

Abstract

This thesis aimed to thoroughly analyze the subjective perception of the demands of the profession of a teaching assistant in an autism classroom, focusing on both psychological and physical stress. The study's hypothesis posited that the profession of a teaching assistant is demanding but also meaningful and fulfilling.

A qualitative research approach was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with three teaching assistants and three teachers working in autism classrooms. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, identifying key themes and patterns in the respondents' answers.

The results revealed that the profession of a teaching assistant is considered highly demanding due to high workload, low professional prestige, and inadequate salary. However, teaching assistants view their work as meaningful and fulfilling because of the opportunity to help children with autism and observe their progress. Key factors for successfully managing the profession include support from school leadership, quality professional development, and open communication and collaboration.

Based on these findings, recommendations were made to improve working conditions, including regular professional development, enhanced support from the school, and improved communication between teaching assistants and teachers. Additionally, it was recommended to increase the societal prestige of the profession and ensure fair salary compensation.

In conclusion, the hypothesis was confirmed that the profession of a teaching assistant is demanding but also meaningful. The recommendations derived from the research could contribute to improving working conditions and more effectively supporting the education of children with autism, thereby fostering a positive and inclusive school environment.