

General Education Teachers: Lived Experiences and Challenges in the Implementation of Inclusive Education

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Abstract

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences and challenges of General Education Teachers in the implementation of inclusive education. Specifically, the participants were Receiving Teachers assigned to inclusive classrooms at Rosario East Central School, Division of Batangas. The study sought to understand how teachers experienced inclusive education, the challenges they encountered in teaching learners with diverse educational needs, the coping mechanisms they employed, and the enhancement program that may be proposed based on the findings. A qualitative phenomenological research design was employed, involving ten (10) receiving teachers who were selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using semi-structured interviews and were analyzed through Reflexive Thematic Analysis following Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework. The findings revealed that teachers viewed inclusive education as a meaningful approach that promotes equal learning opportunities, diversity, and learner participation. However, they also experienced challenges such as inadequate training in inclusive practices, limited instructional materials, large class sizes, behavioral management concerns, time constraints, and insufficient institutional support. Despite these difficulties, the participants demonstrated resilience by adapting instructional strategies, modifying learning activities, collaborating with Special Needs Education (SNED) teachers and parents, seeking peer support, and engaging in continuous professional learning to address the diverse needs of learners. The study further revealed that while teachers remained committed to implementing inclusive education, effective practice requires sustained professional development, adequate instructional resources, stronger administrative support, and enhanced collaboration among schools, families, and stakeholders. Based on the findings, an enhancement program was proposed to strengthen teachers' competencies and improve the implementation of inclusive education. The findings provide valuable insights for school administrators, policymakers, and future researchers in developing more responsive, equitable, and sustainable inclusive education practices.

Keywords: Special Education, Inclusive Education, Teacher Experiences, Phenomenology and Thematic Analysis, Philippines

