Journal of Education, Learning, and Management (JELM)

ISSN: 3079-2541 (Online)

Volume 2 Issue 1, (2025)

https://doi.org/10.69739/jelm.v2i1.409

https://journals.stecab.com/jelm

Published by
Stecab Publishing

Research Article

Bridging Knowledge and Practice: Special Education Teachers' Role in Individualized Education Plan Development

*[1]Rolando M. Concepcion, [2]Donato O. Abaya, [2]Aiken Dale K. Magaya

About Article

Article History

Submission: February 12, 2025
Acceptance : March 16, 2025
Publication : March 27, 2025

Keywords

Inclusive Education, Individualized Education Plan, Special Education Teachers, Teacher Knowledge, Teaching Practices

About Author

[1] NIUG Elementary School, Sto. Niño District, Philippines

[2] Ifugao State University, Philippines

Contact @ Rolando M. Concepcion
rolando.concepcion@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent of knowledge and practices of Special Education Teachers (SPETs) in developing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) in selected schools in Cagayan Valley, Region II, Philippines. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were gathered from 40 SPETs including receiving teachers through a validated survey questionnaire and content analysis of actual IEPs. Results indicated that SPETs demonstrated a high level of knowledge in IEP development, particularly in the application of interventions, information gathering, and planning. However, reviewing and revising IEPs were identified as areas needing improvement. Similarly, the extent of practice in IEP preparation was high, with teachers consistently engaging in all key phases, though challenges remained in collaboration with specialists and systematic review processes. A strong positive correlation was found between teachers' knowledge and practices, emphasizing the importance of continuous professional development. These findings highlight the need for structured training programs, administrative support, and collaborative mechanisms to enhance IEP preparation and implementation, ensuring improved learning outcomes for students with special needs.

Citation Style:

Concepcion, R. M., Abaya, D. O., & Magaya, A. D. K. (2025). Bridging Knowledge and Practice: Special Education Teachers' Role in Individualized Education Plan Development. *Journal of Education, Learning, and Management, 2*(1), 92-99. https://doi.org/10.69739/jelm.v2i1.409

1. INTRODUCTION

Special education teachers (SPETs) play a critical role in designing and implementing instructional plans tailored to the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Among their key responsibilities is the development of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a comprehensive document outlining a child's learning needs, the services provided by the school, and the strategies for measuring progress. The IEP serves as a fundamental tool in ensuring inclusive, student-centered learning that promotes academic and social development (Jačova *et al.*, 2018). However, the preparation of an IEP is a complex and intricate task requiring collaboration among educators, parents, and specialists to ensure its effectiveness (Smith & Brownell, 2017). The quality of an IEP is directly linked to the success of a student's learning experience, making it a crucial element of special education (Contreras, 2021).

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are developed following a structured process that includes gathering relevant student data, assessing performance levels, and drafting a customized learning plan. The initial stage involves the collection and review of student records, including medical reports, developmental assessments, and standardized test results (Downing, 2010). Additionally, interviews with parents, teachers, counselors, and students provide valuable insights into the child's unique needs. This phase is followed by a performance level determination, which includes preliminary and detailed assessments through criterion-referenced tests to establish the student's strengths, weaknesses, and instructional needs (Browder *et al.*, 2011). The final drafting of the IEP includes defining specific developmental areas such as cognitive, social, motor, and language skills ensuring that interventions align with the student's age, disability, and learning goals (Rosas, & Winterman, 2014).

Despite the established guidelines for IEP development, numerous studies have identified significant challenges in their preparation and implementation. Research indicates that many IEPs lack specificity, measurability, and relevance to natural learning contexts (Boavida *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, Akçin (2022) highlights difficulties faced by SPETs, including the formulation of criterion-referenced tests, selection of instructional strategies, and drafting of observable and measurable objectives. Poorly written IEPs can hinder student progress, leading to ineffective interventions and missed learning opportunities (Mirari, 2022). Moreover, Britton and Spencer (2020) and Wongwatkit (2017) emphasize that effective planning and personalized learning are essential in optimizing student outcomes, underscoring the detrimental impact of inadequate IEPs.

A key factor contributing to the challenges in IEP development is the limited knowledge and training among SPETs. Studies have revealed that many special education teachers, particularly in the Philippines, have not received adequate training in special needs education, affecting their ability to create and implement high-quality IEPs (Allam & Martin, 2021). Kunter (2013) further asserts that teacher knowledge significantly influences instructional quality and student learning, reinforcing the need for professional development in this area. Additionally, Buli-Holmberg and Jeyaprathaban (2016) identify a lack of expertise among general educators in adapting instruction for students with special needs, highlighting the necessity of building teacher competencies for effective IEP implementation.

As such, this study aimed to assess the knowledge and practices by SPETs in the development of IEPs at selected schools in Cagayan Valley, Region II, Philippines. Specifically, it sought to evaluate the extent of teacher training, the quality of IEP content, and the level of collaboration among stakeholders in the IEP process. By identifying gaps in knowledge and practice, this research aimed to provide recommendations for enhancing the development and implementation of IEPs.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to improve the quality of special education services. Findings from this research would inform teacher training programs, ensuring that SPETs acquire the necessary skills to develop effective IEPs. Additionally, it would emphasize the importance of collaborative practices, encouraging schools to adopt more inclusive and participatory approaches in IEP formulation. Through these efforts, this study may contribute to the broader goal of enhancing the educational experiences and outcomes of students with special needs, aligning with national and international standards for inclusive education.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The development of Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) for students with educational needs is a complex and multifaceted process. Special education teachers play a critical role in this process, requiring a comprehensive understanding of information gathering, analysis, intervention planning, and review. This literature review examines existing research findings related to the knowledge and practices of special education teachers in these areas and highlighting gaps in the current literature.

2.1. Knowledge and Preparation of Special Education Teachers

A significant body of research emphasizes the need for adequate preparation among special education and general education teachers to meet the diverse needs of students with emotional disabilities. Gable *et al.* (2012) found that many teachers reported insufficient training in evidence-based practices, which directly impacts their ability to gather and analyze information effectively for IEP development. The findings indicate a pressing need for ongoing professional development focused on data analysis and intervention planning to enhance the effectiveness of IEPs.

Similarly, Hendricks (2011) explored the self-reported knowledge of special education teachers working with students with autism. The results showed that teachers who felt more knowledgeable about effective practices were better equipped to implement them, further underscoring the importance of targeted professional development in this area. This suggests that enhancing teacher knowledge is critical for the successful planning and execution of IEPs.

2.2. Perceptions and Implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI)

The implementation of a multitiered Response to Intervention (RTI) framework is another critical aspect influencing the

practices of special education teachers. Swanson *et al.* (2012) revealed that teachers' perceptions of RTI significantly affected their instructional practices and IEP development. The qualitative data gathered highlighted the necessity for teachers to gather and analyze student performance data systematically. Moreover, Greenfield *et al.* (2010) emphasized the importance of using data to inform instructional planning and progress monitoring, reinforcing the idea that effective data utilization leads to more targeted interventions and improved IEP outcomes.

2.3. High-Leverage Practices and Data-Driven Decision Making

The concept of High-Leverage Practices (HLPs) is also pivotal in the context of special education. The identification and integration of HLPs into teacher preparation programs can enhance educators' abilities to analyze student data and plan appropriate interventions (Council for Exceptional Children, 2017). These practices serve as a foundation for effective teaching strategies that directly impact the information gathering and planning processes essential for IEP development.

Moreover, Thomas and Dykes (2011) highlighted the role of systematic transition planning within the RTI framework, suggesting that teachers can utilize tiered interventions to gather and analyze information for comprehensive transition plans. This approach is crucial for ensuring that IEPs not only address current educational needs but also facilitate successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

2.4. Collaborative Planning and Technology Integration

The collaborative approach to planning IEPs is another essential facet discussed in the literature. Bishop *et al.* (2010) pointed out that involving a team of educators in the planning process enhances the quality of IEPs, particularly for students with complex communication needs. This collaborative model ensures thorough information gathering and analysis, which can lead to more effective interventions tailored to individual student needs.

Furthermore, the integration of technology in special education is emerging as a valuable tool for enhancing information gathering and analysis. Berry and Gravelle (2018) explored the use of smartwatches as assistive technologies, indicating that such innovations can aid special education teachers in tracking student progress and planning responsive interventions. This highlights the potential for technology to support data-driven decision-making in the development of IEPs.

Despite the wealth of research on these topics, several gaps remain. For instance, while the literature emphasizes the importance of professional development and knowledge enhancement, there is limited understanding of the specific content and formats that would most effectively improve teachers' abilities to gather and analyze information for IEPs. Future research could focus on developing and evaluating targeted professional development programs aimed at enhancing teachers' skills in data analysis and intervention planning.

Additionally, while collaboration between special and general education teachers is recognized as vital, studies exploring the barriers to effective collaboration and practical strategies to overcome these challenges are scarce. Research that investigates the dynamics of collaborative planning in diverse educational contexts could provide valuable insights into improving IEP quality.

Finally, the integration of technology in special education is still a developing field. Further studies examining the specific technologies that enhance information gathering and intervention planning, as well as the training required for effective implementation, are warranted.

The literature reflects a growing recognition of the importance of effective information gathering, analysis, and planning interventions in the preparation of IEPs among special education teachers. While significant strides have been made in understanding these processes, further research is needed to address existing knowledge gaps and explore innovative approaches to enhancing teacher preparation and collaboration in special education.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study used the descriptive-correlational research design. According to Lappe (2000), the aim of descriptive-correlational research is to describe the relationship among variables rather than to infer cause and effect relationships. Descriptive-correlational studies are useful for describing how one phenomenon is related to another in situations where the researcher has no control over the independent variable. In this study, this design was utilized in describing the extent of knowledge and practices of the SPETs in the preparation of IEPs. The study further looked into the relationships among these variables.

3.2. Research Locale and Respondents

This study was conducted in selected schools in Cagayan Valley, Region II, Philippines. These schools cater to Learners of Special Educational Needs (LSENs) having all kinds of disabilities. The participants of this study were the SPETs and receiving teachers of the selected schools who have at least one year of teaching experience in special education. Substitute teachers were not taken as they were not yet permanent.

3.3. Data Gathering Procedure

Protocol like permission from the office of the Public Schools District Supervisor and the School Principals were sought for the conduct of the study. During the administration of the questionnaire, informed consent was properly discussed with respondents for their approval and willingness to participate in the study. Likewise, the purpose of the study was explained and what the participants needed to do. Utmost care was observed to secure most accurate and complete response. Respondents were assisted during the course of data gathering about their questions and clarifications on some of the items in the questionnaire.

Upon completion of the questionnaire, copies of the respondents' utilized IEPs were collected. The researchers thoroughly analyzed the content of the IEPs to verify the results of the study.

3.4. Data Gathering Instruments

The data gathering instrument used in the study was a self-made survey questionnaire. It is comprised of two parts:

Part I - was used to determine the extent of knowledge of the SPETs in developing the IEPs. It is comprised of 38 indicators categorized under four phases: Information Gathering and Analysis (12 items), Planning of Interventions (12), Application of the Interventions (10) and Reviewing the Plan (4).

Part II - was used to determine the extent of practices of the SPETs in developing IEPs. It is comprised of 38 indicators developed vis-à-vis the knowledge indicators.

The questionnaire underwent content validation by three experts in the field of special education with good track record in research. A Content Validity Index (CVI) of 1.0 was yielded from the validation process which exceeds the acceptable CVI of .80 recommended by Davis (1992) when validation is conducted. Likewise, reliability coefficient of .84 was computed using Cronbach's Alpha, which indicates that the instrument was good.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Extent of Knowledge of Special Education Teachers (SPETs) in Developing Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

The findings in Table 1 reveal that SPETs demonstrate a high level of knowledge in developing IEPs with an overall weighted mean of 3.87 (SD = 0.89). Among the four domains assessed, the highest mean score was observed in Application of Interventions (M = 3.93, SD = 0.90), indicating that teachers are highly proficient in implementing planned strategies to address students' learning needs. Similarly, teachers exhibited strong competency in Information Gathering and Analysis (M = 3.90, SD = 0.85) and Planning of Interventions (M = 3.91, SD = 0.85), reflecting their ability to collect relevant student data and develop appropriate instructional approaches. However, the domain Review of the Plan (M = 3.75, SD = 0.96) had the lowest mean, suggesting that SPETs may face challenges in evaluating and revising IEPs over time.

The results imply that while SPETs possess a solid foundation in IEP development, additional support may be required to enhance their ability to critically review and update IEPs. The relatively high standard deviations across all domains indicate variability in SPETs' knowledge levels, suggesting that targeted professional development programs could help bridge gaps. School administrators may consider implementing structured feedback mechanisms and collaborative review processes to strengthen teachers' capacity in refining IEPs. Additionally, fostering collaboration among SPETs, general educators, and specialists may further improve the effectiveness of individualized learning plans. These findings reinforce existing literature on the critical role of teacher competency in IEP development. Studies by İlik and Sari (2017) and Einhorn (2022) highlight that well-trained special education (SPED) teachers possess advanced skills in designing and executing IEPs, which is consistent with the high knowledge levels reported in this study. This underscores the notion that expertise in IEP development is not only a function of experience but is also significantly influenced by specialized training in curriculum adaptation, progress monitoring, and individualized instructional planning.

However, despite the demonstrated proficiency in IEP development, challenges persist, particularly concerning the administrative workload associated with IEP documentation. Similar to the findings of Kartika *et al.* (2018), the bureaucratic demands of IEP preparation remain a significant concern for educators. The intricate paperwork involved can consume more than 10% of a teacher's working time—often exceeding the time allocated for direct student assessments and parental communication. This administrative burden is exacerbated by the complexity of IEP forms, stringent documentation requirements, and tight submission deadlines, leading to increased stress and potential burnout among SPETs. The necessity to balance instructional responsibilities with extensive documentation may inadvertently divert attention from direct student engagement, which is crucial for personalized learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the importance of continuous professional development in mitigating these challenges is well-documented. Research by Blasko *et al.* (2024) and Mangongon (2023) underscored the importance of professional development, noting that teachers who receive extensive training in special education policies and instructional strategies tend to perform better in IEP development. Professional development programs that focus on streamlining IEP documentation, utilizing assistive technologies, and implementing evidence-based instructional strategies can enhance teacher efficacy. Additionally, structured support systems, such as mentorship programs and administrative assistance, can alleviate the workload burden, enabling teachers to dedicate more time to student-centered instructional practices.

These insights underscore the need for ongoing policy reforms aimed at reducing the administrative load on SPETs while reinforcing their instructional capacity through targeted training. These improvements may contribute to better learning outcomes and holistic development for students with special needs, aligning with the overarching goals of inclusive education.

Table 1. Summary of Extent of Knowledge of the Special Education Teachers in Developing IEP

Knowledge in Developing IEP	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Information Gathering and Analysis	3.90	.85	High Knowledge
Planning of Interventions	3.91	.85	High Knowledge
Application of Interventions	3.93	.90	High Knowledge
Review of the Plan	3.75	.96	High Knowledge
Over-all Weighted Mean	3.87	.89	High Knowledge

4.2. Extent of Practices of the SPET in Developing Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

The findings presented in Table 2 below summarize the extent to which respondents practice the development of IEPs. Results indicate that all four key domains—information gathering and analysis, planning of interventions, application of interventions, and review of the plan—are "highly practiced," with a grand mean of 3.64 (SD = 1.22). This suggests that special education teachers (SPETs) systematically engage in all crucial stages of IEP development, ensuring that students with special needs receive tailored interventions and continuous progress monitoring.

Among the four domains, "Information Gathering and Analysis" (M = 3.79, SD = 1.00) emerges as the most highly practiced. This highlights the teachers' emphasis on collecting relevant data regarding students' strengths, weaknesses, and specific needs before crafting an IEP. Specifically, SPETs highly practice evaluating learners' academic, social, and physical abilities and actively involve parents and students in meetings and discussions before setting goals. Additionally, parents are required to coordinate the child's initial assessments and provide comprehensive input on their child's capabilities, maximizing their participation in the process.

The active involvement of parents in information gathering positively influences the planning phase. Fish (2008) found that parents generally have favorable perceptions of IEP meetings, especially when educators value their input and treat them as equal decision-makers. Similarly, Kurth *et al.* (2020) emphasize that parental involvement significantly predicts satisfaction with their child's school experience, particularly during planning. Content analysis of actual IEPs confirms that parent interviews are conducted and documented. These IEPs provide detailed descriptions of learners' cognitive, behavioral, social, and language domains, focusing on strengths and weaknesses. However, analysis and decision-making could be improved with greater participation from the entire IEP team.

Despite these strengths, areas for improvement remain. SPETs need to enhance their practices in defining and assigning specific roles to the learning team at the outset of IEP development. Challenges include effectively orienting parents, general education teachers, and other members about their roles in planning and involving specialists in the learning team. In a review of the actual IEPs reveals that orientation or briefing sessions for parents are often omitted, though parental commitments to home-based tasks appear in some cases. Additionally, specialists' participation in data gathering and analysis is notably absent. Typically, only limited test results reflect a specialist's involvement, and these specialists are often private practitioners rather than school-affiliated professionals. The absence of resident specialists, such as developmental psychologists or physicians, places a financial burden on parents who must seek private assessments, further hindering collaboration between SPETs and specialists in the IEP team.

The second most highly practiced domain, "Planning of Interventions" (M = 3.72, SD = 1.12), indicates that SPETs invest considerable effort in designing appropriate strategies based on gathered information. They consistently include objectives in IEPs that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. This contradicts the findings of Boavida *et al.* (2010), who reported that many IEP goals tend to be overly broad, lacking functionality and measurability. Additionally, SPETs highly practice planning differentiated learning activities, developing strength-based and needs-based IEPs, ensuring that each identified area of need has a corresponding goal, utilizing various special education interventions, and determining necessary instructional materials, resources, and school services to achieve set goals.

However, challenges persist. SPETs struggle with ensuring that only accurate observations and objective data are included in IEPs, engaging the entire learning team in goal setting based on existing Functional Life and Academic Adaptive Performance (FLAAFP) assessments (if available), and clearly defining the participation of team members in intervention planning. These findings suggest that SPETs find it difficult to engage the learning team effectively, particularly in determining specific roles in IEP development. This is evident in the 12 analyzed IEPs, where interventions are primarily based on teacher and parent observations rather than objective assessment tools or specialist evaluations. The limited participation of the IEP team from the initial information-gathering phase contributes to these difficulties.

These challenges align with previous research such that of Debbag (2017), to which it was found that SPETs often feel unqualified to evaluate student performance, identify individual needs, set appropriate goals, collaborate with parents and administrators, or plan educational adaptations. Similarly, Patti (2016) noted that while SPETs receive IEP training in teacher preparation programs, translating theoretical knowledge into practice can be challenging. Many teachers feel overwhelmed when tasked with leading the IEP team in drafting critical portions of the document.

The "Application of Interventions" (M = 3.57, SD = 1.38) also falls within the "highly practiced" category but shows greater variability, suggesting that some teachers struggle with consistent implementation. Results indicate that SPETs highly practice administering appropriate tests to monitor learner progress and regularly updating progress comparisons to bridge learning gaps. Additionally, content modifications, such as adjusting learning expectations based on learner abilities, are practiced sparingly.

Analysis of actual IEPs reveals that most assessments consist of practical or performance-based tests, including kinesthetic, reading, and self-care evaluations. However, these assessments lack objective descriptions of learner performance, making it difficult to compare initial assessments with progress achieved. Adjustments and remediation strategies are also absent in the actual IEPs, limiting the effectiveness of intervention application. These findings support Akçin (2022), who identified common challenges in IEP preparation, including the development of criterion-referenced tests, drafting measurable objectives, accessing preliminary assessment tools, and selecting priority skills for intervention.

Challenges persist in implementing strategies included in IEPs and informing IEP team members about intervention plans. A lack of coordination and real-time collaboration with the IEP team results in interventions being predominantly teacher-

driven, with minimal involvement from parents, general education teachers, administrators, or specialists. Although some IEPs specify home-based activities for parents, there is a lack of feedback mechanisms, documentation, and evidence of collaborative efforts.

The lowest mean score among the four components is "Review of the Plan" (M = 3.48, SD = 1.36). While still categorized as "highly practiced," the findings suggest that teachers may not review IEPs as frequently or systematically as other phases. SPETs conduct post-intervention conferences with learners and parents, and the IEP team evaluates the plan at the intervention's conclusion. However, content analysis of actual IEPs indicates that these documents do not contain attached review results or evaluations. Moreover, no schedule for reviews or evaluations is specified.

Challenges in this phase include revising IEPs based on review findings to improve future interventions. The lack of proper documentation and reporting of evaluation outcomes may contribute to this issue. These findings suggest that while SPETs prioritize direct feedback with learners and parents, they place less emphasis on formal review and revision processes.

Overall, while SPETs demonstrate a strong commitment to IEP development, gaps remain in team collaboration, specialist involvement, objective assessment use, and systematic plan review. Addressing these issues will enhance the effectiveness of IEP implementation and student outcomes.

Table 2. Summary of the Extent of Practices of the Respondents in Developing IEP

Practices in Developing IEP	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Information Gathering and Analysis	3.79	1.00	Highly practiced
Planning of Interventions	3.72	1.12	Highly practiced
Application of Interventions	3.57	1.38	Highly practiced
Review of the Plan	3.48	1.36	Highly practiced
Grand Mean	3.64	1.22	Highly practiced

4.3. Correlation between Extent of Knowledge and Extent of Practices in Developing Individualized Education Plan

Table 3 presents the statistical relationship between the Extent of Knowledge Special Education Teachers in Developing IEPs and their Practices in Developing IEPs. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.840, indicating a strong positive correlation between these two variables. This suggests that as SPETs' knowledge in developing IEPs increases, their extent of practice also improves, and vice versa. The p-value of 0.001 demonstrates that this correlation is statistically significant, meaning the relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance. With 30 degrees of freedom (df), the sample size is reasonable for a reliable correlation analysis.

These findings have important implications for teacher training and professional development. The strong relationship suggests that ongoing training, workshops, and hands-on experience in IEP preparation are crucial in strengthening educators' skills. Schools and policymakers may emphasize continuous professional development to enhance both the theoretical knowledge and practical application of IEP preparation. Furthermore, the results imply that educators who frequently engage in IEP-related tasks develop deeper expertise, underscoring the need for structured opportunities to apply theoretical learning in real-life IEP formulation.

A well-prepared IEP directly impacts the quality of education for students with special needs, ensuring that their learning goals, accommodations, and interventions are appropriately tailored. The study's findings align with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory as cited by Mechouat (2024), which emphasizes that learning is most effective when individuals actively apply their knowledge in practice. This also supports previous research indicating that teacher preparedness significantly influences the success of special education programs (Kucharczyk & Davis, 2024; Llanes & Llanes, 2023; Whitworth, 2022)

From a policy perspective, special education schools and inclusive schools may consider mandatory refresher courses, mentorship programs pairing novice and experienced educators, and practical assessments in professional evaluations to ensure teachers are both knowledgeable and skilled in IEP development.

Table 3. Relationship Between Extent of Practices of Respondents in Developing IEP and Knowledge of Respondents in Preparing IEP

Global Practice and Global Knowledge	Correlation	0.840
	Significance (2-tailed)	0.001
	df	30

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that SPETs possess a high level of knowledge and exhibit strong practices in developing IEPs. However, certain challenges persist, particularly in reviewing and revising IEPs, as well as engaging specialists in the planning process. The strong correlation between knowledge and practice underscores the importance of ongoing professional development to further strengthen educators' competencies. Addressing the challenges identified will contribute to more effective IEP implementation, ultimately benefiting learners with special needs. To enhance

the effectiveness of IEP development, schools may provide regular professional development programs focused on improving teachers' skills in reviewing and revising IEPs. Strengthening collaboration between SPETs, specialists, and general educators through structured feedback mechanisms and interdisciplinary teamwork is also essential. Additionally, administrative support may be reinforced by reducing the bureaucratic workload related to IEP documentation, allowing teachers to allocate more time to direct student engagement. Integrating technology, such as digital IEP management systems, may also facilitate efficient documentation and progress tracking. Lastly, parental involvement in IEP development may be actively promoted through orientation programs and structured consultation sessions.

LIMITATIONS

This study is limited by its focus on a specific region, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings. The reliance on self-reported data and content analysis of IEPs also presents potential biases, as responses may be influenced by personal perceptions. Additionally, while the study establishes a correlation between knowledge and practice, it does not determine causation. Future research may explore longitudinal data and experimental designs to better understand how targeted interventions impact SPETs' competencies in IEP preparation.

REFERENCES

Akçin, F. N. (2022). Identification of the Processes of Preparing Individualized Education Programs (IEP) by Special Education Teachers, and of Problems Encountered Therein. *Educational Research and Reviews, 17*(1), 31-45. https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2021.4217

Allam, F. C., & Martin, M. M. (2021). Issues and challenges in special education: a qualitative analysis from teacher's perspective. *Southeast Asia Early Childhood, 10*(1), 37-49.

Berry, A., & Gravelle, M. (2018). The Benefits and Challenges of Special Education Positions in Rural Settings: Listening to the Teachers. *The Rural Educator, 34*(2), 3. http://doi.org/10.35608/RURALED.V34I2.400

Bishop, A. G., Brownell, Mary T., Klingner, J., Leko, Melinda M., & Galman, S. (2010). Differences in Beginning Special Education Teachers: The Influence of Personal Attributes, Preparation, and School Environment on Classroom Reading Practices. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 33* , 75-92. http://doi.org/10.1177/073194871003300202

Blasko, A., Morin, K., Lindström, E., Murphy, G., & Squitieri, M. (2024). Special Educators' Training and Preparedness to Write Individualized Education Programs. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 47*, 161-179. https://doi.org/10.1177/08884064241234616.

Boavida, T., Aguiar, C., McWilliam, R. A., & Pimentel, J. S. (2010). Quality of individualized education program goals of preschoolers with disabilities. *Infants & Young Children, 23*(3), 233-243. https://doi.org/10.1097/IYC.0b013e3181e45925

Britton, T., & Spencer, G. (2020). Do students who fail to plan, plan to fail? Effects of individualized learning plans on postsecondary transitioning. *Teachers College Record, 122*(5), 1-36. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146812012200509

Browder, D. M., Lee, A., & Mims, P. (2011). Using shared stories and individual response modes to promote comprehension and engagement in literacy for students with multiple, severe disabilities. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, 46*(3), 339-351. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23880590

Buli-Holmberg, J., & Jeyaprathaban, S. (2016). Effective Practice in Inclusive and Special Needs Education. *International journal of special education, 31*, 119-134.

Contreras, N. (2021 Apr 20). *How to write an effective IEP*. Teach. Learn. Grow. https://www.nwea.org/blog/2021/how-to-write-an-effective-iep

Council for Exceptional Children. (2017). News from CEC: High-leverage practices in special education. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 50*(1), 7-9. https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059917713206

Davis, L. (1992). Instrument review: getting the most from your panel of experts. *Applied nursing research, 5*, 104-107. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0897-1897(05)80008-4

Debbag, M. (2017). Opinions of prospective classroom teachers about their competence for Individualized Education Program (IEP). *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 5*(2), 181-185. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050202

Downing, J. (2010). *Academic instruction for students with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities in inclusive classrooms*. Corwin Press.

Einhorn, S. (2022). Kompetencie špeciálneho pedagóga vo výchovno-vzdelávacom procese. *Studia Scientifica Facultatis Paedagogicae Universitas Catholica Ružomberok, 21*(3), 59–67. https://doi.org/10.54937/ssf.2022.21.3.59-67

Fish, W. W. (2008). The IEP meeting: Perceptions of parents of students who receive special education services. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth, 53*(1), 8-14. https://doi.org/10.3200/PSFL.53.1.8-14

Gable, R., Tonelson, S., Sheth, Manasi., Wilson, Corinne., & Park, K. (2012). Importance, Usage, and Preparedness to Implement Evidence-based Practices for Students with Emotional Disabilities: A Comparison of Knowledge and Skills of Special Education and General Education Teachers. *Education and Treatment of Children, 35*, 499-520. http://doi.org/10.1353/ETC.2012.0030

Greenfield, R., Rinaldi, Claudia., Proctor, C. Patrick., & Cardarelli, A. (2010). Teachers' Perceptions of a Response to Intervention (RTI) Reform Effort in an Urban

Elementary School: A Consensual Qualitative Analysis. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 21*, 47-63. http://doi.org/10.1177/1044207310365499

Hendricks, D. (2011). Special education teachers serving students with autism: A descriptive study of the characteristics and self-reported knowledge and practices employed. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 35*(1), 37-50. http://doi.org/10.3233/JVR-2011-0552

İlik, Ş. Ş., & Sari, H. (2017). The Training Program for Individualized Education Programs (IEPs): Its Effect on How Inclusive Education Teachers Perceive Their Competencies in Devising IEPs. *Kuram Ve Uygulamada Egitim Bilimleri, 17*(5), 1547. https://doi.org/10.12738/ESTP.2017.5.0424

Jačova, Z., Kovačević, J., & Hasanbegović, H. (2018). Individual education plan (IEP) foundation of a quality inclusive education. *Human Research in Rehabilitation, 8*(2), 88-93.

Kartika, A., Suminar, D., Tairas, M., & Hendriani, W. (2018). Individual Education Program (IEP) Paperwork : A Narrative Review. *International journal of engineering and technology, 7*, 682. https://doi.org/10.14419/ijet.v7i2.29.13997.

Kucharczyk, S., & Davis, K. (2024). *Preparing Special Educators to Shift Education Experiences and Outcomes for Students with Disabilities Who Are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color* (pp. 236–255). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781032685090-18

Kunter, M., Klusmann, U., Baumert, J., Richter, D., Voss, T., & Hachfeld, A. (2013). Professional competence of teachers: effects on instructional quality and student development. *Journal of educational psychology, 105*(3), 805–820. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032583.

Kurth, J. A., Love, H., & Pirtle, J. (2020). Parent perspectives of their involvement in IEP development for children with autism. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 35*(1), 36-46. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088357619842858

Lappe, J. M. (2000). Taking the mystery out of research: Descriptive correlational design. *Orthopaedic Nursing, 19*(2), 81.

Llanes, A. B., & Llanes, M. C. L. (2023). Improving the Ability of Teachers to Address the Special Educational Needs of Students through Capacity-Building Program. *International Education Forum, 1*(2), 46-58. http://dx.doi.org/10.26689/ief.v1i2.5705

Mangongon, F. A. A. (2023). Challenges encountered by special educators: Inputs for the improvement of the individualized education program. *AIDE Interdisciplinary Research Journal, 2*, 136-150. https://doi.org/10.56648/aide-irj.v2i1.25

Mechouat, K. (2024). The Impact of Aligning Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory with a Comprehensive Teacher Education Model on Preservice Teachers' Attitudes and Teaching Practice. *European Scientific Journal, 20*(28), 135. https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n28p135

Mirari, K. (2022). The Effectiveness of Adaptive Learning Systems in Personalized Education. *Journal of Education Review Provision, 2*(3), 70-76. https://doi.org/10.55885/jerp.v2i3.194

Patti, A. L. (2016). Back to the basics: Practical tips for IEP writing. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 51*(3), 151-156. https://doi.org/10.1177/1053451215585805

Rosas, C. E., & Winterman, K. G. (2014). Are Parents Really Partners in Their Child's Education?. *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals, 25*, 35.

Smith, S. W., & Brownell, M. T. (2017). Individualized education program: Considering the broad context of reform. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 28*(1), 1-12.

Swanson, E., Solis, M., Ciullo, S., & McKenna, J. W. (2012). Special education teachers' perceptions and instructional practices in response to intervention implementation. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 35*(2), 115-126. http://doi.org/10.1177/0731948711432510

Thomas, S. B., & Dykes, F. (2011). Promoting successful transitions: what can we learn from RTI to enhance outcomes for all students?. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth, 55*(1), 1-9. http://doi.org/10.1080/10459880903217978

Whitworth, M. (2022). Through the Eyes of a Teacher: Reflections on Preparedness to Teach Special Population Students. https://doi.org/10.12794/metadc1985447

Wongwatkit, C., Srisawasdi, N., Hwang, G. J., & Panjaburee, P. (2017). Influence of an integrated learning diagnosis and formative assessment-based personalized web learning approach on students learning performances and perceptions. *Interactive Learning Environments, 25*(7), 889-903. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2016.1224255