

Parental Guidance: Exploring Elementary Teacher's Experiences with Parent-Teacher Collaboration in an Inclusive Classroom

Shrian Abueva
Remigilda D. Gallardo

Abstract:- This study explored the lived experiences, challenges encountered, coping mechanisms and insights of public elementary school teachers in collaborating with parents in the implementation of inclusive education in schools. The participants were coming from DepEd Region XI, Division of Davao City, specifically in the schools of Paquibato District. There were ten (10) teachers who participated in the study, and were purposely selected. This study made use of a phenomenological approach to extract the ideas from the participants. The virtual in-depth interview was employed to gather significant information with regard to their respective lived experiences. Using the thematic analysis, the following themes emerged pertaining to their lived experiences: parent-teacher collaboration as a reciprocal commitment, parents who are satisfied with teachers' efforts, positive parent-teacher communication, and teachers hurdling with collaboration challenges. Further, there were three (3) subthemes identified on the teachers hurdling with collaboration challenges, these are too much expectations for learners, limited parents' availability, and teachers' lack of professional preparations. The coping mechanisms of teacher participants on the challenges they experienced were: parent-teacher regular communication and continuing professional development for inclusive teachers. The educational management insights drawn from the participants were collaboration impacts academic success and preparation for inclusive teachers matters. Thus, The DepEd administrators and heads may craft teacher enhancement programs through face-to-face training or through webinars focusing on handling inclusive classes, implementing instructions in schools, and collaboration strategies with parents.

Keywords:- Parent-Teacher Collaboration, Inclusive Education, Elementary School.

I. INTRODUCTION

Families and schools are two of children's primary living environments. With this, their partnership is viewed as a significant aspect in education, with a significant impact on learning outcomes, motivation, and children's health. The home-school relationship affects children holistically and influences not just their school learning but also their home learning. Therefore, teachers must be aware of this connection and how the home-school relationship influences a child's academic and total development. Much more is possible to take place in inclusive classrooms where the usual need for support may be doubled and more vital for students with special needs. Teachers of children with special develop a unique channel of communication through a distinctive bond with their students. This relationship enables the teacher to comprehend the child's requirements and needs.

In the Philippines, presently, the Philippine education is reinforcing its commitment to high-quality education by adopting the upgraded and comprehensive K-12 curriculum for regular programs. This K-12 curriculum is also adapted and modified in the Special Education program (SPED) in accordance with the essential and fundamental needs of the school children with special needs, in the belief that this is one of the most important means of providing a high-quality special education program for the school children with special needs.

The study titled, *"Parental Guidance: Exploring Elementary Teacher's Experiences with Parent-Teacher Collaboration in an Inclusive Classroom"* was conducted undertake a qualitative study on elementary teachers' lived experiences, encountered problems, coping strategies, and academic insights in parents and teachers' collaboration in inclusive classrooms. Notably, there are few research and literary works on inclusive education that focus on teachers' experiences at the primary level in the Philippine educational institutions. The majority of global research has concentrated on the implementation of inclusive education in the higher elementary and secondary school sectors.

Moreover, the results of this study may serve as a foundation for policymakers, school administrators, and teachers to improve their school collaboration practices in relation to inclusive education, as well as a springboard for future local empirical research. Consequently, this study is thought to be of considerable importance.

The findings of this study will have benefits for the Department of Education (DepEd), as this study shall provide information on the real situation of the public elementary school teachers with regards to their work experiences and collaboration issues in the new normal. School principals and school heads may gain a clear understanding of teachers' challenges faced in their respective stations in relation to parent-teacher collaboration in an inclusive education. The findings of the study provided the scenario as to how teachers are challenged to create and conduct collaborations and partnerships in inclusive schools. This study also provided research literature which could also serve as basis for future researchers who would wish to conduct a study parallel to the themes of this study and or applying other categories that their study will cover.

Finally, the study contributed to the scarce research on inclusive education in Philippine primary schools. By focusing on teachers' real-life experiences, obstacles, and methods of working with parents, the study emphasized the importance of parent-teacher cooperation in enabling inclusive classrooms. The findings provided practical suggestions for strengthening collaboration between parents and teachers, which can aid school administrators and educators. This study also stimulated further local research, demonstrating the importance of parent-teacher collaboration in promoting inclusive education.

II. METHOD

The study used a qualitative-inquiry-based phenomenological research approach with open-ended questions. A type of inquiry known as phenomenological research involves the researcher distilling the main points of participants' accounts of a phenomenon. By highlighting the similarities in their experiences, the researcher was able to generate a description of the teachers' shared meanings on their efforts to develop digital literacy through technology-based teaching and learning methods (Creswell, 2007).

Moreover, an In-Depth Interview (IDI) was used in this study to gather participant observations. The contextual aspect of real-life circumstances as seen by the participants must be investigated. As a result, phenomenology is a suitable and useful method for investigating the subjects of home economics instructors' actual experiences in public secondary schools. All of the interviews will have their common themes examined, categorized, and extracted.

This study was conducted in DepEd Region XI, Division of Davao City, specifically in the schools of Paquibato District. Only 10 participants from different elementary schools as the key informants were included and were purposely selected based on the nature of their work as classroom teachers and who already experienced working in the Department of Education for at least three years or more. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses.

To obtain a variety of perspectives from participants, the endeavor was expanded to include both men and women, as well as people with varying degrees of educational training, attainment, and status. The following are the specific inclusion criteria: (1) elementary teachers who have been teaching for three years or longer; (2) teachers who have taught in grades one through three under the old and new normal; and (3) elementary teachers who have encountered difficulties working with parents of students with special needs in an inclusive classroom.

In conclusion, this study was conducted in Paquibato District, under DepEd Region XI, Division of Davao City, involving 10 selected elementary teachers as participants. These teachers were chosen through purposive sampling based on their experience of teaching for at least three years in the Department of Education. The selection included both male and female teachers with different levels of education and rank to ensure a variety of perspectives. The study focused on teachers who had taught in both the old and new normal settings, handled grades 1 to 3, and faced challenges working with parents of students with special needs in inclusive classrooms.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The participants revealed their experiences as they reflected on their lived experiences of the parent-teacher partnership in the implementation of inclusive education in elementary classes. The participants' challenges encountered, coping mechanisms and insights were also presented in this part of the research specifically in the Schools of Paquibato District, Division of Davao City, Region XI. In this chapter, the results of the thematic analysis are presented. It is followed by discussions arranged according to themes and subthemes that were generated.

The first theme presented the lived experiences of teachers on parent-teacher collaborations in inclusive classrooms. These themes are as follows: parent-teacher collaboration as a reciprocal commitment, parents who are satisfied with teachers' efforts, positive parent-teacher communication, and teachers hurdling with collaboration challenges. Further, there were three (3) subthemes identified on the teachers hurdling with collaboration challenges, these were too much expectations for learners, limited parents' availability, and teachers lack of professional preparations.

The second theme presented the coping strategies of teachers on the challenges they experienced. The coping strategies of school leaders are divided into two (2) major themes. These are parent-teacher regular communication and continuing professional development for inclusive teachers. These summarized the coping strategies of the teachers as they deal with the challenges of the current research circumstances.

The third theme presented educational management insights drawn from the experiences and challenges of elementary school teachers in collaborating with parents in an inclusive classroom. Figure five (5) shows the summary of insights and lessons learned. Based on the experiences and challenges of the teachers in public elementary schools, the participants of this study had their respective insights to further improve their professional development situations and experiences in inclusive schools and in becoming effective partners with parents. These insights were some of the personal thoughts of the participants that they deemed significant in understanding their real situations whether in the old or in the new normal.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, The lived experiences of public elementary school teachers in collaborating with parents in implementing inclusive education showed the following themes: parent-teacher collaboration as a reciprocal commitment, parents who are satisfied with teachers' efforts, positive parent-teacher communication, and teachers hurdling with collaboration challenges. Further, there were three (3) subthemes identified on the teachers hurdling with collaboration challenges, these are too much expectations for learners, limited parents' availability and teachers' lack of professional preparations. The coping mechanisms of teacher participants on the challenges they experienced were: parent-teacher regular communication and continuing professional development for inclusive teachers. The educational management insights drawn from the participants were collaboration impacts academic success and preparation for inclusive teachers matters.

Teachers learned that for an inclusive classroom to be successful, there must be healthy interaction and collaboration between the teachers and the parents. Perhaps the act of working together in itself exemplifies what it means to have an inclusive environment in schools. Collaboration between teachers and parents is the key to the attainment of a genuine inclusive classroom where students are academically successful and performing. To achieve a better inclusive climate in schools where the partnership is a change factor toward the improvement of learners' academic journeys, teachers' professional development programs may be provided for them. Teachers indeed desire professional enhancement in performing their roles in inclusive schools.

The findings of this study shed light on the various experiences of public elementary school teachers handling inclusive classrooms. The study looked into the educators' actions and reactions. These experiences, acquired through systematic interviews, can help other educators interested in the phenomenon under study, as well as other scholars pursuing comparable lines of study. Participants' coping techniques can be used as a resource for those who find themselves in a similar position.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Adams, D., Harris, A., & Jones, M. S. (2016). *Teacher-Parent Collaboration for an Inclusive Classroom: Success for Every Child*. Teacher-Parent Collaboration for an Inclusive Classroom: Success for Every Child., 4(3), 58–71.
 - [2]. Ali, M. M., Mustapha, R., & Jelas, Z. M. (2006). An empirical study on teachers' perceptions towards inclusive education in Malaysia. *International Journal of Special Education*, 21(3), 36-44.
 - [3]. Anderson, K. J., and Minke, K. M. (2007). Parent involvement in education: toward an understanding of parents' decision making. *J. Educ. Res.* 100, 311–323. doi: 10.3200/joer.100.5.311-323
 - [4]. Azad, G., & Mandell, D. (2016). Concerns of parents and teachers of children with autism in elementary school. *Autism: The International Journal of Research and Practice*, 20(4), 435–441. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362361315588199>
 - [5]. Azad, G., Wolk, C., & Mandell, D. (2017). Ideal interactions: Perspectives of parents and teachers of children with autism spectrum disorder. *School Community Journal*, 28(2), 63–84. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1201931>.
 - [6]. Bandura, A. (1993). *Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning*. *Educational Psychologist*, 28(2), 117-148
 - [7]. Booth, T., Ainscow, M., & Vaughan, M. (2011). *Index for Inclusion*. Developing Learning and Participation in Schools. Retrieved from [https://Lst-liep.liep-Unesco.Org/Cgi-Bin/Wwwi32.Exe/\[In=epidoc1.in\]/?T2000=020966/\(100\)](https://Lst-liep.liep-Unesco.Org/Cgi-Bin/Wwwi32.Exe/[In=epidoc1.in]/?T2000=020966/(100)).
 - [8]. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. Cambridge, MA:Harvard University Press
 - [9]. Budiyo, Sheehy, K., Kaye, H., & Rofiah, K. (2018). Developing Signalong Indonesia: issues of happiness and pedagogy, training and stigmatisation. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 22(5), 543–559. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2017.1390000>
- Burstein, N., Sears, S., Wilcoxon, A., Bustos, M., Tantengco, M. T., Abaya, E., Alcantara, E.,

- [10]. Darling-Churchill, K. E., & Lippman, L. (2016). Early childhood social and emotional development: Advancing the field of measurement. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 45, 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2016.02.002>
- [11]. David, C., & Albert, J. (2015). *Recent trends in out-of-school children in the Philippines*. Philippine Institute for Development Studies. Retrieved from https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/websitemcs/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidsdps1551_rev2.pdf
- [12]. Department of Education. (2015). *Standards and competencies for five-year -old Filipino children*. Pasig. DepEd. Retrieved from https://www.deped.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Kinder-CG_0.pdf
- [13]. Egger, J., Lehmann, J., and Straumann, M. (2014). Die Kooperation von Schule und Elternhaus - Eine Analyse der Praxis von Lehrpersonen. *Solothurn: Pädagogische Hochschule der FHNW Institut Vorschul- und Unterstufe*.
- [14]. Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools, 2nd Edn*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. doi: 10.4324/9780429494673
- [15]. Hampden-Thompson, G., and Galindo, C. (2017). School-family relationships, school satisfaction and the academic achievement of young people. *Educ. Rev.* 69, 248–265. doi: 10.1080/00131911.2016.1207613
- [16]. Hornby, G., and Lafaele, R. (2011). Barriers to parental involvement in education: an explanatory model. *Educ. Rev.* 63, 37–52. doi: 10.1080/00131911.2010.488049
- [17]. Fishman, C. E., and Nickerson, A. B. (2015). Motivations for involvement: a preliminary investigation of parents of students with disabilities. *J. Child Fam. Stud.* 24, 523–535. doi: 10.1007/s10826-013-9865-4
- [18]. Friedman, B. A., Bobrowski, P. E., and Geraci, J. (2006). Parents' school satisfaction: ethnic similarities and differences. *J. Educ. Adm.* 44, 471–486. doi: 10.1108/09578230610683769
- [19]. Friedman, B. A., Bobrowski, P. E., and Markow, D. (2007). Predictors of parents' satisfaction with their children's school. *J. Educ. Adm.* 45, 278–288. doi: 10.1108/09578230710747811
- [20]. Hagenauer, G., Hascher, T., & Volet, S. E. (2015). Teacher emotions in the classroom: associations with students' engagement, classroom discipline and the interpersonal teacher-student relationship. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 30(4), 385–403
- [21]. Han, S., & Kemple, K. (2006). Components of social competence and strategies of support: Considering what to teach and how. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 34 (3), 241–246. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-006-0139-2>
- [22]. Hertel, S. (2016). "Eltern und schule. aspekte von chancengerechtigkeit und teilhabe an bildung," in *Elternberatung im Schulischen Kontext*, eds S. Frank and A. Sliwka (Weinheim: Beltz Juventa), 116–126.
- [23]. Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M., Sandler, H. M., Whetsel, D., Green, C. L., Wilkins, A. S., et al. (2005). Why do parents become involved? *Research findings and implications*. Elem. Sch. J. 106, 105–130. doi: 10.1086/499194
- [24]. Hornby, G. (2011). Importance of parental involvement. In G. Hornby, *Parental involvement in childhood education: Building effective school-family partnerships* (pp. 1–10). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-8379-4_1
- [25]. Hornby, G., & Blackwell, I. (2018). Barriers to parental involvement in education: An update. *Educational Review*, 70(1), 109–119. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2018.1388612>
- [26]. Hughes, C., Cosgriff, J. C., Agran, M., and Washington, B. H. (2013). Student self-determination: a preliminary investigation of the role of participation in inclusive settings. *Educ. Train. Autism Dev. Disabil.* 48, 3–17.
- [27]. Garner, P. W., & Waajid, B. (2012). Emotion knowledge and self-regulation as predictors of preschoolers' cognitive ability, classroom behavior, and social competence. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 30(4), 330–343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734282912449441>
- [28]. Gibbons, S., and Silva, O. (2011). School quality, child wellbeing and parents' satisfaction. *Econ. Educ. Rev.* 30, 312–331. doi: 10.1016/j.econedurev.2010.11.001
- [29]. Jelas, Z. M., & Ali, M. M. (2012). Inclusive education in Malaysia: policy and practice. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1-13. doi: 10.1080/13603116.2012.693398
- [30]. Johansson, S. (2014). "He is intelligent but different": Stakeholders' perspectives on children on the autism spectrum in an urban Indian school context. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 61(4), 416–433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2014.955786>
- [31]. Jónsdóttir, K., Björnsdóttir, A., and Bæck, U.-D. K. (2017). Influential factors behind parents' general satisfaction with compulsory schools in Iceland. *Nord. J. Stud. Educ. Policy* 3, 155–164. doi: 10.1080/20020317.2017.1347012
- [32]. Kaczan, R., Rycielski, P., and Wasilewska, O. (2014). Parental satisfaction with school – determining factors. *Edukacja* 131, 39–52.
- [33]. Koay, T. L. (2012). Inclusion in Brunei Darussalam: The role of teacher education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 18(10), 1029–1037. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2012.693396>
- [34]. Kildan, A., Mehmet, A., & Ahi, B. (2013). Mental models of school for preschool children. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 2(2), 97–105. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.2.2.97>
- [35]. Larivée, S. J., Kalubi, J.-C., and Terrisse, B. (2006). La collaboration école-famille en contexte d'inclusion: entre obstacles, risques et facteurs de réussite. *Rev. Sci. L'éducation* 32:525. doi: 10.7202/016275ar

- [36]. Loden, M. (1996). Implementing diversity : Best practices for making diversity work in your organization. Toledo, OH: McGraw Hill, *Education*.
- [37]. Luder, R., Kunz, A., Pastore, G., and Paccaud, A. (2020). Beteiligung der eltern in der inklusion und ihre sichtweise auf die integrative förderung ihrer kinder. *Vierteljahresschr. Für Heilpädagog. Ihre Nachbarggeb.* 89, 278-290.
- [38]. McCartney, K., & Phillips, D. (2006). *Blackwell handbook of early childhood development*. Chicester, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd
- [39]. Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (2013) Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 - 2025. *Education*. Putrajaya: Ministry of Education.
- [40]. *Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025*. Retrieved from http://www.moe.gov.my/cms/upload_files/articlefile/2013/articlefile_file_003108.pdf
- [41]. Malaysia Educational Statistic (2013) Malaysia Educational Statistic. *Putrajaya: Ministry of Education*.
- [42]. Ministry of Education (2004) The Development of Education, *National Report of Malaysia*. Geneva: UNESCO International Bureau of Education.
- [43]. Ministry of Education. (1997). Special Education Policy Guidelines. Bandar Seri Begawan: Unit Pendidikan Khas. *Ministry of Education*. (2007). *Proposed SPN21 curriculum: Draft*. Bandar Seri Begawan: Curruculm Development Division, Ministry of Education.
- [44]. Ministry of Education. (2008). ADHOC Committee on Education Programme for Gifted Students. Bandar Seri Begawan: Unit Pendidikan Khas. *Ministry of Education*. (2013).
- [45]. Monceau, G., and Larivée, S. J. (2019). Tentations et tentatives d'éduquer les parents. *Sociétés Jeun. En Diffic.* 17
- [46]. Mortag, I. (2012). "Zusammenarbeit von elternhaus und schule," in *Qualität des Lebens und Qualität der Schule (Programm LLP ERASMUS)*, eds I. Mortag and I. Nowosad (Leipzig: Uniwersytet Zielonogórski Zielona Góra).
- [47]. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2018). "L'implication des parents, la performance des élèves et leur satisfaction à l'égard de leur vie," in PISA 2015 Results : *Students' Well-Being*, Vol. 3 (Paris: OCED).
- [48]. Philippine Constitution (1986). Education, science nad technology, arts, culture and sports: ARticle XIV, Sec 3, (2) *mandate on values education*. <https://www.gov.ph/the-philippine-constitutions/the-1986-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-philippines/the-1986-constituion-of-the-republic-of-the-philippines-article-xiv>
- [49]. Pietsch, M., Scholand, B., and Schulte, K. (eds) (2015). Schulinspektion in Hamburg: *dererste Zyklus 2007 - 2013: Grundlagen, Befunde und Perspektiven*. Münster: Waxmann.
- [50]. Sacher, W. (2016). "Differenzierte elternarbeit als voraussetzung für mehr chancengerechtigkeit," in *Eltern und Schule. Aspekte von Chancengerechtigkeitund Teilhabe an Bildung*, eds S. Frank and A. Silwka (Weinheim: Beltz Juventa), 104–115
- [51]. Schultz, T., Sreckovic, M., Able, H., & White, T. (2016). Parent-teacher collaboration: Teacher perceptions of what is needed to support students with ASD in the inclusive classroom. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 51(4), 344–354. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26173862>
- [52]. Skinner, E., Pitzer, J., and Brule, H. (2014). "The role of emotion in engagement, coping, and the development of motivational resilience," in *International Handbook of Emotions in Education*, eds P. A. Alexander, R. Pekrun, and L. Linnenbrink-Garcia (London: Routledge), 331–347.
- [53]. Sunardi, Sunardi, Mucawir Yusuf, Gunarhadi Gunarhadi, Priyono Priyono, and John L. Yeager. 2011. "The Implementation of Inclusive Education for Students with Special Needs in Indonesia." *Excellence in Higher Education 2* (1): 1–10.
- [54]. Thomas, P., & Legge, M. (2009). Disability, Disadvantage and Development in the Pacific and Asia. *The Development Studies Network*, No:73.
- [55]. UNESCO. (2009a). *Guidelines for inclusion: ensuring access to education for all*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- [56]. UNESCO. (2009b). *Policy guidelines on inclusion in education*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- [57]. UNESCO. (2016). *Training tools for curriculum development. Reaching out to all learners: A resource pack for supporting inclusive education*. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/15_62.pdf
- [58]. UNESCO. (2017). *A guide for ensuring inclusion and equality in education*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- [59]. UNESCO. 2020. *Sub Education Policy Report: Inclusive Education*, https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/inclusive_education_final_-_january_2021.pdf
- [60]. United Nations. 1975. *U.N. Declaration on the rights of disabled persons*. <http://www.unhchrch/html/menu3/b/72.html>.
- [61]. United Nations. 1989. *Convention on the rights of the child*. New York: United Nations. *United Nations*. 2001. *Enable*. <http://www.un.org/esca/socdev/enable/disA56181el.htm>.
- [62]. U.S. Department of Education. (2018, November). IDEA Part B child count and educational environments for school year 2017–2018. *OSEP Data Documentation*. <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/collection-documentation/datadocumentation-files/part-b/child-count-and-educational-environment/idea-partbchildcountandedenvironment-2017-18.pdf>

- [63]. West, E., Jones, P., Chambers, D., & Whitehurst, T. (2012). A multi-perspective collaborative on teacher learning for teachers of students with autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of International Special Needs Education*, 15(1), 24–43. <https://doi.org/10.9782/2159-4341-15.1.24>
- [64]. Yoder, N. (2014). Teaching the whole child: Instructional practices that support social-emotional learning in three teacher evaluation framework. Washington, DC: *American Institutes for Research Center on Great Teachers and Leaders*
- [65]. Zagona, A., Kurth, J., & MacFarland, S. (2017). Teachers' views of their preparation for inclusive education and collaboration. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 40(3), 163–178. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406417692969>