

Elementary School Teachers' Attitude towards Including Students with Special Educational Needs into Regular Public Schools in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The inclusion of students with special educational needs (SEN) into the regular educational system is a major concern. Hence, in the present study, the reactions of 100 qualified regular elementary school teachers were evaluated to explore their opinions on the inclusion of students with SEN in the mainstream schools within Saudi Arabia. Moreover, these opinions were scrutinized based on certain criteria of the teachers including gender, educational level, teaching experience, knowledge and awareness about SEN, in addition to the type, character, and severity of students' SEN. The outcomes of the study showed that the level of strategies used by the male/female teachers for teaching the children with special educational needs was on an average level. The study has also shown that there are no statistically significant differences for variables such as "years of experience", "educational level", and "teachers' knowledge of teaching students with special needs. As for the variable of "gender", the study has shown statistically significant differences in favor of the female teachers. The study has also shown that mild mental disability followed by mild visual and health disabilities are the most amenable categories. However, the least amenable categories for inclusion are severe mental disability preceded directly by the behavioral disorder.

Keywords: Special educational needs, Teachers, Students, Public schools, Saudi Arabia

1. Introduction

The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) holds the view that children with special educational needs (SEN) should be provided with access to mainstream education. This is because such schools have the most efficient approaches, such as professional attitude, establishment of welcoming communities, achievement of education for all, and building of an inclusive society, which may help in overcoming the general discrimination faced by such students. Many countries provide support to this ideology and have accordingly devised and implemented SEN policies centered on ensuring the regulation of its development and practices (IDEA, 1997; Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2001, Dev & Kumar, 2015). However, the approach applied in Saudi Arabia has been described as rhetorical because the blueprint of the Ministry of Education Policies and Strategic Plans for the Education Sector of Saudi exercises caution in its development and application (Al-Mosa, 2005). The circumstances of teachers are one of the key justifications provided by the government in regard to the need to research how the characteristics of both students and teachers could impact the development and adoption of inclusion in the country.

Previous literature has highlighted that SEN is affected greatly by the awareness, conventions, principles, and opinions of a community. As schools cannot be removed from the society (McManus, 2006, Al Zyoudi, 2013, Ford, 2013), it seems that general education teachers are affected by these convictions and opinions. The Audit Report (2002) observed that the decision of parents to allow their children with SEN to learn within the mainstream educational environment is usually restricted by the absence of appropriate local provision, as well as hostile manners in some schools. Gaad (2001) established that unconstructive outlooks are based on a group of cultural convictions and principles. If the attitudes of teachers are constructive, it renders limited challenge to the application of policies that ascertain the entitlement of the student to learn in a regular classroom environment (Alghazo and Gaad, 2004). Nonetheless, the outlook of an unsuitable teacher can have a drastic impact on the manner in which such students are acknowledged as participants in the mainstream classrooms.

As enforcers derive the educational policies from educational structures, the absence of interest on the part of teachers while devising such educational policies can have grave consequences, particularly on the targets of the policies. For instance, Mushoriwa (2001) was of the opinion that learning schemes might probably fail if not sustained by teachers. Additionally, Ellins and Porter (2005) asserted that the students with SEN could be successful in the mainstream learning structure only if their requirements are addressed in the classroom and the teachers are prepared to support them.

Kirk, Gallagher and Anastasiow (2000) outlined how significant it is for the teachers to be conscious of the aspects that form their individual cultural opinions and ‘to be aware that their cultural convictions and conventions could serve them well but not automatically others too’ (p.26). Inclusive learning involves variety, and as proposed by Sapon-Shevin (1996), teachers should scrutinize their own comprehensions, principles, and convictions regarding diversity. Elliot and McKenney (1998) observed that prior to studying and selecting

techniques of inclusion, it is essential to identify the opinions of particular staff members regarding children with SEN. They additionally asserted that an institution's technique of inclusion is reliant on staff convictions, as unconstructive opinions are inclined to restrict the inclusion process. Peetsma, Vergeer, Roeleveld, and Karsten (2001) also outlined the significance of studying teachers' opinions towards inclusion. However, the present studies have not sufficiently determined the kind of school that is most appropriate for students with SEN.

The teacher's outlook concerning the inclusion is considerably impacted by their individual professed extents of efficiency, especially in the instruction of children that have incapacitations within their classrooms (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Forlin 1998; Jordan, Karcaali-Iftar & Patrick Diamond, 1993; Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998). This is related to the instruction received by the teachers at pre-service extent (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000; Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly, 2003; Martinez, 2003; Shade & Stewart, 2001; Shippen, Crites, Houchins, Ramsey & Simon, 2005). Studies have observed the teacher's groundwork is basically faulty due to the absence of particular awareness concerning the field worldwide (Hamre & Oyler, 2004). Additionally, the intricacies encompassing the idea of inclusion and teacher's opinions concerning inclusion are not simple and are reliant on a steady interchange of aspects. Numerous researches have illustrated that constructive teacher opinions concerning inclusion are affected by a multitude of aspects, like the prevailing policies regarding inclusion, institutional philosophy, accessible resources, and extent of sustenance needed in addressing the requirements of students with incapacitations (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Romi & Leyser, 2006; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996).

In addition, the outlooks of teachers concerning their apparent extents of effectiveness and training, influenced by the conventionally individual tracks of overall and special education teacher groundwork are of utmost importance in this paper.

1.1 Attitudinal Studies and Inclusion

Inclusion-centered attitudinal studies imply that inclusion is affected by various types of educational need and the extent of involvement of the teachers in the process (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000). The teacher's attitude is influenced by the types of disabilities of the students and the demands made upon them (Mushoriwa, 2001). Importantly, Center & Ward (1987) reported that mainstream education teachers showed a preference for those students whose characteristics do not warrant additional management or instructional skills. Teachers develop a tendency to reject those learners with notable disabilities (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000), emphasizing the rationale that the severity of disability has a direct effect on the perceptions and expectations surrounding educational outcomes. Sapon-Shevin (1996) has stated that the challenge in such a scenario is to create a classroom that ensures all children are respected, with recognition and respect directed to their differences.

Inclusion literature suggests that students with behavioral and emotional difficulties (EBD) cause a lot more concern and stress for the teachers than those with other types of SEN (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000; Clough & Lindsay, 1991). One of the previous studies has highlighted the link between the severity of disability and its acceptance by the teacher

(Barnatt & Kabzems, 1992). Such a view has also been adopted by, who stated that, prior to planning for a child's individual needs, there is a need to take into account the current capabilities and potential of the students involved in the class. Accordingly, the literature review states that the perspectives of teachers in regard to the inclusion of children with SEN are affected by the condition itself. However, while the majority of these studies have come from Western literature, where SEN policies are in application, the situation in Saudi is different as it lacks SEN policies.

1.2 Research Objectives

From the researcher's knowledge and experience, it is not obvious if teachers in Saudi Arabia undergo distressing emotional responses when teaching children with SEN within the mainstream. Thus, the research has two main objectives:

- ✓ To identify the strategy preference of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities along with other students in regular classrooms in Saudi Arabia with respect to the variables of gender, educational level, years of experience, and teacher's knowledge of teaching students with special needs
- ✓ To explore the emotional responses that Saudi teachers went through or expected to go through when teaching various types of children with special educational needs in the mainstream school classroom with respect to different variables (gender, educational level, years of experience, and teacher's knowledge of teaching students with special needs).

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

Contemplating the previous features of structure for research design in formulating a study design, the descriptive survey plan was selected. Best (1970) considered this design to be suitable when data was required concerning the situations or associations that are available, dominant practices, convictions, perceptions or opinions that are maintained or procedures that are in process. Van Dalen (1979) considered this study design to be suitable as it permits the researcher to gather data to appraise the present practices for enhancement.

The authorization letter for usage of field work and ethical approval was obtained from King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah. The researcher used a survey design, including Likert-scale questionnaires.

2.2 Research Methods

The sample of the study included 100 teachers (50 male/ 50female) who were chosen randomly from schools in Jeddah that allowed the inclusion of different categories of special education. To answer the questions of the study and test its hypotheses, a special questionnaire was designed by two researchers and included the following four parts:

- General information about the teacher.
- Male/female teachers' responses towards the level of integrating each category of special education.
- Teachers' emotional responses for integrating each category of special education.
- Strategies used in teaching children with special needs.

This questionnaire was filled up by the teachers who taught in regular education settings and those who taught students with special education needs.

The questionnaire was viewed by ten specialized examiners, and the statements that were approved by 90% of the examiners have been accredited. The text of the questionnaire was also edited linguistically. Moreover, ethical considerations were highlighted not only in terms of identifying the authorizing committee at King Abdulaaziz University to allow the conduct of the study, but also in terms of the considerations that were sought throughout different stages of study (preparation and conduction), alongside the emphasis on ethical dilemmas regarding inclusion and political correctness (language used to describe children with disability). The demographic data of the Participants are described in Table 1

Table 1. Demographic information of teachers (N = 100)

Variable	Frequency	
Gender	Male	50
	Female	50
Teaching experience	(1-5)	30
	(6-10)	40
	(11+)	30
Qualifications	Bachelor	40
	High Diploma	40
	Master	20
Knowledge of SEN	Yes	60
	No	40

3. Results

The results obtained in this study have been presented with respect to the two main objectives mentioned earlier:

3.1 The Strategies Preference of Teaching Children with Learning Disabilities and Mild Disabilities Along with Other Children in Regular Classrooms

As shown in Table 2, the findings of the study showed that male/female teachers used specific strategies for teaching children included in regular education. As per the value of the mean scores, some of the important or frequently-used specific strategies included "I

encourage students to help each other (Item 15)", "I do monitor my students when they do classroom activities (Item 11)", and "I let students interact in doing classroom tasks and work (Item 16)". The least used strategy was "I establish an educational goal that fits both regular and special needs children (Item 1)", followed by "I choose teaching materials (teaching aids) that help all students learn (both regular and special needs students) (Item 2)".

Table 2. Arithmetic means and the standard deviations for the strategies that male/female teachers of public education in Saudi Arabia use while teaching integrated special education students within public education regular classroom

No.	Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sequence of Items	Approval Degree*
1	Establish an educational goal that fits both regular and special needs children.	2.256	1.0109	22	Average
2	I choose teaching materials (teaching aids) that help all students learn (both regular and special needs students).	2.47	1.064	21	Average
3	I set teaching tasks that can all done by all students.	2.58	1.055	19	Average
4	I prepare my classroom in a way that helps all students get involved in classroom activities.	2.64	1.141	16	Average
5	I vary my pace of teaching to help all students gain knowledge.	2.62	1.066	18	Average
6	I divide my teaching objective into sub-objectives to help all students learn effectively.	2.80	1.063	11	Average
7	I give my students enough time to practice what have been learned.	2.74	1.043	13	Average
8	I give my students enough time to finish their exams and classroom tasks.	2.84	1.051	7	Average
9	I verify the questions to make sure that they are fair and cover the whole book appropriately.	2.81	1.023	10	Average
10	I don't move the next unit until I make sure that all the students have understood the	2.84	1.055	5	Average

	studied unit.				
11	I do monitor my students when they do classroom activities.	2.87	1.023	2	Average
12	I document the activities and programs offered inside the classroom.	2.77	1.017	12	Average
13	I design individualized educational program that suit special education children.	2.56	1.050	20	Average
14	I pay special attention to children who need assistance.	2.83	1.011	8	Average
15	I encourage students to help each other.	2.89	1.038	1	Average
16	I let students interact in doing classroom tasks and work.	2.86	1.058	3	Average
17	I let children with special needs do other classroom activities when regular children are assigned with challenging tasks.	2.63	1.019	17	Average
18	I allow students to respond orally when they don't know how to write.	2.67	1.004	15	Average
19	I benefit from experts' advice in case I can't find it difficult to teach students with special needs.	2.82	1.015	9	Average
20	I allow students with special needs to do the classroom activities at different areas inside the classroom.	2.67	1.020	14	Average
21	I make sure that the classrooms provide students with enough space to move inside easily and smoothly.	2.84	.996	6	Average
22	I make sure that the environment of the classrooms is comfortable for all the students.	2.85	1.029	4	Average
23	Overall Mean Scores of the Strategies	2.7201	0.7201	-	Average

* The approval degree has been provided as per the mean score. A mean score of 3-4 represents high approval degree, 2-3 represents average degree, and 1-2 represents low degree.

The level of significance for the strategy of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities in regular classes due to the variable of teachers' gender was found to be higher ($\alpha > 0.05$). Hence, this proves that there is no statistical significance difference with respect to gender (Table 3).

Table 3. Comparison of the strategy of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities when integrated with regular children in regular classrooms in terms of teacher's gender

Gender	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	(t) value	Percentage	The Level of Significance
Male	2.4665	0.78756	-4,230	0.223	Not Significant
Female	2.9740	0.72351			

The level of significance for the strategy of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities in regular classes due to the variable of teachers' education level was found to be higher ($0.05 < \alpha$). Hence, this proves there is no statistical significance difference with respect to education level (Table 4).

Table 4. ANOVA between the strategy of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities when integrated with regular children in regular classrooms in terms of educational level

Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom (DF)	Mean Squares (MS)	F	Degree of Significance	Level of Significance
	2.795	3	0.932	1.49	0.218	Not Significant
	97.326	156	0.624	3		
	100.12	159				
	2					

The level of significance for the strategy of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities in regular classes due to the variable of teachers' years of experience was found to be higher ($\alpha > 0.05$). Hence, this proves that there is no statistical significance difference with respect to years of experience (Table 5).

Table 5. ANOVA for the strategy of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities when integrated with regular children in regular classrooms in terms of years of experience

Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom (DF)	Mean Squares (MS)	F	Degree of Significance	Level of Significance
Between Groups	2.636	3	0.879	1.406	0.243	Not Significant
Within Groups	97.485	156	0.625			
Total	100.122	159				

The level of significance for the strategy of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities in regular classes due to the teachers' knowledge of teaching children with special needs was found to be higher ($\alpha > 0.05$). Hence, this proves that there is no statistical significance difference with respect to the knowledge of teaching children with special needs (Table 6).

Table 6. Comparisons of the strategy of teaching children with learning disabilities and mild disabilities with regular children in regular classes in terms of teacher's knowledge of *the teaching of children with special needs using (t) test*

Gender	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	(t) value	Degree of Significance	Level of Significance
Male	2.9881	0.69563	3.930	0.352	Not Significant
Female	2.5181	0.79303			

3.2 Elementary school male/female teachers' emotional responses towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in regular public education

Table (7) shows the perspectives of male/female teachers towards the inclusion of students with special educational needs.

Table 7. Male/female teachers' perspectives of the percentages for the levels of the including special need children in regular public education

Category	1*	2†	3‡	4§	5**
Mild Mental Disability	25.6%	36.3%	20.0%	18.1%	0%
Severe Mental Disability	4.4%	11.3%	23.8%	60%	0.6%
Behavioral Disorder	11.3%	31.3%	30.0%	27.5%	0%
Motor Disability	20.0%	31.3%	25.0%	23.1%	0.6%
Health Disabilities (asthma, diabetes, anemia)	25.0%	36.9%	16.9%	19.4%	1.9%
Severe Hearing disabilities (full deafness)	13.8%	20.0%	19.4%	45.6%	1.3%
Mild Hearing disabilities (partial deafness)	16.3%	31.9%	26.3%	25.0%	0.6%
Severe visual impairment (complete blindness)	15.6%	21.9%	21.9%	40.0%	0.6%
Mild visual impairment (visually impaired)	25.6%	40.6%	16.9%	16.9%	0%
Language Disorder	16.9%	35.6%	35.6%	21.3%	0.6%

* We can teach them without the assistance of others;

† We can teach them after consulting specialists in special education;

‡ We can teach them in regular classrooms with the cooperation of a special education teacher;

§ We can teach them by using the resource room for a special sort of education;

** None of the above and I prefer to teach them in special education schools.

Table 8 shows that there are statistically significant differences among male/female teachers' emotional responses towards the inclusion of special education children in regular public education with respect to the teacher's gender where the significance degree was less ($\alpha > 0.05$) in favor of female teachers.

Table 8. Test (t) for comparing the attitudes of male/female teachers towards the inclusion of children with special needs in regular public education in terms of the variable of teachers' gender

Gender	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	(t) value	Degree of Significance	Level of Significance
Male	2.3175	0.62678	-6.340	0.025	Significant
Female	3.0127	0.75096			

Table 9 shows that there are no statistically significant differences among male/female teachers' emotional responses towards the inclusion of special education children in regular public education with respect to educational level because the significance degree is higher ($\alpha > 0.05$).

Table 9. ANOVA test among the attitudes of male/female teachers towards the inclusion of children with special needs in regular public education in terms of the variable of educational level

Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean squares	F	Degree of Significance	Level of Significance
Between Groups	4.29	3	1.430	2.481	0.63	Not Significant
Within Groups	89.94	156	0.577			
Total	94.235	159				

Table 10 shows that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of special education children in regular public education with respect to the years of experience because the significance degree is higher ($\alpha > 0.05$).

Table 10. ANOVA test among the attitudes of male/female teachers towards the inclusion of children with special needs in regular public education in terms of the variable of years of experience

Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean squares	F	Degree of Significance	Level of Significance
Between Groups	2.046	3	.682			
Within Groups	92.189	156	.591	1.154	.329	Not Significant
Total	94.235	159				

Table 11 shows that there are no statistically significant differences among male/female teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of special education children in regular public education with respect to the teacher's knowledge of teaching children with special needs because the significance degree is higher ($\alpha > 0.05$).

Table 11. Test (t) for comparing the attitudes of male/female teachers towards the inclusion of children with special needs in public regular education in terms of the variable of teacher's knowledge of the teaching of children with special needs

Gender	Mean score	Standard Deviation	(t) Value	Degree of Significance	Level of Significance
Male	2.352	0.641	-4.827	0.64	
Female	2.903	0.771			Not Significant

4. Discussion

This study showed that the level of strategies used by the male/female teachers for teaching the children with special educational needs was on an average level. This could be the result of the lack of skill training provided to the teachers for teaching the children with special needs. No statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) were found with respect to the effects of the study variables on the strategies employed in teaching SEN students, and this could be the result of unspecialized teachers. As for the second hypothesis, there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the emotional responses of teachers towards the integration of children special educational needs in public education in Saudi Arabia due to the study variables. The study has shown that there are no statistically significant differences for variables such as "years of experience", "educational level", and "teachers' knowledge of teaching students with special needs."

The study has also shown that mild mental disability followed by mild visual and health disabilities are the most amenable categories. However, the least amenable categories for inclusion are severe mental disability preceded directly by the behavioral disorder. This is attributed to the behavioral troubles caused by children's severe mental disability and behavioral disorder in regular classrooms. In addition, children with severe disabilities (mental, visual, and hearing) required aid and assistance that regular public education does not provide.

The research sought to examine the various effects of the nature, type, and degree of a child's SEN, as well as the various characteristics of mainstream primary teachers in Saudi and their views on inclusion. The present study emphasized that teachers were found to be positive towards the inclusion of children with varying degrees of SEN. Teachers also adopted positive views concerning including those students with mild-to-moderate intellectual, behavioral and emotional problems, as well as health and physical disorders, speech and language problems, and low vision issues. Notably, in contrast to the popular view that those with behavioral and emotional issues are of the most concern (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000; Clough & Lindsay, 1991), it was found that, in Saudi, teachers did not identify children with behavioral and emotional problem as problematic. Rather, those with blindness, deafness, and severe mental disability, as well as those who were hard of hearing, were found to be the most problematic.

As for the variable of "gender", the study has shown statistically significant differences in favor of the female teachers; this is because female teachers are more patient and more lenient with children with special needs. Therefore, the findings were successful in supporting the works of Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden (2000), who stated that female teachers were found to hold more positive views to those with SEN than their male counterparts. Al-Mosa (2008) further made reference to the fact that Saudi people overall hold negative perspectives towards those with disabilities. Okyere (2003) further emphasized that the parents do not like their children to learn alongside those with SEN and other disabilities as a result of the perceived negative effects on their own child's education/development. It is possible that this could be owing to the lack of difference in the

groups. Nonetheless, there is the implication that if teachers adopt more positive perspectives in regard to inclusion, then teachers' education—and the education of the population overall—would be necessary. It is confirmed in the work of Sugden & Chambers (2005) that the inseparable relationship apparent between the development of the child and the environment is clear, suggesting that this should be taken into account by different interventions.

In regard to teacher qualifications, Gersten & Woodward (1990) proposed the view that, without SEN skills and competencies needed to accommodate those with SEN, the progress of children would be compromised if they were enrolled in mainstream teaching establishments. In the context of the present study, however, no statistically significant difference was identified between those untrained and trained in SEN. Exceptions include mental disability of mild-to-moderate severity and severe-to-profound mental disability. In the context of Saudi, it is widely recognized that teachers graduate from their institutions with a lack of SEN-related knowledge (Althabet, 2002). In this vein, it is noteworthy to emphasize that, in the process of preparation of teachers, mediocrity means that the trained are not advantaged above the untrained. Such a view is significant as it highlights the concern of training quality. Although no SEN-specific pedagogy was identified in the work of Norwich & Lewis (2001) when considering the various ranges of children with SEN, it was found that 'more intensive and explicit teaching' is fundamental to students showcasing varying degrees and patterns of learning disabilities.

In regard to the duration for which teachers undergo teaching experience, the present work offers no support for any of the results garnered in prior works to suggest that the experience of teachers has a positive effect on the perspectives adopted. The work of Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden (2000) reported that teachers' experience had positive effects on inclusion, and that teachers who have implemented inclusion programs—and therefore have active experience—were seen to be more positive about inclusion. However, the current work has established findings to the contrary, providing support for the work of Stephens & Braun (1980), Forlin (1998) and Gilada, Avissar, Reiter, & Leyser, (2003) all of whom emphasized on the fact that the teaching experience of a teacher does not affect the views in regard to teaching those with SEN with various disabilities. In these researches, it was recognized that teachers with several years of teaching experience were less supportive of inclusion. It could be that a lack of inclusion policy adopted in schools across the country provides a rationale for why no difference has been established in the current work.

In consideration of the level of experience of teachers, centered on whether a teacher had taught children with disabilities, it was identified that there is a statistically significant difference between teachers with and without any experience. It has been highlighted by some academics (Yuker, 1988; Jones, Wint & Ellis, 1990; Leyser, Kapperman & Keller, 1994; Fazio & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 1994) that, to some degree, this investigation provides validation for prior works; therefore, for those with disabilities, teachers are more likely to adopt a more positive perspective when they are given the opportunity to interact and teach them.

Finally, in consideration of the knowledge of SEN as held by teachers, differences were

found in some of the SEN categories. However, when interpreting the results, the differences were found only in 30% of the cases. In this vein, it was noted by Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden (2000) that there has been a wealth of attention. For example, the argument posed by Cornoldi *et al.* (1998) stated that teachers could show a preference for inclusion without having undergone training. On the other hand, there is also evidence to suggest that teachers require expertise and knowledge in order to meet the requirements of those with disabilities (Gersten & Woodward, 1990). Significantly, the findings highlight the need to ensure researchers continue to engage in more research in this area. Moreover, the importance of this study is based on the fact that the teacher is the appropriate person who determines the feasibility of integrating disabled students into public education. In addition, identifying positive trends has also been a major impact on the success of inclusion.

5. Conclusion and Implications for Future Studies

There was some evidence to suggest that the nature, degree of SEN, and type of disabilities had an effect on the choices of teachers. However, in contrast to the prevalent view that children with SEN are recognized as being of most concern to teachers, it was found that those with severe sensory and mental disabilities are of most concern to teachers. The present research also emphasizes that historical and cultural contexts have an effect on how inclusion is interpreted and that the policies need to be devised and applied, rather than merely transplanted. Accordingly, the research emphasizes the need for countries to interpret the inclusion agenda from local perspectives and devise policies and regulations centered on SEN in such a way so as to fulfill local standards and circumstances. It is essential to welcome inclusion as an international agenda; however, the development and application of such policies need to remain under the control of each respective country. Therefore, it could be valuable for individual countries not only to establish the obstacles to inclusion but also how these can be circumvented.

In Saudi, the findings have a number of implications, not only in regard to inclusion in particular and the way in which the government of the country has responded to such a concept, but rather what is required in order to facilitate the development and application of such a policy. The policy change is warranted when considering that, without change to emphasize the views and attitudes of teachers, pushing practice forward could be hindered. Nonetheless, making changes to educational policy so as to ensure inclusive education is favored is not simplistic.

Information pertaining to those with SEN will enable teachers to efficiently apply interventions. This means that, when preparing teachers to teach in schools, there is a need to provide knowledge and understanding relating to the causes and overall nature of disabilities and their relevant features. Through providing such training, teachers would come to recognize what would need to be included or otherwise removed from the curriculum so as to ensure the access and participation of the child in classroom activities. Such information should not only focus on the cognitive areas but also on the affective domain. Moreover, attitudes and beliefs should be taken into consideration in order to accommodate those with

SEN into the mainstream. If there be a lack of information among teachers, it is then likely that those with disabilities would be rejected.

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