



Peer Review Report Form

Manuscript Title:	Managing Disruptive Behaviors Among Learners with Autism: A Qualitative Descriptive Study of Kindergarten Teachers
Type of Article:	Original Article

FIRST ROUND

Editor

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The reviewers acknowledge the significance of your manuscript and recommend several revisions to further improve its clarity, coherence, organization, and overall scholarly quality. In addition, you are advised to thoroughly review and validate all references included in the manuscript. Please ensure that all cited sources are accurate, accessible, and retrievable through Google Scholar to uphold the credibility and reliability of the study. Additionally, make sure to include the DOI or website link for every reference whenever available to facilitate verification and accessibility of sources. Furthermore, only sources that are cited within the manuscript should appear in the References section, and all entries listed in the References section must also be cited in the text. For example, if 20 unique sources are cited in the manuscript, then only those 20 sources should be included in the References section. Please also note that repeated citations of the same source within the text are counted as a single reference entry; therefore, the total number of references may be lower than the total number of in-text citations.

Reviewer 1

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The manuscript discusses a relevant issue in inclusive kindergarten education, especially the management of disruptive behaviors among learners with autism. The topic has practical value for teachers and schools, but the paper still needs stronger methodological clarity and deeper analysis so that the findings will be more convincing for an international journal.

<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
The methodology needs more detail. The study mentions eight kindergarten teachers and the use of semi-structured interviews, but it does not clearly explain the school context, inclusion criteria, interview process, length of interviews, or how data saturation or adequacy was determined. These details are important because readers need to judge whether the data are sufficient and credible.
There is some inconsistency in the focus of the study. The title and abstract focus on learners with autism and disruptive behaviors, but some parts of the methodology and results use



broader terms such as adaptive difficulties. This may confuse readers about the actual scope of the study and should be made consistent throughout the manuscript.

The results present many themes, but the analysis remains mostly descriptive. The manuscript would be stronger if the authors explain more clearly how the themes are connected to each other and what new insight they provide about managing disruptive behaviors. At present, the findings sometimes read like a list of classroom strategies rather than a deeper qualitative interpretation.

The discussion includes supporting and contrasting literature, which is good, but it should be more focused on interpreting the study's own findings. Some parts depend heavily on previous studies, while the voices of the participants and the local context are less emphasized. The authors should make clearer what this study adds to existing knowledge on inclusive education and autism support.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
First of all, I commend you for taking on this very timely and relevant topic. The issue of managing disruptive behaviors among learners with autism in inclusive classrooms is a real struggle, especially here in our local context. Your research has great potential and provides a good voice to our kindergarten teachers.
<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
You mentioned that your participants are eight kindergarten teachers selected through purposive sampling because they have direct experience handling learners with autism. However, you completely missed providing a demographic profile. Please include a table or a rich description of their profiles. How many years of teaching experience do they have? Have they attended special education (SPED) training? What is the severity of the autism of the learners they are handling? This context is crucial because a teacher with 10 years of SPED training will have very different adaptive practices compared to a novice teacher.
You stated that you used Braun and Clarke's (2022) thematic analysis framework. But looking at your results, your themes are actually just categories or a list of strategies. Themes should capture the essence or the underlying meaning of the teachers' experiences, not just act as topic headings for their teaching strategies. Revisit your data and elevate your analysis. Instead of just listing what they do, explore why they do it and how it affects them as educators. For example, instead of just Responding to Sudden Emotional Meltdowns, a deeper theme could explore the emotional toll on the teacher or the intuitive navigation of the child's triggers.



I appreciate that you included the original local language (Cebuano) quotes alongside the English translations, as this preserves the authenticity of the data. However, the way you presented the results is a bit repetitive. For instance, in section 3.2, your paragraph explains that teachers provide immediate and calm responses, use calming strategies, and help learners regain control. Then, your quotes (e.g., from Participant 4) basically just say the exact same thing. The introductory paragraphs for each theme should synthesize the overarching idea, and the quotes should serve as the vivid evidence. Do not just paraphrase the quote right before you show it. Dig deeper into the nuances of what the teachers are expressing.

Your discussion section is structured very rigidly. You present a finding, show literature that agrees with it, conclude that it affirms the participants' experiences, and then immediately follow up with a paragraph showing contrasting literature. You repeat this exact same pattern for the subsequent sections. While it is good that you are showing both sides of the literature, the flow feels very mechanical and formulaic. A good discussion synthesizes the findings to build a new argument. Instead of just saying "Study A agrees, but Study B disagrees," tell us why there is a difference. Is it because of the Philippine classroom context? Is it due to the lack of resources here compared to Western studies? Contextualize the contrast to make your discussion richer and more insightful.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

SECOND ROUND

<u>Decision</u>	<u>Editor</u>	<u>Reviewer 1</u>	<u>Reviewer 2</u>
Accept the manuscript for publication.	/	/	/
Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.			
Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.			