The Lived Experiences of Teachers Handling Learners with Auditory Disabilities

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores how 5 educators have dealt with students who have hearing impairment in regular classroom environments. The research was shaped by phenomenology with the goal of identifying the complex difficulties, achievements, and coping strategies that educators face on a daily basis. The relevance of creating an inclusive learning environment, the difficulty of meeting individual requirements, and the necessity of customized support were among the key themes that emerged from thematic analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted using semi-structured interview approach to gather a detailed exploration of each regular educators. Teachers described coping mechanisms include flexibility, working with support systems, and continuing education. The results highlight how important it is for educators to support diversity and the academic rights of students with auditory disability. To better assist teachers in their endeavors, recommendations include the creation of focused training programs, the availability of sufficient resources, and the adoption of inclusive policies. Comprehending the viewpoints of educators is crucial in formulating efficacious treatments and policies aimed at improving educational achievements for students with auditory disabilities.

1. Introduction

Encouraging inclusion and equal opportunity for all pupils is still a basic and shared goal in the field of education. A thorough understanding of the various needs and experiences of students, especially those

who face specific difficulties because of disabilities, is essential to reaching this goal. Of these difficulties, Auditory problems are one that stands out as a unique category that has a significant impact on the lives of a great number of students. Empathetic assistance from instructors and good teaching practices are critical for these children to be able to participate meaningfully in the educational process.

In addition to being responsible for imparting knowledge, teachers also have the admirable duty of creating a welcoming and fair learning environment for all students. In this function, teachers have a significant impact on the lives of students with auditory difficulties, affecting not just their academic achievement but also their sense of empowerment and community. Deaf and hard-of-hearing students' experiences and academic progress are influenced by a number of intricate aspects, including their personal traits, their familial situations, and their experiences both inside and outside of the classroom (Marschark, Shaver, Nagle, & Newman, 2015).

While inclusive education has gained momentum as a global aspiration, empirical investigations focusing specifically on the mainstreaming of students with hearing impairments in Filipino schools remain notably limited. The Philippines Constitution provides that The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Republic Act No. 7277 or the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons and Republic Act No. 9442 (An Act Amending RA 7277) provides an avenue for the disabled persons, including the D/Hh, the opportunity to develop their full potentials and stipulates those accurate programs and policies must be in place to promote the spirit of the law.

The Social Justice Doctrine, which holds that "Those who have less in life should have more in law," is in line with those laws. Only by fully immersing oneself in the Deaf community can one comprehend the spirit and objective of the law, as well as learn about the difficulties they face. The aforementioned legislation was included in Memorandum Order No. 126 Series of 2011 of the Commission on Higher Education. Furthermore, all institutions are required under the Department of Education Order No. 224 Series of 2013 to give all students with disabilities equitable access to education. All educational systems are thought to have instituted these laws, which are social contracts.

From the viewpoint of their teachers, the researcher thinks it can provide insight into the educational experiences of students with aural difficulties. We use a phenomenological method to investigate the particular difficulties, achievements, and viewpoints of educators in order to forward the objective of inclusive education for everyone. By promoting a more inclusive and fair learning environment, this research has the potential to benefit not only students with auditory challenges but also the larger educational community, policymakers, and society at large.

1.1. Related Literature

From modest to extensive hearing loss, there is a wide range of conditions that fall under the category of auditory impairments. The World Health Organization reports that more than 5% of people worldwide suffer from hearing loss, underscoring the importance of this problem (WHO, 2021). Understanding this population's diversity and the different requirements of individuals with aural problems is crucial.

In educational contexts, students with auditory difficulties frequently encounter significant communication barriers (Luckner & Slike, 2008). Due to the heavy reliance on spoken language in traditional teaching approaches, these kids experience a disconnect. Even while assistive technologies, such cochlear implants and hearing aids, might lessen some of these difficulties, effective classroom communication is still a difficult problem. In order to guarantee that communication is inclusive and available to all students, teachers are essential (Marschark, 2018).

Since laws encouraging inclusive education were introduced, the educational landscape has changed dramatically. Examples are the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the United States' Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These frameworks emphasize how crucial it is to give students with disabilities—including those who have auditory impairments—equal access to education.

Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that providing inclusive education can result in favorable outcomes for students with hearing impairments. These advantages include higher post-school results, social integration, self-esteem enhancement, and academic accomplishment (Luckner & Muir, 2001; Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004). The effective use of inclusive education approaches that support these beneficial outcomes depends heavily on teachers.

According to Antia et al. (2009), educators frequently state that in order to effectively support kids with auditory difficulties, they require more comprehensive training and professional development. These students' educational experiences can be improved if teachers have the information and abilities needed to modify their lesson plans and make use of assistive technology. In order to prepare teachers to meet the special demands of this student population, professional development opportunities are essential.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study sought to explore and document the experiences of teachers in Davao del Norte, Philippines. Examine and understand how educators view and assist primary students with auditory problems in their educational journeys. The study uses a phenomenological method to explore the various experiences and obstacles encountered by educators and students in their pursuit of inclusive education, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the learning environment and results for these young students.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to explore and comprehend how teachers perceive and support the educational journey of elementary pupils with auditory disabilities. In particular, this study aims to shed light on the following question:

•What are the teachers' lived experiences working with learners with auditory disabilities in the classroom?

1.4 Theoretical Lenses

The Social Model of Disability is one theoretical lens that provides insightful analysis when examining the educational experiences of students with auditory problems from the viewpoint of instructors (Oliver, 1990). According to this paradigm, a person's disability is influenced by cultural attitudes, structures, and practices rather than just being an inherent shortcoming. This perspective encourages academics to look into how classroom surroundings, instructional practices, and teacher views affect children with hearing difficulties' learning outcomes in the context of education. The significance of inclusive education approaches that stress diversity and equity, creating environments where all learners, regardless of ability, can engage fully and achieve, is highlighted by recent research by Slee (2011) and Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011).

Moreover, utilizing a Disability Studies viewpoint (Goodley, 2014) can offer a crucial structure for comprehending the power relationships present in learning environments and their influence on students with auditory impairments. Through this perspective, conventional ideas of normalcy are questioned, and it is suggested that disability is a social construct shaped by political, cultural, and economic variables. Using this viewpoint, researchers can investigate how the attitudes, convictions, and methods of instruction of instructors either support or contradict the educational system's marginalization of students with aural difficulties. According to recent studies, educators must identify and remove structural obstacles that restrict the educational opportunities and experiences available to students with auditory disabilities. This will help to advance inclusive and accessible teaching methods. These findings were reported by Meekosha and Shuttleworth (2009) and Davis (2013).

2. Methodology

This section delineates the comprehensive methodology employed in the qualitative investigation. The study's research design, participants, instrument, data gathering, data analysis, and ethical considerations, are systematically detailed.

2.1 Research Design

This research engagements a phenomenological approach to investigate the educational experiences of learners with auditory disabilities through the perspective of teachers. Phenomenology is chosen as it provides a robust basis for exploring the lived experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of teachers who work closely with these pupils, allowing for an in-depth and holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

2.2 Participants

This study involved 5 teachers in Dujali Central elementary school, would be educators with prior experience working in educational settings with students who have auditory challenges. To obtain a thorough picture of the educational experiences of students with auditory difficulties in a variety of settings, the selection criteria will comprise teachers from a range of backgrounds who are teaching a range of courses at different grade levels. To offer a variety of viewpoints, special education teachers, general education teachers, and educators with expertise in inclusive classrooms will be the main target audience.

2.3 Instrument

This study will employ a semi-structured interview guide as its research technique to examine many facets of the lives of spouses who do not work. Using the tool, participants will be able to provide detailed narratives about their experiences, difficulties, and coping mechanisms. The goals and research questions of the study will serve as the foundation for developing the interview questions. The interview guide will start

with an introduction that highlights that participation is voluntary and gives a quick rundown of the goals of the study. After that, the tool will start with broad, open-ended inquiries to foster a relaxed atmosphere where people are at ease telling their tales.

2.4 Data Gathering

Teachers who are willing to participate in semi-structured interviews will provide data for this qualitative research study. In order to fully explore each participant's viewpoints, experiences, and practices about teaching students with auditory difficulties, the interviews will be done one-on-one. Based on the research questions and theoretical framework, an interview guide will be created that will address issues like teachers' opinions of auditory disabilities, inclusive teaching tactics, difficulties encountered, and suggestions for enhancing the educational experiences of students with auditory disabilities. With the participants' permission, audio recordings of the interviews will be made, and the full transcriptions will be used for analysis to guarantee the precision and depth of the data gathered.
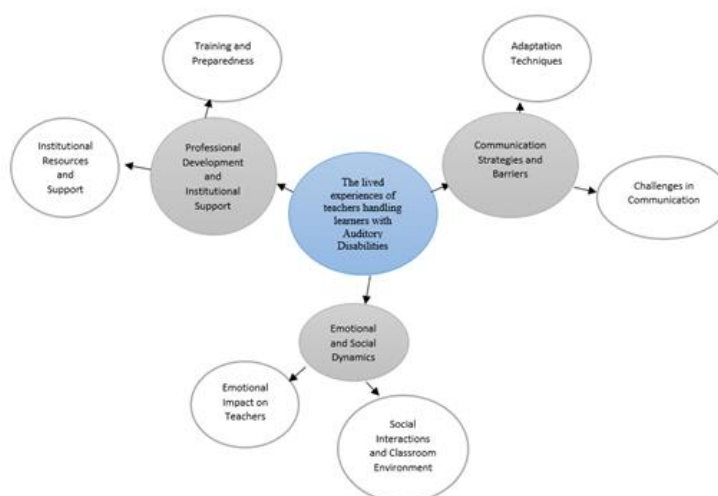
2.5 Data Analysis

This study's data analysis procedure was methodical and thorough, based on thematic analysis techniques described by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis made it possible to find patterns and themes in the qualitative data through ongoing comparison and iterative assessment. Ethical considerations and member verification improved the analysis's validity and integrity. The emerging themes add to the corpus of knowledge in inclusive education by offering insightful perspectives on the educational experiences of students with auditory challenges (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

2.6 Ethical Considerations

To protect the rights and welfare of each participant, a number of ethical issues will be given top priority during the conduct of this qualitative research project. First, each participating teacher will be asked to provide informed permission, which will include a description of the study's objectives, the nature of their voluntary participation, and the confidentiality procedures in place to safeguard their identities and responses. Furthermore, measures will be used to mitigate any possible injury or discomfort that participants may experience throughout the data collection process. These measures include furnishing a secure and comfortable interview setting and permitting participants to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any repercussions. Additionally, all identifying information will be removed or pseudonyms utilized during data analysis and reporting to protect participant privacy. This will ensure that data confidentiality and anonymity are maintained throughout the research process.

3. Results and Discussions

1.1   *Communication Strategies and Barriers*

Table 1. Themes and Core Statement on Communication and Barriers

Themes	Core Statements
Adaptation Techniques	P1: "I use a lot of visual aids, such as charts, and real objects, to make sure my pupils who have auditory follow along".
	P4: "using technology, such as interactive whiteboards, significantly enhances my ability to communicate with my students".
	P5: "I often modify my teaching methods to include more written instructions and hands-on activities".
Challenges in Communication	P1: "Due to my limited knowledge of sign language, because I only have the Basic ASL training, communicating with my learner with auditory disability is a challenging one".
	P2: "We face is the inconsistent availability and reliability of assistive technology in the classroom setting".
	P4: "Because the class size is large, I often have a hard time adapting my teaching methods.

3.1.1 Adaptation Techniques

        The instructors' shared experiences underscore the critical role that adaption strategies play in enabling successful communication with students who have auditory processing difficulties. As shown in Participant 1's insight, accessibility for students with auditory impairments is ensured through the use of visual aids, such as charts and real objects. The importance of technology, especially interactive whiteboards, on improving communication channels in the classroom is highlighted by participant 4. Furthermore, Participant 5's modification of the teaching strategies, sum up the overarching theme of Communication Strategies and adaptation as a fundamental element in the lived experiences of teachers handling learners with Auditory Disabilities which includes written instructions and practical exercises, shows a proactive attitude toward meeting the needs of students with varying learning styles. When taken as a whole, these stories highlight how important adaptation is to creating inclusive classrooms where all students may participate fully and flourish.

3.1.2 Challenges in Communication

        The participant narratives illuminated the major communication obstacles faced by educators working with students who have auditory problems. The difficulty Participant 1 had using sign language emphasizes how crucial ongoing professional development is to improving teachers' capacity to interact with children in an efficient manner. The second participant draws attention to the ongoing problem of uneven accessibility to assistive technology, which creates a barrier to effective communication in the classroom. Moreover, Participant 4's challenge in modifying instructional strategies as a result of sizable class sizes highlights the intricate dynamics involved in meeting a range of learning demands. To ensure that all students have equitable access to education, addressing these issues calls for a multimodal strategy that includes regular training, increased resource availability, and creative teaching techniques.

3.2 Professional Development and Institutional Support

Table 2. Themes and Core Statement on Professional Development and Institutional Support

Themes	Core Statements
Training and	P2: "I need to learn most of the necessary skills on the job and through additional workshops."

Preparedness	P3: "Regular training sessions on the latest teaching strategies".
	P5: "There is a strong need for specialized professional development programs that focus specifically on auditory disabilities".
Institutional Resources and Support	P3: "There are no resources available and it significantly hampers our ability to teach effectively".
	P4: "In our school we are not provided some resources, which leaves us struggling to meet the needs of our student".
	P5: "Strong support from school administration and colleagues is important".

3.2.1 Training and Preparedness

The perspectives shared by the participants highlight how important it is for educators working with students who have auditory difficulties to receive thorough training and preparation. Participant 2 emphasizes the need for extra seminars and on-the-job training to acquire important skills, highlighting a deficiency in initial teacher preparation. Participant 3 highlights the value of frequent training sessions on the newest teaching techniques, which are essential for remaining up to date with efficient teaching approaches. Additionally, Participant 5 emphasizes the critical necessity for specialized professional development courses that concentrate on auditory impairments. Taken as a whole, these claims show that continuous, specialized training and professional development for teachers are essential to supporting students with auditory difficulties.

3.2.2 Institutional Resources and Support

The experiences of the participants demonstrate how important institutional support and resources are to teaching students with aural problems. The difficulty presented by uneven access to assistive technology, which can seriously impair the usefulness of instruction, is highlighted by Participant 3. Participant 4 emphasizes how important it is to have specialized staff, such audiologists and speech therapists, even though not all schools will always have access to them. Strong peer and administrative support are crucial, according to participant 5, who also notes that a supportive school climate improves teaching and learning significantly. All in all, these observations point to the need for schools to guarantee consistent access to assistive technology, assign specialized support staff, and create a caring environment among teachers and administrators in order to improve educational outcomes for students with aural difficulties.

3.3 Emotional and Social Dynamics

Table 3. Themes and Core Statement on Emotional and Social Dynamics

Themes	Core Statements
Emotional Impact on Teachers	P1: "I often feel a sensitive sense of responsibility to guarantee he is not left behind, which can be quite stressful."
	P2: ""Despite the challenges, there is a profound sense of fulfillment when I see my students make progress".
	P4: "Their achievements, no matter how small, bring immense joy and validation to my efforts."
Social Interactions and Classroom Environment	P2: "I make a conscious effort to promote peer interactions through group activities and cooperative learning".
	P3: "I try to ensure that all students understand the importance of inclusion and respect".
	P5: "It's difficult to give individual attention to students with auditory disabilities and ensure they are fully engaged and included in all activities."

3.3.1 Emotional Impact on Teachers

Teachers who work with students who have auditory difficulties experience a complicated and powerful emotional impact. Participant 1 conveys a strong sense of duty to make sure their pupils don't fall behind, which frequently results in a great deal of stress. Participant 2 emphasizes the great sense of fulfillment they receive from seeing their pupils advance in spite of these difficulties. Participant 4 goes on to say that even minor successes make them feel so happy and validate their efforts. All of these quotes show that even if teaching has a lot of emotional demands, teachers can find great inspiration and fulfillment in watching their pupils thrive.

3.3.2 Social Interactions and Classroom Environment

Teachers must make conscious, multidimensional efforts to promote a healthy social interaction and classroom environment for students with auditory difficulties. In order to foster social connections, Participant 2 emphasizes the value of encouraging peer interactions through cooperative learning and group activities. In order to foster a supportive environment, Participant 3 emphasizes how important it is to inculcate a spirit of inclusion and respect among all pupils. Participant 5 highlights that even with these efforts, it can be difficult to give each kid with aural problems the individualized attention they need to feel completely included in all classroom activities. Together, these findings highlight the importance of encouraging inclusion and peer engagement while also emphasizing the ongoing need for educators to pay close attention to the special requirements of students with auditory difficulties.

4. Conclusions

Studies provide light on the variety of communication tactics teachers use to help kids with auditory impairments, highlighting the need for continued assistance and improvements in approaches to deal with challenges including inadequate sign language skills and unequal access to assistive technology. Participants indicate a great need for resources, including people with expertise, assistive technology, and training programs specifically designed to address auditory problems. These results highlight how crucial it is for educators to have access to ongoing professional development opportunities and resources in order to guarantee that they have the knowledge and tools needed to serve their pupils. Teachers find immense satisfaction in their students' achievement; despite the significant stress and responsibility they bear. For this reason, it is essential to create a friendly and inclusive classroom atmosphere that supports the emotional and social well-being of both teachers and students.

5. Recommendations

The study highlights several key recommendations. First, it's critical to improve communication skills by including various approaches that are customized to meet the needs of each unique student. Using visual aids, sign language, and assistive. Using direct, concise communication methods and designing classroom arrangements that support lipreading are further strategies for overcoming communication difficulties. Teachers must get ongoing professional development in or der to be trained in inclusive teaching strategies and the newest assistive technologies. Establishments ought to guarantee that educators have access to tools and professional advice from professionals like audiologists and speech therapists in order to promote a cooperative network of support.

The research emphasizes how crucial it is to create a welcoming and inclusive learning atmosphere in the classroom. In addition to technical training, educators should receive training in emotional support measures for children with aural impairments. Students' feelings of isolation can be lessened by fostering peer relationships and social integration through group activities. Recognizing the heavy burdens teachers bear, institutions must to put in place systems for providing emotional support and addressing teacher stress. Fostering an environment of empathy and understanding within the school community can have a significant positive impact on the experiences of teachers and students, which will ultimately improve social and academic performance.

Acknowledgments

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