

# Education essays example

[Profession](#), [Student](#)



Not all studies are created equal, and when it comes to research, the two prominent research methodologies employed are those of qualitative research, and quantitative research methodology. While both these methodologies have their unique characteristics in the way they are used to arrive at a possible result, quantitative research emphasizes on the number of volumes of study to arrive at a particular answer to a research. Journals, websites, guides, reports, and publications are all part of the quantitative research paradigm. Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) describe quantitative research method as “ understanding a phenomenon by collecting existing numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically-based methods” (p. 1). For example, if a research is initiated to understand how many males got a first-class degree at university compared to females; or, if a question like what was the percentage of teachers and school leaders who belong to ethnic minority groups are undertaken, they can be answered by conducting a quantitative research. As data required to answer these questions are already available in numerical form, it is a question of using a mathematical method to arrive at the right figure or percentage, using a mainframe version (8. 1) of SAS (2000), which was used to calculate all statistics. In critiquing the journal *Paraeducator Training Materials to Facilitate Inclusive Education: Initial Field-Test Data* by Giangreco et al., (2003), a descriptive evaluation of journal was undertaken using a quantitative method that used two sets of paraeducator training materials; *Paraeducator Entry-Level Training for Supporting Students with Disabilities* (CichoskiKelly et al., 2000), and *Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum* (Backus & CichoskiKelly, 2001). The approach adopted for this

research paper involves extensive data collection from respondents (Paraeducators and Instructors), which will then be mathematically calculated to arrive at a consensus. The accruing responses are totaled to give averages, which reflect the majority view or finding of the research. The rationale behind this study was to present initial field-test evaluation feedback on training materials designed to help prepare paraeducators in teaching children with special educational needs. The objective was to find out whether the quantitative research using the two sets of paraeducator training materials could indeed be used to teach courses for paraeducators. The data collection and methods employed in this study were intended to capture the possibility of whether the two sets of paraeducator training materials could indeed, be used to successfully train children with special educational needs. In order to do this, feedback from 213 paraeducators who participated in the course, Paraeducator Entry-Level Training for Supporting Students with Disabilities; 105 paraeducators who participated in the course, Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors: A Paraeducator Curriculum; and 23 instructors who taught a combined total of 20 sections were analyzed. For the research, paraeducators were asked to first, complete a 10-question, multiple-choice, quiz, and then, asked to complete an evaluation of each unit's materials and content. The end finding was more than satisfactory, as the results showed that most of the paraeducators developed new techniques and methods to impart training to children with special education needs. In addition to favorably acknowledging the effectiveness of the two sets of paraeducator training materials, they also provided constructive feedbacks to improve the training materials further.

The results of the study showed that paraeducators gave high scores in the upper ranges across all units in both the alternate and regular formats, and indicated that the objectives of the course were met most favorably. 95% to 99% of all paraeducators rated the course as either important, or very important. Paraeducators were also for infusing paraeducator content into school-based staff development and training programs for prospective special and general education teachers. The majority of the paraeducators chosen for the research were females and their level of experience ranged from newly hired to several years of experience. The feedback from the 23 instructors, who taught a combined total of 20 sections of these courses in a variety of formats, was also very positive. The instructors identified different readings and activities of the two sets of the paraeducator training materials that they felt, was particularly helpful to them. The author concluded that though special educators should be aware that presenting exemplary practices information to paraeducators might validate current experiences, they still need to work, and train the work of paraeducators to succeed.

## **Reflection**

The paper is written clearly, and the authors did clarify some key vocabularies related to the research topic or question. For example, when the authors mentioned the “logistical aspects of the course” they supported this by stating, within brackets, “scheduling, space, and materials preparation.” Similarly, when they talked about the “purpose of the project,” they mentioned, again in brackets, “to develop and field-test paraeducator training materials.” However, the tables were not clear. While the emphasis of the research was on using the quantitative research method, they did use

qualitative research method to elicit a response from the participants. In addition to this, even though the results indicated a positive response to the paraeducator training materials, the results were not completely positive. There were apprehensions raised on view of the questions that were asked, and the quality of some of the printouts, which could have had an impact on the research. The topic was not completely significant and relevant to education, as it focussed more on training people in education, rather than on education. As mentioned, there were confounding variables or other issues that weren't taken into account when the study was undertaken. Further research is mandated to understand whether paraeducator training materials can help in general education. Though only two sets of training materials were used in this research, a better understanding of the subject could have developed, had more training materials been used. Therefore, this research study falls short of answering the question whether the research helped prepare paraeducators in teaching children with special educational needs. Having studied the two sets of paraeducator training materials, the next logical step would be to test it by introducing a proactive qualitative research, wherein further interviews and feedbacks from participants are elicited.

## **Reference**

Giangreco, M. F, Backus, L, CichoskiKelly, E, Sherman, P, and Mavropoulos, Y, (2003), Paraeducator Training Materials to Facilitate Inclusive Education: Initial Field-Test Data Classic RESQ article, Rural Special Education Quarterly, Volume 22(1), p. 14-22