

ABSTRACT

Experience Speaks! A Teacher's Experiences of Teaching Students with Autism

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This study examined one teacher's real-world experiences in teaching an autistic student at a primary school in Trinidad and Tobago. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the teacher had a variety of experiences that were complex in nature. These were classified as: 1) educational or academic (mastery) experiences; 2) psychological (mastery) experiences; and 3) quality (mastery) experiences. These findings supported the teacher's claim that mastery experiences could inform feelings of competence in teaching autistic students. Of the three types of experiences, the teacher underwent a wide array of psychological experiences, of which those related to teachers' dispositions were noted.

Keywords: Inclusive education; Primary school students; Primary school teachers; Teacher attitudes; Special education; Special needs students; Case studies; Autism; Educational experience; Trinidad and Tobago