

Trainee Teachers' Perceptions of Online Teaching During Field Experience with Young Children

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Abstract

The global pandemic of COVID-19 forced trainee teachers from the United Arab Emirates to have virtual field experiences in the field of early childhood education. The various stakeholders, young children, families, preservice teachers, and university faculty hold different perceptions of online teaching formats. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of trainee teachers and faculty supervisors about online field experiences with young children. The study was done using a qualitative case study within an interpretivist paradigm. Twelve internship students and five supervisors were purposively selected to complete open-ended questionnaires about virtual field experiences. Three themes emerged from the data: (1) integrating technology into lesson planning, (2) meeting challenges to classroom management, and (3) expanding the repertoire of teaching strategies. It is concluded that the virtual field experience which trainee teachers had provided a milestone of achievement for them in terms of preparation to implement the country's plan of integrating technology in the curriculum.

Keywords: Online teaching; Trainee teachers; Technology integration; Virtual field experience.