acknowledge my grandmother Isabell, who passed away at 94 years old, before I could complete my doctorate. She influenced me greatly and still looks down on me waiting to call me Dr. Granddaughter. Even though she's gone, she still makes me feel like I'm her little girl. I acknowledge my cousin Marci, who is just amazingly supportive and makes me feel like a superstar. I want to thank all my family for allowing me to do my homework, assignments, reading, and writing when I was supposed to be enjoying time with them on my vacation.

I would like to acknowledge my girls Denise, Indigo, Charlene, Vera, and Sheila for putting up with me doing schoolwork on our annual trip and reading my work, making suggestions, and contributing to my understanding of my topic. Thank you, Tisa for encouraging me and checking up on me to make sure I did not give up. Thank you all

Tenacious Ten for supporting, loving me and accepting me for who I am. I am truly blessed to have you all in my life.

I would like to acknowledge all the Walden professors, who made me a better writer along the way. A special acknowledgement to my committee chair, Dr. Billie Andersson. She really took her role seriously and was more helpful than I could have imagined. She was always available for assistance, provided tons of resources, and supported me when I stumbled along the way. When I struggled through some dark times and losses in my life, she was there to push me on.

I want to send a special thank you to my husband Fahim, who missed many home-cooked meals and dates because I was busy working towards my dissertation. He continues to provide emotional support and reminds me every day that I am the most important person in his life. My love is unconditional.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
List of Figures	v
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background	3
Problem Statement	5
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Questions	8
Conceptual Framework.....	9
Nature of the Study	12
Definitions.....	13
Assumptions.....	15
Scope and Delimitations	15
Limitations	16
Significance.....	16
Summary	17
Chapter 2: Literature Review	19
Literature Search Strategy.....	20
Conceptual Framework.....	20
Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts.....	25
Special Education Teacher Shortage	26
Special Education Teacher Retention	32
Motivation and Theories Used to Explain Motivation	34

Two-Factor Theory of Motivation Related Studies	37
Summary and Conclusions	40
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	42
Research Design and Rationale	42
Role of the Researcher	47
Methodology	48
Participant Selection	48
Instrumentation	49
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection.....	50
Data Analysis Plan	52
Trustworthiness.....	53
Ethical Procedures	55
Summary.....	56
Chapter 4: Results.....	58
Setting	59
Data Collection	62
Data Analysis	62
Results.....	66
Research Question 1	66
Research Question 2	69
Administrative Supports	72
District Supports	72
Discrepant Cases.....	73

Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	73
Summary.....	75
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	77
Introduction.....	77
Interpretation of the Findings.....	79
Research Question 1: Intrinsic Factors	80
Research Question 2: Extrinsic Factors	87
Limitations of the Study.....	91
Recommendations.....	91
Implications.....	94
Administrators and District Leaders	94
Special Education Teachers	96
Special Education Students and Parents	97
Recommendations for Practice	97
Conclusion	98
References.....	100
Appendix A: Interview Questions	116
Appendix B: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors That Retain Special Education	
Teachers	117

List of Tables

Table 1. Participants' Demographics	61
Table 2. Research Questions With Emerging Themes	64
Table B1. Intrinsic Factors That Retain Special Education Teachers	121
Table B2. Extrinsic Factors That Retain Special Education teachers.....	122

List of Figures

Figure 1. Percentage of Unfilled Teaching Positions	7
Figure 2. Two-Factor Theory of Motivation.....	11

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Every school year, principals invest money and time to recruit teachers. Teacher attrition and retention is a problem that has plagued school districts across the United States (Grant, 2017). This problem has affected general education teachers, as well as special education teachers (Aragon, 2016). It has also affected school districts' ability to provide a quality education for all students (Mason-Williams, 2015). Numerous studies regarding teacher attrition concerns have been conducted; however, researchers have expressed a need for more research pertaining to special education teacher retention (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017; Djonko-Moore, 2016; Fusco, 2017; Gordon, 2018; Kose, 2013). In my study, I investigated the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence special education teachers' decisions to remain in the teaching profession. The study was conducted to understand what special education teachers perceive as their reasons for remaining in the teaching field.

Information gained from this study may inform administrative leadership practices that could enhance special education teacher experiences and influence them to remain in the field. Additionally, information gained from this study may help administrators in school districts cut costs associated with replacing quality special education teachers. Finally, this study may help develop a comprehensive approach to retaining high-quality special education teachers and positively affect their students.

Special education students and their parents may benefit from the study when more special education teachers stay. Currently, school districts are unable to adequately serve the special education population due to a shortage of special education teachers

(Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017). Retaining more special education teachers may increase the quality of instruction as research shows stability helps improve teacher effectiveness as well as teacher-parent relationships (Aragon, 2016). School administrators may benefit from retaining more special education teachers from year to year and limit costs associated with hiring new staff (Scott & Alexander, 2018). Administrators can spend more money on other critical areas such as mentoring, professional development, and evidence-based approaches to supporting teacher development if the numbers remain constant. Administrators may also benefit from the study when less money and time are spent on introducing new staff members to the school's vision, mission, and professional development intended to catch them up to the retained staff (Collins et al., 2017).

A background section is provided in Chapter 1 to summarize research literature related to special education teacher attrition and retention. I describe the necessity for the study, which is to understand the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence special education teachers to remain in the teaching profession. The Problem Statement section provides evidence that the problem of special education teacher retention exists and is current, relevant, and significant to the teaching profession. In the section entitled Purpose of the Study, I further detail how this basic qualitative study explores the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that may influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom. This section is followed by the Research Questions that are based on the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that motivate special education teachers to remain teaching and the Conceptual Framework section that includes a presentation of the two-factor theory of motivation. The section entitled Nature of the Study details why

I chose a basic qualitative study, how I selected participants to interview, how I collected data, and how I analyzed data to reveal the factors that influence special education teachers to remain. The Definitions section consists of significant terms that are related to the topic of motivation factors, teacher retention, and attrition. The Assumptions section includes discussion of assumptions that were critical to the study and why these assumptions were necessary. The Scope and Delimitations section addresses characteristics of the participants chosen to interview for the study as well as how participants were excluded from the study. In the Limitations section, I describe any limitations related to the basic qualitative design, any biases that could influence study outcomes, and any reasonable measures to address the limitations. The Significance section includes potential contributions of this study. Chapter 1 concludes with a Summary of the chapter.

Background

Teacher attrition is a condition that plagues administrators every year. School districts in many states encounter the annual exit of teachers and the grim prospect of replacing them, resulting in undesirable teacher shortages (Grant, 2017). Teacher turnover and attrition have been identified as the main culprits for this teacher shortage (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017). The teacher shortage is more critical among special education teachers as they are more likely to leave the profession than most other categories of teachers (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Conley & You, 2017). According to Sutchter et al. (2016), the special education teacher attrition rate is 12% higher than the general education teacher attrition rate. Almost one-third of special

education teachers leave the profession after only 3 years of teaching (Conley & You, 2017). Research indicates special education teacher turnover and attrition have plagued administrators and policymakers for more than 2 decades, as recruitment and retention efforts have failed to correct the problem (Conley & You, 2017). In the study site state, 19% of special education teachers left their jobs in 2018 ("Illinois' educator pipeline", 2019). As a result, special education teacher attrition creates challenging problems of special education teacher shortages from year to year.

With increasing special education teacher shortages, principals and school districts are faced with the daunting task of finding ways to attract, recruit, and retain quality special education teachers. The shortage of special education teachers makes it challenging for districts to replace special education teachers who choose to leave (Brownell & Sindelar, 2016). Local special education administrators and principals share the responsibility of understanding what attracts special education teachers and what motivates them to remain in the profession (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017). Retention is especially important in the current labor market, as the gap continues to increase between the number of jobs available and the number of special education teachers available (Vittekk, 2015). As the teacher shortage continues to grow, retaining teachers becomes more important than ever.

Researchers have conducted studies to identify reasons teachers leave. Poor job satisfaction, workload, stress, and lack of administrative support have been identified as some of the reasons teachers leave the teaching profession (Hughes et al., 2015; Vittek, 2015). Researchers also identified workload manageability, emotional exhaustion, and

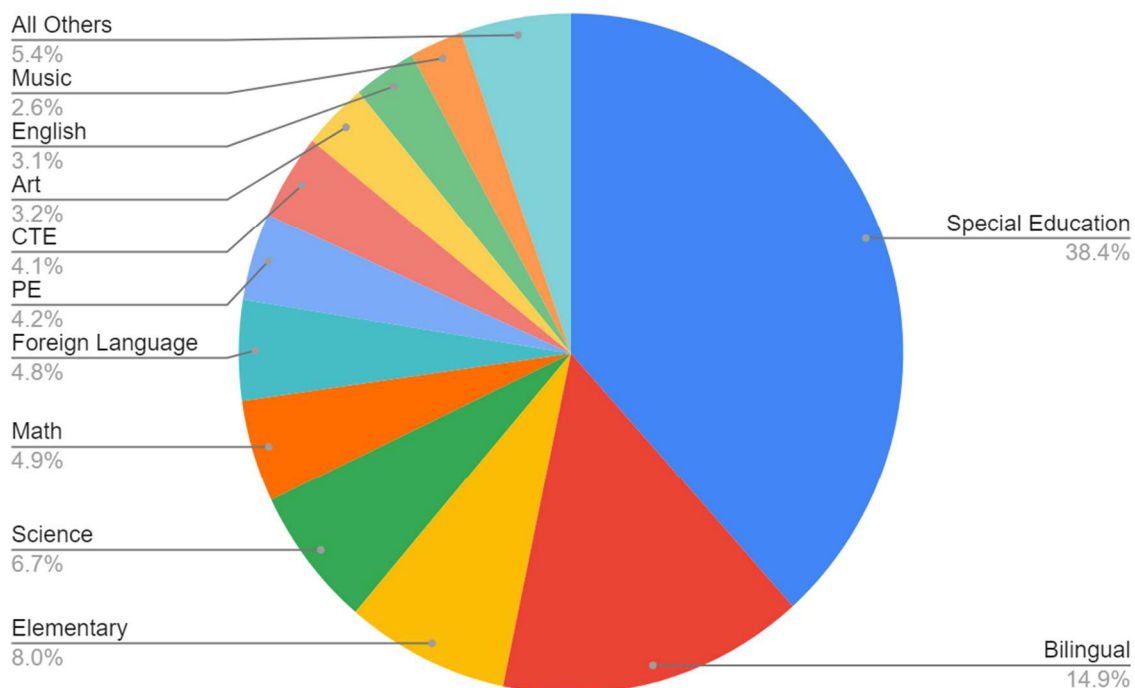
teacher burnout as some of the reasons special education teachers leave (Bettini, Jones et al., 2017; Brunsting et al., 2014). The reasons many teachers leave special education jobs have been represented in the current literature, which supports findings of previous studies (Vittek, 2015). However, research that identifies intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence special education teachers to remain in the teaching profession is limited. Vittek (2015) stated special education teacher attrition has been represented in literature; however, future research needs to concentrate on factors that help special education teacher retention. Though researchers have noted several reasons for high attrition rates in special education, research is not clear on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors that may increase special education teacher retention rates. Therefore, this study was necessary to support limited research that previously identified some factors that influence special education teacher retention and to identify motivation factors that have not yet been discussed in current literature. As school districts are still struggling to fill vacated positions, this study was also needed to uncover possible special education teacher retention strategies that may cut down on teacher attrition, thereby increasing the special education teacher retention rate.

Problem Statement

School districts across the United States are currently experiencing a teacher shortage. According to the National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services (n.d.), 98% of school districts across the United States have reported difficulty locating special education teachers. These teacher shortages are caused by four main factors: “increased student enrollment, decreased teacher programs,

compensation, and high teacher attrition” (Sutcher et al., 2016, p.37). Teacher shortages are especially prevalent in the areas of science, math, and special education (Aragon, 2016). Attracting and retaining special education teachers has become a national priority (Mason-Williams, 2015; Vittek, 2015). Administrators across the nation must make special education teacher retention a priority.

Every year the special education teacher shortage forces administrators across the nation to hunt for new teachers to fill the void. In 2015-16, 48 states reported teacher shortages in the area of special education (Sutcher et al., 2016). In one midwestern urban school district in the United States, the number of empty special education teacher positions grew from 65 in 2017 to 186 in 2020 (Illinois Board of Education, 2020). Last year, that same school district reported more than 1,000 unfilled teaching positions with the biggest need in special education. Figure 1 shows nearly 40% of the teacher shortages exist in special education (Advance Illinois, 2020).

Figure 1*Percentage of Unfilled Teaching Positions*

Administrators struggle to locate, recruit, and retain the help they need, especially in special education. As the shortage continues to grow nationwide, special education teachers are leaving at a higher rate than other teachers (Moore et al., 2018). Brunsting et al. (2014) investigated the reasons for special educators' attrition rates. The problem is special education teacher attrition rates continue to increase (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017; Fusco, 2017; Gordon, 2018). Understanding the reasons special education teachers remain in the field is key to addressing teacher attrition.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that may influence special education teachers to remain in

the classroom. According to Ravitch and Carl (2015), a basic qualitative study provides the opportunity for people to share their personal perceptions about a particular phenomenon. This study focuses on understanding what special education teachers perceive as their reasons for remaining in the teaching field in an urban Midwestern school district.

I analyzed data looking for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors, as well as any other themes that may emerge. Intrinsic motivation factors are inherent to work and motivate employees to perform their jobs to satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). They fulfill psychological needs and are intrinsically rewarding. Examples of intrinsic factors include verbal recognition or achievement. Extrinsic motivation factors describe the work environment or workspace (Herzberg et al., 1959). They fulfill physiological needs and pacify employees to keep them from being dissatisfied. Examples of extrinsic factors include company policies and benefits. Data gathered from the participants may be used to make recommendations to school administrators and district leaders that will address the special education teacher retention and attrition issues. The findings of this study may provide school districts with a better understanding of what influences teachers to remain in the state's urban schools. The findings of this study may also provide insights for teachers, administrators, and teacher educators in terms of teachers' professional development, school induction and mentoring programming, and university teacher education programs.

Research Questions

This basic qualitative study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How do special education teachers describe the motivators or intrinsic factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?

RQ2: How do special education teachers describe the extrinsic or hygiene factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?

Conceptual Framework

For this basic qualitative study, I utilized the two-factor theory of motivation. The two-factor theory of motivation was derived from a survey of accountants and engineers conducted in the mid-1950s (Herzberg et al., 1959). The researchers determined employees are motivated by satisfying and dissatisfying experiences, also referred to as “motivators” and “hygiene” factors. Motivators are known as intrinsically motivating factors and hygiene factors are known as extrinsically motivating factors.

Intrinsic motivation factors, also referred to as motivators, are described as actions that are not necessarily attached to an external reward and may fulfill psychological needs. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), motivators are intrinsic factors that include, but are not limited to, outgrowth of achievement, verbal recognition, responsibility, and advancement. When motivators exist, employees are more likely to experience job satisfaction. Intrinsic motivators tend to increase feelings of personal growth and self-accomplishment. In a school setting, motivators could refer to personal satisfaction for student growth.

Extrinsic motivation factors, also referred to as hygienes, are described as non-job-related factors that are outside of an employee’s control. They can also be described as physiological needs. Examples of extrinsic factors include, but are not limited to,

company policies, administrative practices, supervisory styles, physical working conditions, job security, benefits, salary, and mentor supports (Herzberg, 1966). When hygienes or extrinsic motivation factors are present, employees are not likely to experience job dissatisfaction. Extrinsic motivators tend to remove unhappiness from the work environment. In a school setting, hygienes could refer to administrative support.

A major component of the two-factor theory is the idea that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are not opposites, but independent of each other. Figure 2 displays the two-factor theory of motivation as explained by Herzberg. Herzberg (1966) suggested that, when present, motivators or intrinsic factors lead to a positive state of job satisfaction. However, according to the two-factor theory, the absence of motivators does not lead to a negative state of job dissatisfaction. The absence of motivators leads to not being satisfied, which is a neutral state rather than a negative state (Herzberg, 1968). Similarly, when present, hygienes or extrinsic factors lead to a neutral state of not dissatisfied. However, when absent these factors lead to a negative state of dissatisfied.

social change within urban schools, especially with administrators who are seeking ways to recruit and retain teachers and among those special education teachers who struggle to find reasons to stay. As I gathered and analyzed the factors that may influence teachers' choice to remain, the two-factor theory guided the process.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this basic qualitative study was to explore special education teachers' perceptions of the motivation factors that influence retention. In a basic qualitative study, the researcher is interested in collecting rich data about how participants perceive an event, process, or activity (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Ravitch and Carl (2015) stated qualitative research uncovers relevant information in a narrative format. I used open ended, semistructured interviews to obtain information from special education teachers who decided to remain in their schools for more than 1 year. Semistructured interviews use specific, organized questions with the flexibility of asking follow-up questions to add more depth and richness to the data. Rubin and Rubin (2012) stated qualitative interviewing research may uncover new ways of understanding a problem. As the study progressed, interviews revealed perceptions that were key to identifying motivational factors.

In this basic qualitative study, I was looking for data saturation. According to Guest et al., (2006), there is no magic number to reach data saturation. However, researchers do agree data saturation occurs when the interviews no longer reveal new information or there is enough information gathered to answer the research questions (Guest et al., 2006; Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Crouch and McKenzie (2006) proposed that

fewer than 20 participants is ideal when conducting a qualitative study as it helps a researcher build and maintain a close relationship with participants, which improves exchange of information, thereby increasing the chances for data saturation. Researchers Guest et al. conducted a study to determine how many interviews it takes to ensure data saturation. Their research included 66 interviews and revealed data saturation was achieved within the first 12 interviews. Qualitative expert Yin (2014) stated that to achieve a high level of certainty, at least 6 interviews should be conducted. I interviewed 12 special education teachers to ensure saturation of data for this study.

Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded using a prior and open coding. Open coding can be used to assemble codes and themes and allows concepts to emerge and be grouped into conceptual categories (Creswell, 2002). Once the coding process started, two categories were initially constructed to separate the data: motivators or intrinsic factors and hygiene or extrinsic factors. I searched for common words, phrases, or factors that emerged that were related to the conceptual framework of the study, the two-factor theory of motivation.

Definitions

This section contains definitions of important terms that will be used frequently throughout this proposal. Definitions of these terms are critical to the understanding of terminology as used in the study.

Extrinsic motivation: Performing an activity that leads to an external reward, for example, a bonus or trophy.

Hygiene factors: Extrinsically motivating factors such as job security, benefits, and coworker relationships (Herzberg et al., 1959). The offer of a long-term contract would be an example of a hygiene factor.

Intrinsic motivation: The doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions (Ryan & Deci, 2000) or performing an activity for the pleasure inherent in the activity (Story et al., 2008). Accomplishing a personal goal or earning recognition would be examples of intrinsic motivation.

Job dissatisfaction: The extent to which people dislike their jobs (Mertler, 2016).

Job satisfaction: The extent to which people like their jobs (Mertler, 2016).

Motivation: Any internal process that energizes, directs, and sustains behavior (Reeve, 2016).

Motivators: Intrinsically motivating factors such as achievement, advancement, and verbal recognition (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Teacher attrition: The permanent exit of a teacher from the teaching profession (Djonko-Moore, 2016).

Teacher retention: The ability to reduce teacher mobility and keep teachers at the same setting for a period of time (Williams & Dikes, 2015).

Teacher shortage: The inability to staff positions with qualified teaching individuals at the current wage (Cowan et al., 2016).

Teacher turnover: Teacher movement out of schools or out of the teaching profession (Djonko-Moore, 2016). These teachers may leave the district or specific school and take a different position at another school or leave the profession.

Assumptions

The focus of this study was to uncover the motivations that influence special educators to remain teaching, especially when high attrition rates are most common in many school districts across the nation. One assumption this study made was special education teachers' responses were open, honest, and without bias. An additional assumption was that the perceptions of Midwestern K-12 participants may not be representative of the entire Midwestern K-12 population of schools or special educators. These assumptions were necessary to recover information other special education teachers and administrators would find useful and actionable.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study involved 12 special education teachers in Midwestern urban schools and included high school teachers at the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior levels. Special education teachers were the focus of the study. These teachers were chosen because research has shown special education teachers have the most alarming attrition and retention rates with little research done to understand this phenomenon. I used purposeful sampling due to specific requirements of selecting special education teachers, and I used snowball sampling was used to locate specific participants who were recommended for the study. Snowball sampling provides different and/or confirming perceptions of participants (for this study, special education teachers) with similar experiences (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Special education teachers in suburban or rural schools were outside the scope of this study and therefore were not included. General education teachers were also outside the scope of this study. The findings may not be

transferable to general education teachers, suburban or rural schools, and schools that are not located in socially and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Limitations

This study follows a basic qualitative research design. One limitation of this study is the special education teachers participating primarily came from three schools on the north side of the focus city. Using purposive and snowball sampling in this area may have been convenient; however, it may not be representative of or transferable to special education teachers in other parts of the city or the suburban areas outside of the city. To prevent bias and increase opportunities for obtaining honest and truthful information, I did not include special education teachers with whom I have a personal relationship outside of teaching. A personal bias of mine is special education teacher retention is more difficult in schools where the student population is predominantly Black. I addressed this bias by including schools that have a more diverse student population as well as schools with low attrition rates and high attrition rates.

Significance

This study may contribute to an understanding of the factors that influence special educators' retention rates from the teachers' perceptions. Various studies have identified factors that contribute to special educators' attrition rates (Conley & You, 2017; Grant, 2017). With an improved understanding of special education teacher retention, administrators may benefit from the teachers' perceptions as they will be provided with information to help change the trend of special education teacher attrition and shortages. The special education teacher shortages make it nearly impossible to support the

academic needs of all students with disabilities (Mason-Williams, 2015). The growing population of diverse learners may benefit from the study when administrators are aware of the factors that attract and retain qualified special education teachers (Friedman, 2014). Identifying motivation factors may promote positive social change within urban schools, especially with administrators who are seeking ways to recruit and retain teachers and among those special education teachers who struggle to find reasons to stay.

Summary

Special education teacher shortages, attrition, turnover, and retention are problems that affect school districts' and administrators' efforts to recruit and retain good teachers. This basic qualitative study was conducted to understand the factors special education teachers perceive are their reasons for remaining in the teaching field. The two-factor theory of motivation was utilized to explain intrinsic and extrinsic factors identified through open-ended questions and semistructured interviews with special education teachers who have been teaching for more than 1 year. I used a priori and open coding to analyze data. This study may contribute to our understanding of the factors special education teachers consider when deciding to remain teaching.

Chapter 2 includes a synopsis of current literature that establishes the relevance of the study and presents factors that influence special education teachers' decisions to remain teaching. It also includes literature search strategies with databases and search engines utilized. This is followed by the study's conceptual framework and how the current study benefited from it. An exhaustive review of current literature related to

factors that influence special education teachers' decisions to remain teaching details
what is known, what is controversial, and what remains to be studied.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The teacher attrition rate is cause for alarm for most school administrators and districts across the nation. According to recent research, school districts across America are currently experiencing a teacher shortage, mostly due to teacher attrition (Grant, 2017). As the shortage continues to grow nationwide, special education teachers are also leaving at a higher rate than other teachers (Moore et al., 2018). Brunsting et al. (2014) investigated the reasons for special educators' attrition rates. In their study, they found several reasons for teacher attrition: teacher experience, role ambiguity, role conflict, and administrative support (Brunsting et al., 2014). Brunsting et al. also suggested future studies should focus on how to support special education teachers to increase retention rates. There have been many other studies exploring teacher attrition concerns among general and special education teachers. The problem is special education teacher attrition rates continue to increase (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017; Fusco, 2017; Gordon, 2018). Little is known about the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence special education teachers to remain in the field. This study needed to be conducted to understand the motivation factors special education teachers perceive as their reasons for remaining in the teaching field in a Midwestern urban school district.

This chapter includes the Literature Search Strategy, Conceptual Framework for the study, Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts, and Summary and Conclusion. The Literature Search Strategy lists the databases and search terms that were utilized and a list of journals with relevant articles for the study. The Conceptual Framework section provides an in-depth look at the two-factor theory of motivation. The

Literature Review Related to Key Variable and Concepts section explores relevant topics regarding Special Education Teacher Shortage, Special Education Teacher Retention, Motivation and Theories Used to Explain Motivation, and Two-Factor Theory of Motivation Related Studies. The Summary and Conclusion provides a synopsis of the information presented in the chapter.

Literature Search Strategy

To comprehend the phenomenon of motivational factors that effect teachers' decisions to remain teaching, I searched of multiple databases including ERIC, ProQuest, Sage Journals, Education Research Complete, Academic Search Complete, Psychology Research Databases, EBSCO, and Google Scholar. Searches containing the following terms proved useful to the research: *special education teachers, teacher retention, teacher attrition, teacher turnover, motivation, motivation factors, motivation theories, two factor theory, job satisfaction, and teacher shortage*. Searches of articles published within the last 5 years included, but were not limited to the following journals: *The Journal of Special Education, Teaching Exceptional Children, Remedial and Special Education, Journal of Research in Special Education Needs, Review of Educational Research, Education & Treatment of Children, Educational Management Administration & Leadership, Teacher Education and Special Education, Race Ethnicity and Education, and Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals*.

Conceptual Framework

The two-factor theory of motivation was the conceptual framework for this qualitative study. The two-factor theory was derived from a study conducted by Herzberg

et al. (1959), who hypothesized job satisfaction and dissatisfaction could not be measured on the same continuum. Herzberg et al. used semistructured interviews and questionnaires with 203 research participants in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. The purpose of the study was to identify factors for goal achievement, as well as factors that kept motivation levels up. Herzberg et al. maintained that individuals need factors that provide job enrichment to increase worker effectiveness and job satisfaction while they need to avoid factors that evoke discomfort and job dissatisfaction. From this study, researchers identified two sets of factors that impact an individual's satisfaction at work.

Herzberg et al. (1959) identified two types of factors that work independently of each other. In the study, the researchers divided job satisfaction and motivation into motivator and hygiene factors. According to the two-factor theory, motivators affect job attitudes in a positive direction; however, lack of motivators do not lead to job dissatisfaction. Contrarily, hygiene represents job dissatisfaction and do not affect job attitudes in a positive direction. These motivator and hygiene factors are also known as intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) factors (Herzberg, 1968).

The two-factor theory described motivators as intrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors are job related and generally affect a worker's input. They have a positive effect on morale, productivity, and job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1966). The presence of intrinsic factors also affects the overall efficiency of the organization. A list of intrinsic factors includes accomplishment, work performance, recognition, job status, responsibility, and opportunities for growth (Herzberg, 1966).

The two-factor theory also described hygienes as extrinsic factors. Herzberg (1966) stated extrinsic factors are external to the work itself, and other people control their size and whether or not they are granted. Extrinsic factors are non-job related and typically out of the control of the employees. The presence of hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction with a job and the absence of hygiene factors cause dissatisfaction. The list of extrinsic factors includes company policy and administration, salary, job security, working conditions, mentor supports, physical workplace, and relationships between supervisor and employees (Herzberg, 1966).

One major point Herzberg et al. (1959) wanted to convey is satisfaction and dissatisfaction do not share related factors. The researchers also found satisfaction factors and dissatisfaction factors are not opposites of each other (Oluwatayo, 2015). In other words, if a dissatisfaction factor is taken away from an employee, it does not mean the employee is now satisfied. It just means the employee is no longer dissatisfied in this area (Oluwatayo, 2015; Sankar, 2015). The two-factor theory proposes improving motivator factors to increase job satisfaction and improving hygiene factors to decrease job dissatisfaction (Costello & Welch, 2014; Wilson, 2015).

The two-factor theory attempts to get to the root of what motivates people to work harder (Herzberg et al., 1959). Basic principles of the two-factor theory state the presence of internal factors (motivators) motivates employees to work harder and the absence of external factors (hygienes) motivates employees to work less hard (Ramlall, 2004). Motivators, such as sense of accomplishment, can be found within the job itself. Hygienes, such as administrative support, can be found outside the job; however, they

may affect the decisions within the job (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Motivator factors are directly related to employee motivation and satisfaction, while hygiene factors are correlated with reducing job dissatisfaction. When assessing the satisfaction levels of employees in an organization, one of four situations may exist: high hygiene and high motivation, high hygiene and low motivation, low hygiene and high motivation, and low hygiene and low motivation (Katsikea et al., 2015).

In the high hygiene and high motivation scenario, employees have few grievances and are highly motivated. They may have job security and have plenty of room for advancement. This is a manager's or administrator's ideal situation. The high hygiene and low motivation scenario means employees may have few grievances but are not highly motivated. An example of this is employees have job security, but there is no room for advancement within the company. The low hygiene and high motivation scenario means employees have many grievances, but are highly motivated. An example of this is employees are unsatisfied with their salary, but their work is meaningful to them. The final scenario, low hygiene and low motivation, means employees have many grievances and are not motivated to work. An example of this is teachers who are not satisfied with their salary and do not find their work rewarding (Katsikea et al., 2015). Another example of low hygiene and low motivation is when the Chicago teachers and class assistants went on strike due to unsatisfactory poverty wages and large class sizes (Smith & Davey, 2019). The strike represents a low hygiene and low motivation scenario.

Escardibul and Afcha (2017) utilized the two-factor theory to consider the overall job satisfaction of PhD holders in Spain. They concluded, that to increase PhD holders'

retention in their current jobs, employers must invest in motivational factors to improve job satisfaction. Khanna (2017) utilized the two-factor theory to determine both motivators and hygiene factors are positively and significantly related to job satisfaction. Boone (2018) studied teacher retention in a rural, low-performing, high-poverty school district in northeastern North Carolina utilizing the two-factor theory and concluded that teacher retention is directly related to job satisfaction. The researcher found teachers were motivated to stay in their schools because they felt rewarded when their students were successful.

Hammonds (2017) studied the methods school leaders at urban schools used to retain teachers using the two-factor theory. The researcher found school leaders thought supporting teachers throughout the school year was key to retaining them. The study suggested future research to gain an understanding of effective strategies to retain teachers from the teachers' perspectives. Evans (2017) used the two-factor theory to study principals', assistant principals', and teachers' perceptions of key factors influencing teacher retention and found respect to be the number one factor that all groups reported as why teachers remain in the field. The researcher also recommended intentional efforts to focus future research on polling teachers to reveal specific reasons teachers opt to remain. Osbourn (2018) studied factors influencing teacher retention using the two-factor theory and reported administrative support as the leading factor that influenced teacher retention. Osbourn recommended future research on teacher retention is needed to empower all educational stakeholders to ultimately focus on student achievement. Morris (2017) studied novice teachers' perceptions of retention factors and

found that 89% felt administrative support was key to teacher retention. The researcher suggested future research in teacher retention in high-needs schools.

The two-factor theory is valuable when analyzing the best practices of workforce retention (Kotni & Karumuri, 2018). The theory is also relevant when evaluating employee motivation and retention (Greene, 2017). Accordingly, the two-factor theory supported this study's conceptual framework because gaining an understanding of special education teachers' motivators and hygienes is vital to understanding the reasons they choose to remain in the classroom.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

The literature review includes information relevant to motivation factors and special education teacher retention. Topical headings included in the literature review are as follows: Special Education Teacher Shortage, Special Education Teacher Retention, Motivation and Theories Used to Explain Motivation, and Two-Factor Theory of Motivation Related Studies. Within the section of Special Education Teacher Shortage are the following subsections: High Teacher Attrition, Increased Student Enrollment, Decreased Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs, and Compensation. Within the section of Motivation and Theories Used to Explain Motivation are the following subsections: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and McClelland's Need Theory.

The need for special education teachers is urgent. There is a decades-long shortage of special education teachers across the United States (Grant, 2017). The National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services (2016) declared only one state in the entire United States did not report a shortage of

special education teachers. As the shortage continues to grow nationwide, special education teachers are leaving at a higher rate than other teachers (Moore et al., 2018). The problem is special education teacher attrition rates continue to increase (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017; Fusco, 2017; Gordon, 2018). There have been studies exploring special education teacher attrition concerns, however, little is known about the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence special education teachers to remain in the field (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017; Billingsley et al., 2014; Fusco, 2017; Gordon, 2018). The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that may influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom.

Special Education Teacher Shortage

Every year, principals face the challenge of recruiting qualified teachers. For more than 30 years, the United States has been experiencing a teacher shortage crisis (Forman et al., 2018). School districts in many states encounter the annual exit of teachers and the grim prospect of replacing them, resulting in undesirable teacher shortages (Grant, 2017). The shortage of special education teachers is a more critical problem as compared to general education teachers (Conley & You, 2017). Goldhaber et al., (2015) reported school administrators across the country consistently report greater difficulty locating and retaining special education teachers as compared to any other endorsement areas. In nearly every state, special education teachers are at the top of the critical shortage list with no real solution or strategies for recruitment and retention in place (Scott, 2016). Forman et al. (2018) stated shortages can be influenced by many factors from an increasing number of retirees to the desire to re-staff schools to pre-

recession levels. High teacher attrition, increased student enrollment, decreased enrollment in teacher preparation programs, and low compensation are four main factors to blame for the teacher shortages (Sutcher et al., 2016). The main factors need to be understood if teacher shortages can be properly addressed.

High Teacher Attrition

Several factors have been blamed for the teacher shortage. High teacher attrition, the act of teachers leaving the profession, has been identified as the primary reason for the teacher shortage (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017). Research indicates special education teacher attrition has plagued administrators and policymakers for more than three decades, as recruitment and retention efforts have failed to correct the problem (Conley & You, 2017). K-12 special education teachers are more likely to leave the teaching profession than any other teacher, thereby contributing to the national shortage (Goldhaber, et al., 2015). In a comparison of all teachers, special educators' attrition rate was second only to English language learner teachers (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). According to Sutcher et al., (2016), the special education teacher attrition rate is 12% higher than the general education teacher attrition rate. This situation creates a bigger demand for special education teachers.

Inexperienced teachers seem to be more susceptible than others when it comes to leaving the teaching field. Hagaman and Casey (2018) stated special educators with less experience are more likely to leave the teaching field. Conley and You (2017) cited new special education teachers express dissatisfaction and are particularly more apt to leave the profession. Roughly 9% of special educators leave the profession after the first year

and almost one-third of new special educators leave the profession within their first three years (Conley & You, 2017; Gius, 2016; Zhang & Zeller, 2016). Further, researchers found that 40-50% of special educators left the profession within their first five years of service (Jokikokko et al., 2017). Prior research attributes lack of adequate training or qualifications, lack of administrative support, and teacher burnout as specific reasons for new special educators' attrition (Brunsting et al., 2014; Sutchter et al., 2016). Special educators are more apt to leave teaching before they can become qualified teachers.

Finding qualified special education teachers is a real challenge for many school districts, administrators, and principals. School districts report having a difficult time finding qualified special education teachers and are therefore forced to hire less experienced or novice teachers (Vittekk, 2015). In many instances, novice special education teachers are replaced with novice special education teachers (Gius, 2016). Many school districts also reported loosening their hiring standards and issuing emergency teaching certificates to unqualified teachers (Aragon, 2016). Unqualified special education teachers can add to the shortage problem when they leave the profession.

Administrative support is key to keeping school personnel satisfied. Lack of administrative support is reported to be a direct link to teacher attrition (Andrews & Brown, 2015; Conley & You, 2017). Administrative support includes professional development, mentoring support, collaboration opportunities, teacher resources, trust, and decision-making autonomy (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). Teachers not satisfied with the amount of administrative support and feedback they received were less likely to stay in

their current job assignment and more likely to leave the teaching profession altogether (Grant, 2017). Throughout the years, researchers have reported special education teachers feel isolated with little encouragement and contact with their administrators (Holdheide & DeMonte, 2016; McDowell, 2017). Novice teachers also cited lack of administrative support as a reason for exiting teaching within their first three years (Brunsting et al., 2014). Years of research has established administrative support is important to the overall success of teacher retention.

Teachers have many responsibilities and, as a result, may experience burnout. Teacher burnout is also a major cause of teacher attrition (Brunsting et al., 2014). Teacher burnout has been described as high stress levels that lead to job dissatisfaction (Vittekk, 2015). Job dissatisfaction with high stress levels eventually lead to teacher attrition, especially among novice teachers (Vittekk, 2015). Special education teachers report inadequate planning time, large amounts of paperwork, overwhelming caseloads, large class size, and student behavior challenges as major reasons for high levels of stress causing them to make the decision to leave teaching (Bettini et al., 2015; Biddle & Azano, 2016). Additionally, lack of school-based mentorships, constructive feedback, or support systems for special education teachers increase the potential of additional stress and teacher burnout (Hagaman & Casey, 2018). Administrators should be aware of the responsibilities reported to cause stress to cut down on teacher burnout.

Increased Special Education Student Enrollment

Students with disabilities are being diagnosed more efficiently and effectively than ever before. Student enrollment in special education has increased significantly.

Since the enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975, special education student enrollment has increased significantly (Samuels, 2016).

Increased student enrollment of special education students has also been blamed for the special education teacher shortage (Sutcher et al., 2016). According to Billingsley and Bettini (2019), when the IDEA was passed, appropriate educational opportunities were required for all students, thus creating an increase in demand for special educators. Since then, demand for special educators has consistently exceeded the supply, contributing to the chronic national special education teacher shortage (Dewey et al., 2017). Trends in the demand for special education teachers indicate a disproportionate growth between students with disabilities and special education teachers that is likely to continue for decades (Heim, 2016). According to Samuels, students with disabilities have increased at a rate approximately three times faster than the overall population. Between 1991 and 2009, special education enrollment increased from approximately 11 percent to 13.5 percent (Dhuey & Lipscomb, 2013). Heim stated the shortage of special education teachers will continue to be a significant problem partly because of the increased enrollment of students with disabilities. James-LaMonica (2015) hypothesized the increase in the number of students being served by special educators in the public-school system may be one factor that has contributed to the special education teacher shortage.

With the increase in special education students and the decrease in teachers, special education programs may not be meeting the needs of the students.

Decreased Enrollment in Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher shortage is a major problem, especially when teacher demand is increasing, and teacher supply is decreasing. In comparison to general education teachers, special education teacher enrollment is significantly lower (McDowell, 2017; Scott, 2016). According to Sutchter et al. (2016), decreased teacher enrollments in special education programs have been attributed to the special education teacher shortage. Illinois has seen a significant drop in special education teacher preparation programs from 71 in 2012 to 59 in 2017 (Illinois' educator pipeline, 2019). Enrollment in special education teacher programs needs to increase dramatically to keep up with increased special education student enrollment.

Due to the decrease in special education programs enrollment, administrators have been forced to hire teachers who are not qualified to teach the increasing population of special education students. According to the Illinois Pipeline Educator (2019), Illinois experienced a 50% decline in special education students who actually complete teacher programs. DeMonte (2016) stated not every student who enrolled in special education teacher programs completed the program or started a career in teaching. The decline in completers has led to hiring unqualified teachers. Hiring unqualified teachers may diminish the quality of education that is provided to the students and may result in reduction of services students should receive (McDowell, 2017). Holdheide and DeMonte (2016) found replacing fully qualified teachers with teachers less qualified affected students with disabilities' opportunities to learn. Insufficient numbers of special education teachers may also cause stress for school faculty.

Compensation.

For many years, it has been said the teaching profession is overworked and underpaid. The national consensus reports teachers are underpaid (OECD, 2015). Low compensation in the teaching profession has been blamed, in part, for the special education teaching shortage (Djonko-Moore, 2016). Djonko-Moore suggested low wages are associated with high attrition rates and the nationwide teacher shortage. Teachers are compensated considerably less than other professions that require a four-year degree (Kelly, 2004). According to Kelly and Aragon (2018), tens of thousands of special education teachers are leaving the profession to pursue other careers or are taking on an additional job due to low pay. In general, teachers need to earn higher wages, however higher wages are even more important in order to recruit and retain more special education teachers (Scott, 2016). Lower wages may contribute to the overall stress of special education teachers.

Special Education Teacher Retention

School districts across the nation are feeling the pain of the special education teacher shortage. Additionally, school districts are finding it difficult to retain the special educators they already have (Grant, 2017). With the retention problem growing faster among the special educators, principals are struggling to provide quality special education services to the growing population of students with special needs (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Cancio et al., 2018). The shortage and retention problems take its heaviest tolls on the students who need special education services.

As the population of students requiring special education services increases, the demand for special education teachers increases. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), over 7 million or 14% of all public-school students received special education services under the IDEA in 2017-18 (NCES, 2019). The demand for special education services will continue to rise as children with disabilities are being diagnosed earlier in their school years (U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, 2019). As the shortages continue, children with disabilities suffer the consequences of not having qualified teachers providing special education services mandated in their education plans.

When teachers leave, they leave vacancies. Many of these vacancies are filled by teachers who do not meet the required highly qualified status specified by No Child Left Behind and the IDEA (Morris, 2017). It is estimated that over 80% of secondary special education teachers do not meet these standards (Samuels, 2016). A recent study shows half of all U.S. schools are having difficulties locating certified special education teachers (Sutcher et al., 2016). Every year, special education teachers leave their positions and administrators are left to wonder what it will take to retain them.

Highly qualified teachers are especially difficult to find. When highly qualified replacements are difficult to find, administrators are forced to hire inexperienced or novice teachers (Boone, 2018). Studies reveal inexperienced or novice teachers are often unprepared to take on the challenges of special education students or provide quality services as required by the IDEA (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). Retention is the biggest problem when hiring inexperienced or novice special education teachers (Hughes et al., 2015). Roughly 9% of novice special education teachers leave the profession after their

first year; approximately one-third leave within 3 to 5 years (Boone, 2018). Even though not all special education teachers leave the field early, those that do are leaving schools at a disadvantage.

Many factors contribute to the exit of special education teachers from the teaching profession. However, research has uncovered factors that influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom. Lack of administrative support is not only the most common reason to leave, but also presence of administrative support is the most common reason to stay (Cunningham, 2018). Billingsley and Bettini (2019) reported knowledgeable and experienced teachers are less likely to leave as they would likely be more prepared and effective than less experienced or novice teachers. Vittek (2015) reported teacher retention and job satisfaction are associated with administrative or leadership support, work involvement, and reduced stress. Tehseen (2015) found teachers can only be retained if they are satisfied with their jobs and satisfaction can be through intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Overall, research revealed teachers are more likely to remain in the teaching profession if both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation needs are met.

Motivation and Theories Used to Explain Motivation

Theories of motivation have been utilized for years to help explain job satisfaction and employee retention. Motivation is defined as any internal process that energizes, directs, and sustains behavior (Reeve, 2016). Not only does motivation entail intrinsic characteristics, but also extrinsic characteristics. Motivation is affected by self-identity and expectations of each individual (Singh, 2016). Motivation theories have also been used to try to understand the special education teacher shortage problem which has been

affected by retention problems (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and McClelland's Need Theory are other theories used to explain motivation (Reeve, 2016). This section details these theories further.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

One of the oldest and most popular motivation theories is Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Reeve, 2016). A synopsis of the needs theory states there is a hierarchy of at least five basic human needs or sets of goals: "physiological, safety, love or social, esteem or ego, self-actualization" (Maslow, 1943, p. 383). Maslow stated the desire to achieve or maintain current status, motivates people to move along the hierarchy. Represented as a pyramid, the physiological need is located at the bottom of the hierarchy and self-actualization is at the top (Reeve, 2016). Maslow's theory states all needs are fulfilled starting at the bottom, moving to the top, meaning self-fulfillment does not happen without having job security first (Acevedo, 2018; Maslow, 1943).

Physiological needs include "water, food, air, shelter, and clothing" (Maslow, 1943, p. 370). These needs must be met in order to serve as a basis for motivation (Maslow, 1943; Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017). Once physiological needs are met, safety needs arise. Safety needs include the need for "security, protection, and stability" (Maslow, 1943, p.370). Social needs are next on the hierarchy. Social needs in the workplace include communication with colleagues to cope with work demands and stress (Maslow, 1943). The esteem or ego need on the hierarchy refers to the need for respect, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Lastly, the highest level of Maslow's theory is self-actualization. Self-actualization is where an individual's full personal potential is

achieved (Maslow, 1943). When looking at Maslow's hierarchy in the workplace, actions on the part of the supervisory team are vital, as they are responsible for creating a climate that meets the needs of their employees (Maslow, 1943). Examples of each level of the hierarchy represented in terms of special education teacher needs may include the following: health, job security, social interactions or sense of belonging, recognition, and self-fulfillment.

McClelland's Need Theory

McClelland et al. (1953) developed the needs theory based on research conducted with Atkinson, Clark, and Lowell. Through their research, McClelland et al. (1953) claimed an individual's needs are defined by life experiences and social conditions and these needs evolve over time. Through further research, McClelland (1965) argued that an individual's motivations are based on the need for achievement, power, or affiliation. If achievement is the motivation, some observed behaviors may include seeking work situations that provide 1) a challenge, 2) concrete feedback on how well they are performing, and 3) opportunities to take responsibility for achieving the goals. Individuals who are motivated by a need for achievement are typically driven by the challenge of success and the fear of failure. The challenge must be moderately difficult so that the risk of failure is low (McClelland, 1985). If power is the motivation, observed behaviors may present as the need to affect change and make a difference. These individuals tend to be demanding and ambitious, driven by the ability to dominate others (McClelland, 1965). Thus, those who are motivated by power tend to be effective and efficient obtaining satisfaction from driving organizations and achieving team goals

(McClelland, 1985). Finally, if affiliation is the motivation, behaviors may present as the need to initiate, preserve, or restore positive relationships. These individuals aspire to create close personal relationships, avoid conflict, and affirm friendships. Therefore, those who are motivated by affiliation seek out or gravitate towards individuals and groups and are driven to create friendly environments (McClelland, 1965). Based on his previous studies, McClelland posited that top managers have a high need for power and a low need for affiliation. McClelland further stated that those with high achievement needs are the most likely to be successful entrepreneurs (McClelland, 1985).

Two-Factor Theory of Motivation Related Studies

Basic principles of the two-factor theory state certain factors lead to positive attitudes towards work, and others lead to negative attitudes (Alshmemri et al., 2017). The presence of intrinsic factors (motivators) motivates employees to work harder and the absence of extrinsic factors (hygienes) motivates employees to work less hard (Ramlall, 2004). According to Singh (2016) organizations should focus more on intrinsic motivation than extrinsic motivation, however, the ability to create a balance between both is a skill that may result in positive outcomes. In an ideal work environment, employees would be satisfied because their intrinsic or motivation needs are being met and would not be dissatisfied because their extrinsic or hygiene needs are being met (Herzberg et al., 1959).

The two-factor theory is valuable when analyzing the best practices of workforce retention (Kotni & Karumuri, 2018). Boone (2018) studied teacher retention in a rural, low-performing, high-poverty school district in Northeastern North Carolina utilizing the

two-factor theory and concluded that teacher retention is directly related to job satisfaction. Hammonds (2017) studied the methods school leaders at urban schools used to retain teachers using the two-factor theory. The researcher found school leaders thought supporting teachers throughout the school year was key to retaining them. The study suggested future research to gain an understanding of effective strategies to retain teachers from the teachers' perspectives. Evans (2017) used two-factor theory to study principals', assistant principals', and teachers' perceptions of key factors influencing teacher retention and found respect to be the number one factor that all groups reported as why teachers remain in the field. The researcher also recommended intentional efforts to focus future research on polling teachers to reveal specific reasons teachers opt to remain. Osbourn (2018) studied factors influencing teacher retention and reported administrative support as the leading factor that influenced teacher retention. Osbourn recommended future research on teacher retention is needed to empower all educational stakeholders to ultimately focus on student achievement. Morris (2017) studied novice teachers' perceptions of retention factors and found that 89% felt administrative support was key to teacher retention. The researcher suggested future research in teacher retention in high-needs schools.

The two-factor theory is also valuable when evaluating employee satisfaction, motivation and retention (Greene, 2017). Escardibul and Afcha (2017) utilized Herzberg's two-factor theory to consider the overall job satisfaction of PhD holders in Spain. They concluded, to increase PhD holders' retention in their current jobs, employers must invest in motivational factors to increase job satisfaction. For example,

PhD holders want to build a career within the institution they are hired, therefore employers should have career opportunity plans in place to ensure retention of good employees (Escardibul and Afcha). Khanna (2017) utilized the two-factor theory to determine if both motivators and hygiene factors are positively and significantly related to job satisfaction among academicians. This quantitative study revealed job satisfaction is affected by factors such as working conditions, responsibilities, growth opportunities, and salary (Khanna). Crisci et al., (2019) conducted a study that examined job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Naples utilizing the two-factor theory. The researchers concluded high levels of job satisfaction was a positive emotional state associated with personal gratification from job experiences therefore satisfied teachers were intrinsically motivated to continue to perform their jobs well.

The two-factor theory of motivation has been used in studies regarding the motivation of special education teachers who leave or stay in the field. Hughes (2019) conducted a study of job satisfaction among special education teachers. In her study, Hughes reported special education teachers experienced low job satisfaction and left the field almost twice the rate of their general education peers. From this study, predictive motivational factors emerged from the data that support the two-factor theory of motivation. Participants in the study described the work itself, evaluation, working conditions, salary, recognition, potential for growth, and job salary as the most influential factors that motivate them and lead to job satisfaction (Hughes). Burkhart (2018) examined the relationship between level of job satisfaction and intention to remain in the profession among special education teachers. Survey results indicated high levels of job

satisfaction. However, an equally high percentage planned to seek positions outside of the profession. Burkhart recommended additional research to better understand the factors motivating special educators to leave their positions.

A recent study conducted by Abt (2019) revealed intrinsic factors reported by teachers that affected job satisfaction and teacher retention. Similar to what Herzberg claimed, Abt reported sense of achievement, professional autonomy, recognition, potential for growth, and the work itself as intrinsic factors that influenced the decision to remain in the classroom. Raymond (2018) conducted a similar study to explore teacher job satisfaction and retention and revealed achievement, status, recognition, responsibility, advancement, personal growth, and the work itself as motivating factors that explained why some teachers were satisfied with their jobs and chose to remain in the classroom. According to recent research, intrinsic factors for retention among general education teachers remain consistent. A study of special education teachers, however, found intrinsic factors that influenced retention decisions as collegial support, responsibility, and relationships/experiences with students (Olson, 2017). Researchers suggest some differences exist when comparing intrinsic motivation factors of general education and special education teachers.

Summary and Conclusions

Chapter 2 included the Literature Review. An Introduction restated the problem and purpose of the study as well as provided a concise synopsis of current literature that establishes relevance of the problem. This information was followed by the Literature Search Strategy and the Conceptual Framework. The Literature Review Related to Key

Variables and Concepts focused on the following topics: Special Education Teacher Shortage, Special Education Teacher Retention, Motivation and Theories Used to Explain Motivation, and Two-Factor Theory of Motivation Related Studies.

Teacher attrition has long been a problem that concerns principals, administrators, and school districts across the nation. The reasons many teachers leave education jobs have been represented in the current literature and continue to support findings of previous studies (Vittek, 2015). Motivation factors such as poor job satisfaction, workload, stress, and lack of administrative support have been identified as some of the reasons teachers leave the teaching profession (Hughes, et al., 2015; Vittek, 2015). Further research identified motivation factors such as workload manageability, emotional exhaustion, and teacher burnout as some of the reasons special education teachers leave (Bettini, Jones et al., 2017; Brunsting et al., 2014). Vittek (2015) stated special education teacher attrition has been represented in literature, however, future research needs to concentrate on factors that help special education teacher retention. This study used the two-factor theory of motivation to understand teachers' perceptions of the reasons that motivate them to stay. This study was intended to contribute to the limited research that previously identified some factors that influence special education teacher retention and possibly identify factors that have yet to be discussed in current literature. Chapter 3 follows with the Research Method, including an Introduction, Research Design and Rationale, Role of the Researcher, Methodology, Trustworthiness, Ethical Procedures, and Summary.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The research literature provided evidence that school districts and administrators have concerns about special education teachers leaving the profession after just a short time in the field. This degree of turnover leads to a nationwide shortage of qualified special education teachers in schools and students with disabilities who are unable to receive services mandated by law. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom. To begin this chapter, I provide an overview of the Research Design and Rationale, which includes the research questions, the central concept of the study, and the rationale for the research tradition. This is followed by Role of the Researcher. Next, the Methodology section includes an explanation of how I used purposive sampling to identify 12 participants, and the Instrumentation section includes an explanation of why semistructured interviews were best for the study. Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection includes details of the approval process for conducting the study. The remaining part of Chapter 3 addresses Trustworthiness, Ethical Procedures, and a Summary of the entire chapter with an overview of Chapter 4.

Research Design and Rationale

This study allowed me to gather descriptive data to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do special education teachers describe the motivators or intrinsic factors that shaped their decisions to remain teaching?

RQ2: How do special education teachers describe the hygiene or extrinsic factors that shaped their decisions to remain teaching?

This research study utilized a basic qualitative research design. The major qualitative methods used in dissertation research include phenomenology, case studies, grounded theory, ethnography, narrative, and basic. A summary of each of these methods follows along with an example of each.

Researchers who use phenomenological studies are interested in an individual's lived experiences and how the individual perceives the impact of a particular event (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). According to Moustakas (1994), phenomenological researchers seek to describe human experiences with data from the people themselves. Preconceived ideas should be abandoned when using phenomenology methods to fully understand and appreciate what the actual data reveals (Husserl, 1931). These studies often involve multiple interviews of the same participants. Researchers Creswell (2002) and Seidman (1998) suggested three as the optimal number of interviews to collect the appropriate data for a phenomenological study. Data saturation is pertinent as knowing when all new ideas have been uncovered is key. Shaw (2016) conducted a phenomenological study to understand how participating in a teacher leadership program impacted teacher retention. In this instance, participating in a teacher leadership program was the experience and teacher retention was the phenomenon. This type of study was not suitable for my study because I did not immerse myself into my participants' lives to understand their experiences, and I only conducted one interview per participant.

Case studies may consist of a single case or multiple cases. A single case study explores experiences of real-life events in a single setting while multiple case studies compare experiences across different settings. Yin (2014) stated that case studies are effective in research that focuses on how an event works or why an event occurs and is bound by time and place. These studies are not used to understand others or generalize to a broader population (Thomas, 2013). For triangulation purposes, case studies require a variety of data sources such as direct observations, interviews, focus groups, documents, or artifacts (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Raymond (2018) conducted a case study exploring teacher job satisfaction and retention issues in a large urban school district. A case study allowed the researcher to inquire into contemporary problems of a particular school district through *how* and *why* research questions. Case study research was not appropriate for this study because the study was not bound by time and place and I only used one data source, interviews.

Grounded theory is quite different than the traditional models of research. This method is used to develop a theory from the data rather than gather the data to test a theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Data is collected through a variety of methods, such as interviews, observations, and conversations. Data is constantly compared as it is collected, analyzed, and coded. Possible theories begin to emerge from saturated categories and themes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Farris (2017) used grounded theory to study how administrators can support new teacher retention. With a focus on interactions between administrators and new teachers, the researcher constantly compared data as it was collected, analyzed, and coded. This strategy ultimately led to the theoretical

framework for the study. Grounded theory was not suitable for my study as I did not collect data from a variety of sources.

Ethnography research methods require immersion in the field and observations of participants. The researcher spends an extended amount of time getting to know the culture and developing a rapport with participants. The overall objective of ethnographic research is to gain in-depth understanding and knowledge of a specific phenomenon by direct immersion and interaction (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). Data collection must take place over the extended time. Cerda (2017) conducted an ethnographic study to understand teacher retention in rural schools. Data collection was done in three phases and the study lasted 6 months (Cerda, 2017). Cerda also brought personal experiences, perceptions, and interpretations to the study as ethnographic research requires. Although I needed to establish rapport with my participants, ethnography research was not suitable for my study because I did not spend an extended amount of time with the participants or observe them in the field.

Narrative research generally describes the lives of individuals and their experiences. Often seen in autobiographies, biographies, memoirs, narrative writing, and narrative interviews, narrative research provides chronological accounts of an event or series of events. Narrative research allows people to tell their stories and is a rich source of data (Pavlenko, 2002). Data may be collected through multiple sources including but not limited to interviews, journal entries, field notes, documents, and artifacts (Creswell, 1998). Ali (2017) used narrative research to interview participants who shared their experiences through their stories. Ali stated narrative inquiry allowed for understanding

the phenomenon of teacher attrition through the experiences of the teachers who left the profession or moved on to other school districts. Narrative research was not suitable for my study because I did not intend to do a chronological account of a participant's life.

According to Ravitch and Carl (2015), basic qualitative studies provide the opportunity for people to share their personal perceptions about a particular phenomenon. The underlying question the researcher seeks to answer is how events, activities, or processes are perceived. In my study, I gathered information from the participants about their perceptions of reasons they remain in the teaching field. The nature of this basic qualitative study was to explore special education teachers' motivation factors that influence retention. Open-ended, semistructured interviews were utilized to obtain information from special education teachers who decided to remain in their schools for more than 1 year. Using a basic qualitative study, Stelly (2020) sought to understand common themes among elementary school teachers' perceptions of their preparedness. This study may contribute to the understanding of the factors that influence special educators' retention rates from the teachers' perceptions.

With an improved understanding of teacher retention, administrators may benefit from the teachers' perceptions as they will be provided with information to help change the trend of special education teacher attrition and shortages. The special education teacher shortages make it nearly impossible to support the academic needs of all students with disabilities (Mason-Williams, 2015). The growing population of diverse learners may benefit from the study when administrators are aware of the factors that attract and retain qualified special education teachers (Friedman, 2014). Identifying motivation

factors may promote positive social change within urban schools, especially with administrators who are seeking ways to recruit and retain teachers and among those special education teachers who struggle to find reasons to stay.

Role of the Researcher

For this study, my role involved conducting interviews, collecting information to answer the research questions, and transcribing and analyzing data. I searched for patterns, themes, and distinctive perspectives in the data. It was my responsibility to attempt to access the thoughts and feelings of the participants and encourage them to share experiences as they related to the research questions. During the interviews, I moved toward the role as an active participant by asking follow-up questions based on the responses given by the participants. By engaging in the conversation, I acquired a better understanding of the perspectives of the special education teachers and how they described the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that shaped their decisions to remain teaching. The interviews were carefully structured, asking open-ended questions that elicited deep and rich responses.

I conducted this study in three different school districts, all located within the study site in which I have no affiliation with any of the teachers. The relationship with the participants of the study was strictly professional. I was not in a supervisory role and did not have any power over the participants. I had no prior knowledge of the participants and did not seek to establish a personal relationship with them before or after the interviews. A personal bias of mine is that special education teacher retention is more difficult in schools where the student population is predominantly Black. I addressed this

bias by including schools that were predominantly Black and had high teacher retention rates.

Methodology

Participant Selection

The participant population comprised special educators with more than 1 year of experience who voluntarily agreed to meet with me to discuss the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence their decisions to remain in the classroom. I used purposive sampling to select 12 special educators from three different school districts to answer the research questions that guided this study. A purposive sample is a nonprobability sample that allows researchers to use their own judgement when selecting participants (Thomas, 2013). Recruiting from three different school districts allowed me to choose schools that report high special education teacher attrition rates as well as those schools that report low attrition rates.

To gather participants for this study, I sent an introductory email to the principals of the chosen schools asking for permission to conduct the study at their schools. Once permissions were received, the principals provided a list of possible participants with more than 1 year of special education teaching experience along with their email addresses. An invitation to participate in the interview process and informed letter of consent were sent to each possible interviewee. Teachers were asked to read the consent form and respond by email with the words “I consent” if they agreed to participate. Consenting teachers were also asked to keep a copy of the consent form for their records and informed that I would be keeping a copy in my files. The first 12 special educators

who responded were selected to participate in the study. Only those consenting to participate were contacted to schedule an interview.

Instrumentation

For this study, I used semistructured interviews. While semistructured interviews are structured and organized with a specific line of questions, they are also more open allowing freedom and flexibility (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). I was able to ask supplementary or probing questions as necessary. This is important because I was able to delve deeper into unexpected responses and obtain richer data. The audio-taped interview questions produced narrative form responses. Since the audio-taped interview questions were open-ended, participant answers were summarized and common words, phrases, or factors were identified among the responses.

The interview questions I developed, found in Appendix A, were informed by the literature review and research questions. The literature review revealed a great need to fill special education teacher positions and previous studies exploring general education teachers' retention factors. However, fewer studies have addressed the retention factors for special education teachers. The literature review revealed the need for more studies with special education teachers in order to understand the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors that influence them to remain in the field. The interview questions were developed to reveal any factors that influence special education teachers' retention and were reviewed by three field experts who decided the questions should get the answers I need to understand motivation factors. Information gained from the questions may also inform administrative leadership practices that could enhance special education

teacher experiences, help administrators in school districts cut costs associated with replacing quality special education teachers, and help develop a comprehensive approach to retaining high-quality special education teachers and positively affect its students.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The first step to conducting this study was to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Walden University. After approval was received, the next step was to obtain approval from principals to conduct the study within their schools. An introductory letter was sent explaining that I need special educators, with at least one year of teaching, who were willing to be interviewed to get their perceptions on the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influenced them to remain in the classroom. After approval was granted, the next step was to gather participants. The principals provided a list of possible participants with more than one year of special education teaching experience along with their email addresses. An invitation to participate in the interview process and informed letter of consent was sent to each possible interviewee. Teachers were asked to read the consent form and respond by email with the words “I consent” if they agreed to participate.

The goal was to choose 12 special education teachers to interview. Twelve participants were chosen to ensure saturation of data. Data saturation helps to establish adequate data has been obtained to support the study (Thomas, 2013). Data were collected and analyzed from audio recorded semistructured interviews. Every study participant was assigned a pseudonym for anonymity. All information gathered from individual interviews was organized and prepared for analysis. Creswell (2002) suggests

listening to video recordings, transcribing the interviews, typing up observations, and sorting the sources of information.

I also emailed an invitation letter providing potential participants with the purpose of the study, the significance, and potential benefits of the research study. The invitation letter (see Appendix B) indicates that return of the letter, with an electronic signature, represents acknowledgement, willingness, and consent to participate in the study. Electronic signatures were appropriate for the study and were accepted as consent to participate. Potential participants were informed that their participation was voluntary, and they may end participation at any point. The goal was to have at least 12 special educators from three different schools within two weeks of emailing the invitation letter. If there were not enough acceptances within two weeks, I would send another email requesting participation and extend the time period an additional week. If that still did not produce adequate number of responses, I would discuss this with the committee chair and possibly ask for permission to lessen the number of participants for the study. I was able to secure 12 participants without sending a second email, extending the time period, or lessening the number of participants.

Participants were given a list of available days and times to choose for their interview. Participants could choose from any day of the week including the weekend. Available time slots included late afternoon to late evening. Most interviews were conducted during the week, after the school day ended. With permission from the participants, recorded, semistructured interviews took place through Google Meets. Interviews were recorded using the record option available within the application.

Participants' interviews occurred only once and lasted anywhere from 35 to 60 minutes. Depending on the day, there were 1 to 2 interviews conducted in a day. The entire interview process took 8 days. One teacher rescheduled her interview due to a meeting that lasted longer than she expected. Every participant was cooperative and no participant asked to leave the study.

Member checking was done after conclusions were drawn from the interviews. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated member checking enhances credibility in qualitative research, and also provides an opportunity for participants to check for an accurate account of their stated experiences. During the member checking procedure, I emailed participants a copy of my initial conclusions to ensure their perceptions were correctly interpreted. I thanked them for their participation. Only one teacher added an intrinsic motivation factor to his initial response. His response was incorporated into the final report. Upon completion of the study, no other follow-up procedures occurred.

Data Analysis Plan

Semistructured interviews were recorded and uploaded into Otter, a transcription software. Once uploaded, Otter provided an option to place the transcribed data into Word documents. Each interview was placed in a separate document and all documents were printed, studied in detail, and prepared for coding. I used a priori coding to preset codes before the analysis process began. A priori coding is generally used when the researcher wants to base codes on the research questions or the theoretical framework. I chose to use a priori coding since I was specifically looking for intrinsic and extrinsic codes based on the two-factor theory and the study's research questions were designed

around the two-factor theory. Using a priori coding also allowed me to quickly identify relevant data.

I used open coding after establishing the a priori codes, intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors. Open coding can be used to assemble codes and themes and allows concepts to emerge and be grouped into conceptual categories (Creswell, 2002). Through the open coding system, emergent ideas were compared to intrinsic and extrinsic factors to determine which category fit each theme best. I searched for common words, phrases, or factors that emerged that were related to the conceptual framework of the study, the two-factor theory of motivation. I also made sure to note any discrepant cases that emerged from the data.

Trustworthiness

Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability ensure standards of trustworthiness are present within a study. Credibility of this study was addressed through triangulation using special education high school teacher at four different grade levels. The interviewed teachers came from three different high schools providing the opportunity for richer data and deeper understanding of the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors that influence special education teachers' retention. Transferability of this study was achieved by including detailed descriptions of the data. This was necessary in order to determine the degree to which the data can be applicable in other contexts or settings. Transferability allows readers to determine if the results can be duplicated in another setting (Thomas, 2013). Qualitative studies are not considered to be transferable, but other schools may see similarities in the rich description found in the findings of this

study. Dependability refers to the stability and consistency of the data collected and ensures the research questions have been answered. Dependability was addressed in this study through triangulation of the data from the interviewees at three different schools and school levels. The results were analyzed to compare and contrast the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors that influence special education teacher retention. The final stage of trustworthiness is to establish confirmability. Qualitative researchers must seek confirmable data that is relatively neutral and reasonably free from biases. Confirmability can be established through researcher reflexivity, triangulation, and external audits (Ravitch & Carl, 2015).

To address reflexivity, I was self-aware and made notes taken throughout the process available for others to analyze to demonstrate any biases noted did not affect the results of the study. Triangulation was achieved through interviewing teachers from different levels of teaching; 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. External audits were conducted through accuracy checking and member checking processes. an external audit was conducted through a peer reviewer, whose primary purpose was to check for accuracy and ensure the conclusions were supported by the data collected in the interviews. I enhanced credibility in my study by checking for accuracy with the participants and using member checking. To check for accuracy, I emailed the participants their transcribed interviews so they may check for accuracy or suggest any changes. Checking for accuracy allowed me to ask follow-up questions or clarify data as well as provided participants the opportunity to review and edit what they said during the interview. Member checking was done after conclusions were drawn from the interviews.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that member checking enhances credibility in qualitative research. After making tentative conclusions, I shared a summary of the themes that emerged from the data with the participants.

Ethical Procedures

A formal code of ethics must be followed throughout the entire interview process. Participants in the study must be treated with respect from the beginning of the process to the end. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), ethical behavior always includes showing respect, honoring promises, and not pressuring participants to participate in the study. I respected participants by being straightforward and not misrepresenting myself, my position, or my topic. I honored my promises of confidentiality and anonymity by using pseudonyms for names, schools, and cities. I provided all participants an opportunity to exit the interview process at any time with a right to withdraw from the study form.

Walden University mandates every researcher obtain approval from the IRB before proceeding with a research study. Prior to collecting data, the study was approved by a committee and Walden University's IRB (approval number 11-24-20-0634640). Prior to recruiting participants for the study, I obtained proper approval from the school principals. Principals were provided with a copy of the invitation letter providing potential participants with the purpose of the study, the significance, and potential benefits of the research study. The invitation letter also indicated that return of the letter, with an electronic signature, represented acknowledgement, willingness, and consent to participate in the study. Once approval was granted, an email was sent to potential participants with the informed consent. Informed consent highlighted the description of

the study, potential risks and benefits to the participants, confidentiality agreement, participants' right to withdraw from the study, and consent of the participants.

All information collected from participants was coded to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. All information will be kept in a locked cabinet or on a flash drive for 5 years, after which time information will be eliminated. Minimal risk was associated with participation in the study because all information collected within the study was confidential. Ensuring confidentiality of the participants and safeguarding all data guarantees the protection of human rights. Although there was minimal risk associated with this study, I ensured participants felt comfortable and respected.

Summary

Chapter 3 provided an overview of the Research Design and Rationale including the research questions, the central concept of the study, and the rationale for the research tradition. This was followed by my Role as a Researcher. Next, the Methodology section provided an explanation of how purposive sampling was used to identify 12 participants and the Instrumentation section noted why semistructured interviews were best for the study. Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection sections detailed the approval process for conducting the study along with how participants were recruited with the assistance of principals and interviewed remotely. The Data Analysis Plan described how open coding was utilized to identify emerging themes from the data collected through audio-taped semistructured interviews. The remaining part of the chapter addressed Trustworthiness within the study and strategies were explained to

address credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Ethical Procedures describing the approval process and confidentiality for the study concluded the chapter.

In Chapter 4, Results are presented followed by Setting. Through the Data Collection and Data Analysis process, an understanding of motivation factors influencing special education teacher retention are revealed. The research was designed to study what special education teachers perceive as their reasons for remaining in the teaching field. Results from the study may be used to make recommendations to school administrators and district leaders that will address the special education teacher retention and attrition issues. The findings of this study may provide school districts with a better understanding of what influences teachers to remain in urban schools. The findings of this study may also provide insights for teachers, administrators, and teacher educators in terms of teachers' professional development, school induction and mentoring programming, and university teacher education programs. Evidence of Trustworthiness follows the Results of the study. The chapter concludes with a Summary.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that may influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom. Teacher attrition is a condition that plagues administrators every year. School districts in many states encounter the annual exit of teachers and the grim prospect of replacing them, resulting in undesirable teacher shortages (Grant, 2017). Teacher turnover and attrition have been identified as the main culprits for this teacher shortage (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017). The teacher shortage is more critical among special education teachers as they are more likely to leave the profession than most other categories of teachers (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Conley & You, 2017). School and district administrators across the country need to solve the retention problem among the special education teachers. This study was necessary to understand the factors special education teachers perceive are their reasons for remaining in the teaching field. The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1: How do special education teachers describe the motivators or intrinsic factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?

RQ2: How do special education teachers describe the extrinsic or hygiene factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?

In Chapter 4, I focus on detailed information about the logistics of the setting for the study. The Setting section provides specifics of the demographics and characteristics of the participants as well as the conditions that influenced their responses to the interview questions. The Setting section is followed by the Data Collection section,

which outlines the way data were collected, and the Data Analysis section, which displays the process for analyzing ideas that emerged from the data. The Results section is focused on the findings of the study and the Evidence of Trustworthiness section outlines credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study. Chapter 4 concludes with a Summary.

Setting

All interviews conducted for this study were done remotely with Google Meets. Interviews were conducted remotely due to a global pandemic, COVID-19. COVID-19 made in-person interviews impossible. All teachers in the school district were mandated to teach remotely using either Zoom or Google Meets at the time of the pandemic. Using Google Meets allowed face-to-face interaction through a video call. With permission from the participants, video calls were recorded. The interviews were scheduled at a time that was most convenient for the teacher. With teachers in control of the day and time they interviewed, they were less likely to be fatigued from a long day at work. However, there were other factors present that may have affected the results of the study.

COVID-19 changed the way teachers delivered daily lessons to students across the nation. Remote learning presented major challenges for all teachers faced with the task of mandatory distance learning (Schuck & Lambert, 2020). Special education teachers have expressed stress and concern over meeting the needs of special education students in a remote setting. Concerns range from limited access to resources to lack of ability to meet accommodations and modifications specified in the IEP. These factors may have affected the participants' responses to some of the interview questions.

I interviewed 12 special education teachers from three different high schools. Their experience levels ranged from 2 to 25 years in the special education field. Most of the teachers were assigned to students with mild to moderate disabilities. Mild to moderate disabilities include but are not limited to specific learning disability, ADHD, emotional disturbance, visual impairment, hearing impairment, and speech or language impairment. One teacher was assigned to students with moderate to severe disabilities in the life skills class setting. Moderate to severe disabilities include but are not limited to autism, mental retardation, serious emotional disturbances, deaf-blindness, and multiple disabilities. Seven of the teachers were female, five were male. One teacher was Black while the others were White. All schools were predominantly minority student population, either Hispanic or Black; however, the teacher population at each school was predominantly White. The special education teacher population at each school was predominantly White with a few minority teachers and approximately 60% female, 40% male. Table 1 shows the demographics of the teachers interviewed for the study.

Table 1*Participants' Demographics*

Teacher	Yrs teaching spEd	Gender	Grade level	Degree of disability
A	4	M	10 th	Mild to moderate
B	4	F	9 th	Mild to moderate
C	25	F	9 th	Mild to moderate
D	2	F	9 th	Mild to moderate
E	12	M	11 th	Mild to moderate
F	16	F	9 th - 12 th	Moderate to severe
G	8	M	10 th	Mild to moderate
H	10	F	12 th	Mild to moderate
J	8	M	11 th	Mild to moderate
K	3	M	9 th	Mild to moderate
L	8	F	10 th	Mild to moderate
M	13	F	11 th	Mild to moderate

Data Collection

Data collection for this study was done by conducting 12 face-to-face remote interviews using Google Meets. The interviews varied between 35 and 60 minutes depending on the amount of follow-up questions asked for clarification purposes. Because the interviews were conducted remotely, participants chose their locations. Only one interview was required for each participant. I used Google Meets recording option to record each interview. Each recording was uploaded into Otter, a transcription software that transcribed the audio recordings into Microsoft Word documents. All the recordings and corresponding transcriptions were stored on a flash drive. The transcription software was a deviation from the original plan to use a transcriber. Due to COVID-19 challenges, the transcription software was a safer and faster option. No unusual circumstances were encountered during the data collection process.

Data Analysis

All semistructured interviews were recorded and transcribed through Otter, which captured every word. Each interview was downloaded into separate Microsoft Word documents. I chose to use both deductive and inductive coding for my data analysis process. According to Miller et al. (2020), combining deductive and inductive coding methods allows researchers to begin the analysis process with a set of codes and add new codes as they emerge during the analysis process.

A priori coding, a deductive coding, was used before analyzing the data. According to Ravitch and Carl (2015), a priori coding is often used in qualitative studies when the researcher wants to identify the codes before examining the data. The codes

may be based on the theoretical framework, interview questions, or other preexisting information. A priori coding may be used when the researcher already knows what themes are of interest. I chose to use a priori coding because I was specifically looking for intrinsic and extrinsic reasons based on the two-factor theory and because the study's research questions were designed around the two-factor theory. Using a priori coding also allowed me to quickly identify relevant data.

I used open coding, inductive coding, after establishing the a priori codes. Open coding can be used to assemble codes and themes and allows concepts to emerge and be grouped into conceptual categories (Creswell, 2002). Once the interviews were transcribed, I highlighted the answers to the question that asked about the reasons the participants remain in the classroom. Those answers, also known as emerging ideas, were written on index cards. I then separated the emerging ideas into the two preset a priori codes, intrinsic and extrinsic factors. I also looked for any answers that did not fit into either preset code. After all emerging ideas were coded as intrinsic or extrinsic, I reviewed each idea again to look for similar phrases that could be combined into common categories. This process revealed 10 categories that became the themes for the study. Six of those themes were intrinsic codes and four of those themes were extrinsic codes. Table 2 summarizes the themes that emerged during the interview process.

Table 2

Research Questions With Emerging Themes

Research questions	Codes	Themes
How do special education teachers describe the motivators or intrinsic factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?	Motivators or intrinsic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student connections • Loyalty to coteachers • Loyalty to other special education teachers • Improvement to practice • Change the world • Honor to teach
How do special education teachers describe the extrinsic or hygiene factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?	Hygienes or extrinsic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary/job security • Smaller class sizes • Day-to-day challenge • Social inequality and injustice

Data analysis of the reasons special education teachers remain in the teaching field revealed a mixture of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. At the top of the list of intrinsic themes was student connections. Seven of 12 teachers interviewed identified reasons that fit into the student connections theme as the number one reason they still teach. These teachers are committed to the success of their students and teach for the “aha” moments. One teacher stated just one student success moment may sustain him for a couple of weeks. Closely following the student connections theme was the loyalty teachers felt to their coteachers and their coteacher connections. Five of the 12 special education teachers stated they felt the relationships developed with their coteachers was important. One teacher described her experiences with coteachers as building a sense of community or

family. Three special education teachers stated they stay because working with special education students challenges them to improve their teaching practices and improving their practices leads to motivation. One teacher had a vision to change the world while another felt honored to be charged with the responsibility of educating special education students.

When analyzing the reasons special education teachers remain in the teaching field, several extrinsic factors emerged. At the top of the list was salary and job security. One teacher was guaranteed a teaching position in the Teach for America program, while two other teachers felt special education was a growing field and job security was certain. One of those teachers had transferred from what he called “babysitting” in a therapeutic day school to teaching special education in high school. Another common extrinsic theme that emerged was the advantage of teaching to a smaller group of students. Two teachers described positive experiences when working with students in a smaller setting with a lower teacher to student ratio, while two teachers stated they enjoyed the challenge of the day-to-day. No 2 days are the same. Another special education teacher stated he remains in special education because of the need for more Black males in the field. He described social inequities such as racism, police brutality, and discrimination as the primary reasons more Black males are needed in the special education field.

It is important to note that 92% of the participants in the study stated remote teaching was stressful on the students, as well as themselves. They were worried about being able to meet the accommodations and modifications as specified in their students’ IEPs. However, when asked if their reasons for staying were different because of

COVID-19 mandatory distance learning, all special education teachers stated the reasons for staying remain the same.

During the analysis process, one discrepant case emerged. Teacher D described her remote teaching experience as the main reason she does not leave teaching. While all other teachers stated they are stressed out and worried about meeting the needs of their students, Teacher D finds remote teaching stress-free.

Results

The purpose of this study was to explore the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that may influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom. The study was guided by two research questions. Most of the interviewees provided more than one response when asked about the reasons they remain in the teaching field. The following sections are organized by research questions and themes related to the two-factor theory of motivation.

Research Question 1

How do special education teachers describe the motivators or intrinsic factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?

Student Connections

Although student connections varied in definition from teacher to teacher, this intrinsic factor was the number one reason special education teachers want to remain teaching. Seven of 12 teachers identified student connections as the thing that motivates them to keep teaching. These special education teachers expressed satisfaction when their students experienced success in some sort of way. Teacher J, a 9th grade special

education teacher, stated “You spend an abundance of time with them and see them multiple times a day. The relationship with the students, you grow very close and it’s rewarding. Students first; that keeps me going”. Teacher A, an 11th grade special education teacher, stated teachers are assigned a group of 9th graders, called an advisory, with the idea that they will remain with that group through graduation. “I’m motivated to stay on just being kind of loyal to seeing that relationship through” noted Teacher A. When asked what factors have influenced them to remain in special education, Teacher B commented she has strong ties to her community of students. “We’re like a family” she noted. Teacher H similarly stated she enjoys her connections to the students, past and present, especially when they keep in touch and visit her even after graduating.

Loyalty to Coteachers

Following closely behind student connections was loyalty to coteachers as the reason special education teachers want to remain in the teaching field. While coworkers may work together in the same organization, coteachers work together not only in the same organization, but also in the same classroom that has both general education and special education students in a cotaught setting. Coteachers often plan together to ensure lessons provide opportunities for all students to have equal access to learning. Teachers B, F, H, L, and M stated their relationships with their coteachers are keeping them in a sane place. Teacher E, a 10th-grade special education teacher, stated “I have been lucky to have good people to co-teach with”. Teacher M, a 9th grade special education teacher, finds her relationship with her coteacher “absolutely valuable and essential to the success of the students”.

Loyalty to Other Special Education Teachers

Special education teachers also feel loyalty to each other. Six of the 12 participants agreed special education teachers have a unique set of responsibilities that general education teachers do not. Many times, these responsibilities create a special bond among the special education team. Teacher B, an 11th grade special education teacher, describes the team as a community and a family. Teacher F, who teaches a mix of high school students, refers to the 15-person special education staff as one big family. “On those days when it is hard to get out of bed and circumstances get tough, I really think it’s the people I work with who keep me going” stated Teacher F.

Improvement to Practice

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the teaching field. Teaching is being done remotely across the world and teaching has a whole new meaning. Teachers are finding it stressful and difficult to connect to their students, keep them engaged, and deliver quality lessons. However, three of the special education teachers interviewed found this stressful time provided the perfect opportunity to improve their practices. When asked if their motivations to remain in the teaching field had changed over time or because of COVID-19, Teachers A and C both stated they were forced to improve their practices to ensure special education services were being delivered to every student with an IEP, and provide accommodations, and modifications. Teacher A stated, “my motivation is to improve on some things and kind of hone in on certain parts of the practice, such as planning thoroughly”. Teacher C’s motivation factor is “wanting to continually learn and be better so I’m better able to serve the students”.

Change the World

One teacher shared his desire to change the world when he decided to become a special education teacher. “We are working our butts off, but it’s not for nothing. It’s definitely bringing some kind of change into the world” stated Teacher K.

Honor to Teach

Teacher C shared her great fortune to be trusted with the responsibility of educating someone’s child. “What gets me up and gets me going on a day-to-day basis, is the fact that I have this great honor, the education of this person” stated Teacher C. She further explained “special education has come a long way, but we still have a ways to go and that’s what kept me”.

Research Question 2

How do special education teachers describe the extrinsic or hygiene factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?

Salary/Job Security

Teachers D, E, and K claimed job security or money as an excellent reason to remain in the special education teaching field. The youngest teacher with the least amount of experience, Teacher D, shared her desire to do something other than teaching. However, Teach for America offered her a guaranteed job after graduation and she accepted the teaching position. Teacher E stated the compensation scale has changed and administration is trying to keep people around. He also admitted that there is still much room for improvement as many teachers are getting paid much less than their friends. Teacher K worked in the education field, however, in a different capacity. His therapeutic

day school paid poorly and was closing when he found a position as a special education teacher in a high school. He gladly accepted the position because it paid more, and he felt secure in the stability of the school.

Smaller Class Sizes

Two teachers expressed their desire to teach special education students in smaller class settings, while a third teacher shared smaller classes were necessary in the life skills classroom working with moderate to severe disabilities. Teacher E commented “I definitely like teaching a self-contained class, having your own space, a smaller group of students to kind of really be your own thing”. Teacher L shared similar thoughts stating, “I really like the fact that I get to work with a smaller ratio of students because I think oftentimes I feel lost in a big classroom of students and feel like I don’t get to connect one-on-one as much”.

Challenge

Teaching remotely is a challenge most teachers are experiencing this school year. However, according to three participants, challenge is not always considered a bad thing. Teachers A and E described challenge as a positive reason that keeps them motivated to keep teaching, even through a pandemic. Teacher A explained that beyond the commitment to the program, she enjoys “the particular challenges of sped work”. During the pandemic, she specifically enjoys the challenges of student engagement and student work completion. Teacher E is motivated by the fact that no two days are the same and the challenges of the day are constantly changing. Teacher E commented,

so like those days that suck are because you get to go to IEP meetings and a class didn't go well and all that. Whereas the next day, that same thing isn't going to happen because you don't have all those other things going on. It's going to be a whole different experience.

Teacher J stated his reason for staying in special education is "the thrill of the challenge". He believes every student's disability is unique and he enjoys the challenge of learning how to help them and manage their disabilities.

Social Inequality and Injustice

Four of the participants believe students of color are not always provided the supports they need, especially in special education. Social inequality and injustice play a substantial role in these special education teachers' careers. Teachers E and G both feel it is part of their responsibilities to advocate for their students when it comes to social equity. "I'm fighting for social equity, like in the last 3 or 4 years of huge assault like anti-racism, and making sure my students get the same as a student in the suburbs or private schools" stated Teacher E. He further stated he has grown in his purpose which is to serve a community and a body of students that need him to fight for them. Teacher G views the "current state of society" as the main influence for his retention. Teacher G stated

Just knowing all of the things that young black girls and boys are up against has definitely motivated me to continue this work. Some things such as racism, police brutality, discrimination, and poverty; just inequalities across the board has definitely motivated me to stay where I'm at.

Administrative Supports

In addition to the reasons special education teachers remain in the classroom, participants were asked what they thought administrators should focus on to retain special education teachers. Supports the participants reported they need from administrators were similar to much of the research information revealed in Chapter 2 and the Literature Review. Information from the Literature Review revealed special education teachers reported inadequate planning time, large amounts of paperwork, overwhelming caseloads, large class size, and student behavior challenges as major reasons for high levels of stress causing them to make the decision to leave teaching (Bettini et al., 2015; Biddle & Azano, 2016). Participants from the study reported the following administrative supports are needed: (a) collaboration time with coteachers, (b) support when there is legal conflict or litigation, (c) mentor support for new teachers, (d) realistic expectations and deadlines for writing IEPs, (e) autonomy to run classrooms, (f) less paperwork, (g) recognition for successes, (h) professional development, (i) well-being checks, and (j) creative scheduling for more time to do paperwork.

District Supports

Participants were also asked to share their perspectives about the support they need the districts to focus on in order to retain special education teachers. Participants stated they would like district leaders to focus on the following supports: (a) programs to recruit special education teachers, (b) mental support for teacher burnout, (c) clear and honest communication, (d) properly equipped classrooms for special education students, (e) additional training for inexperienced principals, (f) resource toolboxes for teachers

working with students with severe disabilities. Participants felt these supports were out of the hands of their administrators and therefore these supports should come from the district. Administrative and district supports are extrinsic factors according to the two-factor theory.

Discrepant Cases

During the analysis process, one discrepant case emerged. Teacher D described her remote teaching experience as the main reason she does not leave teaching. While all other teachers stated they are stressed out and worried about meeting the needs of their students, Teacher D finds remote teaching stress-free. She stated, “remote learning gave me so much capacity back because in-person drained me and I was holistically and completely exhausted”. All other teachers admitted they were looking forward to returning to in-person learning with the students. However, Teacher D disclosed that she would not be returning to in-person learning because it was stressful. “My anxiety was very, very, very high pretty much every day when I walked into the building” she admits.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in a qualitative study is essential to the honesty and integrity of the study. As stated previously in Chapter 3, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability ensure standards of trustworthiness are present within a study. Credibility can be achieved through several different techniques. Credibility of this study was addressed through triangulation of sources, using special education high school teacher at four different grade levels. The interviewed teachers came from three different high schools providing the opportunity for richer data and deeper understanding of the

intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors that influence special education teachers' retention. Credibility was also addressed through member checking. Participants were emailed interpretations and conclusions of their interviews and allowed to check for errors, clarify information, and provide any additional information they deemed important. Only one teacher added an intrinsic motivation factor he had not previously stated.

Transferability in this study refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied to other populations. Transferability of this study was achieved by including detailed descriptions of my experiences during data collection. In the data collection section, I shared details about where, when, and how the interviews took place as well as why the interviews were done in this manner. The interviews were done remotely, at a time that was convenient for each of them, using Google Meets. They were conducted in this manner due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This information was necessary to determine the degree to which the data can be applicable and transferable to other populations. Qualitative studies are not considered to be transferable, however, other schools may see similarities in the findings of this study.

Dependability refers to the stability and consistency of the data collected and ensures the research questions have been answered. Dependability was addressed in this study through triangulation of the data from the interviewees at three different schools and four different grade levels. The results were analyzed to compare and contrast the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors that influence special education teacher retention.

The final stage of trustworthiness is to establish confirmability. Qualitative researchers must seek confirmable data that is relatively neutral and reasonably free from biases. Confirmability can be established through researcher reflexivity, triangulation, and external audits (Ravitch & Carl, 2015). To address reflexivity, I was self-aware and made notes taken throughout the process available for others to analyze to demonstrate any biases noted did not affect the results of the study. Triangulation was achieved through interviewing teachers from different levels of teaching: 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. Finally, an external audit was conducted through a peer reviewer, whose primary purpose was to check for accuracy and ensure the conclusions were supported by the data collected in the interviews.

Summary

Chapter 4 began with a detailed description of the setting for the interviews conducted. It was followed by the data collection and data analysis sections. These sections were followed by the results of the data analysis process. The chapter also included a review of the results of interviews conducted to understand the reasons special education teachers remain in the classroom. The results revealed both intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence these teachers to stay.

Intrinsic factors that were revealed included: (a) student connections, (b) loyalty to coteachers, (c) loyalty to other special education teachers, (d) improvement to practice, (e) change the world, and (f) honor to teach. Extrinsic factors that were revealed included: (a) job security and money, (b) smaller classes, (c) day-to-day challenges, and (d) social inequality and social injustice. More extrinsic factors emerged from the data

when participants were asked what their administrators and district leaders should focus on to retain special education teachers.

Teachers admitted they would like to have more support from administrators and district leaders. Teachers stated administrators can support them better by providing more of the following: (a) collaboration time with coteachers, (b) support when there is legal conflict or litigation, (c) mentor support for new teachers, (d) realistic expectations and deadlines for writing IEPs, (e) autonomy to run classrooms, (f) recognition for successes, (g) professional development, (h) well-being checks, and (i) creative scheduling for more time to do paperwork. Special education teachers would also like to have less paperwork to complete. They would also like district leaders to provide the following: (a) programs to recruit special education teachers, (b) mental support for teacher burnout, (c) clear and honest communication, (d) properly equipped classrooms for special education students, (e) additional training for inexperienced principals, and (f) resource toolboxes for teachers working with students with severe disabilities.

Chapter 5 of this study will begin with an Introduction that restates the purpose and nature of the study and why it was conducted along with a summary of the key findings of this study. The Introduction will be followed by Interpretation of the Findings section, which will compare the findings of the study with what has been found in the peer-reviewed literature described in Chapter 2. Limitations of the Study section will describe the limitations to trustworthiness that arose from execution of the study. Recommendations for further research and Implication for social change will then be addressed. Chapter 5 will end with a Conclusion for the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that may influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom. The nature of this study was to explore special education teachers' perceptions of the motivation factors that influence retention. Vittek (2015) stated special education teacher attrition has been represented in literature; however, future research needs to concentrate on factors that help special education teacher retention. In this study, I used the two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg, 1966) to understand teachers' perceptions of the reasons that motivate them to stay. This study was necessary to contribute to the limited research that previously identified some factors that influence special education teacher retention and to possibly identify factors that have yet to be discussed in current literature. I focused this study on understanding what special education teachers perceive as their reasons for remaining in the teaching field in an urban midwestern school district.

Results of the study suggest both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors are responsible for the reasons special education teachers remain in the classroom. Intrinsic factors are described as actions that are not necessarily attached to an external reward and may fulfill psychological needs. Intrinsic motivators tend to increase feelings of personal growth and self-accomplishment. Intrinsic motivation factors that participants shared during the interviews were student connections, loyalty to coteachers, loyalty to other special education teachers, improvement to practice, to change the world, and an honor to

teach. Extrinsic motivation factors are described as non-job-related factors that are outside of an employee's control. They can also be described as physiological needs. Extrinsic motivation factors participants shared during interviews were salary and job security, smaller class sizes, day-to-day challenges, and social inequality and injustice. Tables B1 and B2 in Appendix B sum up the results from the interviews.

In addition to identifying the motivation factors that influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom, I conducted an analysis of supports the teachers need from their administrators and district leaders. Participants reported the following administrative supports are needed: (a) collaboration time with coteachers, (b) support when there is legal conflict or litigation, (c) mentor support for new teachers, (d) realistic expectations and deadlines for writing IEPs, (e) autonomy to run classrooms, (f) less paperwork, (g) recognition for successes, (h) professional development, (i) well-being checks, and (j) creative scheduling for more time to do paperwork. Additionally, participants would like district leaders to focus on the following supports: (a) programs to recruit special education teachers, (b) mental support for teacher burnout, (c) clear and honest communication, (d) properly equipped classrooms for special education students, (e) additional training for inexperienced principals, and (f) resource toolboxes for teachers working with students with severe disabilities. All supports the participants identified from both administration and district leaders were extrinsic factors. Extrinsic factors are those factors outside of the participants' control.

Interpretation of the Findings

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that may influence high school special education teachers to remain in the classroom. Based on the data analysis, the findings of this study were able to confirm, disconfirm, or extend current knowledge of the factors special education teachers state influence their decisions to remain in the classroom as described in the Literature Review in Chapter 2. The two-factor theory of motivation was the conceptual framework for this qualitative study. The two-factor theory is used to get to the root of what motivates people to work harder (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Intrinsic motivation factors, also referred to as motivators, are described as actions that are not necessarily attached to an external reward and may fulfill psychological needs. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), motivators are intrinsic factors that include but are not limited to outgrowth of achievement, verbal recognition, responsibility, and advancement. When motivators exist, employees are more likely to experience job satisfaction. Intrinsic motivators tend to increase feelings of personal growth and accomplishment.

Extrinsic motivation factors, also referred to as hygienes, are described as non-job-related factors that are outside of an employee's control. They can also be described as physiological needs. Examples of extrinsic factors include but are not limited to company policies, administrative practices, supervisory styles, physical working conditions, job security, benefits, salary, and coworker relations (Herzberg, 1966). When hygienes or extrinsic motivation factors are present, employees are not likely to

experience job dissatisfaction. Extrinsic motivators tend to remove unhappiness from the work environment.

This study was intended to contribute to the limited research that previously identified some factors that influence special education teacher retention and possibly identify factors that have yet to be discussed in current literature. This study was guided by two research questions developed to understand the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors special education teachers state motivate them to remain in the teaching profession.

RQ1: How do special education teachers describe the motivators or intrinsic factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?

RQ2: How do special education teachers describe the extrinsic or hygiene factors that influenced their decisions to remain teaching?

Themes that emerged from the interview questions were categorized as intrinsic or extrinsic factors.

Research Question 1: Intrinsic Factors

The two-factor theory of motivation has been utilized in many studies in the past to understand reasons teachers remain in the classroom. Raymond (2018) conducted a study to explore teacher job satisfaction and retention among general education teachers and revealed intrinsic factors of achievement, status, recognition, responsibility, advancement, personal growth, and the work itself as motivating factors that explained why some teachers were satisfied with their jobs and chose to remain in the classroom. Researchers suggest some differences exist when comparing intrinsic motivation factors

of general education and special education teachers. Olson (2017) conducted a study of special education teachers and found intrinsic factors that influenced retention decisions were collegial support, responsibility, and relationships/experiences with students.

According to the results of this study, special education teachers' responses confirmed previous research results by Olson. This study found collegial support from coteacher and special education team members were important. It also found student connections was the most important reason special education teachers choose to remain in the classroom.

Student Connections

Even though special educators indicate student caseloads and characteristics are a major concern, these same teachers often indicate student connections are the ultimate motivation for staying (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). A study conducted by Olson (2017) also revealed student connections as one of the major intrinsic factors motivating special education teachers to stay. The findings of my study confirmed previous studies' results. According to the results of my study, the number one intrinsic motivation factor influencing special education teachers to remain teaching is student connections. Seven of 12 teachers identified student connections as "that thing that motivates them to keep teaching."

Data for this study was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic. All teaching was done remotely, which was especially stressful for both special education teachers and students. Although teachers were worried about providing modifications and accommodations for their students, they were more concerned about the ability to make connections with the students. When asked if their reasons for staying in special

education were altered by the pandemic, teachers overwhelmingly reported the pandemic did not affect their desire to stay. They also reported that although making connections with students was extremely difficult through remote learning, they were committed to finding a way to do so.

Loyalty to Coteachers

Good working relationships with coteachers is essential to the success of everyone involved. As an experienced special education teacher myself, I know a good coteacher relationship benefits not only the general and special education teachers, but also the general and special education students who share the same classroom. Over the years, special education teachers have expressed the importance of collaborating with their coteachers and sharing the responsibility of teaching all students in the classroom (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). One teacher in the study stated she was lucky to have such a good relationship with her coteacher, especially during the pandemic. Their strong relationship has transferred into the classroom and created an atmosphere of mutual respect and has helped influence her decision to stay. The teacher further stated that a bad coteacher relationship played a large part in her decision to leave her previous school.

Loyalty to Other Special Education Teachers

The special education team is often thought of as a department separate from the rest of the school. Only special education teachers understand the complex responsibilities that come with the title. Workload manageability, caseload size, students' disabilities and behavior, paperwork including IEP writing, assessments and accountability, delivery method, lesson planning, and classroom management are many

of the characteristics that make being a special education teacher unique (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017). These same responsibilities may also make special education teachers feel like they are alone. However, sharing these same responsibilities with other special education teachers, either at your school or at another school, may keep special education teachers in the classroom (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019).

When asked “What keeps you teaching in the classroom?” Teacher F stated emphatically, “It’s my other sped teachers.” She stated they were a community at her school, and she looked forward to being in the same office with them every day. She further stated the office was their safe space that allowed them to share experiences, techniques, IEP information, ideas, and plans. Teacher F has a strong relationship with special education teachers, past and present. Teacher F commented,

I really think it’s the people I work with, you know, because I can go to them. Every summer I organize a big dinner, and we all go out for dinner, all the sped staff and all the former sped staff. Even with COVID-19, when it was the end of the school year, I had everyone come sit in the yard and have a barbeque. We sat six feet apart and wore masks and came together because we all love each other, former staff and present staff.

In my experience as a special education teacher of 13 years, special education teachers tend to gravitate towards each other at school functions, teacher conferences, professional developments, celebrations, and so forth. It feels like a kindred spirit that brings us together and makes us trust each other enough to share our experiences and knowledge with one another. Teacher B described the same feelings during his interview.

He stated, “At the end of the day, special education teachers share a special bond that keeps me going on really hard days.”

Connections to students, coteachers, and special education teachers are all motivational factors uncovered during the research process and reported in the Literature Review section in Chapter 2. The data from this study not only confirms the research gathered in the Literature Review, but also extends upon the knowledge gained from that research. This study increases the research since there was no previous research gathered about motivational factors influencing special education teachers to remain in the classroom during a global pandemic.

Improvement to Practice

During the data analysis process, one theme that emerged as a motivation factor for remaining in the classroom was special education teachers wanted to improve their practice. A major reason for the surface of this factor may be the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has teachers everywhere rethinking their teaching strategies.

At the beginning of the pandemic, schools around the world moved to remote teaching and teachers all around the world began to note new teaching strategies were necessary. Special education teachers were especially stressed as they quickly noticed how difficult it would be to provide special education services mandated in students’ IEPs (Iivari et al., 2020). The special education teachers I interviewed were feeling the pressure of providing accommodations and modifications in an online remote learning setting. One teacher announced the pandemic has shown him his weak spots in teaching and he needs to be more flexible to meet his students’ needs. He also shared his

motivation factors have changed since the pandemic and he believes his instruction needs to change and improve to close the gaps in the learning he now sees in his students' everyday struggles. Another teacher stated his motivation to teach more efficiently has increased since the pandemic and now his major motivation to remain in the classroom is to improve his instruction for the students.

Improvement to practice as a motivational factor for special education teachers to remain in the classroom was an unexpected theme uncovered during the data analysis process. This theme was a surprise because it was not one of the factors that surfaced during the Literature Review stage. This theme may have become relevant due to the global pandemic and the shift to remote learning. This intrinsic motivation factor increases the research since it was not previously revealed during the Literature Review.

Change the World

During my early years as a special education teacher, I felt my purpose was to change the world, one child at a time. The special education field needed changes and I was going to make those changes. In a study conducted by Hagaman and Casey (2018), the researchers found special education teachers in their early years have dreams of changing the world. In my study, a veteran special education teacher of 25 years stated she still dreams of changing the world and still believes one child can make a difference. This teacher feels her work is changing the world "a little at a time" and remains the motivating factor that influences her to stay.

Changing the world is an intrinsic motivation factor that was not previously uncovered during the research process. Although Hagaman and Casey (2018) mentioned

young special education teachers dream of changing the world, research did not reveal changing the world to be a motivation factor for influencing teachers to remain in the classroom. Therefore, this motivation factor extends current knowledge shown in the Literature Review.

Honor to Teach

My data analysis of 12 transcripts revealed one final intrinsic motivation factor that influences special education teachers to remain in the classroom; honor to teach. Teacher C is a veteran special education teacher of 20 years. She stated she was called to do this work many years ago. She also considered teaching to be “a great honor that not everyone can do”. Although Hagaman and Casey (2018) found young special education teachers are more likely to consider teaching a great honor, my study reveals there are exceptions. Previous research studies did not reveal “honor to teach” as a major intrinsic motivation factor for remaining in the classroom among teachers with more than one year of special education experience. Honor to teach is an intrinsic motivation factor that extends knowledge outside of the Literature Review.

Herzberg (1966) suggested, when present, motivators or intrinsic factors lead to a positive state of job satisfaction. He further explains when intrinsic factors are absent, employees are in a neutral state of job satisfaction. According to the two-factor theory, student connections, loyalty to coteachers, loyalty to special education teachers, improvement to practice, change the world, and honor to teach are all intrinsic factors. Since these intrinsic factors are present among most of the teachers in my study, the special education teachers in the study are in a positive state of job satisfaction.

Research Question 2: Extrinsic Factors

Extrinsic motivational factors are described as non-job-related factors that are outside of an employee's control. In a recent study, Hughes (2019) reported special education teachers stated evaluation, working conditions, potential for growth, and job salary as the most influential extrinsic factors that motivate them and lead to job satisfaction. The data analysis for my study revealed four extrinsic themes.

Salary/Job Security

Special education teacher attrition is a decades long problem that may not be solved any time soon. Research has shown job security and salary are extrinsic factors that when absent, have contributed to teacher attrition (Conley & You, 2017). One young teacher in my study accepted her teaching position because of a promise of job security through the Teach for America program. This young teacher had no intention of becoming a special educator and every intention of enrolling in a doctorate program. She stated the reason she remains a teacher is because she has job security and no reason to leave while in the middle of a pandemic. Similarly, another young teacher found switching from a failing therapeutic school to a public school provided job security and a better salary in the special education department. Although he has found other reasons to remain in the classroom, job security and salary are his biggest motivating factors.

Smaller Class Sizes

Special education students may find themselves in general education classes with coteachers or self-contained classes with a special education teacher. Every special education teacher in this study is both a coteacher and a self-contained teacher. The study

found coteacher relationships are important when considering staying or leaving the classroom. The study also found self-contained classes are just as valued due to the lower teacher-student ratio. Oftentimes special education teachers feel lost, disrespected, underappreciated, and devalued in larger co-taught environments (Conley & You, 2017). According to two participants in the study, smaller class sizes provide teachers the opportunity to connect with their students on a more personal level and allows them more autonomy in their classrooms.

Day-to-Day Challenge

Teaching is an occupation that has its challenges from day-to-day. General and special education teachers claim classroom management is the biggest challenge they face on a day-to-day basis (Scott, 2017). These challenges also lead to teacher burnout, emotional stress, and exhaustion (Scott, 2017). However, in today's world of a COVID 19 pandemic and online remote learning, teaching brings new and bigger challenges.

Prior to COVID-19, classroom management was the biggest challenge facing special education teachers. During the interview process, two teachers stated they loved the challenges of teaching students with special needs. Being in the classroom for a few years, classroom management was a challenge they felt prepared to face. One teacher felt classroom management skills made him a better teacher and he loved the challenges because they varied from day to day. The beginning of remote teaching quickly changed this for both special education teachers and special education students.

The challenge of classroom management changed to the challenge of student engagement. Almost immediately, special education teachers became aware that student

engagement was going to be a bigger challenge than anything else. Even though they stated student engagement was a challenge, Teachers A and E both stated the challenge was “what got them out of the bed” every day.

The challenges special education teachers reported during the interview process were a contradiction to information uncovered in the literature review. According to Scott (2017), classroom management and student engagement were among the top reasons for teacher attrition. Conley and You (2017) also found classroom management was a key influence on special education teachers’ intention to leave teaching. Contrarily, this study found classroom management and student engagement was a reason to remain in the classroom. This extrinsic motivation factor was previously revealed as a reason to leave and therefore disconfirms knowledge gathered in the Literature Review.

Social Inequality and Injustice

The global pandemic is not the only major event affecting the world today. Schools across the country are being challenged to acknowledge and address the social inequities and injustice for students of color in public schools (Reddix, 2020). Teacher G has always felt a sense of duty to fight and advocate for black students. When asked what keeps him in the classroom, he stated the need to ensure all black girls and boys got the services they were entitled to receive. He expressed concern about the social injustice happening outside the classroom and how it affects the students inside the classroom. A colleague teaching at the same school expressed the same concern of social injustice. Teacher E stated his motivation for staying in the classroom has changed since he started

teaching years ago. He now notices the social injustices and feels like he needs to “do his part” and help in any way he can when his students are in school.

Herzberg et al., (1959) conducted a study that found extrinsic motivation factors, when present, tend to remove unhappiness from the work environment. He further explains when extrinsic factors are present, employees are not dissatisfied and when they are absent employees are dissatisfied. According to the two-factor theory, salary and job security, smaller class sizes, day-to-day challenges, and social inequality and injustice are all extrinsic factors. Since these extrinsic factors are present among some of the teachers in my study, no dissatisfaction is present.

Of the 12 special education teachers interviewed, 11 of them informed me they were returning to the classroom for the next school year. The teacher leaving at the end of the school year shared she will not be returning due to stress in the classroom and lack of administrative support. She also stated she is thinking about starting a doctorate program specializing in psychology. Prior research attributes stress and lack of administrative support as specific reasons for special educators’ attrition (Brunsting et al., 2014; Sutchter et al., 2016). Teachers not satisfied with the amount of administrative support they received were less likely to stay in their current job assignment and more likely to leave the teaching profession altogether (Grant, 2017). This conclusion is consistent with what was learned in the research process and revealed in the Literature Review. The two-factor theory states when intrinsic and extrinsic factors exist, employees are happy and less likely to leave their positions.

Limitations of the Study

Qualitative studies have advantages and disadvantages. Semistructured interviews can provide in-depth and insightful information. Rich information can be gathered from a relatively small number of participants. However, information gathered from interviews may not be generalized to other populations and participants need to be chosen carefully to avoid bias (Queiros et al., 2017).

One limitation of the study was all the participants were chosen from three schools on the north side of the focus city. The information gathered from the interviews may not be generalized to other schools located in other parts of the focus city, however, schools in other locations may find some similarities from the study. Another limitation of the study was the use of purposive or snowball sampling to recruit participants for the study. In this case, I was careful not to accept any participants I had a personal relationship with outside of the teaching arena. Since all the participants were unknown to me, this decreased the likelihood of personal bias and increased the opportunity to obtain truthful and honest answers to the interview questions. Finally, a personal bias of mine was that special education teacher retention is more difficult in predominantly black schools. This bias was addressed by choosing a predominantly black school with a high special education teacher retention rate.

Recommendations

The reasons many teachers leave special education jobs have been represented in the current literature and continue to support findings of previous studies (Vittekk, 2015). However, research that identifies intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence special

education teachers to remain in the teaching profession is limited. Though researchers have noted several reasons for high attrition rates in special education, research is not clear of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors that may increase special education teacher retention rates. Therefore, this study was necessary to support limited research which previously identified some factors that influence special education teacher retention and to identify motivation factors that have yet been discussed in current literature. As school districts are still struggling to fill vacated positions, this study was also needed to uncover possible special education teacher retention strategies that may cut down on teacher attrition thereby increasing the special education teacher retention rate.

This study of intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence special education teachers to remain in the classroom revealed the following factors: (a) student connections, (b) loyalty to coteachers, (c) loyalty to other special education teachers, (d) improvement to practice, (e) change the world, (f) honor to teach, (g) salary and job security, (h) smaller class sizes, (i) day-to-day challenges, and (j) social inequality and injustice. This study contributed to the limited research that has been conducted in the past. However, there are several recommendations for further studies of the reasons special education teachers choose to remain in the classroom.

One recommendation I have for further study is to broaden the study area to include other parts of the focus city. This study focused on the north side of the focus city; however, other areas may reveal some different reasons special education teachers stay. Just as the neighborhood demographics vary within a city, the teacher and student

demographics in schools vary in different parts of the city. Different demographics may lead to different reasons special education teachers stay.

The second recommendation I have for further study is to include suburban and rural schools in the focus area. There are significant differences between urban, suburban, and rural schools. These differences often vary within the same state. Variances can range from school and district budgets to resources available to special education teachers. Interviewing or surveying suburban and rural schools may bring additional factors into the research.

This study was conducted within three high schools located in an urban Midwestern city. Another recommendation would be to include elementary schools located in the same city. Special education teachers in high schools may value different things than elementary school teachers. Elementary school teachers may also have different experiences that make their needs different. It may be important to note if there are differences in the retention rates among special education teachers in high schools and elementary schools located in the same city.

This study included only one black male special education teacher. I would recommend conducting more studies among black male and female special education teachers. It would be important to note if there are any cultural and race differences that play a role in influencing retention.

Finally, this study was conducted during a major worldwide event; a global pandemic called COVID-19. I would recommend conducting a study with the same teachers when the pandemic is over. Ask the same interview questions and see if the

answers would remain the same. It would also be important to note any different factors that may emerge if the circumstances go back to the way they were before the pandemic.

Implications

Research from this study revealed the motivation factors special education teachers feel influence them to remain in the classroom in relation to the two-factor theory of motivation. The findings of this study may lead to a better understanding of what needs to be done to combat the teacher shortage as well as the high attrition rates among special education teachers. The findings of this study may also reveal important retention information for administrators, special education teachers, special education students and parents.

Administrators and District Leaders

Herzberg et al. (1959) determined employees are motivated by satisfying and dissatisfying experiences, called intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors are job related and generally affect one's input. They have a positive effect on morale, productivity, and job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1966). The presence of intrinsic factors also affects the overall efficiency of the organization. Herzberg stated extrinsic factors are external to the work itself, and other people control their size and whether or not they are granted. Extrinsic factors are non-job related and typically out of the control of the employees. The presence of hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction within a job and the absence of hygiene factors cause dissatisfaction. When intrinsic motivators exist, employees are more likely to experience job satisfaction and when extrinsic motivators exist employees are less likely to experience job dissatisfaction. This study revealed both

intrinsic and extrinsic factors that may help increase special education teacher retention rates. Increasing retention rates in schools has benefits for both the administrators and district leaders.

When teachers leave their positions, they must be replaced. According to Billingsley and Bettini (2019), administrators or districts can spend more than \$20,000 to replace teachers. These costs include separation costs, recruitment and hiring costs, and training costs. This is money that can be saved if administrators and district leaders can implement procedures and policies that influence teachers to stay. Information gained from this study may help administrators in school districts cut costs associated with replacing quality special education teachers.

Quality special education teachers are difficult to find. Scott (2016) stated there are challenges to recruiting and hiring credentialed teachers. Not only are fewer people becoming interested in teaching, but also the number of students enrolled in teaching programs are decreasing. In comparison to general education teachers, special education teacher enrollment is significantly lower (McDowell, 2017; Scott, 2016). When administrators and school districts have a difficult time finding qualified special education teachers, they forced to hire less experienced or novice teachers (Vittekk, 2015). In many instances, novice special education teachers are replaced with novice special education teachers (Gius, 2016). Many school districts also reported loosening their hiring standards and issuing emergency teaching certificates to unqualified teachers (Aragon, 2016). Information gained from this study may decrease the need to locate

qualified special education teachers and decrease the amount of unqualified special education teachers in the classrooms.

Special Education Teachers

Supports the participants reported they need from administrators and district leaders mirror much of the research information revealed in Chapter 2 and the Literature Review. Information from the Literature Review revealed special education teachers reported inadequate planning time, large amounts of paperwork, overwhelming caseloads, large class size, and student behavior challenges as major reasons for high levels of stress causing them to make the decision to leave teaching (Bettini et al., 2015; Biddle & Azano, 2016). Participants from the study reported that the following administrative supports are needed: (a) collaboration time with coteachers, (b) support when there is legal conflict or litigation, (c) mentor support for new teachers, (d) realistic expectations and deadlines for writing IEPs, (e) autonomy to run classrooms, (f) less paperwork, (g) recognition for successes, (h) professional development, (i) well-being checks, and (j) creative scheduling for more time to do paperwork. Additionally, participants would like district leaders to focus on the following supports: (a) programs to recruit special education teachers, (b) mental support for teacher burnout, (c) clear and honest communication, (d) properly equipped classrooms for special education students, (e) additional training for inexperienced principals, (f) resource toolboxes for teachers working with students with severe disabilities.

Special education teachers have responsibilities that are unique to the special education field. The findings of this study may provide insights for special education

teachers in terms of teachers' professional development, school induction and mentoring programming, and university teacher education programs. Special education teachers may also experience smaller class sizes, smaller caseloads, and less paperwork when schools are able to retain more special education teachers.

Special Education Students and Parents

Special education students also pay the price for special education teacher attrition rates. Currently, school districts are unable to adequately serve the special education population, due to a shortage of special education teachers (Bettini, Benedict et al., 2017). The special education teacher shortages make it nearly impossible to support the academic needs of all students with disabilities (Mason-Williams, 2015). The growing population of diverse learners may benefit from the study when administrators are aware of the factors that attract and retain qualified special education teachers. Retaining more special education teachers may increase the quality of instruction as research shows stability helps improve teacher effectiveness as well as teacher-parent relationships (Aragon, 2016). Special education students and their parents may benefit from the study when more special education teachers stay in the classrooms.

Recommendations for Practice

In addition to identifying the motivation factors that influence special education teachers remain in the classroom, I conducted an analysis of supports the teachers need from their administrators and district leaders. Although the interviewed teachers were generally content with their positions, they did have suggestions for things they would like to see happen from their administrators and district leaders to show commitment to

retaining special education teachers. Participants reported the following administrative supports are needed: (a) collaboration time with coteachers, (b) support when there is a legal conflict or litigation, (c) mentor support for new teachers, (d) realistic expectations and deadlines for writing IEPs, (e) autonomy to run classrooms, (f) less paperwork, (g) recognition for successes, (h) professional development, (i) well-being checks, and (j) creative scheduling for more time to do paperwork.

The supports reported in this section are consistent with Chapter 2 and the Literature Review. Research revealed lack of administrative support was a major contributor to teacher attrition. Administrative support includes professional development, mentoring support, collaboration opportunities, teacher resources, trust, and decision-making autonomy (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). It is not surprising these same supports are the same ones identified by the participants in my study.

Additionally, participants would like district leaders to focus on the following supports: (a) programs to recruit special education teachers, (b) mental support for teacher burnout, (c) clear and honest communication, (d) properly equipped classrooms for special education students, (e) additional training for inexperienced principals, and (f) resource toolboxes for teachers working with students with severe disabilities.

Conclusion

The special education teacher shortage is a major problem that affects every state in the nation. The teacher attrition rate is higher among special education teachers than any other school employees. Now, more than ever, it is important to understand why special education teachers are leaving and what can be done to make them stay in the

classrooms. Retaining special education teachers would benefit school administrators, district leaders, special education teachers, special education students and parents.

In this study, I found that special education teachers are willing to remain committed to the cause of educating special education students despite the challenges that come along with the field, as long as both intrinsic and extrinsic factors exist. Participants in the study shared both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence them to remain in the classroom. Many teachers stated they stay because of relationships they have with their students, coteachers, or department members. Some mentioned their commitment to improving their teaching strategies. They also shared their struggles along with the things administrators and district leaders can do to remove the negative aspects of special education, such as too much paperwork, limited planning time with coteachers, and large caseloads. Even though participants stated they would like more focus on extrinsic factors like more collaboration time with coteachers and more programs to recruit special education teachers, the presence of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that do exist for them is enough for them to remain in the classroom. This information is consistent with what was discussed in the Literature Review therefore, this study adds to the limited knowledge gained through prior research and confirms the two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg et al., 1959) can be a useful theory for determining intrinsic and extrinsic factors that lead to employee satisfaction.

References

- Abt, D. (2019). *Factors affecting teacher job satisfaction in Dixon County public schools* [Doctoral dissertation, Wilmington University]. Available from ProQuest.
- Acevedo, A. (2018). A personalistic appraisal of Maslow's needs theory of motivation: From humanistic psychology to integral humanism. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *148*, 741-763. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2970-0>
- Advance Illinois. (2020). *Illinois teacher shortage hits vulnerable students hardest*. <https://www.advanceillinois.org/datadesk-teachershortage/>
- Ali, F. (2017). *A qualitative narrative inquiry on teacher attrition* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Phoenix]. Available from ProQuest.
- Alshmemri, M., Shahwan-Akl, L., & Maude, P. (2017). Herzberg's two-factor theory. *Life Science Journal*, *14*(5), 12-16. <https://doi.org/10.7537/marslsj140517.03>
- Andrews, A., & Brown, J. L. (2015). Discrepancies in the ideal perceptions and the current experiences of special education teachers. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, *3*(6), 126-131. <https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v3i6.984>
- Aragon, S. (2016). *Teacher shortages: What we know*. Education Commission of the States. www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Teacher-Shortages-What-We-Know.pdf
- Aragon, S. (2018). *Targeted teacher recruitment: What is the issue and why does it matter?* Education Commission of the States. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED582978.pdf>
- Bettini, E., Benedict, A., Thomas, R., Kimmerling, J., Choi, N., & McLeskey, J. (2017). Cultivating a community of effective special education teachers: Local special

education administrators' roles. *Remedial and Special Education*, 38(2), 111-126.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932516664790>

Bettini, E., Cheyney, K., Wang, J., & Leko, C. (2015). Job design: An administrator's guide to supporting and retaining special educators. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 50(4), 221-225. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053451214532346>

Bettini, E., Jones, N., Brownell, M., Conroy, M., Park, Y., Leite, W., & Benedict, A. (2017). Workload manageability among novice special and general educators: Relationships with emotional exhaustion and career intentions. *Remedial and Special Education*, 38(4), 246-256. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932517708327>

Biddle, C., & Azano, A. (2016). Constructing and reconstructing the "rural school problem" A century of rural education research. *Review of Research in Education*, 40(1), 298-325. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X16667700>

Billingsley, B., & Bettini, E. (2019). Special education teacher attrition and retention: A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 89, 697-744. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654319862495>

Billingsley, B., Crockett, J., & Kamman, M. (2014). Recruiting and retaining teachers and administrators in special education. In P. Sindelar, E. Mcray, M. Brownell, & B. Kraft (Eds.), *Handbook of research on special education teacher preparation* (pp. 94-108). Routledge.

Boone, L. (2018). *Staying put: An analysis of teacher retention in a rural, low-performing, high poverty school district in Northeastern North Carolina* [Doctoral dissertation, Gardner-Webb University]. Available from ProQuest.

- Brownell, M., & Sindelar, P. (2016). *Preparing and retaining effective special education teachers: Systemic solutions for addressing teacher shortages* [Policy brief]. <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CEEDAR-GTL-Shortages-Brief.pdf>
- Brunsting, N., Sreckovic, M., & Lane, K. (2014). Special education teacher burnout: A synthesis of research from 1979 to 2013. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 37(4), 681-711. <https://doi.org/10.1353/etc.2014.0032>
- Burkhart, M. E. (2018). *An examination of the relationship between level of job satisfaction and intention to remain in the profession among special education teachers in two small city settings* (Publication No. 2128024840) [Doctoral dissertation, Drexel University]. Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global..
- Cancio, E., Larsen, R., Mathur, S., Estes, M., & Johns, B. (2018). Special education teacher stress: Coping strategies. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 41(4), 457-481. <https://doi.org/10.1353/etc.2018.0025>
- Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). *Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it*. Learning Policy Institute. https://healthyplacesindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/2017_learning_policy_inst_teacher_turnover.pdf
- Cerda, S. (2017). *Teacher retention in rural schools nested in large districts: An ethnographic qualitative study* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley]. Available from ProQuest.

- Chu, H., & Kuo, T. (2015). Testing Herzberg's two-factor theory in educational settings in Taiwan. *Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning*, 11(1), 54-65.
<http://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/91e1/0049907ef5d280732081a0868c92ed112aab.pdf>
- Collins, L., Sweigart, C., Landrum, T., & Cook, B. (2017). Navigating common challenges and pitfalls in the first years of special education. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 49(4), 213-222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004005991668>
- Conley, S., & You, S. (2017). Key influences on special education teachers' intentions to leave: The effects of administrative support and teacher team efficacy in a mediational model. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 45(3), 521-540. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143215608859>
- Costello, R., & Welch, S. (2014). A qualitative analysis of faculty and student perceptions of effective online class communities using Herzberg's motivator-hygiene factors. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 15(4), 15-24.
- Cowan, J., Goldhaber, D., Hayes, K., & Theobald, R. (2016). Missing elements in the discussion of teacher shortages. *Educational Researcher*, 45(8), 460-462.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X16679145>
- Creswell, J. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Sage.
- Creswell, J. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Crisci, A., Sepe, E., & Malafrente, P. (2019). What influences teachers' job satisfaction

and how to improve, develop and reorganize the school activities associated with them. *Quality & Quantity*, 53, 2403-2419. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-018-0749-y>

Crouch, M., & McKenzie, H. (2006). The logic of small samples in interview-based qualitative research. *Social Science Information*, 45(4), 18.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018406069584>

Cunningham, K. A. (2018). *Special education teachers' perspectives regarding needed support to retain special educators* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University].

Available from ProQuest.

DeMonte, J. (2016, February 4). The leaky pipeline: Why don't new teachers teach *AIR* [Blog post]. <http://educationpolicy.air.org/blog/leaky-pipeline-why-dont-new-teachers-teach>

[teachers-teach](http://educationpolicy.air.org/blog/leaky-pipeline-why-dont-new-teachers-teach)

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Dewey, J., Sindelar, P., Bettini, E., Boe, E., Rosenberg, M., & Leko, C. (2017).

Explaining the decline in special education teacher employment from 2005–2012.

Exceptional Children, 83(3), 315-329.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402916684620>

Dhuey, E., & Lipscomb, S. (2013). Funding special education by total district enrollment:

Advantages, disadvantages, and policy considerations. *Education*, 8, 315-331.

https://doi.org/10.1162/EDFP_a_00098

Djonko-Moore, C. (2016). An exploration of teacher attrition and mobility in high

- poverty racially segregated schools. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 19(5), 1063-1087. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2015.1013458>
- Escardibul, J., & Afcha, S. (2017). Determinants of the job satisfaction of PhD holders: An analysis by gender, employment sector and type of satisfaction in Spain. *Higher Education*, 74(5), 855-875. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-016-0081-1>
- Evans, C. (2017). *Principals', assistant principals', and teachers' perceptions of key factors influencing teacher attrition and retention* [Doctoral dissertation, Mississippi College].
- Farris, N. (2017). *Beginning teachers speak: How administrators can support new teacher retention* [Doctoral dissertation, Aurora University]. Available from ProQuest.
- Forman, L., McKenzie, S., & Ritter, G. (2018). *Arkansas teacher supply*. University of Arkansas Office for Education Policy. <http://www.officeforeducationpolicy.org/category/oep-publications/arkansas-education-reports/>
- Friedman, B. (2014). Special education shortage. WTTW News. <https://chicagotonight.wttw.com/2014/01/13/special-education-shortage>
- Fusco, M. (2017). Burnout factories: The challenge of retaining great teachers in charter schools. *Kappan*, 98(8), 26-30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721717708291>
- Gius, M. (2016). Teacher job satisfaction in charter schools. *Journal of Economics and Economic Education Research*, 17(2), 88-96.
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for*

qualitative research. Aldine Publishing.

- Goldhaber, D., Krieg, J., Theobald, R., & Brown, N. (2015). Refueling the stem and special education pipelines. *Kappan*, 56-62.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721715619921>
- Gordon, S. (2018). *Leadership's role in teachers' commitment and retention* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. <https://files.Walden.08990/.pdf>
- Grant, M. (2017). A case study of factors that influenced the attrition or retention of two first-year special education teachers. *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals*, 11(1), 77-84. <http://aasep.org/aasep-publications/journal-of-the-american-academy-of-special-education-professionals-jaasep/latest-archived-journals-of-the-american-academy-of-special-education-professionals/index.html>
- Greene, J. I. (2017). *Acquisition and retention of skilled employees for industries in Giles County, Tennessee* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. Available from ProQuest.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903>
- Hagaman, J., & Casey, K. (2018). Teacher attrition in special education: Perspectives from the field. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 41(4), 277-291.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406417725797>
- Hammonds, T. (2017). High teacher turnover: Strategies school leaders implement to

retain teachers in urban elementary schools. *National Teacher Education Journal*, 10(2), 63-72.

Heim, J. (2016, September 14). America has a teacher shortage and a new study says it's getting worse. *Washington Post*.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/america-has-a-teacher-shortage-and-a-new-study-says-its-getting-worse/2016/09/14/d5de1cee-79e8-11e6-beac-57a4a412e93a_story.html

Herzberg, F. (1966). *Work and the nature of man*. World Publishing Company.

Herzberg, F. (1968). One more time: How do we motivate employees? *Harvard Business Review*, 46(3), 53-62.
http://www.prososis.com/uploads/2/9/5/6/2956750/herzburg_article.pdf

Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (1959). *The motivation to work*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Holdheide, L., & DeMonte, J. (2016). Critical shortages in special education teachers: Sound familiar. *American Institutes for Research*. Retrieved from
<https://www.air.org/resource/critical-shortages-special-education-teachers-sound-familiar>

Hughes, A., Matt, J., & O'Reilly, F. (2015). Principal support is imperative to the retention of teachers in hard-to-staff schools. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 3(1), 129-134. <https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v3il.622>

Hughes, M. (2019). *A quantitative study of job satisfaction among special education teachers* [Doctoral dissertation, Northcentral University]. Available from

ProQuest.

Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology*. George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Iivari, N., Sharma, S., & Ventä-Olkkonen, L. (2020). Digital transformation of everyday life – How COVID-19 pandemic transformed the basic education of the young generation and why information management research should care? *International Journal of Information Management*, 55(1), 1-6.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102183>

Illinois' educator pipeline. (2019). https://media.advanceillinois.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/04001139/AdvanceIllinois_SWI-PrintReport_2019_ExecutiveSummary.pdf

Illinois State Board of Education. (2020). *Education licensure: Unfilled positions, 2021*. <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ELUnfilledPositions.aspx>

James-LaMonica, T. (2015). *Factors influencing the retention of special education teachers of students with ASD* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/pqdtglobal/docview/1707690871/fulltextPDF/5E9B7A26F80D45DFPQ/1?accountid=14872>

Jokikokko, K., Uitto, M., Deketelaere, A., & Estola, E. (2017). A beginning teacher in emotionally intensive micropolitical situations. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 81, 61-70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2016.11.001>

Katsikea, E., Theodosiou, M., & Morgan, R. (2015). Why people quit: Explaining

- employee turnover intentions among export sales managers. *International Business Review*, 24(3), 367-379. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2014.08.009>
- Kelly, S. (2004). An event history analysis of teacher attrition: Salary, teacher, tracking, and socially disadvantaged schools. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 72(3), 195-220. <https://doi.org/10.3200/jexe.72.3.195-220>
- Khanna, V. (2017). Measuring job satisfaction of academicians using Herzberg theory. *Delhi Business Review*, 18(2), 75-86. http://www.delhibusinessreview.org/V18n2/dbr_v18n2f.pdf
- Kose, L. (2013). Challenges of charter schools with special education: Issues of concern for charter school authorizers and service providers. *Mid-Atlantic Education Review*, 1(1), 36-45.
- Kotni, V., & Karumuri, V. (2018). Application of Herzberg two-factor theory model for motivating retail salesforce. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 17(1), 24-42.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.
- Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370-396. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>
- Mason-Williams, L. (2015). Unequal opportunities: A profile of the distribution of special education teachers. *Exceptional Children*, 8(2), 247-262. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402914551737>
- McClelland, D. (1965). Toward a theory of motive acquisition. *American Psychologist*, 20(5), 321-333. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0022225>
- McClelland, D. (1985). *Human motivation*. Scott, Foreman.

- McClelland, D., Atkinson, J., Clark, R., & Lowell, E. (1953). *Motives in fantasy action and society*. Van Nostrand.
- McDowell, J. (2017). Burning out: The effect of burnout on special education. *Brigham Young University Education and Law Journal*, 2017(1), 99-123. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1394&context=elj>
- Mertler, C. (2016). Should I stay or should I go? Understanding teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and perceptions of retention among Arizona teachers. *International Research in Higher Education*, 1(2), 34-45. <https://doi.org/10.5430/irhe.v1n2p34>
- Miller, M., Huberman, A., & Saldana, J. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Sage.
- Moore, L., Rosenblatt, K., Badgett, K., & Eldridge, J. (2018). Urban Texas teacher retention: Unbelievable empirical factors tied to urban teacher persistence and retention. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal*, 9(2), 2923-2931. <http://infonomics-society.org/wp-content/uploads/licej/published-papers/volume-9-2018/Urban-Texas-Teacher-Retention.pdf>
- Morris, N. (2017). *Perceptions of novice elementary teachers regarding retention* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. Available from ProQuest.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage.
- National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services. (n.d.). *About the shortage*. <https://specialshortages.org/about-the-shortage/>

- Okeke, C., & Mtyuda, P. (2017). Teacher job dissatisfaction: Implications for teacher sustainability and social transformation. *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, 19(1), 54-68. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jtes-2017-0004>
- Olson, S. (2017). *Special education teacher retention in small schools* (Doctoral dissertation). https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/ece_diss/35
- Oluwatayo, A. (2015). Employee architect's perceptions of human resource practices and their job satisfaction. *Built Environment Project and Asset Management*, 51(1), 89. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/loi/bepam>
- Osbourn, J. (2018). *Factors that influence k-8 educators in regard to teacher retention* [Doctoral dissertation, Lindenwood University]. Available from ProQuest.
- Pavlenko, A. (2002). Narrative study: Whose story is it, anyway? *TESOL*, 36(2), 213-218. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588332>
- Queiros, A., Faria, D., & Almeida, F. (2017). Strengths and limitations of qualitative and quantitative research methods. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 3 (9), 369-387. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.887089>
- Ramlall, S. (2004). A review of employee motivation theories and their implications for employee retention within organizations. *The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge*, 5(1/2), 52-63.
- Ravitch, S., & Carl, N. (2015). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. Sage Publications.
- Raymond, C. (2018). *Case study exploring teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention issues in a large urban Oklahoma school district* [Doctoral dissertation,

- Northeastern University]. Available from ProQuest.
- Reddix, R. (2020). A new era for social change and community engagement in higher education. *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*, 12 (3), 8-10.
- Reeve, J. (2016). A grand theory of motivation: Why not? *Motivation and Emotion*, 40, 31-35. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-015-9538-2>
- Rubin, H., & Rubin, I. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Ryan, R., & Deci, E. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54-67. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020>
- Samuels, C. (2016). Number of students in US special education ticks upward. *Ed Week*. <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2016/04/20/number-of-usstudents-in-special-education.html>
- Sankar, M. (2015). Impact of hygiene factors on employee retention: Experimental study on paper industry. *Indian Journal of Management Science*, V (1), 59-63. http://www.scholarshub.net/ijms/vol5/issue1/Paper_07.pdf
- Schuck, R., & Lambert, R. (2020). Am I doing enough? Special educators' experiences with emergency remote teaching in spring 2020. *Education Sciences*. 10(320), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci10110320>
- Scott, L. (2016). Where are all the black male special education teachers? *Perspectives on Urban Education*, 13(1), 42-48. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ1103886>

- Scott, L., & Alexander, Q. (2018). Strategies for recruiting and retaining black male special education teachers. *Remedial and Special Education, 00*(0), 1-12.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932517732636>
- Scott, T. (2017). Training classroom management with preservice special education teachers: Special education challenges in a general education world. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 40*(2), 97–101.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406417699051>
- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. Teachers College Press.
- Shaw, T. (2016). *How does participating in a teacher leadership program impact secondary teachers' retention, instructional capacity, and influence on other teachers* [Doctoral dissertation, Youngstown State University]. Available from ProQuest.
- Singh, R. (2016). The impact of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators on employee engagement in information organizations. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science, 57*(2), 197-206. <https://doi.org/10.12783/issn.2328-2967/57/2/11>
- Smith, M., & Davey, M. (2019, October 31). Chicago teachers' strike, longest in decades, ends. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/31/us/chicago-cps-teachers-strike.html>
- Stelly, D. (2020). *Exploring novice alternatively certified elementary school teachers' perceptions of their preparedness to teach: A basic qualitative research study*

- [Doctoral dissertation, Texas A & M University]. Available from ProQuest.
- Story, P., Stasson, M., Mahoney, J., & Hart, J. (2008). A two-factor model of achievement motivation. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 36(5), 707-708. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2008.36.5.707>
- Sutcher, L., Darling-Hammond, L., & Carver-Thomas, D. (2016). *A coming crisis in teaching? Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S.* [Report, Learning Policy Institute]. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/coming-crisis-teaching>
- Tehseen, S. (2015). Factors influencing teachers' performance and retention. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(1), 233-244. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n1p233>
- Thomas, G. (2013). *How to do your research project: A guide for students in education and applied social sciences* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- Vitteck, J. (2015). Promoting special educator teacher retention: A critical review of the literature. *Sage Open*, 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015589994>
- Williams, J., & Dikes, C. (2015). The implications of demographic variables as related to burnout among a sample of special education teachers. *Education*, 135(3), 337-345. https://research.phoenix.edu/sites/default/files/publication-files/EDU%20135.3_complete.pdf#page=73
- Wilson, A. (2015). Factors that affect job satisfaction and intention to leave of allied health professionals in a metropolitan hospital. *Australian Health Review*, 39(3), 290-294. <https://doi.org/10.1071/AH14198>

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Sage.

Zhang, G., & Zeller, N. (2016). A longitudinal investigation of the relationship between teacher preparation and teacher retention. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 43(2), 73-92.

Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. How many years have you taught in Special Education?
2. How long have you been here at this school?
3. How would you describe the school demographics? Student population?
4. Over the years, what factors have influenced you to remain in your current special education teaching position?
5. When circumstances get challenging in your position, what factors influence you most to remain? Why?
6. Has that most influential factor changed throughout the course of your career? Why or why not?
7. What are the most important factors you think school administrators should focus on in order to retain special education teachers? Why?
8. What are the most important factors you think district administrators should focus on in order to retain special education teachers? Why?
9. What additional factors have influenced you to stay in your current position as a special education teacher?

Appendix B: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors That Retain Special Education Teachers

Table B1*Intrinsic Factors That Retain Special Education Teachers*

Intrinsic factor	Example quote
Student connections	Teacher J: "It would be like the relationship with the students because you could spend an abundance of time with them. And then the relationship with the students, you grow very close, which is rewarding."
Loyalty to coteachers	Teacher E: "I really like co-teaching. I've been lucky to have good people to co-teach with."
Loyalty to other special education teachers	Teacher F: "I really think it's the people I work with. I love the people I work with because I can go to them."
Improvement to practice	Teacher C: "No matter what, my quest is to better myself professionally, continually learn and be better, and be better able to serve the students."
Change the world	Teacher K: "It's always been in me to speak up for the powerless and look out for the students who are often overlooked. We are working our butts off, but it's not for nothing. It's definitely bringing some kind of change into the world."
Honor to teach	Teacher C: "And so what gets me up and gets me going on a day to day basis is the fact that I have this great honor, the education of this person."

Table B2*Extrinsic Factors That Retain Special Education Teachers*

Extrinsic factor	Example quote
Job security/money	Teacher D: "I have job security with Teach for America. That makes it very hard to find a reason to leave right now."
Smaller class sizes	Teacher L: "Having the smaller teacher-student ratio as well as like just generally smaller amount of students on our caseload that we are specifically responsible for allows us to get to know them better and feel more effective at meeting their needs."
Social inequality and injustice	Teacher G: "The current state of society has influenced me to stay. Just knowing all of the things that young black girls and boys are up against has definitely motivated me to continue this work. Some things such as racism, police brutality, discrimination, poverty; just inequalities across the board has definitely motivated me to stay where I am."
Day-to-day challenges	Teacher A: "I enjoy the particular challenges and possibilities of sped work."