

# The Narratives of Elementary Tutors: A Qualitative Inquiry

Desserie S. Balla<sup>1</sup>, Jobell B. Jajalla, PhD<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Student Researcher, Institute of Teacher Education, Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology, Kapalong, Davao del Norte, Philippine

<sup>2</sup>Faculty, Institute of Teacher Education, Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology, Kapalong, Davao del Norte, Philippines

Corresponding Author's Email: [aplacajimmar423@gmail.com](mailto:aplacajimmar423@gmail.com)



## ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of elementary tutors, focusing on the challenges they encountered and the strategies they used to support student learning. Data were collected through in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with fourteen graduates from Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology (KCAST). The findings identified five main themes: referral-based tutoring, gaining teaching experience, managing student behavior, engaging students with interactive methods, and seeing student progress and growth. To handle their challenges, tutors used various strategies. These included offering rewards, building patience, using multimedia and peer support, organizing their schedules, and practicing self-care. Tutors also stressed the importance of adjusting teaching methods to meet different learning needs, developing essential tutoring skills, and using personalized strategies to enhance student learning. Many felt a strong sense of satisfaction from seeing student progress and were motivated to continue teaching earnestly. This study highlights the need for institutional recognition, focused training, and support systems to empower elementary tutors. The insights gained may help education leaders and policymakers improve tutoring programs and promote fair learning in elementary education.

**Keywords:** elementary tutors, tutoring challenges, teaching strategies, student learning, qualitative inquiry, Philippines

## Recommended Citation

Balla, D., & Jajalla, J. (2026). The Narratives of Elementary Tutors: A Qualitative Inquiry. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research and Innovation*. 4(2), 632-648.

## INTRODUCTION

Elementary tutors play an important role in student learning, but they often face challenges. These include meeting different learning needs, dealing with limited resources, and not receiving formal recognition. These issues can hinder students' academic growth and social development, causing difficulties in reading, writing, and communication. Effective tutoring can boost engagement and performance, but it may also put additional pressure on students, especially when they are expected to exceed their capabilities (Ademola, 2023).

Globally, tutors deal with problems such as poor recruitment, limited training, and tight schedules. These issues worsened during the shift to online education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gaps in technological readiness and assessment flexibility, as noted by Demir et al. (2022), show the urgent need for reforms and better support for tutors.

In the Philippines, Magbanua (2024) found that tutoring challenges worsened during the pandemic, especially in remote areas where tutors lacked teaching materials and had to use their personal resources. Other challenges included interruptions in instruction, changes in the curriculum, and weak collaboration between parents and schools due to low parental education levels. While Magbanua (2024) discusses pandemic-related issues, her study mainly concentrates on institutional obstacles and general remote learning challenges.

In Bangladesh, Mahmud (2019) looked at how private tutoring affects student success in urban and rural areas, focusing on socioeconomic differences. His findings pointed out systemic inequalities that affect student results but did not address the experiences of the tutors themselves.

This study goes beyond both Magbanua (2024) and Mahmud (2019) by focusing on the firsthand experiences of elementary tutors. It explores their daily challenges, coping strategies, and personal insights areas that previous research often ignored. By highlighting their voices, this study not only acknowledges their important role in education but also addresses the emotional labor, identity, and resilience involved in tutoring.

Similarly, related studies indicate that issues like poor infrastructure, limited access to technology, and economic disparities make life harder for elementary tutors. These factors lead to low student engagement and higher dropout rates. For example, Arreerard's (2022) study, "Technology Integration Challenges in Rural Schools: A Case Study," looked at how the digital divide affects technology efforts in rural schools. Additionally, the shift to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic created more challenges, including inadequate digital skills among tutors and students, complicating the learning process. Shahid and Abiodullah (2022) discussed these issues in their study, "Challenges Faced by B.Ed. (Hons.) Elementary Prospective Teachers for TPACK Implementation in Practicing Teaching During COVID-19." The combined effects of these obstacles hurt education quality and lead to high turnover rates among tutors. Moreover, Pennefather's (2023) study, "Student Teacher Learning in Rural Contexts: Challenges and Opportunities," explored preservice teachers' experiences in rural schools, but there is limited research on elementary tutors specifically. Most research focuses on formal teacher training and student outcomes, often missing the unique challenges tutors encounter. This study brings attention to the personal stories of tutors and their vital role in supporting students. By addressing this gap in the literature, the research aims to enhance support systems for tutors and ultimately improve student learning results.



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

In this study, the findings will be shared with stakeholders, community members, and educational institutions through reports, summaries, and potential publications. This strategy seeks to raise awareness, encourage policy changes, and promote practical solutions that recognize and support the essential role tutors have in fostering student success.

### Research Questions

This study explored the lived experiences of elementary tutors in supporting students throughout their academic journey. It aimed to understand how tutors manage the challenges they encounter and how these experiences shape their teaching approaches. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are your lived experiences of elementary tutor as they support student in their academic journey?
2. How do elementary tutors cope with the challenges they face in their tutoring responsibilities?
3. What insights can they share to help improve tutoring practices and student support?

### Theoretical Lens

This study was guided by Role Theory (Biddle, 1986), Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977), and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943). Together, these theories provide a complete framework for understanding the experiences of elementary tutors. Role Theory explains how tutors manage their responsibilities, such as handling student behavior and adjusting to different learning needs, often with unclear expectations or limited resources. As they moved into teaching roles, especially in referral-based tutoring, many tutors faced confusion about their roles but still tried to meet both institutional and social expectations. Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory offers insight into how a tutor's belief in their teaching ability affected their motivation and determination. Tutors who gained confidence from positive student results and support from peers were more likely to use engaging strategies, like interactive activities and multimedia, showing high self-efficacy. Additionally, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs can be seen in the coping methods tutors used. Self-care routines and efforts to manage their time helped address both physical and mental needs. The fulfillment they felt from seeing their students grow relates to esteem and self-actualization. Tutors who felt emotionally supported and valued were more resilient and found greater meaning in their work. Overall, these theories show how external expectations, internal beliefs, and personal well-being influenced how tutors adapted, coped, and developed professionally.

## METHODS

### Study Design

This qualitative study used a phenomenological approach. This method effectively captured the rich experiences of individuals. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research allows researchers to explore human experiences in their natural environments. It gives voice to people whose views often get overlooked. Phenomenology focuses on understanding how individuals interpret their experiences. This helps researchers uncover the meanings that participants attach to the events they go through.



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

In this study, a phenomenological design was chosen to explore the experiences of elementary tutors, a topic that has not been fully examined. This approach was preferred over other qualitative methods, such as case study or narrative inquiry, because it focuses on the shared essence of a group's experiences rather than on a specific program, location, or sequence of events. While a case study would look at a specific system, phenomenology allowed for a broader exploration of tutors' emotional, instructional, and personal realities across different contexts. This made it ideal for capturing the challenges, coping strategies, and personal insights of tutors, regardless of where or how they worked.

The study involved fourteen elementary tutors who participated in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. These methods allowed the researcher to gather detailed stories that reflected each tutor's unique perspective. Phenomenology supported this process by letting participants express their experiences in their own words. This helped reduce researcher bias and maintain authenticity. The approach ensured that the study remained grounded in the actual voices of those who experienced the phenomenon.

Using phenomenology highlighted important aspects of tutoring that often go unnoticed, such as emotional fulfillment, growth, and resilience. By viewing the world through the tutors' eyes, the research revealed their untold stories and emphasized their contributions beyond academic instruction. This design supported the study's goal of valuing and understanding the real-life impact of tutoring, providing insights that numbers or more structured research methods could not fully capture.

### **Population and Sample**

The main participants in this study were elementary tutors who graduated from Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology (KCAST), no matter the course they completed. We selected fourteen (14) tutors based on their personal tutoring experience with elementary learners. Each participant had at least six months of tutoring experience, and their ages ranged from 25 to 30 years old. This ensured they understood the realities of tutoring and could provide meaningful insights into their roles, challenges, and strategies.

The participants were split into two groups: seven (7) took part in in-depth interviews (IDI), while the other seven (7) joined a focus group discussion (FGD). The IDIs allowed participants to reflect deeply and privately on their personal experiences. This helped the researcher capture individual challenges and coping methods in detail. Meanwhile, the FGD encouraged interactive dialogue that allowed tutors to share and compare experiences. This led to discovering common themes and shared reflections. This division enriched the data by providing both individual depth and shared viewpoints.

I used purposive sampling to include participants with relevant tutoring experience who could offer valuable insights. As noted by Ellis (2016), this method allows researchers to choose individuals directly involved in the phenomenon being studied. The total number of participants followed Creswell's (2013) suggestion of including 3 to 15 individuals in qualitative research to reach data saturation, where no new themes arise. To be eligible, participants had to be KCAST graduates with at least six months of tutoring experience. Those who did not meet these criteria were excluded to ensure the study focused on qualified and experienced tutors. This maintained the integrity of the data collected.



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

## Data Collection

I used several methods to collect data for the study. I took multiple steps and followed ethical guidelines to make sure the study's conclusions were reliable and ethical. I obtained official approval for this research from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology before starting data collection.

First, I submitted the revised paper and questionnaire to my research adviser to get the endorsement form. I then sent these documents to the research office to confirm the research questions, which required approval from the three research panel members. After receiving full approval, I drafted a permission letter for the institution where I would conduct the study.

To select participants, I approached elementary tutors in person. I explained the purpose of the research and got their permission to participate. Only those who met the inclusion criteria were selected to ensure the reliability of the data.

Next, I provided each potential participant with a formal permission letter and asked them individually for informed consent. I explained the informed consent form, which detailed the study's goals, methods, and participant rights, including the right to withdraw at any time. Once they agreed, participants signed the form, indicating their willingness to take part and understanding of the research.

I made sure they understood that all collected data would be stored securely on Google Drive, with access limited to me. I also prepared a clear timetable, participant tokens, and the questionnaires needed for the interviews and discussions.

Once everything was ready, I conducted in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs), with seven participants in each group. Before recording anything, I asked for and received both verbal and written consent. The sessions were recorded, and afterward, I transcribed and translated the data into Standard English. I performed a member check to ensure the transcripts were accurate.

After transcription, I began coding and organizing the responses based on the participants' experiences, coping strategies, and insights. These codes helped identify common themes, which I later grouped into larger themes.

Throughout the research process, I kept a reflexive journal of my personal thoughts and assumptions to limit bias. I engaged in regular self-reflection to ensure that my interpretations accurately represented the participants' statements.

I respected the privacy of all research participants, and I protected their data. All digital and hard copies of information were stored in secure folders, accessible only to authorized individuals in the research office.

## Data Analysis

The data I collected were analyzed to meet the study's goals. My aim during the analysis was to find common patterns and themes that addressed the research questions.

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), analyzing qualitative data involves organizing and interpreting it to identify themes and insights. My main data sources included transcribed interviews and focus group discussions with the participating elementary tutors. I reviewed and analyzed these transcripts to extract key findings.



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

I used coding to label smaller yet significant ideas that emerged from the responses. I grouped these initial codes into broader categories, which helped form main themes. The coding process involved identifying repetitive concepts and meanings within the responses.

Gibbs (2007) describes coding as a basic practice in qualitative research that helps organize data into conceptual units. Based on this, I tagged relevant sections and grouped similar responses together.

I then employed thematic analysis to analyze and interpret the data further. Braun and Clarke (2021) define thematic analysis as a flexible method for identifying and reporting patterns within data. I followed their process to develop themes that accurately reflected the tutors' lived experiences.

To ensure transparency in the coding process, I kept track of how I labeled the raw data, grouped them into codes, and organized them into major themes. I also maintained reflective notes throughout the process to help reduce my personal biases. This practice of reflexivity helped ensure that the findings truly represented the participants' voices.

By the end of the thematic analysis, I developed a set of main ideas based on recurring concepts in the data. I organized these ideas into major themes that captured the essence of the tutors' narratives and coping methods.

## RESULTS

### Lived Experiences of Elementary Tutor as they Support Student in their Academic Journey

Based on the data gathered from the participants, five key themes emerged from their lived experiences: *referral-initiated tutoring, gaining teaching experiences, dealing with students' behavioral challenges, engaging tutees through interactive activities, and witnessing student progress and growth*. These themes are summarized in Table 2 and reflect the tutors' day-to-day realities as they support learners in their academic development

**Table 2.** Lived Experiences of Elementary Tutor as they Support Student in their Academic Journey

Emerging themes	Supporting statements
<b>Referral - Initiated Tutoring</b>	A parent asked me to tutor their child who struggled to read. I later realized I enjoyed helping children with difficulties. – IDI-1 My cousin asked me to tutor their grandchild. As an education graduate, they approached me. – FGD-3 While teaching at CEMPCO, some parents asked me to tutor. I gave it a try and ended up enjoying it. – IDI-7 A parent requested tutoring. I didn't hesitate and took the chance to help. – FGD-7 After graduating, people referred me to tutor their children. I grabbed the opportunity and became a tutor. – FGD-5
<b>Gaining Teaching Experiences</b>	After finishing school, I didn't take the LET right away. While waiting, I took tutoring as a part-time job to earn and gain experience. – IDI-5 My aunt, who owns a school, absorbed me after graduation. I observed her teaching during college, and since I had no experience, I decided to tutor elementary students. – IDI-3 I wanted to apply what I learned in education by teaching students, which gave me hands-on experience. – FGD-6



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

---

**Dealing with Students Behavioral Challenges**

I organized one-on-one sessions to monitor student progress and develop my teaching skills with various learning styles. – FGD-2

One challenge is their behavior. It's unavoidable to tutor children who are mischievous or lack focus, especially when tired or uninterested. – IDI-1

Since they are at home, the behavior they're used to is the same they show to the tutor, influenced by their environment. – FGD-2

It is hard when a child knows nothing, like a 4-year-old. Each one has a different attitude and behavior. – IDI-5

The biggest challenge is managing behavior. Each tutee has a different attitude, so I adjust my approach based on their needs and learning styles. – FGD-7

Tutoring has many challenges, especially when travel is far. The child also struggles to focus and gets bored easily when alone. – FGD-5

**Engaging tutees with Interactive Activities**

I integrate engaging activities and games that are connected to my lesson so that they will participate and respond because they enjoy it. – IDI-1

My tutees respond well because I prepare activities that suit their needs. Their feedback is positive because I focus on what they need, not just on finishing the tutorial. – IDI-2

During discussions, they are sometimes noisy, but when given activities, they participate and engage. – IDI-3

Most students respond well and engage in activities, especially when I integrate games. One of my teaching methods is incorporating games in tutoring so they won't get bored. – IDI-4

My tutees respond well because I use interactive teaching methods. – FGD-7

**Witnessing Student Progress and Growth**

A tutee didn't know how to read. On our first day, they struggled, so I guided them little by little. After a week, I saw improvement and eagerness to learn. – IDI-1

I had a tutee who couldn't write their name. I assumed they knew. It was challenging, but after weeks of practice, they learned and showed effort. – IDI-2

At first, they were shy and afraid to make mistakes, but over time, I saw their confidence grow. After each session, they said, "Teacher, thank you." – FGD-7

I had a tutee who struggled with Math. I helped them little by little. At first, it was hard, but their mindset changed and they enjoyed learning. – IDI-4

A tutee couldn't read at all. After weeks, they slowly learned syllables and words. It was meaningful, and they always expressed gratitude. – IDI-6

---

**Note.** *IDI = In-depth Interview; FGD = Focus Group Discussion.*

Many tutors started their journey through referrals from parents, relatives, or community members. These recommendations connected learners to trusted individuals, giving tutors opportunities while building their credibility and confidence. Mahmud (2019) noted that in both rural and urban areas, parents often choose tutors based on word-of-mouth recommendations, which help them enter the field with trust. Iswan (2023) found that 81.4% of student learning outcomes were influenced by parental involvement, reinforcing the idea that academic support relies on trusted relationships. These findings confirm that referrals and social networks play a vital role in opening tutoring opportunities and shaping successful learning experiences.



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

Furthermore, by interacting regularly with diverse learners, tutors improve their strategies, classroom management, and overall teaching skills. Lin et al. (2025) found that peer tutors with ongoing practice and training showed significant gains in instructional effectiveness and learner engagement. Similarly, White et al. (2022) highlighted that responding to individual student needs prepares tutors better for formal teaching roles. These findings show that tutoring not only helps students but also plays an important role in developing tutors' professional skills.

Managing students' behavioral challenges is also crucial during tutoring sessions. Tutors often face problems like inattentiveness, low motivation, and disruptive behavior. Mantog et al. (2024) found that using positive reinforcement through operant conditioning helps reduce these behaviors and improve student focus. Lane et al. (2022) emphasized that self-management strategies, such as goal setting and self-monitoring, create a more productive learning environment. These findings show that structured strategies are essential for maintaining student attention and promoting effective learning.

In addition, tutors discovered that interactive activities like games, storytelling, and role-playing motivated students and improved their understanding. These methods encouraged curiosity and active participation. Liu, Chan, and Hou (2025) and the study by Escandallo and Baradillo (2024) found that role-playing boosts engagement by creating immersive learning experiences. Similarly, Çetinkaya and Demir (2025) reported that digital storytelling enhances academic performance and improves students' attitudes toward complex topics. These findings support tutors' experiences that interactive methods not only make sessions enjoyable but also help learners apply concepts more effectively in a dynamic learning environment.

Finally, tutors felt fulfilled by seeing their students' growth and progress. Improvements in academic performance, confidence, and engagement provided them with a strong sense of achievement. Dong et al. (2021) emphasized that seeing learners develop during micro-teaching sessions brought emotional satisfaction and reinforced student-teachers' professional identity. Similarly, White et al. (2022) highlighted that meaningful tutor-student relationships, especially when tutors see real improvement in their learners, contribute to both academic success and tutor motivation. These studies affirm that witnessing student transformation is rewarding and strengthens tutors' commitment to their educational roles.

### **Coping Mechanism of Elementary Tutor with Challenges They Face in their Tutoring Responsibilities**

Based on the data gathered, five key themes emerged regarding how elementary tutors cope with challenges: *reinforcing rewards as motivation, cultivating patience to support student learning, seeking support from multimedia resources and peers, structuring schedules to manage workload, and balancing well-being through self-care*. These themes are summarized in Table 3 and reflect the strategies tutors use to sustain their effectiveness and resilience in tutoring.

**Table 3.** Coping Mechanism of Elementary Tutor with Challenges they Face in their Tutoring Responsibilities

<b>Emerging themes</b>	<b>Supporting statements</b>
<b>Reinforcing Rewards as Motivation</b>	I give small rewards, like food or stickers, so they feel that I am proud of them when they answer correctly or participate. – IDI-1 When I have unmotivated students, I give them rewards. – IDI-3



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

---

**Cultivating Patience  
To Support Student  
Learning**

I give them rewards. We all know that children love rewards, so this is my strategy to keep them motivated during tutoring sessions. – IDI-4

I give small rewards and also set agreements with them, like allowing break time after the lesson to keep them more engaged. – FGD-4

I motivate them by giving rewards. – FGD-6

As an elementary tutor, having a lot of patience is essential and that is how I handle difficult and unmotivated students. – IDI-2

Patience is necessary. You need to understand their behavior and academic skills first before thinking of ways to motivate them. – IDI-6

Tutoring in the afternoon is challenging because students are already tired, and their attention span is shorter. My approach includes extra patience, a firm role, and interactive teaching. I give them a five-minute break to stretch, but after that, we go back to the lesson. Activities must be interactive to keep them engaged and motivated. – IDI-7

Patience is very important when tutoring, especially with young children. – IDI-5

**Seeking Support from  
Multimedia Resources  
and Fellows**

Sometimes, I use online resources, such as watching YouTube videos about teaching strategies. I also ask fellow tutors or teachers for advice and tips that I can apply in my teaching. – IDI-1

Most of the time, I rely on social media and YouTube to learn about the techniques and strategies used by other tutors. – IDI-5

I seek advice from those who have tutoring experience and from my fellow educators. I also conduct research because you can gather more valuable information through research. – IDI-6

The support system I rely on for my professional growth includes reading books, using online resources, and attending training sessions to improve my teaching. – FGD-1

I also rely on online resources, workshops, and mentorship from experienced educators, including my friends. – FGD-7

**Structuring Schedule  
to Handle Workload**

I manage my workload and time, especially when handling multiple students, through proper time management. I create a clear schedule, plan ahead for what needs to be done each day, and ensure that everything is accomplished as planned. – IDI-1

I assess their learning needs and identify what their parents specifically want me to focus on. I start with the easiest tasks, those that only require direct instruction, then move on to the more advanced students, and finally, to those who need extra support. – IDI-2

I create a structured schedule to manage my time, workload, and tutoring sessions. Setting priorities on what needs to be done first really helps in handling the workload effectively. – IDI-4

I make a schedule to ensure fairness among my students and to make sure I can cater to all of them. I also inform parents that if their child cannot attend, they should notify me in advance so that I can rest before the next session. – FGD-4

Time management is essential. If you have multiple tutees, you need to schedule them properly so that, as a tutor, you won't feel overwhelmed or confused about what to teach. – FGD-5

---



---

**Balancing Well-Being with Self-Care**

I take care of my emotional well-being as a tutor by taking breaks when I feel stressed and doing things that make me happy, like listening to music or going out with friends. – IDI-1

To avoid stress, I set boundaries and balance my time. I also engage in hobbies like listening to music, and once I feel better

I continue with tutoring. – IDI-4

I stay optimistic. Even when I experience bad situations, I focus on the brighter side. If I dwell on the negatives, I will feel more down and overthink. Choosing to focus on the positive helps me stay motivated to continue. – IDI-6

I practice self-care by taking breaks, engaging in hobbies, and staying connected with my friends and family. – FGD-7

I prioritize self-care practices like stress management. It's inevitable to feel irritated sometimes, but I make sure that it doesn't affect my tutees. I ensure that I don't feel too exhausted, stay energized, and get enough sleep to provide a good learning environment for my students. – FGD-4

---

**Note.** *IDI = In-depth Interview; FGD = Focus Group Discussion.*

Tutors often use tangible rewards like stickers, snacks, point systems, and short breaks to keep students engaged and encourage participation. These methods help motivate students and create a supportive learning environment. This connects to Bandura's self-efficacy theory, which suggests that positive reinforcement can strengthen a learner's belief in their ability to succeed. When students earn rewards for their efforts, they start to link their actions with success, which boosts their self-efficacy and willingness to engage more in the learning process.

In line with this, Sigalingging et al. (2023) found that rewards significantly boosted learning motivation, particularly when tied to student effort. Likewise, Viray-Castillejos (2023) pointed out that even simple forms of recognition, like praise or certificates, increased student engagement. These results match the experiences of the tutors in this study, confirming that well-implemented reward systems not only promote positive behavior but also enhance students' academic confidence and performance.

Moreover, tutors stressed the importance of being patient by adjusting their teaching pace and explanations to suit each learner's needs. This approach creates a calm and supportive environment where students feel safe to ask questions and build confidence. Zhang (2022) pointed out that teacher patience, shown through strategic pauses and rephrased responses, increases student engagement and understanding during assessments. Similarly, Erduran Tekin and Çayak (2024) found that teachers with more patience showed greater professional resilience, helping them support diverse learners effectively. These findings back up tutors' experiences, showing that patience is not just a virtue but a teaching strategy that supports understanding, confidence, and ongoing academic growth.

Additionally, tutors seek help from multimedia resources and peers to improve their teaching skills. Through online training and mentorship, they continually refine their strategies and stay updated with modern teaching methods to meet learners' needs. Abou Shaaban (2022) discovered that video-based reflection combined with peer coaching greatly improved the teaching performance of TEFL student-teachers, especially in delivering receptive skills. Similarly, Ansari and Khan (2020) highlighted that collaborative learning through social media platforms boosts tutor engagement, confidence, and



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

adaptability in instruction. These studies support the idea that using digital resources along with mentorship encourages ongoing tutor development and responsiveness to learners' needs.

Related to this, many tutors organize their schedules to handle their workload better, showing the importance of time management. By planning lessons and setting priorities, they balance their responsibilities and maintain a productive, stress-free workflow. Moral et al. (2024) noted that prioritizing and organizing tasks helps educators avoid burnout while staying productive. Likewise, Valente et al. (2024) found that structured planning reduces procrastination and aids in completing tasks efficiently. These findings highlight that effective time management is crucial for tutors to balance their responsibilities and teach effectively.

Furthermore, tutors understand that prioritizing their well-being and practicing self-care is vital to staying effective in their teaching roles. By setting boundaries and managing stress, they maintain motivation, prevent burnout, and continue to offer meaningful academic support. Turgeon-Brown (2025) emphasized that practices like mindfulness, boundary-setting, and leisure activities help educators manage stress and prevent emotional fatigue. Similarly, Pakdee et al. (2025) found that both personal and institutional strategies are key to reducing burnout and enhancing overall well-being. These findings confirm that self-care is essential for tutors to stay motivated, mentally healthy, and committed to providing meaningful academic support.

#### **Insight Can They Share to Help Improve Tutoring Practices and Student Support**

Based on the collected narratives of the informants, the researcher identified five key emerging insights: *adapting teaching to diverse learning needs, developing essential skills of an effective tutor, applying personalized approaches to enhance learning, finding fulfillment in student growth, and inspiring growth through dedicated teaching.* These insights are summarized in Table 4 and reflect the tutors' observations and understanding gained from their experiences in supporting students throughout their academic journey.

**Table 4.** Insights They Can Share to Help Improve Tutoring Practices and Student Support

<b>Emerging themes</b>	<b>Supporting statements</b>
<b>Adapting and Personalizing Teaching Based on Student Needs.</b>	<p>At first, I thought teaching was easy—just explain and the child would understand. But I realized each student is different, so patience and flexibility are essential. – IDI-1</p> <p>My perspective changed in tutoring. I used to think I could teach what I wanted, but I learned each child has their own learning style. – IDI-2</p> <p>Education isn't one-size-fits-all. We must adjust methods to suit individual needs for their growth and development. – IDI-4</p> <p>Tutoring showed me a personalized approach improves learning. I use strategies suited to each student's style. Patience and reinforcement help build their confidence. – IDI-6</p> <p>My patience depends on the subject and tutee. One-on-one tutoring helps kids discover skills they missed in class. Teaching must be flexible. – IDI-7</p> <p>Each child learns differently. I discovered new strategies and realized patience is key. – IDI-1</p> <p>I didn't know what to do at first, but I learned to use age-appropriate strategies. – IDI-5</p>



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

---

**Developing Essential Skills of an Effective Tutor**

Teaching should be gradual—from basic to complex. Tutors must identify learning gaps. – FGD-6

One-on-one tutoring gives full attention, unlike classroom settings. Both need different approaches. – IDI-2

A tutor must have patience, good communication, and strategies that fit their tutees. – IDI-1

The most important quality of a successful tutor is flexibility to adjust to students and their learning environment. – IDI-3

Patience is essential since students have different behaviors and learning styles. Tutors must also be adaptable, empathetic, and communicative to support them effectively. – IDI-4

For me, the most important thing is having love for your profession. Patience, humility, and other qualities follow. Without passion for your work, you won't be able to give your best to your tutees. – FGD-5

Based on my experience, the most important qualities of a tutor are patience, empathy, creativity, and a passion for helping children. – FGD-7

**Finding Fulfillment in Student Growth**

The most rewarding part is seeing their improvement and hearing them express their gratitude. – IDI-1

It's fulfilling to see that the child you tutored has learned. The feeling is different when you witness someone go from not knowing how to read to finally being able to. – IDI-5

You can see that the student is improving, achieving their academic goals, and gaining confidence in themselves. – IDI-4

The most fulfilling part is seeing my tutee truly gain confidence and knowledge, knowing that I played a role in her growth. – FGD-7

The most rewarding part is when the child makes it to the honor list because of your help. Parents come back because they see that you can handle their child well and that they are truly learning. – FGD-4

**Inspiring Growth Through Dedicated Teaching**

My advice to those who want to become tutors is that tutoring is not just about teaching. You must be willing to listen, adjust, and have a lot of patience. – IDI-1

As a tutor, your priority should be the learners. It is important to provide meaningful learning that stays with them. You must have a heart for your work and a great deal of patience. – IDI-6

You should not tutor if you do not have a love for teaching and for children. The first thing you should give is your patience and passion for teaching, not just because of money. – IDI-5

A tutor must be patient and willing to adapt to different learning styles. You need to be flexible and knowledgeable about new technology. – IDI-4

Teaching should be your passion because if it is not, it will be difficult to force it. Your tutee may learn, but their understanding will not be as strong. – FGD-2

---

**Note.** *IDI = In-depth Interview; FGD = Focus Group Discussion.*

Tutors adjust their teaching methods to meet diverse learning needs. They use visual, hands-on, or verbal strategies based on how each student learns best. Tutors consistently modify their approach to ensure effective learning and keep track of progress. Yang (2024) highlighted that using a variety of teaching methods can improve student engagement and understanding, especially when tailored to how learners grasp information. Similarly, Hardy et al. (2022) discovered that adaptive teaching, which



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

makes real-time adjustments based on student feedback, positively affects learning outcomes in elementary education. These findings show that effective tutoring involves regularly assessing students and modifying instruction to create a more personalized and impactful learning experience.

Also, tutors noted that building essential skills like patience, adaptability, and communication was crucial for supporting student learning. Zhang (2022) mentioned that patience allows tutors to guide learners calmly through challenges, adjust their teaching pace, and provide steady support. In the same vein, Sabelo and Rondile (2024) found that peer-assisted learning programs helped tutors improve their problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills, which allowed them to simplify complex topics and meet the varied needs of students. These results demonstrate how tutors in this study learned to modify their strategies, listen actively, and repeatedly explain lessons until students understood.

Moreover, a personalized tutoring approach tailored to each student's needs and interests greatly improves learning outcomes. Halkiopoulos and Gkintoni (2024) found that using adaptive, real-life examples and interactive tools increases motivation and makes concepts more relatable. Likewise, González et al. (2023) pointed out that personalized learning strategies like one-on-one support and contextualized lessons lead to better academic performance and deeper understanding. These findings affirm that customized, student-centered approaches create a more effective and supportive learning environment.

Additionally, tutors often feel a strong sense of fulfillment and motivation when they see students improve academically and gain confidence. According to Al Yahyaei et al. (2024), peer tutors reported greater psychological empowerment and satisfaction, particularly when students made clear academic progress. Similarly, Oosterbaan Lodder et al. (2023) found that positive feedback and appreciation from students boosted tutors' motivation and kept their passion for teaching alive. These findings validate the efforts of tutors and encourage them to persevere despite the challenges they encounter.

Furthermore, tutors foster growth through dedicated teaching, going beyond simply delivering lessons to influence students' learning attitudes. Their enthusiasm promotes curiosity, perseverance, and high expectations, which help learners become more independent. Tutors also act as role models, demonstrating the value of hard work and a positive mindset. Dewaele and Li (2021) found that enthusiastic teachers increased students' enjoyment and reduced boredom, leading to improved engagement. These findings confirm that when tutors teach with passion and purpose, they effectively encourage confident and self-directed learning.

## CONCLUSION

The experiences of elementary tutors in this study revealed the complexities of their role as they supported students in their academic journeys. Many started tutoring through referrals, often recommended by parents or community members who trusted their abilities. These tutors used their sessions to gain valuable teaching experience and develop classroom management skills, especially in handling students' behavioral challenges. To make learning engaging, tutors used interactive methods like games, storytelling, and role-playing. These approaches sparked curiosity and motivation among learners. Watching students' academic progress and personal growth gave tutors a sense of fulfillment and purpose. When facing challenges, tutors used coping strategies. They offered rewards to motivate



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

learners, cultivated patience, sought support from peers and online resources, managed structured schedules, and practiced self-care to maintain their well-being. These methods helped them stay resilient and effective, despite limited resources and heavy workloads. Tutors also shared important insights: they highlighted the need to adjust teaching to meet diverse learning needs, develop key tutoring skills like flexibility and communication, and use personalized strategies to improve learning outcomes. These experiences show how tutors gradually took on responsibilities and behaviors that align with the expectations of educators, a process explained by Role Theory. This theory suggests that individuals internalize behaviors, norms, and attitudes based on the social roles they take on. As tutors met the expectations of guiding and supporting learners, they began to see themselves not just as temporary helpers but as emerging educators. Through this internalization, their professional identity evolved, marked by a growing sense of responsibility, confidence, and commitment to teaching. Ultimately, their stories showed that tutoring is not just a part-time job; it is a meaningful and transformative activity that influences students' learning attitudes while nurturing the tutors' growth as future professionals in education.

### Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the most urgent need is to provide targeted training programs for elementary tutors that focus on real classroom challenges, especially in behavior management, differentiated instruction, and interactive teaching strategies. Improving these fundamental teaching skills will directly help tutors meet the needs of diverse learners. Besides training, ensuring access to adequate teaching materials, mentorship, and opportunities for peer collaboration can help tutors deliver effective instruction. Supporting tutor well-being through flexible scheduling and wellness initiatives is also important to maintain motivation and prevent burnout. Recognizing the valuable role tutors play and empowering them to use personalized teaching approaches will strengthen their impact on student development and contribute to a more inclusive and responsive education system.

## REFERENCES

- Abou Shaaban, S. S. (2022). Video-based reflection and peer coaching in enhancing TEFL student teachers' teaching practices of receptive skills. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 9(2), 103–109. <https://doi.org/10.20448/jeelr.v9i2.3991>
- Al Yahyaei, A., Natarajan, J. R., Seshan, V., Joseph, M. A., Valsaraj, B. P., & Al Abri, F. H. (2024). The usefulness of peer tutoring and its impact on nursing students' academic performance, psychological empowerment, and satisfaction: Pre-post design. *SAGE Open Nursing*, 10, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23779608241282168>
- Ansari, J. A. N., & Khan, N. A. (2020). Exploring the role of social media in collaborative learning. *Smart Learning Environments*, 7, Article 9. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-020-00118-7>
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Biddle, B. J. (1986). Recent developments in role theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 12, 67–92. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.12.080186.000435>



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

- Çetinkaya, M., & Demir, İ. C. (2025). The effect of interactive digital storytelling on the academic achievement and attitudes of 6th grade students in learning the circulatory system. *International e-Journal of Educational Studies*, 9(19), 88–101. <https://doi.org/10.31458/iejes.1602184>
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Dewaele, J.-M., & Li, C. (2021). Teacher enthusiasm and students' social-behavioral learning engagement: The mediating role of student enjoyment and boredom in Chinese EFL classes. *Language Teaching Research*, 25(6), 922–945. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211014538>
- Dong, Y., Liu, L., & Yang, L. (2021). A study of student-teachers' emotional experiences and their development through micro-teaching. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, Article 810146. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.810146>
- Erduran Tekin, Ö., & Çayak, S. (2024). Examining the relationship between teachers' patience levels and professional resilience. *International Journal of Academic Studies in Technology and Education*, 2(1), 22–39. <https://doi.org/10.55549/ijaste.25>
- Escandallo, J. C., & Baradillo, D. (2024). A sequential explanatory approach on the relationship between social literacy and student engagement as mediated by English speaking skills. *EPR International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 10(3), 35–42. <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra15397>
- Gibbs, G. R. (2007). *Analyzing qualitative data*. SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849208574>
- González, F., del Río, J., & Arias, P. (2023). Improving the learning teaching process through an adaptive learning strategy. *Smart Learning Environments*, 10, Article 314. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-024-00314-9>
- Halkiopoulou, C., & Gkintoni, E. (2024). Leveraging AI in e-learning: Personalized learning and adaptive assessment through cognitive neuropsychology—A systematic analysis. *Electronics*, 13(18), 3762. <https://doi.org/10.3390/electronics13183762>
- Hardy, I., Meschede, N., & Mannel, S. (2022). Measuring adaptive teaching in classroom discourse: Effects on student learning in elementary science education. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, Article 1041316. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.1041316>
- Iswan, S. K. (2023). The effect of parental tutoring on student learning achievement. *Frontiers in Education Technology*, 6(4), 41–50. <https://doi.org/10.22158/fet.v6n4p41>
- Lane, K. L., Menzies, H., Ennis, R., & Oakes, W. (2022). Self-management interventions for reducing challenging behaviors in schools: A systematic review. *School Psychology Review*, 51(3), 291–308. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966X.2022.2035192>



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

- Liu, S.-W., Chan, H.-Y., & Hou, H.-T. (2025). Role playing monument exploration: An online educational game with a role-playing mechanism and multi-dimensional scaffolding for monument tours. *Educational Technology Research and Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-025-10480-3>
- Mahmud, R. (2019). Mixed implications of private supplementary tutoring for students' learning: Urban and rural disparities in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development*, 21(1), 61–75. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCED-05-2018-0008>
- Mantog, J. A., Peras, G. M. M., & Castro, J. C. F. (2024). Mitigating students' disruptive behavior through operant conditioning in Grade 6 pupils. *International Journal of Advance Research and Innovative Ideas in Education*, 9(3), 20850. [https://www.ijariie.com/AdminUploadPdf/Mitigating\\_Students\\_\\_Disruptive\\_Behavior\\_through\\_Operant\\_Conditioning\\_in\\_Grade\\_6\\_Pupils\\_ijariie20850.pdf](https://www.ijariie.com/AdminUploadPdf/Mitigating_Students__Disruptive_Behavior_through_Operant_Conditioning_in_Grade_6_Pupils_ijariie20850.pdf)
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>
- Moral, R., Perigo, C., & Legaspino, I. (2024). Influence of master teachers' workload on their time management skills at Don Sergio Osmeña Sr. Memorial National High School. *EIKI Journal of Effective Teaching Methods*, 2(2), Article 221. <https://doi.org/10.59652/jetm.v2i2.221>
- Oosterbaan Lodder, L., Stalmeijer, R. E., Jaarsma, A. D. C., de Grave, W., & Scherpbier-de Haan, N. D. (2023). What keeps the flame burning? A qualitative study on tutor motivation to guide students in interprofessional education. *Journal of Interprofessional Education & Practice*, 32, 100652. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.xjep.2023.100652>
- Pakdee, S., Cheechang, P., Thammanoon, R., Krobpet, S., Piyaamornphan, N., Puangsri, P., & Gosselink, R. (2025). Burnout and well-being among higher education teachers: Influencing factors of burnout. *BMC Public Health*, 25, Article 1409. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-025-22602-w>
- Peng, C., Wang, L., & Li, X. (2021). A conceptual review of teacher enthusiasm and students' success and engagement in Chinese EFL classes. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, Article 742970. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.742970>
- Sabelo, P. R., & Rondile, S. (2024). Exploring competency development among peer-assisted learning leaders and tutors. *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, 4(13), 1664–1677. <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.202341323>
- Sigalingging, R., Nababan, H., Putra, A., & Nababan, M. (2023). Enhancing learning motivation in elementary schools: The impact and role of rewards. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan dan Humaniora*, 12(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jish-undiksha.v12i1.52767>
- Turgeon Brown, L. E. (2025). Teachers on self-care: A social ecological model for mitigating stress and burnout in K–12 educators. *OBM Integrative and Complementary Medicine*, 10(2), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.21926/obm.icm.2502017>
- Valente, S., Dominguez Lara, S., & Lourenço, A. (2024). Planning time management in school activities and relation to procrastination: A study for educational sustainability. *Sustainability*, 16(16), 6883. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16166883>



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.

- Viray Castillejos, B. (2023). Teachers' use of reward system: Inputs for students' motivation enhancement. *AIDE Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, 3(1), 169–179. <https://doi.org/10.56648/aide-irj.v3i1.61>
- White, S., Groom Thomas, L., & Loeb, S. (2022). Undertaking complex but effective instructional supports for students: A systematic review of research on high-impact tutoring planning and implementation (EdWorkingPaper No. 22-652). *Annenberg Institute at Brown University*. <https://doi.org/10.26300/wztf-wj14>
- Yang, C. (2024). Adapting teaching methods to accommodate diverse learning styles in education. *Journal of Higher Education Research*, 5(6), 535–550. <https://doi.org/10.32629/jher.v5i6.3382>
- Zhang, X. (2022). The role of teacher patience in the implementation of assessment for learning (AfL): Vignettes from a writing classroom. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 9, Article 375. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01398-9>



Authors retain copyright. Articles published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY) International License. This license allows this work to be copied, distributed, remixed, transformed, and built upon for any purpose provided that appropriate attribution is given, a link is provided to the license, and changes made were indicated.