Teacher Autonomy
A Mutifaceted Approach
For the New Millennium

Clayton Singer LaCoe, III

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Description

Teacher autonomy can lead to either exciting or vacuous learning experiences for students. Therefore, it is of critical import that school leaders understand the complexities associated with teacher autonomy. In this book, Dr. Clay LaCoe examines how teachers view autonomy and whether or not the accountability associated with high-stakes testing influences teachers’ perceptions of autonomy. Researchers have tended to view teacher autonomy as a unitary concept. This book will expand the knowledge base by decomposing autonomy and deepening our understanding of how high-stakes accountability affects teachers’ perceptions of their own autonomy.

First, a model is proposed in which autonomy is decomposed into six distinct subcomponents: autonomy over curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, professional development, student discipline, and classroom environment. Second, the research examines the effects of external accountability on teacher autonomy by quantitatively and qualitatively comparing the perceptions of possessed and desired autonomy of teachers who are direct targets of external accountability to those same perceptions held by teachers who are not direct targets of external accountability. The results show that the six subcomponent model of teacher autonomy provides a solid framework to understand the complex nature of teacher autonomy.
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**Teacher Autonomy**

**Description (continued)**

The findings further indicate that, both quantitatively and qualitatively, there are no fundamental differences in how the teachers who are differentially targets of external accountability perceive their levels of possessed or desired autonomy. Although external accountability may affect the amount of autonomy teachers perceive they have or desire, this effect is not dependent on the level of external accountability faced by teachers. The results also show that teachers generally desire more autonomy than they perceive they already possess. The results inform school leaders about the complex nature of teacher autonomy and how leaders can leverage the power of teacher autonomy to make schools better places for children to learn and grow.

*Teacher Autonomy* is an important book for collections in education.

**About the Author**

Clayton Singer LaCoe, III, is assistant superintendent of the Western Wayne School District in Pennsylvania. He holds an EdD from the University of Pennsylvania.

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