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## **Back To Basics - A Learning Experience for Teaching Assistants to Earn an Academic Certificate in Education**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the Yesodot (“Basics”) program, a training initiative designed for adults over 30 working in educational support roles who seek to pursue a bachelor’s degree and a teaching certificate. The program targets teaching assistants and substitute teachers with at least two years of experience, offering them an academic pathway for professional advancement. This research explores how these adult learners experience the transition into higher education and teacher training.

Using a phenomenological framework grounded in Heidegger and Husserl (1931) and Creswell (2014), the study focuses on participants’ lived experiences and subjective interpretations. The research incorporates a mixed-methods design that combines in-depth interviews with short quantitative questionnaires to broaden the understanding beyond personal narratives.

The study population included 40 first- and second-year students enrolled in the program. The findings highlight the unique motivations of adult learners, particularly those who have completed their rearing and now view academic study as newly accessible. Participants describe the program as an opportunity for reinvention, professional mobility, and personal fulfillment. They also report challenges related to academic culture, group dynamics, and balancing studies with work and family responsibilities.

This research contributes to the field of adult education by focusing on a population rarely examined in teacher training contexts: educational support staff undergoing career retraining. Insights from the study may inform new pathways for recruiting and preparing talented individuals for teaching roles, thereby addressing the education system’s shortages.

**Keywords:** Adult Education, Phenomenological Research, Support Teaching And Sub-Teachers, Teaching Training Process