

TEACHING IS A WORK OF HE(ART): ZOOMING INTO TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES HANDLING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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ABSTRACT

Teaching learners with special needs is a very different reality in the profession. This study aimed to determine the lived experiences of teachers who handle learners with special needs. Qualitative-phenomenological design was employed in order to explore their lived experiences. The participants were purposefully chosen based on pre-determined criteria and were interviewed in order to gather the needed data. Results showed that for the challenges, they encountered difficulty in communication and performing adaptive skills, denial of parents on their children's condition, learners having delayed motor skills, lack of parental support, and the most recurring challenge that emerges is learners' behavioral problems. With the educational practices that teachers employed that are suitable for the children's needs, several outcomes were identified specifically increased participation in different activities, improvement of verbal and non-verbal skills, improvement of behavior through simple instructions, increased socialization with their classmates, and learners improved their skills reading and writing. Furthermore, compassion, enthusiasm, good communication and leadership skills, patience, and resourcefulness and creativity were the skills necessary for teachers to possess to provide the most suitable learning experience to their learners for them to understand, develop, and interact easier and more effectively.

KEYWORDS: Special Education, Special Education Teachers, Learners with Special Educational Needs, Qualitative Research, Thematic Analysis