

Abstract

Research on the working experience and self-efficacy of educational paraprofessionals regarding their mission to meet the needs of public education's most vulnerable students, special education students, is largely non-existent. Therefore, the current exploratory study examines ways to gain access to paraprofessionals to study paraprofessional self-efficacy. Further, access to paraprofessionals was sought as not to limit their voice in the research describing perceived paraprofessional experience. Based on Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy and Critical Theory, this research allows education leaders to become more aware of equity issues affecting paraprofessional efficacy and experience, thus better informing training for paraprofessionals and paraprofessional supervisors. Finally, this study gives voice to a virtually invisible, yet critical, population serving students within the United States.

Keywords: paraprofessionals, paraeducators, paraprofessional voice, paraprofessional supervision, paraprofessional training, para professional self-efficacy.