

The Journal of Special Education Apprenticeship

Volume 13 | Number 1

Article 1

6-2024

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Recommended Citation

(2024). Table of Contents. *The Journal of Special Education Apprenticeship*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.58729/2167-3454.1193>

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JOSEA, Vol 13, No 1 (June 2024)

From the Editors

Full Text

Anna Osipova and Jemma Kim, Co-Editors

Research

Using Behavior Skills Training and Virtual Simulations to Train Preservice Practitioners in Behavior Management: An Exploratory Comparison Study

Full Text

Kathleen M. Randolph, Glenna M. Billingsley, and Cathy N. Thomas
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This study investigated the efficacy of two distinct virtual training platforms, TeachLivE™ and Zoom with actors, in preparing preservice practitioners for behavior management in real-world settings. This exploratory study aimed to investigate individual participant skill acquisition and assess which platform better equipped participants with the necessary skills and strategies. This study employed Behavior Skills Training as the foundational pedagogical framework, utilizing structured training and feedback to foster skill acquisition and retention. The two groups, one using TeachLivE™ and the other Zoom with actors, received identical training modules and practice scenarios. After the training, participants were assessed on their ability to apply behavior management strategies in simulated scenarios closely mirroring authentic classroom settings. Results from the study revealed an observable difference in the percent correct performance between the two groups. The TeachLivE™ group exhibited a higher level of success in applying behavior management strategies compared to the Zoom with actors group. This outcome suggests that the immersive nature of TeachLivE™, with its lifelike avatars and interactive virtual classrooms, provided a more effective training environment for preservice practitioners in behavior management.

Experiences of Rural Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments During the Pandemic

Full Text

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Students who are educated by schools in rural areas experienced challenges around the world even before the COVID-19 pandemic, such as lack of resources and inadequate infrastructure (Çiftçi & Cin, 2018; Dube, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic drew attention to the inequities of the conditions facing students in rural areas (EDC, 2020). These unique challenges were evident for those serving low-incidence disability populations, such as those children with

visual impairment. There are unique challenges in providing support to students and their families with visual impairments in rural areas of the country. Those challenges included need for additional supports in technology, internet infrastructure, funding, and full access to accessible materials. Concerns over the health and well-being of teachers and students with visual impairments were also expressed as concerns but was not unique for teachers of students with visual impairments in rural areas.

The Career Advancement and Working Conditions of Multilingual Paraprofessionals in Special Education

Full Text

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There is a critical issue of special education teacher shortages in the United States. Student populations, many of whom are multilingual and have disabilities, continue to grow while there is a decrease in the teaching workforce. One policy initiative developed to combat the teacher shortage is the Assistant to Teacher Program. The Assistant to Teacher Program is a school district policy that aims to fill high-need teacher vacancies by supporting paraprofessionals to become certified teachers in a career advancement cohort. This qualitative study examines the working experiences of multilingual paraprofessionals in special education and their perceptions of the Assistant to Teacher program within their school district. A thematic analysis reveals the bureaucratic and financial obstacles that multilingual paraprofessionals encounter in their career advancement, and their working conditions specific to special education as linguistic liaisons. Findings from the study are then linked to recommended policy actions intended to mitigate special education workforce disparities