

Northumbria Research Link

Citation: Alzemaia, Fozah Ali (2019) An Exploration of Inclusive Education in Elementary Mainstream Schools in Saudi Arabia. Doctoral thesis, Northumbria University.

This version was downloaded from Northumbria Research Link:
<http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/42042/>

Northumbria University has developed Northumbria Research Link (NRL) to enable users to access the University's research output. Copyright © and moral rights for items on NRL are retained by the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. Single copies of full items can be reproduced, displayed or performed, and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided the authors, title and full bibliographic details are given, as well as a hyperlink and/or URL to the original metadata page. The content must not be changed in any way. Full items must not be sold commercially in any format or medium without formal permission of the copyright holder. The full policy is available online: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/policies.html>



Northumbria Research Link

Citation: Alzemaia, Fozah Ali (2019) An Exploration of Inclusive Education in Elementary Mainstream Schools in Saudi Arabia. Doctoral thesis, Northumbria University.

This version was downloaded from Northumbria Research Link:
<http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/42042/>

Northumbria University has developed Northumbria Research Link (NRL) to enable users to access the University's research output. Copyright © and moral rights for items on NRL are retained by the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. Single copies of full items can be reproduced, displayed or performed, and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided the authors, title and full bibliographic details are given, as well as a hyperlink and/or URL to the original metadata page. The content must not be changed in any way. Full items must not be sold commercially in any format or medium without formal permission of the copyright holder. The full policy is available online: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/policies.html>





**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE

**An Exploration of Inclusive Education in Elementary
Mainstream Schools in Saudi Arabia**

Submitted by:

Fozah Ali Alzemaia

A thesis submitted to Northumbria University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

November, 2019

Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the Faculty Ethics Committee at Northumbria University on 03-08-2015 and the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia on 16-09-2015

I declare that the Word Count of this Thesis is 74,166 words

Name: Fozah Ali Alzemaia

Signature:

Date: 03-10-2018

Abstract

The aim of this research is to uncover the barriers to and enablers of inclusive practices in elementary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. It particularly focuses on educators' attitudes and practices. How some factors, specifically educators' age, level of experience in general and special education, qualification type and level, religious beliefs and self-efficacy in teaching students with special educational needs (SEN), affect attitudes and practices are also examined. The study also explores the effect of a training intervention on these attitudes and practices. Thirty-two participants were interviewed and observed in two stages, prior to and following a training intervention. These participants were Saudi female leaders and practitioners working in four schools that had been involved in inclusive education experience for between 0 and 10 years.

The study's findings in the pre-training stage revealed that the attitudes and practices of the majority of participants were negative, although they held positive religious beliefs indicating a moral commitment towards students with SEN. The prevalence of negative attitudes and practices among the research participants demonstrated that their age, level of experience in general and special education, and qualification type and level did not play a role, or their effect was obscured by other factors. Primarily, two specific factors were held responsible for the negative attitudes and practices: lack of specialist knowledge about inclusion and its purpose, and lack of confidence in their abilities to support and teach students with SEN.

The post-training stage findings revealed that the majority of those who participated in the training workshop became supportive of inclusive education and exhibited more inclusive practices in their classrooms. Moreover, the study identified many barriers to inclusive education in these schools including an unsuitable curriculum, lack of training, lack of staff cooperation, ineffective leadership, insufficient parental involvement, inadequate resources and facilities for students with SEN, large classes, shortage of staff and misdiagnosis of the type of disability that students had. The study concludes with some recommendations to improve inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.

Acknowledgements

I would like to praise and thank Allah for giving me the support, patience, ability, wisdom and health to undertake this study. I am indebted to many people that helped and supported me to complete this study.

First, I would like to express my great sincere thanks and gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Michael Jopling, for his insights, support, commitment, advice, encouraging remarks, feedback and support throughout my journey of PhD study.

My sincere thanks go to Dr Mick Hill for his support and encouragement and for helping me during difficult times of my study. I am also profoundly thankful to Paul Agnew for giving me his time, help and support.

Also, I would like to thank all the research participants, without whom this study would not have been conducted. Sincere thanks also go to a number of people at Saudi Cultural Bauru in London and King Saud University who helped in paper work, permissions and comments on the research tool and Arabic translations. These are Dr Faisl Mohamad Almhna Aba Alkhail, Dr Mohammad Alahmadi, Dr Salh Altwijri, Dr Saad Alhussein, Mr Faisal Aharbi, Mr Jaman Al Gamdi, Dr Nora Alsliman, Dr Hniah Merza, Dr Ibrahim Abunian and Dr Tarq Alris.

Last but not least, I am filled with thanks and gratitude to my family. I would like to give special and sincere thanks to the father of my four beautiful children, Hamad Suliman Alzemaia. Yara, my oldest daughter, and Rakan, my oldest son, accompanied me during my study in the UK and were a great source of support at all times. Ali and Sulaiman, my two youngest sons, stayed in Saudi Arabia during my study and waited patiently with sorrow for missing their mother. I cannot forget the support of my mother, Health Alkudiri, my uncle and step dad, Mohammed Alzemaia, who raised me well, my mother in-law, Fatimah Alomar, who took care of my two youngest sons while I was studying in UK, the child minder, Dona Alviar, who helped in taking care of my children, and my dear sister Ruqaya Alzmia. Thank you very much all.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my father, Ali Fahad Alzemaia, who passed away when I was four and to my grandmother, who passed away in the beginning of my PhD journey.

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	I
Abstract.....	II
Acknowledgements.....	III
Dedication	IV
Table of Contents.....	V
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Motivation of the study	1
1.3 Background of the study	3
1.4 Rationale and importance of the study	6
1.5 Aim, objectives and research questions	8
1.6 Researcher’s positionality.....	9
1.7 Overview of subsequent chapters	11
Chapter Two: Inclusion: The General Context	13
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Perspectives on disability.....	13
2.3 Educational provision for students with special educational needs	18
2.3.1 Understanding of SEN	19
2.3.2 Segregation	23
2.3.3 Integration or mainstreaming.....	26
2.3.4 Inclusion	30
2.4 Barriers to and facilitators of inclusion	36
2.4.1 School culture	36
2.4.2 Curriculum and teaching approaches	39
2.4.3 School environment and resources	40
2.4.4 Professional development, training and teachers’ attitude	42
2.4.5 Collaboration and parental involvement.....	44
2.5 Conclusion.....	47
Chapter Three: Attitudes and Inclusive Education	50
3.1 Introduction	50
3.2 Definition of attitude	50

3.3 Models of attitude	52
3.3.1 The Single Component Model.....	53
3.3.2 The Three Component Model.....	53
3.4 The model adopted for this study.....	58
3.5 Factors affecting teachers’ attitudes toward inclusion	59
3.5.1 Age	60
3.5.2 Teachers’ educational level and specialism	61
3.5.3 Experience.....	63
3.5.4 Perceived level of efficacy.....	65
3.5.5 Training	66
3.5.6 Having relatives with SEN	69
3.5.7 Summary	70
3.6 Conclusion.....	72
Chapter Four: Inclusion: The Saudi Arabia Context	73
4.1 Introduction	73
4.2 The context of the study: Saudi Arabia.....	74
4.2.1 Saudi Arabia: General Information	74
4.2.2 Saudi Arabia: Islam.....	75
4.2.3 Saudi Arabia: The educational system	77
4.3 Special education in Saudi Arabia	78
4.4 Inclusive Education in Saudi Arabia	82
4.5 Barriers to inclusive education and teachers’ attitudes in Saudi Arabia	89
4.6 Conclusion.....	94
Chapter Five: Methodology	96
5.1 Introduction	96
5.2 Aim and Objectives	96
5.3 Research Questions.....	97
5.4 Research Philosophy and Methodology	98
5.4.1 Ontology.....	98
5.4.2 Epistemology.....	99
5.4.3 Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches	101
5.5 Research Design	103
5.5.1 Overview	103
5.5.2 Sampling and Participants.....	103

5.5.3 Data Collection Methods	110
5.5.4 Data Analysis	122
5.5.5 Procedures and Study Piloting	126
5.6 Research Trustworthiness: Rigour and Quality.....	128
5.7 Ethical Issues and Research Governance	132
5.8 Conclusion.....	133
Chapter Six: Findings.....	135
6.1 Introduction	135
6.2 Educators' Understanding of Inclusion	136
6.2.1 Leaders' Understanding of Inclusion	138
6.2.2 Practitioners' Understanding of Inclusion	142
6.3 Educators' Attitudes toward Inclusive Education	147
6.3.1 Leaders attitudes toward inclusive education	148
6.3.2 Practitioners attitudes toward inclusive Education	152
6.4 Educators' Beliefs about Disability.....	155
6.5 Educators' Beliefs about their Abilities (self-efficacy) to Implement Inclusive Education	161
6.5.1 Leaders' beliefs about self-efficacy.....	161
6.5.2 Practitioners' beliefs about self-efficacy.....	164
6.6 Educators' Practices	167
6.6.1 Leaders' actual practices.....	168
6.6.2 Practitioners actual practices.....	175
6.7 Barriers to Inclusion	180
6.7.1 Curriculum.....	180
6.7.2. Lack of training	183
6.7.3 Lack of staff cooperation	187
6.7.4 Lack of effective leadership	188
6.7.5 Lack of parental involvement.....	190
6.7.6 Physical location and facilities	191
6.7.7 Resources	194
6.7.8 Large class sizes and shortage of staff	196
6.7.9 Misdiagnosis.....	197
6.8 Post-training Stage Results	199
6.8.1 Training effect on attitudes	201
6.8.2 Training effect on beliefs	203

6.8.3 The effect of training on practice	206
6.9 Conclusion.....	208
Chapter Seven: Discussion	212
7.1 Introduction	212
7.2 Educators’ Understanding of Inclusion	213
7.3 Educators’ Attitudes.....	221
7.3.1 Educators’ attitudes and non-affecting factors	222
7.3.2 Educators attitudes and religious beliefs.....	226
7.3.3 Educators’ attitudes and affecting factors.....	228
7.4 Practice in schools and classrooms.....	232
7.5 Barriers and facilitators to inclusion	235
7.6 The training effect.....	242
7.7 Conclusion.....	246
Chapter Eight: Conclusion.....	247
8.1 Introduction	247
8.2 Findings summary and research questions.....	247
8.3 Implications of the study findings.....	254
8.4 Recommendations	254
8.5 Limitations of the study and original contribution	256
8.6 The researcher’s personal reflections.....	258
8.7 Concluding remarks	260
References	261
Appendixes.....	287
Appendix A: School Access Permission Form.....	287
Appendix B: Participant Invitation Letter	289
Appendix C: Informed Consent Form	291
Appendix D: Interview Audio Clip Consent Form.....	293
Appendix E: Participant Debrief Sheet.....	294
Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet	297
Appendix G: Teachers’ interview schedule.....	300
Appendix H: Interview Questions	302
Appendix I: Observation Sheet	305
Appendix J: Arabic Version: Principal Consent Form	308
Appendix K: Arabic Version: Participant Invitation Letter	309

Appendix L: Arabic Version: Informed Consent Form	310
Appendix M: Arabic Version: Interview Audio Clip Consent Form	311
Appendix N: Arabic Version: Participant Debrief Sheet.....	312
Appendix O: Arabic Version: Participant Information Sheet	313
Appendix P: Supervisor’s letter to conduct the field work data collection	315
Appendix Q: Permission letter from Head of Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia Cultural Bureau in London	316
Appendix R: Permission letter from Head of Special Education Department at King Saud University	317
Appendix S: Permission letter from Ministry of Education to school.....	318
Appendix T: Letter from the head teacher of school (A) to the Ministry of Education to inform about ending of data collection	319
Appendix U: Letter from the head teacher of school (B) to the Ministry of Education to inform about ending of data collection	320
Appendix V: Letter from the head teacher of school (C) to the Ministry of Education to inform about ending of data collection	321
Appendix W: Letter from the head teacher of school (D) to the Ministry of Education to inform about ending of data collection	322
Appendix X: Letter from the Ministry of Education to inform about ending of data collection	323
Appendix Y: Training Workshop Materials	324
Appendix Z: A portion of coded materials	351

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study explores barriers and enablers affecting the implementation of inclusive education in Saudi Arabia elementary public schools. It focuses on educators' attitudes towards including students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in mainstream classrooms, their practices in schools and classrooms and factors influencing these educators' attitudes and practices. In addition, the study examines the effect of a training intervention on these attitudes and practices.

This chapter describes the researcher's motivation to conduct this study in 1.2. Then it outlines the background to the study in Section 1.3 and its rationale and importance in Section 1.4. The study's overall aim, objectives and research questions are introduced next in Section 1.5. This is followed by a clarification of the researcher's positionality in Section 1.6 and finally an overview of the subsequent chapters is given in Section 1.7.

1.2 Motivation of the study

Between 2002 and 2008, I worked as an assistant lecturer at the Special Education Department at King Saud University, Saudi Arabia. One of my duties was supervising the training programme of students in their final year of study for a Bachelor's degree in special education. In this programme, students had to attend theoretical training sessions and complete a number of hours working as teacher assistants in special education schools or mainstream schools that had students with SEN. The rationale for sending teacher assistants to those schools was to allow them to have a practical experience in teaching students with SEN. As the training supervisor I had to hold group and individual meetings with those

teacher assistants to discuss issues related to their practical training inside schools. The personal accounts of these assistants about the situation of inclusive education were the impetus for the current study as will be clarified below.

It caught my attention in during this period that many of the assistants who completed their training in mainstream schools were unhappy about the practical training they received. This was because, as they reported, students with SEN were completely ignored in classrooms and the main classroom teachers did not give them any directions to how they were supposed to help students with SEN. Many of the assistants also complained that the teaching materials were inappropriate for the students with SEN and classroom teachers did not make any effort to adapt these materials to the needs of students with SEN. These complaints from the assistants raised many questions in my mind about the reasons for such situation and this was later my main motivation to explore the barriers and enablers to inclusive education in Saudi mainstream schools.

Later in 2008, I was offered a scholarship by King Saud University to pursue postgraduate study in special education in the UK. I was also advised by my university to consult the Saudi Ministry of Education to choose the specific specialism for my MA and PhD studies. I visited the Ministry and met three school supervisors, who stated that there were many problems associated with the implementation of inclusive education in Saudi Arabia. They advised that exploring these problems and their sources would provide information that policy makers could use to take decisions to improve inclusive education in the country. What was suggested by these supervisors reflected some of the complaints raised by the teacher assistants I had supervised and this consequently led me to decide to explore the barriers and enablers to inclusive education in Saudi mainstream schools.

1.3 Background of the study

Perceptions of disability have gone through considerable changes over the past century (Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009). Prior to about 1950, a widespread perception of disability was that it was an illness requiring medical intervention to be fixed (Mark, 1998). However, in the second half of the 20th century, the belief started to prevail that it was societal context that required reforming and fixing, rather than individuals with a disability (Shakespeare, 1997). These perceptions affected the decisions made regarding the provision of education for students with SEN. Similar to peoples' perceptions of disability, views on what constitutes the best provision of education to students with SEN have changed over time, ranging from those which proposed teaching them in segregated settings such as special education schools or institutions to those which wanted to teach them in mainstream schools alongside their non-disabled peers (Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009). Students with SEN were first excluded from mainstream schools and taught in special education schools that were thought to be the best environment for them (Atkinson et al. 1997). Yet, this provision of education was widely criticised as it led to segregating these individuals not just academically but also socially (Oliver, 2009). This dissatisfaction with education in segregated settings led to the emergence of calls for educating students with SEN in mainstream schools (ibid).

The provision of education to students with SEN in mainstream schools has been known as integration or inclusion. Although these concepts are often used interchangeably to refer to placing students with SEN in mainstream schools, they embody different assumptions about the purpose of schooling. In integration, students with SEN are placed in a class for students with SEN in a mainstream school or even in a mainstream class for some subjects but not

others (Ashman and Elkins, 2002). This is assumed to be the least restrictive environment for these students and it gives them the chance to be educated side by side with their peers without SEN and socially interact with them (Booth, 2005; Foreman, 2005; Zionts, 2005). On the other hand, inclusion is not limited to the provision of special education for students with SEN in mainstream schools, but it seeks also to explore ways of educating and empowering all students and of restructuring mainstream schooling so that all schools can accommodate every child regardless of disability (Allen, 2003; Avramidis et al, 2000). This also entails considering curricula and organisational changes to eliminate all exclusionary practices (Mitchell, 2014). Based on this, the following are working definitions for integration and inclusion in this thesis:

Integration: Educating students with SEN in mainstream schools either in a classroom for students with SEN or with their peers without SEN in some school subjects but not others.

Inclusion: Educating students with SEN in mainstream schools side by side with their peers without SEN and making changes relating to different aspects, such as the physical space and the curriculum, necessary to accommodate all students regardless of their disability.

Today, there is a global consensus that inclusive education is the most appropriate framework for providing education for students with SEN (Ainscow, 2007). This was first internationally acknowledged in the UNESCO Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). This was in a conference attended by representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organizations held in Salamanca, Spain. It discussed the provision of special education for individuals with a disability and all parties recognized that the provision of education for all individuals should be through the regular education system (UNESCO, 1994). Following the Salamanca

Statement, governments around the world started to initiate policies to implement the inclusion agenda in all schools (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007). Based on this, including students with SEN in mainstream schools and providing them with the required support has been recognised as a right by many countries around the world (Ainscow et al, 2013).

Education provision for students with SEN in mainstream schools is widely favoured for a number of reasons. Firstly, through including students in mainstream classrooms, this approach to education seeks to eliminate discrimination between students with SEN and their non-disabled peers (Bradley and Switlick, 1997; Knight, 1999). Secondly, this system acknowledges that differences between children are natural which requires schools to accommodate all children irrespective of their abilities (Nilholm, 2006). Such reforms will provide genuine opportunities for all children to participate to the best of their abilities and improve their skills socially and academically (Mitchell, 2014). Thirdly, an inclusive educational system is thought to have the power to influence society positively through promoting a culture of acceptance in schools, which will consequently influence society more widely (Booth, 2005; Sapon-Shevin, 1996).

However, inclusion has faced challenges as it requires the elimination of all barriers relating to key elements, for example by ensuring the suitability of physical space inside schools and classrooms, the availability of resources for all students and educators' involvement in this process, to make it successful. This has initiated a line of research which aims to identify the factors that could hamper or enable inclusive education in many countries around the world (e.g. Allan, 2003). Some of the most important hampering or enabling factors include school culture (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 2005; Hunt and Goetz 1997; Zollers et al, 1999), curriculum and teaching approaches (Avissar, 2012; Moodley, 2002), school environment

and resources (Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Janney et al. 1995; Koutrouba et al., 2006; Singal, 2005), training (Dickens-Smith, 1995; Lipsky and Gartner, 1998) and (lack of) collaboration and parental involvement (Adams et al, 2016; Boavida and da Ponte, 2011; Rose, 2000).

Moreover, one of the factors that previous research regarded as essential for the success of inclusion and without which inclusion is deemed to fail is the positive attitudes of teachers towards this system (e.g., Mushoriwa, 2001; O'Brien, 2001). Various studies have been conducted to explore these factors that could influence teachers' attitudes positively or negatively (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002). These factors included the age of teachers (e.g. Dapudong 2014; Schmidt and Vrhovnik, 2015; Vaz et al, 2015), teachers' educational level and specialism (e.g., Errol et al, 2005; Hollins, 2011; Parasuram, 2006), previous experience in general and special education (e.g. Avramidis and Kalyva, 2007; Emam and Mohamed, 2011), perceived level of efficacy in teaching students with SEN (e.g. Brady and Woolfson, 2008; Subban and Sharma, 2006), training (e.g. Beh-Pajoooh, 1991; Subban and Sharma 2006), and having a relative with SEN (e.g. O'Toole and Bruke, 2013; Wilkerson, 2012).

1.4 Rationale and importance of the study

In Saudi Arabia, children with SEN used to be segregated from mainstream schools and taught in special institutions. Those institutions failed to meet the children's' individual needs and prevented them from interacting with their non-disabled peers and developing social, communication and academic skills (Alquraini, 2012). This led the Saudi Government to enact specific regulations (e.g., Regulations of Special Education Programs and Institutes in 2001) aiming to support students with SEN to receive education in mainstream schools alongside students without SEN (Ministry of Education, 2018). However, despite these regulations and exerted efforts to implement them, inclusive education in Saudi Arabia still

faces many barriers and research in this area is widely considered an essential step for improving this system (Alhammad, 2017; Alzaidi, 2017).

A number of studies have been conducted on inclusive education in Saudi Arabia (Abduljabber, 1994; Al-Ahmadi, 2009; Al-Faiz, 2006; Alhudaithi, 2015; Alothman, 2014; Alquraini, 2011; AlShahrani 2014; Aseery, 2016), but these studies have limitations, necessitating further research on inclusive education. First, there are relatively few studies which have contradictory findings with regard to the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion: while some found that teachers' attitudes were positive, others found them to be more negative. Second, most of these studies employed quantitative methods to investigate teachers' attitudes. While this is a valid approach, it runs the risk of eliciting idealistic answers rather than respondents' true attitudes and it does not allow for deep exploration of the beliefs underlying these attitudes. Moreover, although many factors have been found to influence teachers' attitudes, an extremely important factor was neglected, which is faith. This factor is believed to be extremely influential because Saudi society is highly religious (Alquraini, 2011). In addition, all of these studies have recommended that teacher training would improve teachers' attitudes and the situation of inclusive education in Saudi Arabia, but none examined this empirically.

This thesis seeks to bridge this gap through the use of qualitative research to explore the barriers and enablers to inclusive education in elementary schools in the context of Saudi Arabia from educators' perspectives. It specifically examines educators' attitudes and practices and their underlying beliefs, as well as the potential impact of a training intervention on these attitudes, practices and beliefs. This study provides findings that will inform policy makers in Saudi Arabia about what is required to improve inclusive education

in the country. In addition, as the study explores inclusive education from educators' perspectives, this allows the voice of these educators to be heard and taken into consideration in policy making.

1.5 Aim, objectives and research questions

The aim of this research is to reveal the factors that enable inclusive practices in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia by exploring the following issues:

1. Saudi teachers' understanding of inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.
2. Saudi teachers' attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.
3. Saudi teachers' inclusive practices and how these are influenced by individual teachers' attitudes and beliefs.
4. The factors influencing Saudi teachers' attitudes and inclusive practices.
5. The extent to which a training intervention can change teachers' attitudes and improve the inclusion process.

Based on this, the research questions addressed in this thesis are as follows:

1. How do teachers in Saudi Arabia understand the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms?
2. What attitudes do teachers in Saudi Arabia have towards students with SEN?

3. How do teachers' attitudes towards including students with SEN influence their classroom practices?
4. What are the factors that influence Saudi teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN and inclusive practices?
5. To what extent can teachers' attitudes and practices in relation to inclusion be changed by a training intervention?

1.6 Researcher's positionality

One of the criticisms raised against qualitative research is the potential subjectivity of the researcher in the research process (Dean et al, 2018). This subjectivity might arise as a result of the researcher's position in relation to those who are being researched, which might affect the process of data collection, and the researcher's own values and objectives that could influence the interpretation of the collected data (Foote and Bartell, 2011). Such subjectivity would cause concerns about the validity of the research findings and, thus, it is asserted, researchers need to make every effort to eliminate subjectivity in order to approach the researched phenomenon with minimal bias. Indeed, Bourke (2014) asserts that being transparent about and reflecting on the positionality of the researcher is extremely important to reduce subjectivity. This involves considering where the researcher stands in relation to those being researched and the phenomenon under study (i.e. insider or outsider) and what this implies in terms of how it could influence participants, data collection and data interpretation (Bourke, 2014).

Conscious of the subjectivity central to the approach adopted in this research, the researcher's positionality was taken into consideration during the research process. The researcher was seen in this study as both an insider and outsider to the research settings. Given that the research participants were Muslim, Saudi and female educators at elementary schools in Saudi Arabia, the researcher was seen as an insider since she shared with them religion, nationality and gender. The researcher also completed her studies in Saudi schools, which made her familiar with the Saudi educational system and this gave her more of an insider stand in this research. According to Merriam et al. (2001), the insider position gives the researcher the advantage of being aware of the culture and context and allows participants to express their views freely without hesitation. A piece of evidence showing that the researcher was seen as an insider came from occasions when the researcher was invited many times by participants to join them in their prayers, which was a sign that they considered the researcher as one of them. Indeed, the participants in this research welcomed the researcher warmly and participated and responded freely and without hesitation.

Nevertheless, the insider position might lead participants to conceal information because they assume that the researcher is already aware of it (Alothman, 2014). This was apparent in some interviews in which participants used phrases such as '*as you know*' in response to some questions asked by the researcher. As asserted by Mercer (2007), the use of such an expression by participants during interviews indicates that the researcher was perceived by participants as an insider. This could have undermined the quality of data collected as the missing elements might have been critical for data interpretation. In order to overcome this disadvantage in this study, the researcher sought more clarification from participants when they appeared to assume that the researcher was aware of what they were saying by asking

follow-up questions such as *'why is this?'*, *'what do you exactly mean?'* and *'could you tell me more about this specific point?'*

Furthermore, from another perspective, the researcher in this study was an outsider since she did not belong to the teachers' community and had never worked in mainstream or special education schools. Indeed, the researcher introduced herself to participants as a PhD student at Northumbria University, UK, and a university lecturer at King Saud University, Saudi Arabia. According to Dwyer and Buckle (2009), the outsider position gives the researcher the advantage of being able to collect data not influenced by relationships with the participants. These authors clarify that friendships might influence individuals to take part in the study to satisfy the researcher and provide answers during interviews that they thought favourable to the researcher rather than reflecting their own views and opinions. This would consequently create bias in the collected data and threaten the validity of the findings. Therefore, the outsider position in the current study helped the researcher to avoid this and allowed her to create a suitable atmosphere for participants to express their views regarding inclusive education in their schools. However, an important disadvantage of the outsider position is the potential to misinterpret data due to not fully understanding the study's context (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). This did not apply in the current study because the researcher was able to combine an insider and outsider position in relation to the research and the participants.

1.7 Overview of subsequent chapters

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. Chapter One has provided the study's motivation, its general background including working definitions of integration and inclusion, its rationale and importance in the Saudi context and the aim, objectives and questions driving the research. The same chapter also discussed issues relating to the researcher's positionality

while conducting this research. Next, Chapter Two explores the global context of inclusive education through reviewing the historical and conceptual development of perspectives on disability and education provision for students with SEN and the facilitators and enablers of inclusive education identified in previous research. After that, Chapter Three deals with the concept of attitudes, how they are formed and how they can be changed as viewed by different attitude theorists and reviews previous empirical research on teachers' attitudes and the factors influencing them in schools adopting inclusive education. Chapter Four focuses on the national and local contexts of the study, Saudi Arabia, focusing on its culture, educational system, history of special education and the development of relevant legislation and regulations and previous relevant studies. In Chapter Five, the methodology adopted to conduct the study is outlined and justified. Chapters Six and Seven report the study's findings and discuss them in the light of the reviewed literature. Finally, Chapter Eight concludes the thesis with a discussion of the study implications in addition to the study's strengths, limitations and recommendations for further research.

Chapter Two: Inclusion: The General Context

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature relating to inclusive education to provide the historical and conceptual development of this form of education provision for students with SEN and the challenges it faces. The chapter provides a historical overview of perspectives on disability in Section 2.2, as this is considered important background information for Section 2.3, which reviews the literature regarding what is thought to be the best framework for providing education to students with SEN. Different factors deemed to be essential to the success of the implementation of inclusive education are discussed in 2.4 before concluding the chapter in 2.5.

2.2 Perspectives on disability

A study of inclusive education and the role of teachers' attitudes in making it successful (or not) cannot ignore the general perceptions of people within society as a whole towards individuals with disabilities because this helps us understand the source of teachers' perceptions which might in turn be a driver for their actions in practice. Chapter Four will present these perceptions in Saudi Arabia, the context of this study, but the current section will give a historical view of disability in a wider context.

How people perceive disability changed considerably during the 20th century (Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009) and these different perceptions are referred to as models by researchers. There are many models or perspectives of disability and the purpose of these models is to describe the understanding, perceptions, attitudes and responses of people towards disability (Priestley, 2003). In an educational context, Ainscow (1998) described such perspectives as

“alternative ways of looking at the phenomena of educational difficulty based on different sets of assumptions that lead to different explanations, different frames of reference and different kinds of questions to be addressed” (Ainscow, 1998, p. 8). There are three main perspectives of disability which dominate the field. These are the medical/psychological, social and human rights models. These models are discussed in the remainder of this section.

The medical model looks at disability from a diagnostic perspective and it can be regarded as “a conceptual framework within which disability can be understood, assessed, experienced, planned for and justified” (Swain et al, 2003, p.22). Disability here is viewed as a ‘tragedy’ or an illness that needs medical attention to be treated and cured (Hardie and Tilly, 2012; Marks, 1998). As Skidmore (2004, p.20) stated, the medical model “conceptualizes difficulties in learning as arising from deficits in the neurological or psychological make-up of the child, analogous to an illness or medical condition”. Therefore, it locates the individual’s disability and needs in their individual pathology and this approach to disability perceives the source of the problem of disability to be the condition of the individual. This condition needs to be examined by a specialist, e.g. a physician, to diagnose it and prescribe treatment (Croft, 2010). This perspective on disability is reflected in World Health Organisation’s (WHO) (1980) definition, as the following extract shows:

1. Impairment: any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function.
2. Disability: any restriction or lack, resulting from an impairment of ability to perform any activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.
3. Handicap: a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or disability, that prevents the fulfilment of a role that is normal depending on age, sex, social and cultural factors for that individual.

(WHO, 1980)

Alongside other similar definitions, this definition was criticised by many theorists on the grounds that it associated disability with impairment and regarded ‘handicap’ as a problem resulting from disability and impairment (Oliver, 1996, 2009; Wearmouth, 2009). The focus in the medical model therefore is on finding the medical solution for the disability associated with the person under investigation and restricting them from leading a life similar to their non-disabled peers (Swain, French and Cameron, 2003). This process of diagnosis and treatment requires a controlled setting such as a hospital or a clinic and thus individuals with a disability used to be taken to special centres for this purpose (Mary, 1998).

Although the importance of the medical treatment in finding solutions for disabilities cannot be denied, the problem lies in whether people with disabilities should be regarded solely from this perspective. Many educationalists believe that this perspective on disability has hindered the academic development of the students with learning difficulties because it shifted the focus from the question of why schools failed to satisfy students’ needs to diagnostic issues such as identifying the reasons for their disability (Farrell and Ainscow, 2002).

The social model of disability can be associated with the shift away from the medical view of disability, which took place in the second half of the 20th century. According to Oliver (2009), the origins of this model can be traced back to the publication in 1976 by the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) of ‘Fundamental Principles of Disability’. It started with the following claim:

“In our view, it is the society which disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society”

(UPIAS, 1976, cited in Oliver, 2009, p.42).

This suggested that disability emanates from social beliefs and values that reinforce the social marginalisation of minority groups (Marchant and Jones, 1999). Accordingly, the belief that started to prevail is that the environmental context is what requires reforming and fixing rather than the individual with a disability (Shakespeare, 1997). Therefore, in reducing or eliminating the barriers facing individuals with a disability, it is crucial to take their social context into account (Braddock, 2002; Rieser, 2012). Therefore, the social model considers society to be a contributor to the development of negative attitudes and barriers to disability and holds it responsible for the fact that people with disabilities are not always able to lead lives similar to people without disabilities.

On the other hand, the social model was criticised for ignoring the fact that individuals with a disability are indeed in need of medical attention (Morris, 1991). According to Morris (1991), holding society responsible for disability and for eliminating the barriers facing it is not in itself sufficient and is considered a denial of the personal pain arising from the illness itself. Humphrey (1994, p.66) states that “[t]he social model of disability appears to have been constructed for healthy quadriplegics. The social model avoids mention of pain, medication or ill health”. Yet, Vasey (1992) argues that the social model should not be considered a denial of disability but rather it should be thought of as an attempt to address what can be addressed collectively by the society. Oliver (1996, p.32) further stresses that the social model “does not deny the problem of disability but locates it squarely within society”. Therefore, the social model considers that the problem is not the disability itself, but it is the failure of the society to provide the needs and services that people with a disability require. Consequently society, not the disability, is seen to be disabling for the individual (Oliver, 1996). The implication for such view is that the solution for problems faced by individuals

with a disability should not be sought through medical treatment, but through changing the environment to make it more suitable for these individuals (Norwich, 1990).

The social perspective on disability makes a distinction between impairment and disability and thus rejects the labels associated with impairment. However, as argued by Abberley (1996), the social perspective on disability alone does not have the power to create an environment that is free from obstacles because it does not eliminate the fact that disability does restrict individuals' abilities to perform certain tasks in, for example, the work environment. Based on this, many researchers (e.g. Shakespeare and Watson, 2002; Norwich, 2004), have suggested that the elimination of social barriers should be accompanied by medical measures to treat and prevent disability.

According to Thomas (2002), as a result of the prevalence of these ideas and the pressure exerted by political groups, the WHO changed the terminology it used in its definition of disability. While 'impairment' was still described as 'functional loss', disability was changed to 'disablement' and this relates to different aspects such as body functions and structures, physical activities and social activities and participation (Thomas, 2002). This influence was also apparent in the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2011, p.41), which replaced the term 'students with SEN' with students who 'face barriers to play, learning and participation'. This came as a result of human rights movements, which emerged from the political attempts by people with disability and their advocates to get their rights recognized by the law through legal means (Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009). These movements seek to put pressure on governments to enforce laws giving individuals with disability the right to participate fully in society (Bickenbach, 2001). They aim to eliminate social and physical

barriers and seek equal rights and opportunities for disabled individuals in key areas of life including housing, education and employment (ibid).

Finally, the human rights model is associated with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), an important milestone in defending the rights of disabled people, which was adopted by the United Nations in 2006 and had been ratified by 162 countries by 2016 (Degener, 2016). Article 1 of the Convention reads as follows:

“The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.”

(United Nations, 2006, p.4)

The CRPD clearly stated that disabled people are human rights holders and this convention make it clear that equal human rights for disabled persons should not be denied on the basis of their disability. Moreover, like the perception of disability in the social model, this human rights approach perceives disability as being socially constructed (Degener, 2016).

2.3 Educational provision for students with special educational needs

We have seen in the previous section that the perspectives on disability changed over the 20th century. This also led to changes in beliefs about what constitutes appropriate educational provision for these individuals. Three interconnected stages can be identified in this respect: segregation, integration or mainstreaming and inclusion (Dixon, 2005). In this section, definitions of SEN in different contexts including Saudi Arabia will first be discussed, then the three stages identified will be explored, drawing on relevant literature.

2.3.1 Understanding of SEN

The Warnock Report published in the UK first put forward the term Special Educational Needs (SEN) (Department of Education and Science, 1978; Norwich, 1999). It seems that this term classifies and hence separates this group of children who require additional educational attention. However, it has also been suggested that the use of the term SEN provides several benefits. For instance, it was asserted by Norwich (1999) and Williams et al. (2009) that the term SEN has played a positive role in supporting learning opportunities and providing learning support to those students who have been recognized as requiring SEN. In a similar way, it has been asserted by Wearmouth (2009) that when such students are classified as having SEN, they are provided with additional resources, which may help them in coping with challenges that they may face. Therefore, it can be asserted that the use of the term SEN is significant in the sense that it facilitates the provision of relevant education for students having SEN, according to their needs and abilities.

The term SEN has been defined variously in different contexts and historical eras. The term SEN is comparatively new. However, the group of children who have been found to have special needs according to this broad term has been clear in discussions for a very long time. Cultural distinctions create variations in these definitions and the way they may influence the way disability is considered. The term 'SEN' is not part of legislation in Saudi Arabia, rather, the term 'abnormal student' is used. According to The Regulation for Special Education Institutes and Programs (Ministry of Education, 2002, p.8), 'abnormal students' are considered as those "students who are different in their abilities in a number of different contexts, such as in regard to intellect, senses, physical aspects, behaviours, emotions, communication, academics, all of which require the provision of special education". The medical model influenced this definition (Oliver, 1990, 2009), as it distinguishes students

having SEN from those without SEN, and asserts that students with SEN require more support as they are not differ from their peers.

In contrast, like most Western countries, the UK has been dealing with disabilities for a very long time. As it was asserted earlier, the term “SEN” was first put forward in the UK. The Education Act (1996, p. 178) included a definition that highlights the difference between the contexts of the UK and Saudi Arabia regarding the definition of SEN. In the UK, SEN signifies “a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for [the child]”. The same Act explains learning difficulties as follows:

“a child has a “learning difficulty” if (a) he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age, (b) he has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his age in schools within the area of the local education authority, or (c) he is under the age of five and is, or would be if special educational provision were not made for him, likely to fall within paragraph (a) or (b) when or over that age.”

(Education Act, 1996, p.178)

The two definitions presented above are indicative of the different ways in which students with SEN are considered in the two countries. In Saudi Arabia, the definition concentrates on the way students without SEN are distinct from those with SEN on the basis of the type of disabilities that require the provision of special education, while in the UK the focus is on disabilities and challenges to learning that call for the provision of special education.

As asserted previously, even though there are several benefits of using the term ‘SEN’, some people remain critical of it. There are two reasons for these negative perspectives of SEN. Firstly, this kind of classification may cause stereotyping of such students (Tassoni, 2003). For example, when it is believed that these students have fewer capabilities or achievements,

people may have lower expectations of them (Farrell, 2001). Secondly, when such students are referred to as having 'SEN', it may seem that they are being discriminated against (Solity, 1991). It is asserted by Corbett (1996) in this regard that 'SEN' is indicative of some form of prejudice. Nonetheless, the use of this term could help in interpreting the challenges faced by such students and understanding the way they learn. In addition, it may not be possible to fulfil the individual requirements of students with SEN if this term is not used to define them (Norwich, 1999).

Arguments revolving around SEN also pertain to categorisations. It is important to categorize such students because it may help in understanding the child better, which would allow parents and teachers to become aware of their strengths and requirements and so determine the teaching approach that is appropriate for them (Norwich, 2014). This would then provide them with access to resources and planning strategies that have been developed by the school for such students (Ellis et al., 2008). It is asserted by Norwich (1999; 2014) in discussion of categorisations that they are related to policy decisions regarding who should be provided additional support and provisions. Furthermore, if there were no categories, it would be difficult to identify the various kinds of challenges, because it would be more difficult to develop policies that provide the additional resources and provisions necessary for students with SEN. There are also differences in the way students with SEN are categorized in the legislation of various countries, like the UK and Saudi Arabia.

The categories of SEN used in Saudi Arabia are similar to those in the USA, as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004). Ten categories are presented in the Regulation for Special Education Institutes and Programs in Saudi Arabia (Ministry of Education, 2002), which are: visual disabilities (including blindness), hearing disabilities

(including deafness), intellectual disabilities (mental retardation), specific learning difficulties, multiple disabilities, speech or language disabilities, autism, behaviour and emotional disabilities, physical and health disabilities, and gifted and talented.

Four general categories of students with SEN are included in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice in the UK (Department for Education and Department of Health (DEDH), 2014, p.97). These are known as “broad areas of need”. The first category is communication and interaction, which comprises children and individuals having speech, communication and language needs, and those suffering from Autism Spectrum Disorder. The next is cognition and learning, which comprises children and individuals suffering from learning difficulties, including those with learning difficulties, comprising moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties. The third area pertains to social, emotional and mental health difficulties, comprising children and people facing social and emotional problems, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, mental health issues, or attachment disorder. The fourth category pertains to sensory and/or physical needs, including children and young individuals suffering from visual problems, hearing problems, multi-sensory problems or a physical disability.

It is asserted in the Code of Practice (DEDH, 2014) that these areas of need offer a generalized perspective to help schools in determining suitable action to help learners. It is also stated in the Code of Practice that an individual may have several needs at the same time, or that their needs may change with the passage of time. Hence, the specific needs of individuals have to be recognized so that efforts can be made to fulfil them. According to Norwich and Kelly (2005), the legislation adopted recently in the UK regarding SEN has

been affected by the arguments made against categorisations. The legislation concentrates on the needs of the child instead of any particular characteristics of disability.

The categorisation approach used in SEN legislation in the UK may be said to be based on a human rights model (Shakespeare, 2009) or a social model (Hardie and Tilly, 2012) of disabilities that recognize the disabilities of the individual and try to eliminate the obstacles that may restrict individual learning by offering appropriate support to them in schools without segregating them on the basis of their disability. Therefore, the approach adopted in the UK seems to be opposite to that used in Saudi Arabia, where the basis of categorisation is the medical model (Oliver, 1990, 2009) in which students with SEN are categorized based on their disabilities.

The Saudi schools included in this study were assumed to include students with hearing loss, learning difficulty and intellectual disability, but as stated by educators in these schools, the Saudi Ministry of Education had not kept to these categories and sent students with different types of SEN to the schools.

2.3.2 Segregation

In the UK, the 1944 Education Act (applied to England and Wales) stated that education must be available for all people regardless of their abilities. This paved the way for the provision of special education for those who could not meet the standards set in mainstream schools (Clark, et al, 1997; Shogren et al., 2017). At that time, selection was introduced into secondary education (Beveridge, 1999). While high achievers went to grammar schools, those who did not achieve so well went to secondary modern schools and children with what became known as SEN went to special schools (ibid). This resulted in students with SEN

being educated in segregated settings (Atkinson et al. 1997). Students with physical disabilities or with sensory disability were excluded from mainstream schools and taught in special schools that were thought to be able to address their needs (ibid). According to Rabinow (1984), this segregation practice is grounded on the belief that the human body must conform to a certain norm and when students do not meet these standards, they are separated from those who meet these standards. This concept of segregation for students with SEN in education was based on the medical model of disability, which perceived disability to be exclusively based on the disability that the person has (Oliver, 1990, 2009). This was a perception of disability as an individualised problem that required *special* help. Supporters of this system of education had the belief that students with SEN needed teachers who had received training in special education to teach them effectively (Dixon, 2005). Bauer (1994) argues that:

“For the past forty-five years the domain of special education has been differentiating itself, developing analytical techniques and methodological skills which have been designed to handle a large array of disabilities. People in this domain of professional endeavour possess many knowledges and skills which are vitally necessary to those with mental, emotional and physical disabilities.”

(Bauer, 1994, p. 19)

This is one advantage of segregation system that is often cited by its supporters. It is thought that having teachers who have the skills to deal with students with SEN is beneficial to these students. Educators at the time thought that segregating students with SEN in special classes would allow their needs to be addressed through, for example, having not only specialist teachers but also curricula designed to meet their specific needs (Jenkinson, 1997; Shogren et al., 2017). Moreover, another advantage for this system is that students with SEN would be in a setting where they would receive ‘individualized attention’ from their trained teachers (Bauer, 1994). In support of this, Bauer (1994, p. 22) argues that “clearly these young people

will be receiving treatment from a specialist, in an environment which is conducive to a small specialist-client relationship”. This is to say that segregated schools can offer individualised instructions and procedures for disabled students, which makes them a better place for students with SEN.

A further advantage that is used to support segregation is that students with SEN are situated in a less pressured environment when they are placed in special education institutions because they do not need to ‘keep up’ with other students without SEN (Dixon, 2005; Low, 2007). Bauer (1994) maintains that it is ‘immoral’ to put students with SEN in the same place as students who have higher capabilities in learning and thinking. However, putting these children with peers who have the same needs was believed to boost their confidence and improve their self-esteem (Jenkinson, 1997).

Therefore, having trained teachers, having the chance to cater for students with SEN needs, giving them individualized attention and putting them in a less pressured environment that increases their confidence and self-esteem are the main advantages that are cited to support the segregation system. However, in the second half of the 20th century, concern started to arise about the negative effects of segregating students with SEN. One concern was the academic achievement of those students because this system of segregation at times overlooked the issue that students with the same disabilities may not have the same learning needs (Mathews, 2009). For example, students with physical disabilities are likely to have different academic needs to those with sensory disabilities and having these students together might create an educational problem for both groups.

Another key argument against segregation was that segregating and labelling students with SEN meant taking them out of a natural environment and putting them in a segregated setting which might have detrimental effects on these students (Dunn, 1968). Labelling a student as SEN and segregating him/her in a school for students with SEN might also isolate them socially and have negative social, psychological and even developmental effects. In addition, in a special education environment, the deficits of these students are focused on rather than their strengths, with the result that “children are dehumanized, reduced to defective body parts. They’re known more by their labels than their names” (Snow, 2001, p. 12). Moreover, this system segregates both students and teachers, which could limit their competencies (Wang, 2009). While training teachers to work with students with specific SEN may give them the experience necessary to provide effective education for some students, it may leave them without the skills they need to teach other students. According to Smith (1998), all these concerns led educators to suggest the integration of students with SEN in normal educational settings along with their non-disabled peers.

2.3.3 Integration or mainstreaming

Dissatisfaction with the medical perspective and the resulting segregation of students with SEN in education led to a greater focus on social factors and the cultural reproduction of inequalities within society, in which education has a key role to play (Barton, 2003). While, as discussed in the previous section, the medical model viewed disability as a problem located in the disabled individual and led to segregating students with SEN in special schools, the social model of disability argued that society disabled individuals as it could not account for their needs. This acknowledgment within the social model led to the removal of the disabling barriers and made it the responsibility of the society to ensure that disabled people had a right to participate in all facets of society including education (Hardie and Tilly, 2012).

In the 1960s, the social model called for the integration of students with SEN into mainstream schools, which led to more proactive thinking enabling disabled people to participate equally with their non-disabled peers (Barton, 2003).

Integration or mainstreaming (as terms are used synonymously) refers to the practice of placing students with SEN in mainstream schools. This could be a class for students with SEN in a mainstream school or even in a mainstream class for some subjects but not others (Ashman and Elkins, 2002). Idol (1997, pp. 384-385) states that “in mainstreaming, a student with special needs is educated partially in a special education program, but to the maximum extent possible is educated in the general education program”. According to Booth (2005), this is a way to allow students with SEN to participate in the social and educational environment of mainstream schools along with their non-disabled peers. Supporting this, Zions (2005) adds that integration allows for educating students with SEN side by side with their non-disabled peers. Furthermore, according to Foreman (2005), this transfer of students with SEN to a less restricted environment is a way to allow more natural interaction between students with and without SEN. Sage (1993, cited in Idol, 1997, p. 285) explains the underlying assumptions as follows:

“First, mainstreaming and similar terms evolved from two parallel school systems, general education and special education, and there is an underlying assumption of inequity between the two systems. This assumption is simply a cultural practice in public education, whereby special education has become an important system but smaller than and separate from general education. Thus, integration involved members of the lesser system (special education) joining the majority and favoured (mainstream) system. The underlying assumption of mainstreaming is that participation in the majority group will be in accordance with the standards of the dominant system.”

(Sage, 1993, cited in Idol, 1997, p. 285)

This means that integration refers to the placement of students with SEN in mainstream schools without making any changes to any aspect of education. Indeed, Mittler (2000) indicates that making changes in the school system was not a concern for integration policies as they were only concerned with providing places for students with SEN. This also means that schools adopting integration policies did not consider making changes to their curricula or training their teachers in the new situation of having students with SEN in their classes. Vislie (2003, p.20) states that “integration did not have much focus on teaching and learning or on classroom processes.”

A key practice in schools adopting the integration system is removing students with SEN from mainstream classes when they are not performing well, putting them in special education classes and returning them only when they become ready (Snyder, Garriott and Taylor, 2001). Supporters of integration believe that this practice is advantageous in two ways. First, students with SEN will not feel pressured to keep up with their non-disabled peers (Chesley and Calaluce, 1997). Second, teachers will not need to exert much effort to cater for the diverse abilities in their classes (ibid).

Therefore, such practice in integration is thought to benefit from the strengths of special education as taking students with SEN into special education classes will prepare them and make them ready to the extent required from non-disabled students (Dixon, 2005). However, some researchers argue that the idea of segregating students with SEN until they become socially and academically prepared is problematic for the reason that many of these students might not reach this point and hence remain segregated. Because of this, Snow (2001, p.111) calls this practice the ‘myth of readiness’ and she states that ‘I’ve never met a parent who, at

some point during a child's twelve to fifteen-year public school career, was told, "Jill doesn't need special ed services anymore. She can take regular classes from now on".

Furthermore, integration is also thought to avoid the weaknesses of special education as students with SEN will be beside their non-disabled peers in some classes and therefore will have the chance to interact socially with them. In this way non-disabled students will also gain more understanding of the diversity of the society they live in and develop a culture of accepting the people who are different (Dixon, 2005).

Nevertheless, the results of some of the studies that were conducted in the field might put these assumed advantages in doubt. It was found that non-disabled students do not develop a sense that students with SEN belong to the same class as them. For example, Schnorr (1990) interviewed some students from a class in which a student with SEN named Peter was integrated. Schnorr entered the classroom and, pointing to where Peter usually sits, asked "Whose desk is this?", the students replied that it was Peter's desk. Then, the researcher asked, "Who is Peter?" and they said: "He comes here in the morning. He's not in our class. He does not ever stay. He comes in the morning when we have seat work. Then he leaves to go back to his room" (Schnorr, 1990, p. 231). This response shows that students did not feel that Peter belonged to their class. A similar conclusion was reached by Snow (2001) who interviewed students in a class in which a student with SEN called Michael was integrated:

"The message is clear to everyone, including Michael, his teachers, and his classmates: Michael is in the classroom, but he's not part of it. This is not inclusion. We could call it integration or mainstreaming, perhaps, since the student is physically in the classroom. But he's not included because he's not really part of the class; he doesn't belong."

(Snow, 2001, p. 149)

Both studies question the belief held by supporters of integration that this helps non-disabled students to gain more understanding of the diversity of their society and more acceptance of the different individuals around them.

2.3.4 Inclusion

The doubt about the benefits of integration (in the form presented above) and about its effectiveness in eliminating the detrimental effects of segregation, along with a shift in theoretical perspectives on disability from the social construct to the human rights approach, led to more calls for a different kind of integration: full inclusion. Although the social model leaned towards a more inclusive approach, Barton (1997) stated that inclusive education is a part of the human rights approach in social relations. This approach aims to create an integrated vision for the whole society, and it is imperative for inclusive education to ensure that all students are educated.

The proliferation of the inclusion agenda has been part of a global movement to encourage the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools to create an enabling environment in which all can participate and exclusion is eliminated (Sebba and Ainscow, 1996). Blandual (2010) pointed out that the inclusion of students with SEN has been debated and discussed around the world in various forums. These forums have made declarations and recommendations and encouraged the same access for students with SEN as their peers. In recent years, the United Nations has enacted policies to ensure the rights of all children and called for their equal treatment with respect to providing equal opportunities in mainstream education. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the UN Standard Rules of Equalisation for Opportunities for Person with Disabilities (1993) and the UNESCO Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) are all UN policies promoting equality of children.

The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) is one of the most prominent documents in the context of special education as it focusses on principles, policy, and practices in special needs education. According to this document, students with SEN have the right to seek education in mainstream schools which must be able to accommodate such students by devising a child-centred pedagogy that can realize the needs of students with SEN. This document explicitly states that the mainstream schools with an inclusion policy are “the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all” (UNESCO, 1994). Following the Salamanca Statement, governments around the world started to initiate policies to implement the inclusion agenda in all schools (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007). For example, in the UK the Green Paper, *Excellence for All Children* published in 1997, supported the principle that children with SEN should be educated in mainstream schools. This inclusion agenda calls for students with SEN to have full access to school activities and resources (Alderson, 1999). The inclusive education movement therefore seeks to eliminate any discrimination between students with SEN and their non-disabled peers. This entails requiring regular education classes to be shared with special education classes (Bradley and Switlick, 1997; Knight, 1999).

To understand the conceptual development of inclusion, it is important to understand the difference between integration and inclusion. These terms can be used interchangeably but are conceptually different and this is widely explored in the literature. According to Avramidis et al (2000), in recent years the term “inclusion” has emerged that embodies a various range of assumptions about the purpose of schools. The inclusion agenda supersedes the integration concept. In integration, children with SEN are placed in a “least restrictive environment” and this is, hence, limited to placement decisions. By contrast, inclusion

focuses on restructuring mainstream schooling so that all schools can accommodate every child regardless of disability (Avramidis et al, 2000). Gale (2001, p. 271) maintains that:

“It is not enough to include students within the same physical spaces. Inclusion is more concerned with the arrangement of social spaces and the opportunities for students to explore and develop within these. The interests of all students also need to be represented within schools, not just the dominant of society.”

(Gale, 2001, p. 271)

Moreover, Kiviruama et al (2006) indicated that integration aimed to replace the system of segregation in schools to give students with SEN a more natural social and academic experience. Although this meant that disabled students were more integrated into the school system, it failed to ensure equal treatment of students with SEN. Emerging after the failure of the integration and mainstreaming paradigms, the inclusion approach took as its starting point the acknowledgement that differences in children are natural and arguing that schools should be organised in a way to accommodate these differences (Nilholm, 2006). Barton (1999) and Allen and Cowdery (2014) maintain that, unlike integration, inclusion is a process that seeks to promote acceptance and appreciation of diversity. It advocates a non-segregated system in the early education of children which entails the ‘full inclusion’ of children with SEN and their ‘normally’ developing peers (Barton, 1999). As a result, Clough and Corbett (2000) view inclusion as a process which requires existing school systems to change to ensure the involvement of all students irrespective of their abilities. This entails considering curricula and organisational changes to eliminate all exclusionary practices (Mitchell, 2014). According to these researchers, real inclusion can only be evident when genuine opportunities are available for all students so they can participate to the best of their abilities in what a school has to offer.

Furthermore, the inclusive educational system is thought to have the power to influence society positively. According to Booth (2005) and Mitchell (2014), inclusion seeks to enhance participation not just in curriculum and local educational settings but also in local cultures and communities. Booth (2005) posited that an enabling education environment must be created that can respond to differences amongst students and value both staff and students equally and that this will have a positive effect on society as a whole. Barnes (1996) had similar views on inclusion stating that it aimed to create an inclusive society based on the principles of social justice, equity and democratic participation. Sapon-Shevin (1996) explains how inclusion in the educational setting can lead to a more inclusive society:

“When students grow up together, sharing school experiences and activities, they learn to see beyond superficial differences and disabilities and to connect as human beings. This applies to differences in race, religion, economic status, and skill and ability, as well as physical, emotional, and learning differences. It is vital that all students feel safe and welcome in the world, and inclusion provides us with an excellent way to model and insists on a set of beliefs about how people treat one another with respect and dignity.”

(Sapon-Shevin, 1996, p. 39)

Hence, this paradigm is not limited to the provision of special education for children with SEN, it also seeks to explore ways of educating and empowering all students.

The inclusion approach has also been thought to be necessary because of the failure of special education to create an acceptance culture in society. Landorf and Nevin (2007) argue that inclusive education seeks to transform special education based on ideals of social justice. They maintain that the rationale for inclusive education is based on the rights and ethics discourses that criticise the dual education system as a barrier to systemic change in the educational system and society. It is thought that special education failed to promote student learning and led to segregation and labelling, therefore contributing to increasing social

inequality (Landorf and Nevin, 2007). Inclusive education can be said to have been conceptualised in response to promote the social competence of children with SEN. The supporting argument in this context is that students are more likely to develop appropriate social behaviour in an inclusive education classroom which offers a richer social and language environment that allows for the development of friendship with peers (Booth, 2005). This consequently enhances the opportunities for social interactions, not only in schools but also outside.

The main criticism of this policy of inclusive education has been put forward by some teacher unions which argue that having children with SEN in mainstream schools places extraordinary pressure on teachers to meet the diverse needs of their students (Dixon, 2005). This criticism has been echoed by Erten and Savage (2012) who argue that this concept is too idealistic and lacks practicality. They argue that it is not possible for children with SEN to receive adequate education in regular classrooms as special education procedures are essential to identify students who need specialised interventions. However, although this seems to be a legitimate point against inclusion, there are a number of strategies that can be adopted by teachers to make inclusion successful, as outlined by NCERI (1995):

“The instructional strategies that are most often reported by teachers and administrators as important to the success of inclusive education programs are those strategies that experienced and qualified teachers use for all children. Among these are cooperative learning, curricular modifications, “hands-on” teaching, whole language instruction, use of peers and “buddies,” thematic and multi-disciplinary curriculum, use of paraprofessionals/classroom aides, and the use of instructional technology.”

(NCERI, 1995, p. 3)

Therefore, experienced teachers are able to avoid this criticism of inclusion. This however necessitates providing training to teachers to equip them with what is required to make them

successful (a more detailed discussion of the implications for teacher training can be found in the following section).

Another important criticism of inclusion is that making curricula suitable for all students may make them less challenging and thus less effective (Dixon, 2005). However, Thousand et al (1994 cited in Sapon-Shevin, 1996) point out that this does not need to be the case because the curricula can be made flexible to be appropriate for different levels of students. The authors clarify their point as follows:

“For example, all the students might be working on the Civil War, but the range of books and projects undertaken and the ways in which learning is pursued can vary tremendously. Some students might be working on computer simulations, while others might write and perform skits or role plays. A wide range of books on the Civil War could allow students who read at a range of levels to find and share information. Inclusion invites, not a watered-down curriculum, but an enhanced one, full of options and creative possibilities.”

(Thousand, Villa, and Nevin, 1994, cited in Sapon-Shevin, 1996, p.39)

Therefore, curricula do not need to be made less challenging; rather curricula which can cater for different abilities are needed for successful inclusion.

Therefore, although there is some criticism of inclusive education policy, this can be overcome by training teachers and providing support to them through assistants to equip them with the skills that allow them to address the needs of all students and by designing curricula that can cater for different abilities. By overcoming these obstacles, individuals can be empowered academically, socially and in different walks of life and help create an inclusive society that celebrates differences. However, there are some challenges facing the implementation of inclusive education. These are discussed in the following section.

2.4 Barriers to and facilitators of inclusion

Although inclusion is widely perceived as an effective policy at the academic and social levels, its implementation remains a challenge (Elsayed, 2009). A large body of research on inclusive education has indicated a number of factors determining the success of inclusion policy. These include school culture, curriculum and teaching approaches, school environment and resources, professional development and training, teachers' attitudes, collaboration and parental involvement (e.g. Allan, 2003). These factors can either put limitations on inclusion or support, depending on their nature in a specific setting. As identifying these factors is essential for successful inclusion, they will be explored in relation to Saudi schools in this study in this section.

2.4.1 School culture

School culture is one of the most important factors affecting successful inclusion that has been identified in the literature on inclusive education. According to Waldron and Mcleskey (2010, p. 59), "a school culture may be defined as the guiding beliefs and expectations evident in the way a school operates". Ainscow et al (2013, p. 14) also maintain that school culture is "about the deeper levels of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, operating unconsciously to define how they view themselves and their working contexts." Inclusion cannot be deemed to achieve its purposes if the prevalent beliefs in the school do not "value diversity and view differences as assets". Such beliefs will have the power to create "a classroom culture of acceptance and respect for all" (Braunsteiner and Mariano-Lapidus, 2014, pp. 33-34). In addition, an inclusive school culture should promote respect and belonging. This can be achieved through providing the chance to learn about, accept and value individual differences, which will reduce the exclusion of vulnerable groups (Braunsteiner and Mariano-Lapidus, 2014). Ainscow et al (2013) also

point out that an inclusive culture, which has the values of accepting and celebrating differences and being committed to offering equal educational opportunities to all students, will be reflected at the classroom level through the extent to which students are enabled to participate and learn.

Research on school culture (e.g. Hargreaves and Hopkins, 2005; Hunt and Goetz 1997; Zollers et al, 1999) has mainly focused on the role of leadership in enhancing the development of inclusive cultures and reforming school culture. After analysing findings from previous research on school culture, Hunt and Goetz (1997) identified two factors that are essential to create a culture promoting inclusion. These are having a morally-driven commitment to children and consensus among school staff about a set of values that can support inclusive cultures within the school. Zollers et al, (1999) also found similar factors, adding that an inclusive leader is a key feature of successful culture. An inclusive leader, as maintained by Fullan (2007), should be able to promote an inclusive culture, set directions for other staff, develop them professionally, and build relationships with students' parents and whole society.

According to Mittler (2001), the culture prevalent in schools is a reflection of what is prevalent in the surrounding society. Mittler (2001, p.1) maintains that:

“Schools and the education system do not function in isolation. What happens in schools is a reflection of the society in which schools function. A society’s values, beliefs and priorities will permeate the life and work of schools and do not stop at the school gates.”
(Mittler, 2001, p.1)

This means that if the society itself is not inclusive, it is difficult to create an inclusive culture within the school because the teachers are part of that society. Yet, this does not mean that

the society's culture needs to be reformed before an inclusive culture within schools can be created. On the contrary, and as discussed in Section 2.4.1 above, creating an inclusive culture within schools can contribute to the development of a more inclusive society (see also Sapon-Shevin, 1996). Fullan (1999, 2007), among other researchers (e.g. McLeskey and Waldron, 2007), suggests that in schools where an inclusive culture does not exist, 're-culturing' can be the solution. Moreover, as suggested by Waldron and Mcleskey (2010), this cultural change can be achieved through the school staff thinking about their practices, questioning their beliefs regarding how students with SEN should learn and be taught, and engaging in a process leading to a collaborative change that would create new values and beliefs. Ainscow et al (2014, p. 14) describe culture change as "a matter of thinking and talking, reviewing and refining practice, and making attempts to develop a more inclusive culture". They agree that this is not an easy step as they state:

"Changing the norms that exist within a school is difficult to achieve, particularly within a context that is faced with so many competing pressures and where practitioners tend to work alone in addressing the problems they face."

(Ainscow et al, 2014, p. 14)

However, they also maintain that the potential benefits make attempting such changes worthwhile:

"On the other hand, the presence of children who are not suited to the existing 'menu' of the school can provide some encouragement to explore a more collaborative culture within which teachers support one another in experimenting with new teaching responses. In this way, problem-solving activities gradually become the reality-defining, taken-for-granted functions that form the culture of a school that is more geared to fostering inclusive ways of working. At the same time, this can make an important contribution to the development of schools that will be effective for all children."

(Ainscow et al, 2014, p.14)

Therefore, an inclusive school culture has certain features; even when these features are not a part of the current culture, they can be created and the culture can be reformed. The trigger for such reform starts with the presence of students with SEN in a school and using that to encourage teachers to develop an inclusive culture.

2.4.2 Curriculum and teaching approaches

Curriculum in inclusive education is an area that has received greater attention since the rise of the inclusion agenda (Avisar, 2012). UNESCO (2004, p. 13) defines curriculum as “what is learned and what is taught; how it is delivered; how it is assessed; and the resources used”. Hence, what is meant by curriculum is not just the content of what is taught to students and how it is assessed, such as exams, but also how this content is delivered, i.e. teaching methods. It is widely believed that curricula that are flexible and accessible are essential to create an inclusive setting. The discussion of the difference between integration and inclusion in Section 2.3.4 helps to clarify what a curriculum in inclusive education could look like. This discussion showed that while in integration systems, students with SEN were placed in mainstream classrooms and needed to fit into the present curriculum, in inclusive education curricula are required to be modified and adapted to fit students’ needs and abilities.

However, as indicated by Moodley (2002), curricula in many contexts are very demanding and inflexible and thus unsuitable for students with different abilities. They are even in some cases unsuitable for adaptations. Having a curriculum that is inflexible could be a considerable barrier to successful inclusion. In addition, Jackson et al, (2001) identify two types of barriers preventing students with SEN from accessing general curricula: practical issues and philosophical differences. The practical issues relate to the inflexibility of curricula to adaptation (leading to the exclusion of students with SEN); the focus on students’

achievements (preventing teachers from adapting content and providing more individualized instructions); and teachers' increasing responsibilities (Jackson et al, 2001). The philosophical differences are concerned with how teachers interpret inclusion, as their different interpretations lead to different practices in the classroom (Jackson et al, 2001). Indeed, Bartolome (1994, cited in Ainscow et al, 2013) maintains that because teaching approaches arise from educators' perceptions about both learning and learners, an educator who believes that some students are disadvantaged in their classroom may adopt an 'ineffective' teaching approach. Therefore, it can be summarized that the content of the curriculum and the teaching approaches can either be facilitators or barriers to inclusion.

2.4.3 School environment and resources

Many studies have identified the school environment and available resources as major determinants in the success of inclusion policies (Avramidis, 2001). While the school environment refers to physical space as well as the learning and social environment within the school and the classroom, resources refer to issues that for example facilitate the learning experience (e.g. learning materials suitable for students with SEN) and the mobility and communicative ability of students with SEN (e.g. wheelchairs, hearing devices). As for the school environment, UNESCO (2006, p. 10) stresses that:

“Education for All means ensuring that all children have access to basic education of good quality. This implies creating an environment in schools and in basic education programmes in which children are both able and enabled to learn. Such an environment must be inclusive of children, effective with children, friendly and welcoming to children, healthy and protective for children and gender sensitive. The development of such child friendly learning environments is an essential part of the overall efforts by countries around the world to increase access to, and improve the quality of, their schools.”

(UNESCO, 2006, p.10)

Furthermore, an inaccessible environment might lead to the exclusion of students with SEN in an educational setting that is assumed to be inclusive (UNESCO, 2006). Many studies conducted on this aspect have indicated that aspects relating to the school and classroom physical space inhibited the implementation of inclusion (e.g., Janney et al., 1995 and Koutrouba et al., 2006). For example, Singal, (2005) and Al-Zyoudi, (2006) found that the physical structure of the school (if inaccessible to students with disabilities) and the physical size of the classroom (if small) negatively affected the effectiveness of inclusion. UNESCO (2015) indicates that the school's physical environment can be made suitable for students with SEN as well as other students in many ways including improving lightening by, for example, painting walls and enlarging classroom windows, easing mobility by levelling off playgrounds and building ramps to classrooms and the school and improving ventilation systems in classrooms and toilets. Moreover, other arrangements can be made to improve the general learning and social environment of the classroom by for example making seating arrangements in the classroom that allow for good interaction and group work, creating learning corners where students can grow seeds or care for plants for the science class and creating display areas to show students' work in the classroom or display teaching aids (UNESCO, 2015). Such an exemplary environment is believed to be more appropriate for all students (Otiato, 2002).

As for resources, Moodley (2002) indicates that having resources that are suitable for students with SEN such as learning materials in appropriate formats, hearing aids, crutches, wheelchairs and positioning devices facilitates mobility and communication. If they are not available, this may create barriers to inclusion. For example, Avramidis (2001) showed that the lack of material resources such as hearing aids and IT were found to cause a difficulty for some students with SEN.

On the other hand, it is widely acknowledged that resources might be lacking and schools might not be able to finance the necessary equipment. As Miles (2000) emphasises, lack of resources should not be deemed an excuse for not promoting inclusive education. Moodley (2002) suggests that locally available resources should be managed properly and used effectively to promote learning. One way of achieving this, as suggested by some researchers (e.g. Randiki, 2002; Ogot, 2004), is to maintain resources centrally so that different schools in the area can access them easily when needed. Furthermore, UNESCO (2015, p.29) suggests that school leaders can maintain ongoing contact and communication with professional organizations that might offer help in these matters as well as the community “to increase the community’s sense of ownership and the sharing of resources between the community and school.”

Therefore, providing an accessible school environment that is friendly to students with SEN as well as the required resources is essential for effective inclusion.

2.4.4 Professional development, training and teachers’ attitude

There is a widespread agreement among researchers about the effectiveness of pre-service and in-service training in widening the professional horizons of educators, which reflects positively on the implementation of inclusive education (e.g., Carrington et al., 2010; Moodley, 2002). Some researchers consider it is essential for inclusion to be successful (Dickens-Smith, 1995; Lipsky and Gartner, 1998). This training should be systematic (Lipsky and Gartner, 1998) and consider issues relating to different aspects of inclusive education, including pedagogy and the psychology of learning as well as developing an understanding of values and their practical application in the classroom (O’Brien, 2001). The literature is full

of studies that have revealed that lack of professional development opportunities and insufficient training create barriers which affect inclusion (e.g. Reid, 2005; Winter, 2006). The conclusion reached by such studies is that without training, educators might lack the expertise and skills needed to teach students with SEN and accommodate them in an appropriate learning environment.

Indeed, a study by Leyser et al., (1994) comparing teachers with and without training in special education revealed that only the former group was able to apply inclusive education principles. Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) also examined the role of professional development in inclusive education in schools in Greece. The authors found that training had significant effects on promoting the positive performance of teachers in an inclusive setting and teachers with more training were found to be more supportive of students. Moodley (2002) interpret this as revealing that teachers who have training not only gain the skills to deal with students with SEN, but also become more confident in their work setting. In addition, developing a better understanding of students' needs through training leads them to form more positive attitudes towards inclusion.

There is broad consensus about the importance of teachers' attitudes in the success of inclusive education. O'Brien (2001, p.42) maintains that "the inside of a teacher's head is the key resource for inclusion because the starting point for inclusive learning begins when teachers reflect upon how they create educational reality". Attitudes of teachers can either be barriers to inclusion when they are negative or facilitators when they are positive (Mushoriwa, 2001). This is because they have a great influence on how teachers perceive the challenges faced in the inclusive setting and the strategies they choose to achieve the objectives and aims of education (ibid). Various factors have been identified as effective in

forming teachers' attitudes including experience, training, available school support and child's disability. As exploring teachers' attitudes, how they are formed and the influencing factors is an aim of the current study, this is elaborated on in Chapter Three (see also Avramidis and Norwich, 2002).

2.4.5 Collaboration and parental involvement

One of the most important factors that has been widely cited as key to the success of inclusive education is collaboration (Boavida and da Ponte, 2011; Rose, 2000). According to Mislán, Kosnín, and Yeo (2009, cited in Adams, Harris and Jones, 2016, p. 59), collaboration is “a process of two or more parties working together hand in hand to achieve a common objective and goal”. Working together, education actors are involved in the process of achieving the purpose of inclusive education as indicated by Pavlovic and Saric, (2012, p. 511):

“The essence of inclusive education is a joint vision producing the necessary changes, transformations, improvements and new directions, guidelines as well as the outcomes representing the benefit for all the subjects involved and the entire society, as well. It is a process that brings together people, ideas, systems, communications, technologies...”

(Pavlovic and Saric, 2012, p.511)

In other words, collaboration between different parties involved in the educational process is vital for inclusive education and key to achieving its goals and objectives. Moreover, collaboration can be between different parties or ‘education actors’ including educators, students, education professionals, families and the community (Echeita et al., 2013). Therefore, collaboration can occur amongst school staff including principals, their assistants,

special and general education teachers and education professionals, as well as between schools and students, parents, families and communities.

Starting with school-staff collaboration, Randiki (2002) maintains that when the goal of the school is the full participation of students with SEN in the learning experience and what it involves psychologically and socially, it is the responsibility of all staff members including support staff, assistants, teachers, education professionals and principals to get together, set aims and objectives and draw up plans to achieve them. Collaboration amongst school staff has the potential to reflect positively on teachers as well as on students' performance. Waldron and Mclesky (2010) propose that the collaboration between school staff, realized initially in the form of sitting together and discussing different aspects of inclusive education, is the first step in comprehensive school reform, which aims to maximize the outcomes of inclusion. Furthermore, schools could overcome difficulties relating to the implementation of inclusive education through staff collaboration. For example, Hui Ng (2015) found that collaboration amongst staff members in Singaporean schools resolved the problem of having teachers with no previous experience, as all members benefitted from each other's expertise.

As for collaboration between schools and parents, Epstein (2001) emphasizes that this involves both parties working together to identify the areas of students' development that requires school or family attention and determining the objectives and aims that are hoped to be achieved. Friend and Cook (2007) identified a number of factors necessary for such collaboration to be successful. They asserted that it should be voluntary, target achieving pre-determined goals, involve making decisions relevant to all aspects of students' education, acknowledge the roles of both parties and be built on respect and trust. Some researchers, e.g. Mittler (2000), suggest that schools should set clear school-parent partnership policies and

provide training to their staff in implementing them. In addition, these policies should consider parents' views about how they prefer to be involved in the process of making decisions and in the discussions about their children's development and learning (Mittler, 2000).

Many studies have revealed the positive effects of school-parent collaboration. According to Adams et al (2016), this type of collaboration can enhance students' academic outcomes through optimising the monitoring and learning of students to help them reach their full potential. On the other hand, when such collaboration is weak or non-existent, the result might not be as hoped for in an inclusive setting and this might even be a barrier to full inclusion. Indeed, upon examining this aspect in some schools in India and finding that there is a lack of awareness of its importance, Singal (2005) revealed that both teachers and students faced difficulties that could have been eliminated by greater collaboration between the school and students' parents. In another study, Bennett, Deluca and Burns (1997) found that the involvement of parents led to better performance by both teachers and students; the authors explained that teachers showed more sensitivity to students' needs and how to tackle them and students received more help from their parents relating to homework and academic progress.

This goes to show that collaboration at different levels inside and outside schools, when it has the features described above, has an important role to play in improving provision for students with SEN.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the historical development of views on disability. It showed that disability in the first half of the 20th century was perceived as an individualized problem in the pathology of the disabled person (Skidmore, 2004). For this reason, individuals with disabilities were segregated in controlled settings to be diagnosed by a specialist and treated (Marks, 1998). However, in the second half of the 20th century, a shift from this medical perspective on disability took place. The new perspective viewed disability as being largely determined by the social context surrounding individuals rather than the individuals themselves (Shakespeare, 1997). From this perspective, improving conditions for people with disabilities requires eliminating the barriers imposed by the social contexts rather than subjecting individuals to medical treatment (Braddock, 2002). Yet, this perspective on disability was also criticised because it neglected the fact that disability restricts individuals' abilities and hence eliminating social barriers alone does not enable those individuals to perform certain tasks (Abberley, 1996). Later in the 20th century, recognizing that disability is socially constructed, activists started to voice the need for imposing laws acknowledging the equal human rights and access for equal opportunities for all people with and without disability in different realms of life (Bickenbach, 2001). Indeed, in response to these calls, the United Nation adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006, which was ratified by 162 countries by 2016 (Degener, 2016).

The chapter then demonstrated that the change of perspectives on disability was accompanied by a debate on what constitutes the most appropriate provision of education for students with SEN. The belief that disability is an individualized medical problem requiring attention in a controlled setting was reflected in the educational setting through providing special education to students with SEN in a segregated setting away from mainstream schools (Clark et al,

1997). This education system was then criticised for its detrimental effects on the social, psychological and developmental levels of students with SEN (Snow, 2001). After that, notions that disability is socially constructed and that there should be efforts to eliminate social barriers to improve conditions for people with disabilities was followed in education by calls to integrate students with SEN in mainstream schools (Barton, 2003). This integration system managed to put students with and without SEN side by side, but most of the time failed to accommodate students with SEN in the educational system, as it only sought the placement of students with SEN in mainstream schools without making the necessary changes to provision (Mittler, 2000). In this approach, students with SEN only share some classes with their non-disabled peers. In this way, the integration system failed to avoid the problems of segregation system because it led to the continued segregation of students with SEN, although this time within mainstream schools.

Following the failure of the integration system to create an appropriate environment for students with SEN, the need rose for a different type of integration in the form of full inclusion. This inclusion agenda was part of the human rights approach for individuals with disability and aimed to create a suitable environment for students with SEN (Sebba and Ainscow, 1996). This initiative for inclusive education was recognised and adopted internationally for its benefits in empowering individuals and creating an inclusive society that celebrates differences. However, a number of challenges have affected the implementation of the inclusive policy. The chapter presented and discussed some of the main challenges that are relevant to the scope of this thesis. These are school culture, curriculum and teaching approaches, school environment and resources, professional development and training and teachers' attitudes, and collaboration and parental involvement. The next chapter will elaborate on teachers' attitudes, how they are formed and what factors

play a role in their formation before describing and reviewing the literature on the educational provision to students with SEN in Saudi Arabia in Chapter Four.

Chapter Three: Attitudes and Inclusive Education

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in Section 2.4.4, the attitudes of educators and other school staff members towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools and how it impacts on their classroom practices have been the subject of intensive research, which has identified them as one of the most important factors in making the process of inclusion successful. Since teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, how they impact teachers' classroom practices and inclusive education in Saudi Arabia and whether they can be changed are areas of focus and interest for the research at hand, it is necessary to explore the concept of attitudes, how they are formed and how they can be changed as viewed by different attitude theorists. The discussion of these aspects at the theoretical level precedes a discussion of their implications in educational settings at the practical level as demonstrated by previous research on the impact of teachers' attitudes on inclusive education.

This chapter is organised as follows. Sections 3.2 and 3.3 present and discuss definitions of attitude and two models hypothesising on how attitudes are formed as advanced by different researchers. Section 3.4 provides a rationale for adopting one of these models as the theoretical framework for the main study. Next, a discussion of the different factors playing a role in forming teachers' attitudes towards inclusion is presented in Section 3.5 before, finally, concluding the chapter in Section 3.6.

3.2 Definition of attitude

Various definitions of attitude can be identified in the literature on this topic and these definitions are diverse and conflicting, demonstrating the complexity of the concept. It was viewed long ago by Allport (1935) as the mental processes by which individuals' behaviours

and reactions are shaped. In Allport's words, attitude is "a mental and neutral state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (ibid, p.798).

According to Bordens and Horowitz (2001), this definition implies the following:

- 1) Attitudes cannot be a subject to direct measurement or observation because they are 'a mental state' and thus private.
- 2) They are formed culturally because they are formed by experience.
- 3) There is a direct relationship between attitudes and human behaviour because they impact on the individuals' response towards surrounding objects.

Similarly, Triandis (1971, p.2) defined attitude as "an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations". Triandis' definition shows three different aspects of attitudes, which are cognitive (because it is an idea), affective (because it is charged with emotion) and behavioural (because it predisposes a class of action) (Avramidis, 2000).

A different definition of attitude was put forward by Petty and Cacioppo (1981), who maintained that attitude is "a general, enduring positive or negative feeling about some person, object or issue" (ibid, p.7). In contrast with Allport's (1935) and Triandis's (1971) definitions, that advanced by Petty and Cacioppo (1981) described a single aspect of attitude, namely emotion. Along the same lines, attitude was described by Smith and Mackie (1995, p.266) as "any cognitive representation that summarises our evaluation of an attitude object" and by Jonas, Eagly and Stroebe (1995, p.2) as "a psychological tendency to evaluate a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour ". According to Avramidis (2000),

despite the diversity of attitude definitions, one aspect common to the definitions is that they involve the element of liking/favouring or disliking/disfavouring and many link attitudes to actions (see further discussion below).

As can be seen here, the definitions of attitudes presented above demonstrate two different approaches taken by theorists. While the first approach views attitude as a unidimensional concept having just a single component that is emotion towards the attitudinal object, the second looks at it as a multidimensional concept formed by cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects. These two different approaches are elaborated further in the following section as they could enhance our understanding of the process of attitude formation and shape or change the theoretical framework based on which the data from this study will be understood as we will see in Chapters Six and Seven.

3.3 Models of attitude

Many theories have been advanced describing how attitudes are formed and how they are associated with individuals' behaviour. The study at hand aims to understand Saudi Arabia school teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms and how these influence their practices in the classroom. This has the ultimate aim of changing negative attitudes into positive ones to make inclusion more successful. Theories of attitudes will enhance our understanding of teachers' attitudes and their classroom practices and therefore two of the main theories are presented and discussed in this section.

3.3.1 The Single Component Model

In this model, attitude is believed to be the feelings or emotions that an individual has towards an attitudinal object (Franzoi, 1996). According to Petty and Cacioppo (1981, p. 7), “the term attitude should be used to refer to a general, enduring positive or negative feeling about some person, object or issue”. This means that the evaluative nature of attitudes is solely determined by the affective dimension and hence is described as unidimensional. One consequence of this conceptualization of attitude, as proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), is that it detaches it from any association with behaviour or beliefs and intentions. As these authors emphasise, while beliefs are thought to be the information and opinion individuals have about an object in this model of attitude, the attitude is held to relate to an individual’s feeling, whether it is positive or negative, towards that object.

3.3.2 The Three Component Model

While attitude is conceptualized as an evaluative reaction at the affective level (i.e. favouring/liking or disfavouring/disliking) in the Single Component Model, some researchers such as Triandis (1971) and Eagly and Chaiken (1993) maintain that an attitude towards a certain object is reflected in three distinct reactions or responses. Triandis (1971, p. 2) argues that "an attitude is an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations" and similarly two decades later, Eagly and Chaiken (1993, p.1) proposed that “attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. Evaluating refers to all classes of evaluating responding, whether overt or covert, cognitive, affective or behavioural”. Both definitions view attitude as a three-dimensional concept combining the affective aspect (i.e. the feeling of liking or disliking towards an object), the cognitive aspect (i.e. the ideas,

information, beliefs and opinions about an object) and the behavioural aspect (i.e. the actions and action tendencies towards an object).

To start with the affective component, it includes the feelings and emotions experienced by an individual towards an object of interest (Ajzen, 2005) and it might range from extremely positive to extremely negative (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). According to Avramidis (2000), the thoughts held by an individual towards an object (see cognitive component below) constitute a network and each of these cognitive elements or thoughts bears a value based on the previous experiences that individual has with an attitudinal object. These experiences can be positive or negative, as can the values attached to them, and accordingly “the total value attached to the attitude object depends on the strength of its connections with various cognitive elements per se and on the value that is immediately learnt through social interaction” (Avramidis, 2000, p.42). Applying this to inclusive education, teachers might hold positive or negative feelings towards inclusion depending on their experiences with different aspects of the process (e.g. perception of self-efficacy, availability of required resources, size of the classroom in which the student with SEN is included, etc.).

The cognitive component, on the other hand, is the thoughts and beliefs held by an individual about an object of interest (Stahlberg and Frey, 1996). These thoughts and beliefs are formed based on the previous encounters or experiences with an object and these thoughts and beliefs arise because people have a tendency to categorize their experiences (Avramidis, 2000). This is explained further by Avramidis as follows:

“People give identical responses to stimuli that are quite diverse. For example, they may use the term "handicapped" to describe a broad array of persons. A category is inferred from comparable responses to discriminably different stimuli. People also use critical attributes to decide how to categorise experience. For example, to categorise a

person as "handicapped", some individuals may consider those particular physical limitations of the person which make certain kinds of action difficult; other may consider psychological limitations; and still others may use many criteria at the same time."

(Avramidis, 2000, p.41)

Applying this to inclusive education requires us to assume that a teacher follows strategies to teach students with SEN and receives good responses from these students, which in turn makes her/him believe that the strategies are effective. It also assumes that this teacher needs resources (e.g. suitable educational materials for students with SEN and a projector) to achieve their aims and that these resources are available in the classroom. A third assumption is that the number of students present in the classroom is large enough to allow the teacher to deal with students with SEN effectively. Based on this and according to the model under discussion, this teacher would have thoughts and beliefs such as 'I have the ability/ strategies that allow me to effectively teach students with SEN', 'the resources that I need to achieve this are available in the classroom' and 'the class size is suitable in a sense that allows me to apply my strategies and use the available resources to deal with students with SEN effectively'. These thoughts and beliefs, as examples, constitute the cognitive component. To link this further to the affective component discussed above, this teacher's beliefs and thoughts of 'self-efficacy', 'availability of resources' and 'class size' could lead her/him to have positive feelings towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.

Moving to the behavioural (or conative) component, this is the action or reaction intended and taken by an individual towards an object of interest (Ajzen, 2005). According to this model (the Three Component Model), the behaviour intended or demonstrated by an individual is triggered by the set of beliefs, thoughts, i.e., the cognitive component, feelings and emotions, or the affective component, held by an individual towards the attitudinal object

(Triandis, 1971; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). Based on this and in relation to social behaviour, if the cognitive and affective components of an individual hold positive thoughts and feelings towards an object, approaching it positively could be the result. Conversely, when the cognitive and affective components of an individual hold negative or neutral thoughts and feelings towards an object, approaching it negatively or avoiding it might be the result. According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993), this behaviour might be overt or covert. This means that, for example, when an individual holds negative thoughts and feelings towards an object, s/he might act negatively (overt behaviour) or do nothing (covert behaviour). To continue the example above about the teacher whose previous experiences allowed them to build positive thoughts and beliefs about different aspects such as ‘self-efficacy’, ‘availability of resources’ and ‘class size’ and accordingly positive feelings towards including students with SEN, their responses towards students with SEN, according to this model, are expected to be positive by providing them with more support to enable them to achieve their potential. However, as is proposed by Avramidis:

“These responses are sometimes highly complex and it has to be said that they do not only depend on attitudes. They also reflect the kind of social situation and the history of the relationship between the persons.”

(Avramidis, 2000, p.41)

Therefore, while the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of people provide a window into their attitudes, one should be careful with interpreting behaviour as other factors might have a role to play in these behaviours and responses.

The three components have been schematically represented in Figure 3.1.

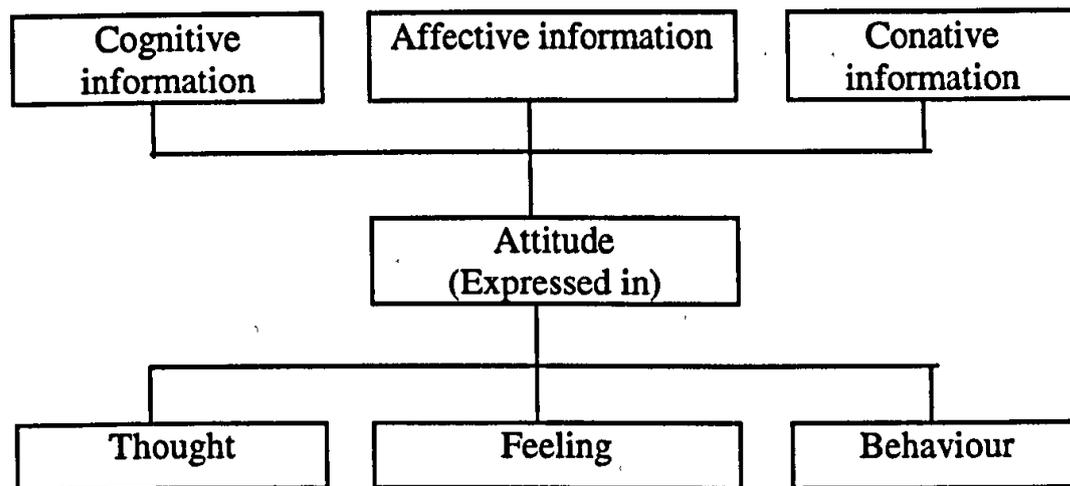


Figure 3.1: the three component model and the relation with attitude (Source: Smith and Mackie, 1995, p. 217)

This model indicates that the three types of information need to be in place for attitude to be formed. However, there are two issues that should be taken into consideration here. Firstly, this situation seems idealistic as it is not always possible to have the three types of information in place before forming an attitude and perhaps one of them might be sufficient for an individual to form an attitude. Indeed, Franzoi (1995) proposed that attitudes can be formed based on the availability of any one of these types of information. This means that in some situations, individuals might have ideas and information (cognitive component) about an object without any emotions (affective component) or previous reactions or behaviour (conative component) and they could still form an attitude towards that object. In other situations, individuals might develop an emotion towards an object without having ideas or information about it or without having exhibited reactions or behaviour towards it and they could still form an attitude based on that. It is also possible that individuals might have exhibited a reaction or behaviour towards an object without having emotions, ideas or information about it and they could still form an attitude based on that. Secondly, Bagozzi (1986) proposed that sometimes individuals might exhibit contradictory beliefs (cognitive component) and emotions (affective component) towards an object. To clarify this, consider

the example of the teacher who has positive cognitive information about ‘self-efficacy’, ‘availability of resources’ and ‘class size’. It could be assumed that this teacher could have positive emotions and positive reactions. However, according to Bagozzi, developing negative emotions is still possible despite their having positive beliefs. In this example, this could be because the teacher thinks that working with students with SEN requires extra effort that s/he is not willing to exert. This could lead her/him to experience negative emotions and reactions and be against including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. Therefore, the formation of positive attitudes based on positive beliefs, emotions and behaviours should be seen as an ideal situation.

3.4 The model adopted for this study

It is held in this thesis that attitude is a complex phenomenon in which many factors affect in its formation and maintenance, as will be demonstrated in Section 3.5 below, based on previous research related to the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. Given the complex nature of attitude, considering an individual’s response in the form of liking or disliking to be representative of the attitude held by that individual might be simplistic in the sense that it does not take the factors at play into account. In a situation similar to the one under study, i.e. teachers’ attitudes towards inclusion, what is important is not only how teachers feel towards inclusion. Teachers’ experiences with and beliefs about different aspects of the process of inclusion and their behaviour in the educational setting are of equal importance. This is because knowing, for example, that a teacher is in favour of or against inclusion does not give us insights into how this attitude can be changed to make inclusion successful. The answer might even be a false representation of a teacher’s attitude because teachers might fake their responses to give a more socially acceptable answer (Avramidis, 2000). This means that to understand attitudes better, examining the influences

behind the development of these attitudes as well as the actions representing these attitudes is held to be necessary in this thesis.

For the reasons mentioned above, the Single Component Model is considered insufficient to understand the attitudes of teachers because it focuses on the affective dimension solely. The Three Component Model, on the other hand, is a more holistic approach because it considers attitude to be a construct built on cognitive, affective and conative dimensions. Therefore, I concluded that the Three Component Model is a more suitable framework for exploring the attitudes of the participants in the study.

3.5 Factors affecting teachers' attitudes towards inclusion

A study focusing on understanding teachers' attitudes towards students with SEN and the extent to which negative attitudes can be changed should endeavour to explore the factors influencing these attitudes. This area of research has not received much attention in the Saudi context and the study at hand sets out to explore these factors. However, the same area of research has received a great deal of attention from researchers and many studies have been conducted to explore the factors that might have an effect on the attitudes held by teachers towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms in other areas of the world (e.g., Ali, Mustapha and Jelas, 2006; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Dickens and Smith, 1995; Johnson, 1996; Kalyva et al., 2007; Nayak, 2008; Zions, 2005). A number of factors have been studied including teachers' age, educational level, specialism, experience and training, as well as whether teachers have a relative with SEN. Such literature can inform our understanding of the topic under investigation in the context of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, previous studies on these factors are reviewed and discussed in this section.

3.5.1 Age

The literature on the impact of age on teachers' attitudes is inconclusive. While some studies found that younger teachers are more positive towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms, others detected no difference between younger and older teachers. For example, in a study conducted by Vaz et al (2015), the researchers aimed at identifying the factors affecting primary school general education teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools in Western Australia. The authors asked 74 public school teachers to complete a questionnaire measuring their attitudes. The study participants were divided into two age groups: 35 to 55 and 55 and over. The results showed that participants in the older age group showed significantly more negative attitudes when compared to participants in the younger age group. Similarly, Schmidt and Vrhovnik (2015) investigated the age factor and its effects on teacher's attitude in primary and secondary schools in Slovenia. The study's sample comprised 200 participants from 20 different schools and they were categorized into four different age groups (20-30, 31-40, 41-50 and 50 or over). Only the differences in the responses of the youngest age group (20-30) compared with the other groups were found to be statistically significant, demonstrating that participants in this group held more positive attitudes. However, the responses of the other groups did not differ significantly from each other.

Conversely, in a study conducted by Dapudong (2014), age was found to play no role. The study surveyed the attitudes of 52 general education and special education school teachers working in four international primary schools in Thailand and these participants were divided into four age groups (30 or younger, 31-40, 41-50 and 51 or older). The results of the study showed no difference in attitudes according to the age of teachers. Similarly, a study conducted by Carroll et al (2003) in primary and secondary mainstream schools in Australia

revealed no differences between younger and older teachers with regard to their attitudes towards inclusion.

The study at hand examined the age factor to explore whether it has an impact on teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN in a different context, which is Saudi Arabia.

3.5.2 Teachers' educational level and specialism

There is considerable agreement in previous research that the higher the qualification obtained by the teacher, the more positive is their attitude towards inclusion (e.g., Errol et al, 2005; Parasuram, 2006). Furthermore, research considering the effect of teachers' specialism on their attitudes has found that special education teachers feel more positively towards inclusion than teachers in mainstream education (e.g. Scruggs and Mastropieri, 1996), although some studies did not detect these effects on attitude (e.g. Davis, 2009). To start with the level of education, a study by Parasuram (2006) conducted in mainstream schools in Mumbai, India, revealed that teachers in mainstream education holding higher qualifications exhibited more positive attitudes towards students with SEN. While some of Parasuram's study participants held a Bachelor's degree, others were holders of a Master's degree qualification: those with a Master's degree were more positive than those with a Bachelor's degree. Similar findings were reported by Errol et al (2005), who investigated the attitudes of 152 teachers from Haiti and 216 teachers from the United States working in mainstream high schools. This study included participants who were qualified at Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral levels. Statistical tests undertaken in the study showed that having an advanced degree was associated with teachers having positive attitudes towards inclusion. Similar findings come from research conducted in various other contexts by Bender et al (1995),

Sharma et al (2006) and Hollins (2011). However, a more recent study by Vaz et al (2015) undertaken in Australian primary schools, reviewed in the previous section, did not detect a difference in attitudes based on the level of qualification held by the teacher.

Moving to the professional specialism of teachers, that is whether they hold a qualification in general or special education and whether this has an impact on their attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms, contradictory evidence emerged. Based on their investigation of previous literature on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion conducted between 1958 and 1995, Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) found out that special education teachers were more positive towards inclusion than general education teachers although 67 per cent of the former group were negative towards inclusion. Taylor, Richards, Goldstein and Schilit (1997) explored the attitudes of 96 general and special education teachers. Some of these participants were undergraduate university students (teachers in pre-service training), others were experienced teachers and all were asked to complete a 14-item Likert-scale questionnaire surveying their level of agreement about the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. They found significant differences between participants with a special education background and participants with a general education background, with the former being more positive towards inclusion. Noticeable disagreement on the inclusion of students with emotional, behavioural or mental disabilities in mainstream classrooms was expressed by general education teachers. McLeskey, Waldron, So, Swanson, and Loveland (2001) also surveyed the attitudes of 162 teachers towards inclusion. Seventy-eight participants were employed in inclusive school setting and 84 were teachers in non-inclusive school settings. The researchers detected differences between the two groups of teachers with the former being more positive towards inclusion. Likewise, Elhoweris and Alsheikh (2006) conducted a small-scale study in the USA examining differences in the

attitudes of general and special education teachers. Ten participants were asked to respond to 39 statements and, although all participants showed positive attitudes, the qualitative and quantitative data from the test battery demonstrated that special education teachers held more positive attitudes than their general education peers. Al-hamad (2006) reached the same conclusion based on studying the attitudes of general and special education teachers in the same setting (USA).

Nevertheless, Davis (2009) reached different conclusions based on studying the attitudes of 113 general and special education teachers working in schools in the USA towards the inclusion of children with severe disability in mainstream schools. Davis surveyed the attitudes of participants using a Likert scale questionnaire and statistical tests showed no differences between the attitudes of general and special education teachers.

Given the relatively inconclusive results of studies exploring teachers' educational background and specialism and their influence on teacher attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools, further investigation is needed in this area. Therefore, the current study examines these factors further in the context of Saudi Arabia.

3.5.3 Experience

There is a considerable body of research examining the association between teachers' level of experience and attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools. Much of this research has revealed a negative link between these variables. The more experienced teachers are, the less positive they become towards inclusion and conversely the less experienced they are, the more accepting of the idea of inclusion they appear to be (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002). One study exploring this issue is by Forlin et al (1996). The

study was conducted in Australian primary schools using a questionnaire survey of teachers' attitudes and the effect of their levels of experience. The study revealed that students with mental and physical disabilities were more accepted by teachers with six years' experience or less and that teachers with more experience were less supportive and less positive to the idea of inclusion. Leyser and Tappendorfk (2001), investigating teachers' attitudes in the USA, found that teachers with 13 years of teaching experience or more were less positive towards inclusion than those with less experience. Both Gilmore, Campbell and Cuskelly (2003) and Taylor, Smiley and Ramasamy (2003) reached similar conclusions, based on surveying the attitudes of a large sample of teachers in the USA. They also found that teachers with less teaching experience were more positive towards inclusion. Finally, Emam and Mohamed's (2011) study of the attitudes of 95 primary school and 71 pre-school teachers in Egypt also revealed that the teachers with more experience exhibited less positivity towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools.

However, when teachers have direct experience of working in inclusive education, the pattern of the results is reversed. Those with more experience of inclusive education are more positive towards inclusion than those with less experience. One study that investigated this issue is Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher and Saumell (1996). They conducted group interviews with 74 teachers, some of whom had previous experience in inclusive education and others who did not. The results of the study revealed that teachers who had experience in inclusive education held more positive attitudes than those who did not. Moreover, Avramidis, Bayliss and Burnen (2000) investigated this issue in teachers in 14 primary and 9 secondary schools engaged in inclusive education schools in the UK. The total number of participants was 81 teachers, divided into five groups by teaching experience. The results of the study revealed that although the variable 'teaching experience' did not have an effect on

attitude, the variable ‘active years of experience in inclusive education’ had a significant effect, as the more experience the teachers had of inclusive education, the more positive they felt towards inclusion.

Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) investigated this issue in Greece and reached similar conclusions. Avramidis and Kalyva used a Likert scale questionnaire to survey the attitudes of 155 Greek primary school teachers. 25 per cent of the sample came from ten schools where inclusive education had been implemented for a long time and the rest of the sample came from 20 schools with no inclusive programmes in place. These two groups were matched on age and years of teaching experience and the only difference was years of experience in inclusive education. Again, the results of this study showed that while teaching experience did not have an effect on attitudes, ‘teaching experience in inclusive education’ did. Teachers with more years of teaching experience in inclusive education held significantly more positive attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream education.

The experience factor will be investigated further in the study at hand to explore the extent to which it has an impact on teachers’ attitudes in the context of Saudi Arabia.

3.5.4 Perceived level of efficacy

Bandura (1977, p. 3) defined self-efficacy as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”. Self-efficacy is believed to be one of the most important factors that impacts on teachers’ attitudes and various studies have found that the more confident teachers are about their abilities, the more positive their attitudes towards inclusion are. For example, Subban and Sharma (2006)

surveyed the attitudes of 122 primary school teachers in Australia towards the inclusion of students with SEN. They found that those who perceived themselves to be capable of educating students with SEN confidently held more positive attitudes and had fewer concerns about the success of inclusion.

Similarly, Lifshitz et al (2004) studied the attitudes of Palestinian and Israeli special education and mainstream primary school teachers after an intervention training programme. They found that mainstream teachers particularly benefited from the intervention programme as it increased their confidence in their capabilities and made their attitudes towards SEN more positive. Lopes et al (2004) also explored the attitudes of 430 special education and mainstream teachers in primary and secondary schools in Portugal. It was found that teachers with lower self-efficacy held more negative attitudes towards students with SEN, regarding them as a barrier to the progress of mainstream students. Emam and Mohamed (2011) reached the same conclusion in preschool and primary settings in Egypt, where significantly more positive attitudes were expressed by teachers who were more confident in their abilities. In a similar vein, Brady and Woolfson's (2008) study of attitudes of low and high efficacy teachers revealed that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy and competence showed more responsibility towards students with SEN and their inclusion and that self-efficacy is the best predictor of positive attitudes in teachers.

This study further explores whether teachers' perceptions of their own capabilities have any effect on their attitudes towards inclusion in the context of Saudi Arabia.

3.5.5 Training

The evidence that training (whether pre-service or in-service) has great effects on teachers' attitudes, and hence the success of inclusion, is substantial and addresses the issue in different

contexts. One example was conducted by Beh-Pajooch (1991), who investigated the attitudes of 74 teachers in a college in the UK towards the integration of students with severe disabilities in college programmes. The study used a questionnaire to measure participants' attitudes and found that those with prior training had more positive attitudes about inclusion. Similar results were found by Shimman (1990) in research located in a UK college. Leyser et al (1994) investigated the same issue in public school teachers from six countries, namely the United States, Germany, Israel, Ghana, Taiwan, and the Philippines. Although differences in teachers' attitudes were detected between teachers from different countries, the most positive attitudes in the six countries came from teachers who had been trained in SEN.

Van Reusen, Shoho, and Barker (2000) conducted a survey of 125 public high school teachers in the USA to measure their attitudes towards the students with SEN. It was found that the training factor significantly correlated with attitudes of teachers, as those who had more training had more positive attitudes. Similarly, Subban and Sharma (2006), based on a survey of the attitudes of 122 primary school teachers in Australia, found that teachers who had undertaken training in special education prior to study were more positive towards inclusion than those who had not.

Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) recommended providing teachers with professional development in order to change their attitudes towards inclusion based on the findings of their study. They surveyed the attitudes of 155 primary school teachers in Northern Greece and found that long term training plays a substantial role in forming positive attitudes among school teachers towards inclusion. In addition, the studies by Schmidt and Vrhovnik (2015) and Vaz et al (2015), reviewed above in relation to teachers' age, also demonstrated that

teachers who reported having received training showed significantly more positive attitudes than those who had not.

Furthermore, Dickens-Smith (1995) found out that in-service training is a critical factor in forming positive teachers' attitudes. The study provided in-service training to 100 mainstream school teachers and 100 special education teachers working in Chicago, Illinois. She measured these teachers' attitudes in a survey administered prior and post the in-service training and she found that both teacher types exhibited more favourable attitudes after training. This led the researcher to conclude that training is a vital factor in making inclusion of students with SEN in public schools successful. Bender et al (1995) reached the same conclusion based on studying the attitudes of 27 mainstream classroom teachers of students in grades 1-8.

According to Hammond and Ingalls (2003), in-service training is critical for changing teachers' attitudes and making inclusion successful, but it is only one factor among many:

"Educators need opportunities to collaborate on inclusive programs in their schools. Teachers need adequate training from pre-service and in-service programs that will help them develop skills for effective collaboration and for implementing inclusive services. They need initial and ongoing support from administrators and fellow teachers in order to successfully implement these services. Last, and possibly most important, all educators need to be involved in the planning and implementation of an inclusionary program. Without careful and systematic planning and coordination from all involved personnel, inclusion is sure to fail"

(Hammond and Ingalls, 2003, p. 26)

The training factor will be investigated further in this study.

3.5.6 Having relatives with SEN

Whether having a relative, or even a friend, with SEN might have an impact on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion is a factor that has been the focus of a number of studies. For example, the study by Subban and Sharma (2006), reviewed above, reported that Australian primary school teachers who had a family member with disability were more positive than other teachers. In Subban and Sharma's words:

“Participants with a family member with a disability, and those who possessed some knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) exhibited more positive attitudes towards including children with disabilities, while participants with a close friend with a disability and those who felt more confident about their roles as inclusive educators, experienced fewer concerns about implementing inclusive education”

(Subban and Sharma, 2006, p.42)

A study conducted by Wilkerson (2012) reached the same conclusion. Wilkerson assessed elementary, middle and high school teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools in the USA. The number of participants in this study was 636 and they included both general and special education teachers. These participants belonged to different age groups and had different levels of teaching experience (including experience of inclusive education) and qualifications. The results of the study indicated that having a family member with SEN was significantly correlated with teachers having positive attitudes.

In a different context, Ireland, O'Toole and Bruke (2013) studied the attitude of 134 pre-service trainee teachers involved in a Professional Diploma in Education programme. 33 per cent of the participants reported having a family member with SEN or having a close relationship with a person with SEN. All participants completed a Likert scale type questionnaire and again a significant correlation was found between having a family member

or a friend with SEN and teachers having a positive attitude towards SEN. However, Parasuram (2006), in a study conducted in India and reviewed above, revealed no difference in the attitudes of teachers based on the variable 'having a family member with SEN'. The study at hand will explore this factor further in the context of Saudi Arabia.

3.5.7 Summary

This section has reviewed relevant literature about the potential factors that might have an impact on the attitudes of teachers towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. There are various factors that have been held to play a role in this issue in the literature. Some studies have revealed that older teachers are less positive towards inclusion (Vaz et al, 2015) and younger teachers are more positive (Vrhovnik, 2015). However, other studies such as Carroll et al (2003) and Dapudong (2014) found that age played a much less important role in shaping attitudes. Another factor that has received some attention is the level of teachers' education. A number of studies (e.g. Bender et al, 1995; Errol et al, 2005; Hollins, 2011; Parasuram, 2006; Sharma et al, 2006) demonstrated that the higher the teacher's level of education was, the more positive they were towards inclusion. This finding was contradicted by Vaz et al (2015)'s finding that there were no differences in attitude among teachers based on their level of education. In addition, some researchers indicated that special education teachers are more positive about the inclusion of SEN in mainstream classrooms than general education teachers. Whether teachers' attitudes are affected by their specialism (general or special education) is a factor that has been found by many studies including Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996), Taylor et al (1997), McLeskey et al (2001), Elhoweris and Alsheikh (2006), Al-hamad (2006) but not in other studies such as Davis (2009).

The influence of teachers' experience on their attitudes is another factor that was addressed in the literature reviewed in this section. Some authors (e.g. Forlin et al, 1996; Leyser and Tappendorf, 2001; Gilmore et al, 2003; Taylor et al, 2003; Emam and Mohamed, 2011) reported that more experienced teachers had less positive attitudes towards inclusion. However, other studies (e.g. Vaughn et al, 1996; Avramidis et al, 2000; Avramidis and Kalyva, 2007) revealed that while teaching experience had no impact on their participants' attitudes, teaching experience in inclusive education did have impact, as teachers who had more teaching experience in inclusive education had more positive attitudes than those who did not. Moreover, the teachers' perceived level of efficacy has been shown to be an influencing factor on attitude as teachers who are more confident of their abilities are more positive about inclusion (e.g. Subban and Sharma, 2006; Lifshitz et al 2004; Lopes et al, 2004; Emam and Mohamed, 2011; Brady and Woolfson, 2008).

Furthermore, there is broad consensus that the training factor is critical in forming positive attitudes by teachers. For example, Shimman (1990), Beh-Pajoooh (1991), Leyser et al (1994), Van Reusen et al (2000), Subban and Sharma (2006), Avramidis and Kalyva (2007), Schmidt and Vrhovnik (2015) and Vaz et al (2015) demonstrated that participants in their studies who reported having received training were more positive towards including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. In addition, Dickens-Smith (1995) and Bender et al (1995) provided their participants with in-service training and found this had a positive influence on their attitudes.

The last factor that was considered in the literature review in this section was having a relative or friend with SEN. Both Subban and Sharma (2006) and Wilkerson (2012) indicated that participants who had a family member with SEN were more accepting of the idea of

inclusion and that there was a significant correlation between this factor and teachers' positive attitudes. O'Toole and Bruke (2013) had the same finding in their survey of pre-service teachers. However, other studies conducted in different contexts such as India (e.g. Parasuram, 2006) revealed no differences in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion based on whether they had a family member with SEN or not.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the concept of attitude and the different definitions that have been advanced in previous research. Two main models (i.e., the Single Component Model and the Three Component Model) explaining how attitudes are formed were presented and discussed. The Three Component Model was chosen to be the theoretical framework through which the data collected for this study will be analysed. The rationale for this choice was that the Three Component Model provides a more holistic approach to attitudes touching on different dimensions. Given the complex nature of attitudes generally, and in inclusive education particularly, an approach exploring different dimensions is assumed to be more valid. Finally, the literature on different factors was reviewed and discussed.

The following chapter focuses on the history of and previous literature on special education and inclusive education in the setting of the current study, i.e., Saudi Arabia.

Chapter Four: Inclusion: The Saudi Arabia Context

4.1 Introduction

In Saudi Arabia, the government has introduced various initiatives to improve learning for students with disabilities. In 2001, the Saudi Government enacted specific legislation to develop special education and policies that focus on special education services (Alquraini, 2010). This initiative focused on improving the quality of special education services and introducing regulation that ensured improvement in the quality of special education services. As inclusive education has been found more beneficial (see Section 2.4), Saudi Arabia is also aiming to support students with SEN to receive an education in mainstream schools alongside students without SEN (Al-Mousa, 2010). The rationale of this approach is that students with disabilities should be allowed to study with their peers so they can develop the cognitive and social abilities which are assumed to be easier to develop in special schools (Brown, 2005).

The current chapter provides the background information about the context of the study in Saudi Arabia. It gives general information about Saudi Arabia, its culture and the educational system in Section 4.2. The history of special education in Saudi Arabia and the development of legislations and regulations are presented in Section 4.3. After that, Section 4.4 discusses the development of the concept of inclusive education in the country. Before concluding the chapter, Section 5.5 discusses previous research focusing on Saudi Arabia and identifies the factors influencing teachers' attitudes to the inclusion movement in Saudi Arabia, highlighting the gaps in previous research and justifying the exploration conducted in this study.

4.2 The context of the study: Saudi Arabia

4.2.1 Saudi Arabia: General Information

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded in 1932 by King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud. It is a country in the Middle East with a population of 32,552,336, occupying 2,000,000 square kilometres of land (General Authority for Statistics, 2017). The kingdom is bordered by seven Arab countries (i.e., Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Yemen and Qatar) as well as the Red Sea and Arabian Gulf and it is divided into 13 regions as demonstrated in Figure 4.1. Riyadh is its capital city.



Figure 4.1: Map of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Islam is the religion of people in Saudi Arabia, governing all aspects of their lives including education, defining their identity and forming their cultural values. Muslims believe in Allah (God), the sole creator of the universe, and his messenger to mankind, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him (pbuh)). All laws and legislation pertaining to all aspects of people's

lives in the kingdom are based on the Holy Quran and the teachings and traditions of the prophet (pbuh). Since Islam plays a very important role in forming the identity and culture of the people studied in this thesis, it is important to examine how disability is looked at in Islam.

4.2.2 Saudi Arabia: Islam

Although there is no mention of people with disabilities in the Holy Quran (Alothman, 2014), in Islam people are equal and there is no difference between one individual and another based on gender, race, status or mental and physical abilities. The only differentiating principle between people is piety and faithfulness to Allah as revealed in the Holy Quran:

‘O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you’ (49, 13).

This revelation makes it clear that all people came from one man and one woman and this means that they are all equal. This is an indication that Islam clearly opposes prejudice against people.

Islam does not only promote equality between people, it also emphasises the importance of treating people with love, care and mercy. For example, the following saying by the prophet (pbuh) clarifies this: “God the Merciful shows mercy to merciful people. Show mercy to those on earth so that God shows mercy on you” (Abu Dawud). The prophet here is urging people to show mercy on all those on earth.

Furthermore, there are two clear examples from the prophetic tradition showing the care, respect and prominence given to people with disabilities. The first example comes from the story of Abdullah Ibn Umm Maktum, who was among the first to join Islam. Abdulla was blind, but he was highly respected by the prophet (pbuh) as he was appointed as Muazzen (i.e., the person who calls for prayers) in Al-Madina and this was an honour to this person. In addition, whenever the prophet (pbuh) left Al-Madina, he used to place Abdulla in charge of this city until he came back. This is a remarkable example of including people with disabilities in the society and giving them a prominence.

The second example is the story of Julaybib, who was very poor and physically deformed. Julaybib wanted to marry but none of the families of the daughters he proposed to allow their daughters to marry him because of his physical appearance. The prophet (pbuh) heard of Julaybib's story and intervened. Following this, one noble family accepted Julaybib's proposal to marry their daughter. This demonstrates how the prophet urged his followers to accept others regardless of their physical appearance.

Today, there are different views on disability among Muslims. While some Muslims hold positive views, believing that disability is a blessing from God, others have negative views and maintain that disability is punishment from God for disobeying him or disrespecting others (Al-Thani, 2009). However, these beliefs have no roots in Islam, neither in the Holy Quran nor in the prophetic traditions, and their source seems rather to be cultural beliefs dating back to pre-Islam era (Gaad, 2011).

4.2.3 Saudi Arabia: The educational system

According to the *Encyclopaedia of Education in Saudi Arabia* (2003), when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded in 1932, education was provided primarily in local mosques which taught only literacy skills and Islam. Gaad (2011) states that attending those learning sessions was completely optional and many families did not send their children because their poor living conditions meant they had to send their children to work to earn money for their family. It was not until the 1970s and 1980s, when the discovery and exploitation of oil brought economic and social welfare to the kingdom, that public and private schools were established (Al-Musa, 1999).

Prior to proclaiming Saudi Arabia a kingdom in 1932, the 'Directorate of Knowledge' was established in 1925 and was responsible for running four schools in the whole country, which catered exclusively for boys (Ministry of Education, 2017). The Directorate of Knowledge was replaced by the Ministry of Knowledge in 1951 and this was responsible for boys' education in primary, preparatory and secondary schools (ibid). The General Presidency for Girls' Education was established in 1960 to oversee girls' education. Then the Ministry of Knowledge and the General Presidency for Girls' Education were brought together in 2002 and renamed the Ministry of Education in 2003 (ibid). Prior to that in 1975, the Ministry of Higher Education was established to implement the kingdom's policies relating to higher education in universities and colleges. However, in 2015, the Ministry of Higher Education was also amalgamated with the Ministry of Education under the latter's name (ibid). Therefore, the Ministry of Education today is responsible for implementing the kingdom's policies relating to education at all levels. It is worth noting that according the *Encyclopaedia of Education in Saudi Arabia* (2003), setting educational policies was the responsibility of the

Supreme Committee in the kingdom headed by the King, working with the Minister of Education and other government ministers. This remains the situation today.

Today education at all levels from kindergarten to doctorate studies is free in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and is compulsory at primary, preparatory and secondary schools. Because of the cultural belief prevalent in the kingdom that boys and girls should be separated, the educational system is segregated by gender (Al-Asmari, 2013). This means that there are different schools, colleges and departments in universities for boys and girls. Furthermore, although private educational institutions exist in Saudi Arabia, they also have to follow the educational policies set by the Kingdom's Supreme Committee (Allothman, 2014).

4.3 Special education in Saudi Arabia

The roots of special education or education for exceptional individuals can be traced back to early Islamic history. In the seventh century mosques offered both religious and non-religious education in the Islamic world. This also catered for the special needs of individuals. According to Ross (1951), blind men were the only people to benefit from this education at the time. During 970AD the blind created a unique educational method for themselves at the University of Al-Azhar Cairo, learning through memorizing texts, including the Quran. Even today these blind men can be found in the corridors of Al-Azhar reciting the Quran. Many such men have become singers or preachers to earn a living, while some are teachers in reform schools in Cairo.

As the education system evolved during the 1950s in Saudi Arabia, blind students and students with mild hearing loss joined their non-disabled peers to attend regular neighbourhood schools. In 1962, the then Ministry of Knowledge created the Department of

Special Education to oversee the development of special education programmes in Saudi Arabia. This department was headed by a blind man, Sheikh Al-Ghanem, who was one of the first to learn Braille in Saudi Arabia (Al-Mousa, 1999). At this time, an Iraqi man introduced the Braille system in Saudi Arabia, in which a few blind students were studying in regular schools (Al-Kheraigi, 1989). These blind students learnt Braille and started to help other blind Saudi students in evening classes at public schools so they could also grasp this new method of reading for the blind (Al-Mousa, 1999). This initiative increased awareness of Braille that helped visually impaired individuals to read and write. After the Department of Special Education was founded, several other institutes for the blind and deaf were also established. The first Institute for the blind was established in Riyadh in 1960. It was named 'Al-Noor Institute' and started with 40 students (Al-Saloom, 1995). In 1964, Al-Noor Institute for Blind launched its female wing and the first school for deaf, Al-Amal Institute, was also created.

In 1972, the Ministry of Education expanded the Department of Special Education into a General Directorate that encompassed three main departments: Educational Administration for the Blind; Educational Administration for the Deaf; and Educational Administration for the Mentally Retarded (Al-Saloom, 1995). The General Directorate of Special Education was intended to administer and expand special education services in major Saudi cities. In 1978, there were 27 special schools, which had increased to 47 by 1992. Ten of these schools were for the blind, 23 for the deaf and 14 for those with learning disabilities. These schools had 6,000 male and female students. During this period, the number of special education teachers working in these schools increased from 23 in 1962 to 1346 in 1992. This shows the speed at which special education services expanded in Saudi Arabia from 1962 (Al-Abduljabber, 1994). The schools provided boarding facilities for students who lived outside the major

cities; they stayed in school accommodation five days a week and were allowed to return home at weekends and during holidays. The special schools for the blind and deaf offered both academic and vocation education. The curriculum was the same as in regular schools, while the vocational curricula included training for handcrafts, gardening, sewing, woodworking and typing. The special schools for students with learning disabilities educated students aged 6-14 and had an IQs of 70-75. These students were also offered academic and vocational training with a focus on rehabilitation.

Since the Holy Quran commands every Muslim to take responsibility for their brethren, the concern for people with disabilities in Saudi Arabia is based on Quranic principles. The Saudi government has introduced specific legislation for the disabled individuals which have been enshrined in the Rights of Mentally Retarded Person (1974) and Education for all Handicapped Children Act (1975). This legislation established undeniable rights for individuals with disabilities that include the right to free education, the right to free medical service and the right to financial support (Nader, 1980).

A watershed event for the development of special education in Saudi Arabia occurred in 1985 when the College of Education at the King Saud University established a Special Education Department, the first in the Arab world (Al-Abduljabber, 1994). The main purpose of this department was to bring together special education training programmes in a four-year special education programme. To be able to achieve this, King Saud University offered scholarships to some Saudi students to study special education in the USA and UK and when these students returned, they were employed in the Special Education Department. This new department introduced many changes to Saudi special education. The foremost achievement of this department was to train Saudi teachers so they could understand the special needs of

Saudi children, expatriate teachers and the students' families. Western-educated professionals joined this department and introduced new concepts for special education and an increasing number of Saudi college students. This new department at the university became a centre for debates and research on special education. It also called for reform to the Saudi special education system which was felt to be of prime importance.

The Saudi government has also enacted specific legislation for people with disabilities and the Legislation of Disability (LD) was approved in 1987 (Ministry of Health Care, 2010). The LD set important requirements to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else in the society. The LD defined disabilities and established guidelines for assessing the eligibility of individuals for special education in Saudi. The LD directs public agencies to provide therapy for the disabled and training programmes to ensure that individuals with a disability can live on their own. In 2000, the Saudi government further created the Disability Code that ensured access to free and suitable medical, psychological, social, educational and rehabilitation services for people with disabilities (Prince Salman Center for Disability Research, 2004).

In 1996, learning disabilities were introduced as a distinct category in the Saudi educational system. At the same time, the General Secretariat of Special Education (GCSE) was created as a division of the Ministry of Education. The GSSE created the Learning Disabilities Department to administer learning disability programmes in elementary schools in the country. This department assigned learning disability teachers to identify students with disabilities and provide them with special education. Saudi was successful in initiating such programs and learning disability became a distinct category of disability and all such children in the country had the right to receive special education services (Al Mosa, 1999).

Despite the progress made in special education in Saudi Arabia since the 1960s, problems persisted in this system until the end of the century. Al-Kheraigi (1989) in her doctoral thesis critically evaluated special education in Saudi Arabia. In her findings, she identified a number of problems in the Saudi special education programme. These included the large number of disabled students who were not enrolled in any special education programme and the low numbers of Saudi teachers qualified in special education. Furthermore, the absence of a coherent strategy for special education training undermined special education provision in Saudi Arabia. She also stated that the curriculum was outdated and that there was no educational innovation for special students. She concluded that the biggest challenge was recruiting qualified professionals to educate special and disabled students.

The Ministry of Education has since taken steps to address this issue by employing teachers from other countries such as Egypt and Jordan (Al-Mousa, 1999). The Ministry also started educating Saudi teacher candidates in the West so they could gain expertise in the field of special education. These Saudi trainee teachers were sent mainly to the USA and the UK to further develop special education in Saudi Arabia (Al-Mousa, 1999).

4.4 Inclusive Education in Saudi Arabia

As detailed in Chapter 2, in inclusive education it is assumed that mainstream classrooms create a better educational and social environment for children with SEN. Inclusive education is the practice of placing a child with disabilities in general education classrooms with appropriate relevant support. Many researchers (e.g. Power-Defur and Orelove, 1997) maintain that this practice should be implemented at school and school district levels, rather than just at classroom level. The philosophy of inclusive education assumes general, special

and vocational education can work together in integrated systems that embrace all types of students and their talents (Barton, 1997). At the system level, inclusive education eliminates the need for a dual curriculum.

Al-Mousa (2010) pointed out that Saudi Arabia has special education institutes for children with visual and hearing disabilities, but children with mild disabilities have been educated in regular schools. Alquraini (2012) stated that before 2001 most of the pupils with SEN in Saudi Arabia were educated in special schools which failed to meet their individual needs and pupils with SEN were unable to develop social communications and academic skills. In 2001, the Saudi Government enacted specific legislation in this context, the Regulations of Special Education Programs and Institutes (RSEPI) (Ministry of Education, 2018), which has continued to evolve. The RSEPI is a specific policy of educating students with disabilities. This policy was modelled on US policies and was concerned with the quality of education provided in special and general schools to students with SEN (Alquraini, 2012). The RSEPI stressed the importance of inclusion for students with disabilities and specified that students with disabilities should receive education in the least restrictive environment (Alquraini, 2012). This regulation requires schools to allow students with mild, moderate and severe disabilities to receive education with typically developing peers in regular classrooms so they could maximise their abilities.

In an attempt to develop special education provision in Saudi Arabia to meet the circumstances of children with SEN, resource rooms were initially introduced into public and private schools as part of the 2001 integration initiative (Somaily et al, 2012). Resource rooms are an educational setting in which therapeutic assessment and education is provided for students with disabilities. Education here is delivered at a regular time during the day and

this setting is considered a form of mainstream special education. Most special education programmes in the Unit of Learning Disabilities are associated with the Department of Special Education in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia (Somaily et al, 2012). These programmes seek to provide assistance to students with learning disabilities and include the families of special students in the therapy process (ibid).

Alquraini (2010) pointed out that in the previous decade special education services had made major advances in offering high quality education to special students in unrestricted environments. Students with mild and moderate disabilities study in general education classrooms which are combined with relevant support for special education services. These students follow a general education curriculum with some alterations to meet their needs (Al-Ahmadi, 2009). Such students with disabilities are able to interact with their typically developing peers in non-curricular activities in the school. Students with mild and moderate disabilities go to elementary schools from the age of 6 to 12, followed by middle school to the age of 18. At present, there is no opportunity for further education apart from some vocational training (Al-Ahmadi, 2009). These vocational training centres focus on developing employment skills and independent living skills for disabled individuals.

Nevertheless, despite the regulation which underlined all students' right to receive education in mainstream classrooms, this has not been implemented for students with severe intellectual disabilities in Saudi Arabia (Alanazi, 2012). This implied that students with severe intellectual disabilities should be educated in special schools or private institutions. In 2008, the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia stated that 88 per cent of students with mild disabilities in 2007/2008 were educated in inclusive settings, but 96 per cent of students with

multiple and serve disabilities such as autism and moderate to severe cognitive disabilities were educated in private institutions (Alquraini, 2012).

Today, students with severe intellectual disabilities in Saudi Arabia are still educated in segregated special education institutions (Aseery, 2016). Such institutions provide shelter, food, financial aid and assistance to students with moderate, severe or profound intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities and autism and are assumed to allow such students to improve their academic skills. However, Alquraini (2010) identified a problem with special education institutions in Saudi Arabia: they used individual education programs (IEP) which were modified from a special education curriculum designed by the Ministry of Education. The IEPs failed to meet the exclusive and individual needs of the students with SEN (Aseery, 2016). Also, private institutions in Saudi Arabia lacked necessary associated services such as occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech and language pathologists from which students could benefit (Alanazi, 2012). Students with disabilities should be able to develop communication, physical and other relevant skills in the course of their education. Some students with mild, moderate and severe disabilities in Saudi Arabia who are educated in segregated settings are less able to recognise their rights and needs than regular students (Al-Ajmi, 2006). The segregation of students with disabilities impairs their ability to acquire social skills, especially for those students with cognitive disabilities who particularly need to develop such skills. The main reason why students with disabilities are educated in segregated settings is the lack of training of mainstream school teachers in teaching special students (Al-Ajmi, 2006). In addition, in Saudi Arabia, there is a general perception among educators that students with SEN might jeopardise other students in the population and, although education experts believe that students with SEN should receive the same level of education as their peers, they think this should be in segregated settings (Al-Faiz, 2006).

In Saudi Arabia, special education and general education were segregated for a long time and to reform special education, there is a need to make incremental changes so the continuum of special education is maintained as education progresses towards full inclusion (Al-Mousa, 2010). In the past decade, there has been more support for the concept of inclusive education in Saudi Arabia allowing students with SEN to be educated in regular state schools alongside their non-disabled peers (Al-Mousa, 2010). Some policy makers in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia started to realize that these students will benefit from inclusive classrooms (Al-Mousa, 2010). Al-Mousa et al (2008) state that special needs education in Saudi Arabia is evolving, the government is creating policies that emphasises on inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools. Saudi Arabia has made good progress in ensuring the inclusion of students and recent studies (e.g. Aseery, 2016) show that today more students with special needs are being educated in regular schools. The implementation of the inclusive education agenda will improve the education of students with disabilities, as the literature on inclusion does not support segregated special schools or classrooms, but rather favours an approach which educates all students with SEN in mainstream classrooms and encourages as many students as possible to interact with their non-disabled peers (Alquraini, 2010).

The Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia defines mainstreaming as educating children with special needs in a regular education environment coupled with special education services (Ministry of Education, 2008). The mainstreaming programmes are the special education programmes in regular education schools for such special students. These programmes include self-contained classroom programs, resource room programs, and teacher consultant programs and follow-up programs (Ministry of Education, 2008). Mainstreaming projects in Saudi Arabia are implemented through self-contained classes in regular class which is in

effect partial mainstreaming. This allows disabled students to study with their non-disabled peers.

The conceptualisation of inclusion in Saudi Arabia seeks to enable children with disabilities to access quality education in the least restrictive environment possible (Al-Mousa, 2010). Therefore, there has been an increase in the number of children with learning difficulties who have been accommodated in their local schools in Saudi Arabia (Aseery, 2016). At present the inclusion agenda in Saudi Arabia is implemented through partial inclusion and full inclusion (Alanazi, 2012). Partial inclusion is implemented through self-contained classes in regular schools. This service delivery model is for students with mild and moderate cognitive disabilities. Such students follow a specialised curriculum and they have an opportunity to participate in some non-curricular activities with their non-disabled peers (Alanazi, 2012). Full inclusion in regular schools is implemented through special education support programmes such as resource rooms, teacher consultant programmes and visiting teachers. In such special education programmes, students with mild learning difficulties are educated alongside their normal peers with some adaptation to the curriculum provided through the resource room sessions (Alquraini, 2011). This underlines the fact that inclusion is still being implemented in Saudi Arabia.

Nevertheless, although the government is making tangible efforts to implement an inclusive education system that is based on the principle of “Education for All” (Ministry of Education, 2008), Al-Mousa (2010) claimed that the term mainstreaming describes special education practices in Saudi Arabia at present. Current education policy in Saudi Arabia enables the education system to seek alternative placements through extending regular education classrooms to residential settings. This allows Saudi schools to accommodate all children

with disabilities. Also, it ensures that each child is provided with an educational setting that meets their needs, interest and aspirations. However, it is important to emphasise that the criteria for education placements for children with SEN should be based on their educational needs, the nature of their disability and administrative convenience, which is not always provided in these schools (Al-Mousa, 2010). The Ministry of Education has encountered difficulties in mainstreaming special education, including the apprehensions of parents of students with disabilities and negative attitudes among certain social groups towards individuals with disabilities (Aseery, 2016).

Furthermore, teachers play an instrumental role in determining whether students with disabilities should be included in general classrooms, not only in Saudi Arabia but also globally (see Section 3.5). The role of the teacher in promoting successful inclusion for students with disabilities has been recognised by many researchers (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Brown, 2005). Improving teachers' understanding and awareness of students' needs is important for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Dickens-Smith, 1995; Lipsky and Gartner, 1998). At the same time the negative perspective of these professionals could impede the inclusion process for such students (Vaz et al, 2015; Vrhovnik, 2015). At present, there is little research on Saudi teachers and their perspectives on inclusive education (see next section). Saudi society follows the Islamic faith, and Saudi cultural values regarding disabilities have come from the Quran and Sunnah (Alzaidi, 2017). However, questionable beliefs have spread in Saudi society about disability with many believing that the source is Islam (Alquraini, 2010). For example, a disability may be seen as a punishment for someone being disrespectful to their family. Also, some perceive patience with disabled individuals as a test that will be rewarded by God. Such values might be one reason why individuals with

disabilities are treated negatively in Saudi Arabia (Alquraini, 2010). This may also contribute to teachers' negative perceptions of people with disabilities.

The following section will review previous empirical research on inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.

4.5 Barriers to inclusive education and teachers' attitudes in Saudi Arabia

The focus of this thesis is the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive education in Saudi Arabia. It also focuses on a particularly critical barrier or facilitator to inclusion, which is teachers' attitudes. Section 2.4 reviewed some of the important barriers and facilitators arising from research in the global context and Section 3.5 reviewed studies conducted in the general context about the factors that play a role in forming teachers' attitudes. Having provided background information about Saudi Arabia, its culture, educational system and the historical development of special and inclusive education in the country in this chapter, we will focus in this section on studies that investigated teachers' attitudes and the barriers influencing these attitudes in Saudi Arabia. Two things should be noted here. First, barriers to inclusive education in the Saudi context have been primarily studied in the light of how they affect educators' attitudes and, thus, this is how they will be presented in this section. Second, there is little empirical research on the inclusion of students with SEN in general in the Saudi context and for this reason studies of the inclusion of specific types of SEN (e.g., deafness, learning difficulty or intellectual or learning disability) in this context are included to inform the study (see Section 2.3.1 for the categories of SEN in Saudi Arabia).

One of the earliest studies on teachers' attitudes towards including students with SEN was Al-Abduljabber's (1994). Al-Abduljabber surveyed the attitudes of 221 male and female teachers and administrators working in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. Participants were reported to have generally positive attitudes, but females were generally more positive than males. In addition, administrators were the most positive towards including students with SEN in mainstream schools.

A decade later, in another quantitative study using surveys to collect data on the attitudes of 240 elementary general and special education teachers on the inclusion of children with autism, Al-Faiz (2006) found in contrast that males were found more positive than females. Teaching experience and having a relative with disability were found to be factors influencing how positive teachers' attitudes were.

In a mixed methods study, Al-Ahmadi (2009) investigated general and special education teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with learning disabilities (LD) in primary mainstream schools through surveys (n=251) and interviews (n=20). The study's results revealed that both general and special education teachers had positive attitudes. Among general education teachers, males were more positive than females and more positive attitudes were associated with higher levels of education. According to the study, special education teachers had better knowledge about inclusion and its requirements than mainstream education teachers.

Unlike the three studies already reviewed in this section, Alquraini (2011) found negative attitudes towards the inclusion of students with severe disabilities in mainstream primary

schools in Saudi Arabia. Alquraini collected survey data from 303 general and special education teachers. Although all teachers had negative attitudes, general education teachers were more positive than their peers in special education. Previous experience with students with SEN was found to positively affect teachers' attitudes as well. However, the teacher's level of education did not have any impact on attitudes.

Alothman (2014) conducted focus group and individual group interviews with the aim of understanding school teachers' and principals' attitudes towards including students with hearing impairment in primary mainstream classrooms. Five principals and thirty-two special education teachers from five schools in Saudi Arabia were involved in the study. While principals were found to have negative attitudes, classroom teachers were found to have more positive attitudes but highlighted some barriers preventing effective inclusion. The barriers mentioned by teachers were lack of support from administrators, lack of training, insufficient facilities and resources and lack of teacher-teacher and school-parent collaboration.

Similar to Alothman, AlShahrani (2014) examined teachers' and administrators' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with hearing impairment in primary mainstream schools. Both a questionnaire survey and individual interviews were used to collect data. One hundred and twenty educators participated in the former and 11 educators participated in the latter. The study revealed generally negative attitudes, which was attributed to lack of training and experience in education of students with deafness and inadequate resources.

Similar results were found by Aseery (2016) upon surveying 196 general and special education teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with deafness. Training and

previous experience in education of students with SEN were found to have an influence on teachers' attitudes. However, gender, specialism, general teaching experience and having a family member with disability did not influence attitudes.

Alhudaithi (2015) examined teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with autism in mainstream classrooms through both surveying and interviewing teachers. A total of 497 general and special education teachers were surveyed and 12 teachers were involved in follow-up interviews. The questionnaire survey revealed a general positive and supportive attitude from both general and special education teachers, but the interviews showed that none of the interviewees were supportive of inclusion. The reasons mentioned by interviewees for their unsupportive attitude was that schools were not prepared and teachers were not qualified to teach students with autism. The contradictory results revealed by the survey and interviews in this study are not surprising; educators in Saudi Arabia fear contradicting the Government's policy and expressing their true attitudes in questionnaires because they are not present to clarify their position and they do not know whether their opinions would cause them trouble. Thus, they give idealistic answers that agree with the education policy in the country. However, in interviews, they may be more open to expressing and justifying their attitudes. This might explain the contradictory results in Alhudaithi's (2015) study, highlighting the potential weakness of survey methodology in capturing the true attitudes of Saudi educators.

Alhammad (2017) is the only study which has explored the barriers to inclusive education in Saudi Arabia without studying teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. Alhammad interviewed and observed classes of 24 general and special education teachers working in five different schools in Saudi Arabia. He reported that the majority of his participants understood clearly

what inclusion means, but unsuitable curriculum, lack of administrative support and cooperation and the large number of students in the classroom were factors hindering the effective implementation of inclusion.

However, prior to Alhammad, Alanazi (2015) interviewed 37 school leaders and general and special education teachers in schools adopting inclusive education, concluding that her participants lacked sufficient knowledge about inclusion, although the views of Alanazi's study participants were similar to those in Alhammad's study. In other words, both studies reached similar results with regard to understanding of inclusion by educators but they were interpreted differently by the researchers. Yet, although Alanazi stated that her participants lacked sufficient knowledge about inclusion, she did not identify it as a barrier to inclusive education.

The studies conducted in Saudi Arabia suffer from some shortcomings that necessitate further research on inclusive education. First, the number of studies is small and they provided contradictory results in terms of the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and the factors influencing those attitudes. The results are contradictory even in studies examining the same specific type of SEN (deafness or autism) or SEN in general. Second, most of these studies employed a quantitative method to investigate the teacher's attitude (i.e. questionnaire surveys). While this is a valid method, it might elicit idealistic answers rather than respondents' actual attitudes and it does not allow for a deeper investigation of their opinions. Moreover, although many factors have been examined to be held as influencing the teacher's attitude, one important factor was neglected, which is the religious beliefs of educators. This factor is believed to be possibly influential (Alquraini, 2011) because the Saudi society is religious. Therefore, this clearly shows that further research is needed exploring teachers'

attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools and the factors influencing them. The type of required research is qualitative in nature in order to give more reliable results. In addition, although most studies identified lack of training as a barrier to inclusive education, none have attempted to investigate how training would influence teachers' attitudes and their practices.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided background information about the context of the study, which is Saudi Arabia. It has been demonstrated that Saudi special education is undergoing a period of major reform and improvement and many changes are being introduced in this field. Saudi policymakers are evaluating existing legislation for students with SEN and creating new policies to improve this education in Saudi Arabia (Allothman, 2014). At present the main challenges include mainstreaming special education and ensuring there are more Saudi qualified teachers who can provide special education (Alhudaithi, 2015). The Ministry of Education has engaged with professionals in the field to improve the quality of special education and improve services to students with disabilities. The new inclusion agenda for special education entails teachers' support and the inclusion of students in general education settings (Alzaidi, 2017).

Teachers' attitudes have been the focus of a great body of research globally (see Section 3.5) for the key role this has on implanting educational policies. Some research has been conducted on this aspect in Saudi Arabia (Abduljabber, 1994; Al-Ahmadi, 2009; Al-Faiz, 2006; Alhudaithi, 2015; Allothman, 2014; Alquraini, 2011; AlShahrani 2014; Aseery, 2016). However, it has been discussed that these previous studies have shortcomings and their findings are contradictory. In addition, they were primarily quantitative, which did not allow

deeper understanding of teachers' attitudes to be gained. They also ignored the faith factor, despite the fact that this could be a vital element in the formation of teachers' attitudes in Saudi Arabia, given the religious nature of the Saudi society. Furthermore, lack of training was identified by most of these studies as a barrier to inclusive education, but no attempts have been made to understand how training could influence teachers' attitudes and their practices. For these reasons, more research on Saudi teachers' attitudes, inclusive practices and how these might be influenced by more training is needed.

The following chapter details the methodology adopted to conduct the study of this thesis.

Chapter Five: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

As outlined in Chapter One, the purpose of this study is to explore the factors that enable or hamper the implementation of inclusive practice in mainstream elementary school in Saudi Arabia. The research aims to evaluate the attitudes of teachers in Saudi Arabia towards the inclusion of students with SEN. There have been no previous, in-depth studies on inclusive education and teachers' attitudes towards inclusion in Saudi Arabia and the study at hand seeks to bridge the gap. This study therefore aims to develop insights from teachers' experience in the context of the inclusion agenda in Saudi Arabia. This entails an examination of the factors that can influence teachers' attitudes towards students with SEN. The study will also endeavour to assess how teachers' attitudes in Saudi Arabia can be changed through training interventions and professional development.

The overall aim of this chapter is to describe the methodology that was used to conduct the study. It begins with an outline of the research aims, objectives and questions followed by a discussion of the research philosophy and methodological approach adopted in this study, clarifying and justifying the option that was chosen. The chapter then proceeds to present the research framework relating to the aims and objectives, research questions and the methods of data collection. After that, the methods of data analysis in the two phases of the study are described. Finally, the chapter concludes with the study limitations and ethical considerations.

5.2 Aim and Objectives

The aim for this research is to reveal the factors that enable inclusive practices in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. The objective of the research was to explore the following:

1. Saudi teachers' understanding of inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.
2. Saudi teachers' attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.
3. Saudi teachers' inclusive practices and how these are influenced by individual teachers' attitudes and beliefs.
4. The factors influencing Saudi teachers' attitudes and inclusive practices.
5. The extent to which training can change teachers' attitudes and improve the inclusion process.

5.3 Research Questions

This research addresses the following research questions:

1. How do teachers in Saudi Arabia understand the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms?
2. What attitudes do teachers in Saudi Arabia have towards students with SEN?
3. How do teachers' attitudes towards including students with SEN influence their classroom practices?
4. What are the factors that influence Saudi teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN and inclusive practices?
5. To what extent can teachers' attitudes and practices in relation to SEN be changed by a training intervention?

5.4 Research Philosophy and Methodology

The inquiry paradigm is a set of philosophical beliefs about the nature of reality and how it can be understood. It can be understood with reference to ontology and epistemology (Thomas, 2013; Harding, 2013). While ontology is “a theory about the type of fundamental entities that exist” (Robson, 2011, p. 529), epistemology is “a theory of how things can be known” (ibid, p. 525). Ontology looks at assumptions about the nature of knowledge and reality, whereas epistemology is concerned with understanding what kinds of knowledge can be studied (Healy and Perry 2000; Potter, 2006). The researcher’s philosophical position clarifies his/her understandings about the nature of knowledge and reality (ontology) and his/her relationship with knowledge and the reality being researched (epistemology) (Blaikie, 2007). Researchers need to be clear about their ontological and epistemological positions because these guide the research and the methodology through which the researcher seeks to explore or measure an entity (Harding, 2013). Based on this, the following sub-sections outline the philosophical positions underlying the methodology of the research at hand.

5.4.1 Ontology

Two of the ontological positions that can be identified in social research are objectivism and constructivism (Bryman, 2008). While objectivism holds that the social entities exist in a reality which is external to social actors within a certain phenomenon, constructivism takes the position that a social phenomenon is created by the perceptions and actions of the social actors within it (Matthews and Ross, 2010; May, 2001; Richardson, 1997; Picard, 2013). On the one hand, objectivism, as Bryman (2008, p.19) states, is “an ontological position that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors”. This means that a social phenomenon such as inclusion in schools might have a separate existence from the

actors or participants (e.g. students and teachers) involved in this phenomenon. This implies that studying inclusion in schools to ascertain its status could be achieved through observing and counting the agreed good inclusive practices.

On the other hand, constructivism is known to be as “an ontological position [...] that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors” (Bryman, 2008, p. 19). This means that a social phenomenon such as inclusion in schools is not only produced by the social interaction of involved participants, but also in constant change based on the interaction of those actors. The implication of this is that studying inclusion in schools can be conducted through exploring the attitudes and perceptions of the participants in this phenomenon.

The constructivist paradigm is suitable for the current study, which focuses on inclusion in Saudi schools. The main reason is that the study aims to understand how teachers construct their attitudes and how this creates barriers or facilitates inclusion. Therefore, a constructivist paradigm has been used to develop theoretical support for the study and evaluate the barriers in implementing inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.

5.4.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge and how it can be realized. Researchers have to clarify their stance to decide how they are going to obtain knowledge and analyse it (Carter and Little, 2007; Gray, 2009). Two of the paradigms that can be identified here are positivism and interpretivism. Positivists “view the natural sciences as the paradigm for educational inquiry” and therefore adhere to scientific methods in research to obtain knowledge (Briggs, Coleman and Morrison, 2012, p.16-17). Interpretivists, on the other hand, maintain that there is a subjective

meaning in social actions and they seek to understand a particular social situation through interpreting the actions of social actors (Bryman, 2008; Gray, 2009; Thomas, 2013).

Since knowledge about teachers' attitudes and perceptions can be obtained through interpreting teachers' behaviours and practices, an interpretivist position was deemed more appropriate for the study at hand. It is widely believed that a study of inclusive practice should take into consideration the attitudes and perceptions of the teachers involved in this process (Cassady, 2011; Rombo, 2006; Subban, 2005). This is because these attitudes and perceptions can influence the inclusive practices of teachers inside classrooms and schools.

Interpretivists view all human action as meaningful and place emphasis on the contribution of human subjectivity to knowledge without undermining its objectivity (Grbich, 2013). Indeed, interpretivists argue that subjective meaning can be understood objectively (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). In an interpretivist study, as in other approaches, the theoretical framework is important. The interpretivist focuses on understanding the difference between humans as social actors (Williamson et al, 2002). This approach emphasizes the difference between conducting research amongst human beings and treating them as objects. Interpretivism could be based on phenomenology and symbolic interactions. Phenomenology addresses how humans make sense of the world around them (Saunders et al, 2009). In an interpretivist study the researcher is more able to understand the world from their point of view (ibid.)

Interpretivists view reality as socially constructed and thus they seek to understand real world situations in their own contexts (Gray, 2009). Moreover, human behaviour here is considered to be regular and the patterns created from such behaviours are generated by the people through their social interaction (ibid.). Interpretivism states that reality is based on the lived experiences, values,

norms, culture and social background (Grbich, 2013). It seeks to understand the meaning of events and the intention of human actions as it is more concerned with the human behaviour. In addition, interpretivism also integrates beliefs, meanings, feelings and attitudes of social actors in social situations (Saunders et al, 2009).

According to the interpretivist view, people are deliberate and creative in their actions and they act intentionally and create meanings from their activities (McMahon, 1997; Derry, 1999). Therefore, people creating their social world are not viewed as passive. This allows the social world to be studied in its natural state (Tuli, 2010). The study at hand explores the behaviours, perceptions and attitudes of educators in Saudi schools with the aim of improving special education services in the country.

5.4.3 Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches

Clear differences can be identified between quantitative and qualitative approaches (Walliman, 2005). Quantitative refers to the quantity of something and therefore counting and measuring is important (Berg, 2009). On the other hand, qualitative refers to the quality or nature of things and here questions of how, where, when and what are essential (ibid.). Qualitative methods are better suited to understand complex social processes and the crucial aspects of a phenomenon from the participants' perspective to uncover their beliefs, values and motivations (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Punch, 2005; Bernard, 2013). Qualitative studies are exploratory in nature and aim to develop a deeper insight into the phenomenon being studied (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Hennink, Hutter and Bailey, 2011). This study investigates the factors that can affect the success of inclusive practice in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. In particular, teachers' attitudes are investigated in this study. Therefore, a holistic approach that deals with perceptions rather than numbers is needed. Based on this, a qualitative approach was adopted in this study.

Qualitative research might create hypotheses about a phenomenon and examines its precursors and consequences (Hennink, et al, 2011). It is conducted in a natural setting and creates data through open-ended discussions and observations (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Rist, 1975; Langdrige, 2004). This often involves the collection of text-based data through, for instance, small numbers of semi-structured or unstructured interviews. The obtained text then forms the basis of the material for analysis (Langdrige, 2004).

Qualitative research aims to understand the universal sense that guides humans based on intellectual principles. These principles are based on ontology and examine the nature of reality. Ontology is combined with methodology to develop beliefs about knowledge. These beliefs determine the researcher's view of reality and what is operationalised within the limitations of their epistemology and ontology. Epistemological, ontological and methodological principles combine together to form a paradigm (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

The use of a constructivist ontology, interpretivist epistemology and qualitative methodology satisfies Denzin and Lincoln (2000) term philosophical congruence. Firstly, both interpretivist theory and qualitative research emphasize the importance of studying the lived experience of humans in their social context (Hennink, et al, 2011; Gray, 2009). Social sciences explore lived experiences so they can be linked to certain actions which can be studied in their social and historical contexts (ibid.). This exploration allows the researcher to better understand the social phenomenon under investigation. Secondly, according to Tuli (2010), the interpretivist-constructivist framework looks at the world as constructed and interpreted by the experience of people within a social system. Through this framework, the researcher is more directly involved in the research process as it entails communicating with the actors and such interaction allows the

research to create a dialogue with the actors (Tuli, 2010). It is through the interpretation of such conversations that the researcher gains an understanding of the research participants' views through interaction which might include facts and values. Such a framework seeks to understand the world through exploring participants' experiences, illustrated and exemplified by quotations from real conversations (ibid). This consequently necessitates using qualitative methodology that creates rich in-depth descriptions of the social phenomenon being studied.

5.5 Research Design

5.5.1 Overview

This study adopted a qualitative approach to explore the factors that enable the successful implementation of inclusion for students with SEN in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. This is a study of teachers who had had different interactions, family situations and different experiences of children with SEN. The study adopted a three-stage approach. The first stage used interviews with the teachers and observations of their practices in classrooms. The second stage was a training workshop on inclusive practice for these teachers. The third stage of the study used interviews and classroom observations to determine the effect of the training on the attitude and practices of the involved teachers. The study seeks to highlight the areas that should be taken into account by policy makers in Saudi Arabia as they develop inclusive education plans.

5.5.2 Sampling and Participants

The research was conducted in Riyadh City, which is the capital of Saudi Arabia. It was chosen because, compared to other cities in Saudi Arabia, Riyadh is more culturally diverse, has a larger population and has a longer experience with the inclusion of students with SEN. Most schools in Riyadh are public schools that were established by the Ministry of Education. The study included

female headteachers, deputy headteachers and classroom teachers in mainstream schools. The researcher targeted female teachers since Saudi society is segregated and, as a female, the researcher could only conduct interviews in Saudi Arabia in female schools.

Sampling

Sampling is a process through which the researcher selects a portion of a population from a whole that has some of the key characteristics of the entire population (Horsburgh, 2002; Flick, 2015; Pickard, 2013). A good sample reflects the study population and the researcher must be able to select a sample size that is accurate, precise and represents key aspects of the whole population (Mason, 2002; Kumar, 2005).

Two sampling techniques were used in this study, namely quota sampling and purposive criterion sampling. In quota sampling, the researcher selects the sample based on pre-defined criteria to ensure that the collected data can answer the research questions (Kumar, 2005). This technique was followed in the selection of schools and classroom teachers within these schools. Given that the effect of experience on inclusive practice was one of the factors this study sought to explore, previous experience (length of time) with inclusive education was the main criteria for choosing schools. Varying levels of experience were sought to allow for comparisons in the findings. Moreover, the same technique of quota sampling was used to select the classroom teachers in these schools, but with a different criterion than that used for sampling schools. The criterion used for sampling classroom teachers was to include those who had students with SEN in their classrooms. This was an essential criterion because not all classrooms had students with SEN inside the schools. This allowed the attitudes and perceptions of teachers who were living the inclusion experience to be explored. As for purposive criterion sampling, this is a technique used to sample participants who are deemed information-rich due to the position they occupy

(Walliman, 2005). Headteachers and deputy headteachers were included in this study based on this technique.

Participants

In this study, there were four schools in total which varied in their inclusion experiences. To maintain anonymity, these will be referred to as school A, school B, school C and school D. Their experience of inclusion was as follows:

School (A) started inclusion about 10 years ago.

School (B) started inclusion about 7 years ago.

School (C) started inclusion about 5 years ago

School (D) has not started inclusion yet.

The rationale for including these schools was to compare the attitudes of teachers who differed in the extent of their experience and to explore if the effect of the training differed according to teachers' levels of experience. Participants from school (D) had no students with SEN, which allowed their attitudes towards inclusion to be examined before they had had any encounter with students with SEN. The teachers in schools (A) (B) and (C) had different levels of experience and this enabled the researcher to obtain insights on how experience changes attitudes and possibly practices.

The total number of participants from these four schools who took part in this study was 32. Again, for anonymity, these participants will be given a code consisting of letters and a number. The letters refer to the participant's post in school (i.e. headteachers (HT), deputy headteachers (DH), classroom teachers (CT) and special education teachers (SET)) and the school which they

belong to (A, B, C or D) and a number (1, 2, 3 ...) to differentiate between participants. For example, CTC3 refers to the 3rd classroom teacher in school C and CTD2 refers to the 2nd classroom teacher in school D. We start below with school A providing relevant information about it and its participants and then move to other schools one by one.

School A

School A is an elementary school located in northern Riyadh. It is larger than the other three schools. Inclusion of students with SEN started 10 years prior to the start of the study, and it was first planned to include only students with hearing loss in addition to non-disabled students. The criterion for including students with SEN is a medical report proving that the student has hearing loss and they are receiving treatment to help them hear again. However, the school was forced to include students with other types of disabilities (e.g., mental challenges) because of misdiagnosis or because the Ministry of Education did not abide by the inclusion criterion.

At the time of the study, the number of students in this school was 488 including 30 students with SEN. There were one headteacher, two deputy headteachers, 30 classroom teachers and 13 special education teachers. The staff members who participated in this study were the head teacher, two deputy headteachers, eight classroom teachers and two special education teachers. Table 5.1 summarises the background information of these participants.

Table 5.1. *Background information of participants from school A*

Participant	Age	Experience	Length of time in this school	Qualification
Headteacher (HTA1)	40 – 49	25 years	7 years	Diploma
Deputy head (DHA1)	40 – 49	23 years	4 years	Master
Deputy head (DHA2)	40 -49	20 years	5 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTA1)	40 -49	More than 20 years	More than 6 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTA2)	40- 49	24 years	6 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTA3)	40- 49	3 years	2years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTA4)	40- 49	20 years	4years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTA5)	30-39	10 years	5 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTA6)	30-39	8 years	6 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTA7)	30-39	More than 6 years	More than 6 years	Diploma
Classroom teacher (CTA8)	30-39	7 years	7 years	Bachelor
Special education teacher (SETA1)	40-49	20 years	20 years	Bachelor
Special education teacher (SETA2)	30-39	12 years	6 years	Bachelor

School B

School B is an elementary school, the smallest among the four schools with respect to building size and the number of students. It is located in northern Riyadh. The number of students in this school was 160 including 23 students with SEN. The inclusion program started seven years before the start of the study. The inclusion criterion for students with SEN is having mild mental challenges, but because of misdiagnosis, students with moderate to severe mental challenges are also included. In addition, the Ministry of Education did not abide by the inclusion criterion and started sending students with different types of disabilities to the school.

The school staff consists of a headteacher, a deputy headteacher, 24 classroom teachers and 14 special education teachers. The participants in this study from this school were the headteacher and deputy, four classroom teachers and two special education teachers. Table 5.2 summarizes their background information.

Table 5.2. *Background information of participants from school B*

Participants	Age	Experience	Length of time in this school	Qualification
Headteacher (HTB1)	40-49	24 years	3 years	Bachelor
Deputy head (DHB1)	30-39	13 years	13 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTB1)	30-39	17 year	17 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTB2)	30 - 39	10 years	10 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTB3)	30 - 39	8 years	7 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTB4)	30 - 39	5 years	5 years	Diploma
Special education teacher (SETB1)	30 -39	7 years	7 years	Bachelor
Special education teacher (SETB2)	30-39	13 years	13years	Master

School C

School C is an elementary school located in northern Riyadh. It had 500 students including 19 students with SEN. Inclusion of students with SEN started five years before the start of the study and the type of disabilities included is learning difficulties. Like schools A and B, the Ministry of Education has also sent students with other disabilities to the school.

The school has one headteacher, one deputy head, 19 classroom teachers and two special education teachers. The headteacher and deputy, two classroom teachers and two special education teachers participated in this study and Table 5.3 summarizes their background information.

Table 5.3. *Background information of participants from school C*

Participants	Age	Experience	Length of time in this school	Qualification
Headteacher (HTC1)	40- 49	24 years	3 years	PhD
Deputy head (DHC1)	30- 39	13 years	13 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTC1)	40- 49	14 years	14 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTC2)	30 - 39	12 years	12 years	Bachelor
Special education teacher (SETC1)	30 -39	9 years	9 years	Bachelor
Special education teacher (SETC2)	30-39	9 years	9 years	Bachelor

School D

School D is an elementary school located in northern Riyadh. No inclusion of students with SEN had been implemented at the time the research was conducted. The school had 690 students and 77 classroom teachers in addition to a headteacher and a deputy head. The participants in this study from this school were the headteacher and its deputy and three classroom teachers. Table 5.4 summarises their background information.

Table 5.4. *Background information of participants from school D*

Participants	Age	Experience	Length of time in this school	Qualification
Headteacher (HTD1)	40- 49 years old	16 years	3 years	Diploma
Deputy head (DHD1)	30 - 39 years old	4 years	4 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTD1)	40- 49 years old	14 years	14 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTD2)	30 - 39 years old	9 years	9 years	Bachelor
Classroom teacher (CTD3)	40-49 years old	26 years	1 years	Bachelor

Table 5.5 provides the total number of participants by their post in school.

Table 5.5. *Total number of participants by school and post*

	Headteachers	Deputy Headteachers	Classroom Teachers	Special Education Teachers	Total
School A	1	2	8	2	13
School B	1	1	4	2	8
School C	1	1	2	2	6
School D	1	1	3		5
Total	4	5	17	6	32

5.5.3 Data Collection Methods

The data collection methods used both secondary and primary data. Secondary data is that which already exists in print and electronic form which has been collected for another study or purpose (Walliman, 2005). Secondary data is available through databases, journals, newspapers, books and interviews. This type of data is useful to develop the initial theoretical framework and the research questions for a study (Flick, 2015; Given, 2008; Kumar, 2005; Pickard, 2013). The benefit of such data is that it can be easily accessed and collected. The drawbacks include the fact that such data can be outdated and may not specifically answer the research question(s) (Saunders et al, 2009). The secondary sources used in this study include academic journals on the education of students with SEN in Saudi Arabia and the wider context, teachers' attitudes and teacher training. On the other hand, primary data is specifically collected by the researcher for a study; this type of data can be collected through various tools such as questionnaire surveys, interviews, focus groups and

observations (Saunders et al, 2009). This research is qualitative in nature and it relies on semi-structured interviews and observations as primary sources of data. This was collected in two phases separated by a training workshop. The following four sub-sections give the rationale for measuring attitudes through qualitative interviews and observation and details about the semi-structured interviews, observations and training workshop used in this study.

5.5.3.1 Measuring attitude

Attitudes of individuals towards an object are measured by a number of different methods as demonstrated in previous research (Stahlberg and Frey, 1996). According to Krosnick, Judd and Wittenbrink, (2005), these methods assume that what individuals report is a true representation of their attitudes; individuals are asked about their attitudes towards an object directly and, hence, such methods are called self-report or self-description measures (Hogg and Vaughan, 2005). According to Stahlberg and Frey (1996), five main methods to measure attitude can be identified in previous research: the one item rating scale, the Likert summated rating scale, the social distance scale, a semantic differential and Thurstone's equal-appearing interval scale. In these scales, participants are usually presented with a set of statements about attitudes, opinions or beliefs about an object and they are asked to provide a response by choosing an option from a scale ranging from strongly agree to neither agree nor disagree to strongly disagree. The data collected using these scales are analysed quantitatively through combing the responses to arrive to a final aggregate score for each set of statements investigating a certain aspect.

Two main advantages in using such scales are usually cited by researchers (e.g. Krosnick et al., 2005) and both pertain to the possibility of comparing the findings across different measures of attitude and across participants. The final aggregate score arising from one scale can be compared to other scores arising from other scales or the same scale in other studies investigating the same

aspect being measured. Moreover, the final aggregate score for one participant can be compared with other scores for other participants. However, these scales have been criticised as their results could be misleading for two reasons. The first is that one aggregate score might not be representative of an individual's attitude because, given the complex nature of attitudes (see Chapter Three about attitudes), the aggregate score might measure one attribute of attitudes but not the whole concept (Avramidis, 2000). The second is that participants might fake their answers in order to give a more socially acceptable response (Avramidis, 2000). While the latter criticism might be true for all measures of attitude, such scales do not allow for further investigations to understand responses better.

For the above reasons and given the complex nature of attitudes, qualitative interviews and classroom observations are held to be more valid in this context. The interviews will allow the researcher to explore participants' attitudes more deeply in the sense that not only attitudes are asked for in the interview but also the underlying factors playing a role in forming these attitudes. Moreover, classroom observations allow for exploring the behaviour exhibited by teachers towards students with SEN, which give information about one very important aspect of attitudes, which is behavioural (conative) information. Based on this rationale, qualitative interview and observation methods have been adopted in this study.

5.5.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

The interview is the main tool for data collection in qualitative or social research. Cannell and Kahn (1968, cited in Cohen et al, 2000, p. 269) defined the interview as “a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation”. Through interviews the researcher can develop in-depth

knowledge of a research subject (Petre and Rugg 2007; Robson, 2005; Wisker, 2009). Interviews are categorised as structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Langdrige, 2004; Wilkinson, 2000). A fully structured interview consists of pre-determined questions. A semi-structured interview also has a structure and set agenda with pre-determined questions, but the questions can be modified during the interview (Wisker, 2009). An unstructured interview on the other hand does not have a formal structure and the researcher works with an area of interest to engage in discussions with the respondents (May, 2001; Robson, 2005; Wisker, 2009).

Semi-structured interviews tend to be more flexible which is why they are used so often in qualitative research. In this type of interview, the researcher engages in open discussion with the respondents and can alter their mode of enquiry. This is a time-consuming process and sometimes the responses obtained can be inaccurate (Arksey and Knight, 2011; May, 2001; Thomas, 2013). In this type of data collection, the researcher has an initial topic and the interview is guided by the responses (Bell and Waters, 2014; Flick, 2015; Gray, 2009). The semi-structured interview has a theme which can be altered by the researcher allowing for in-depth discussion and data collection (Pickard, 2015; Robson, 2005; Walliman, 2005). In this research, the researcher held semi-structured interviews with female primary school educators in Riyadh who had different levels of experience of teaching.

Each participant in the study was interviewed twice – before and after training. This allowed the researcher to detect any changes in a teacher's attitudes and thoughts, an issue that is assumed to be attributable in part to the training. Each day I conducted two to three interviews depending on the teachers' availability. There were some days in which only one interview was undertaken.

Using semi-structured interviews helps the participants express their thoughts without restrictions (May, 2001; Flick, 2015; Pickard, 2015; Wisker, 2009). The semi-structured interview will help the researcher to construct the truth about the reality of the situation in these schools (Walliman, 2005). Carol (cited in Gubrium and Holstein, 2002) suggests that the purpose of the interview is to help the researcher understand participants' views about previous or future experiences. The rationale for choosing the semi-structured interview as a data collection tool in this study is outlined below.

First, the ontological belief held in this research is that social reality is built on people's perceptions and this is what the interview questions sought to explore. I was interested in the interpretation given by different individuals to different experiences. Using the interview as a data collection tool gave the researcher the opportunity to get the depth needed to investigate the issue (May, 2001; Thomas, 2013; Walliman, 2005). However, this would have been much more difficult to achieve through a questionnaire survey because it is more limited in its capacity to allow participants to explain their experiences and thus it was considered to be less appropriate for this study (Gray, 2006; Hollday, 2002; May, 2001).

As for the epistemological belief held in this research, knowledge is viewed as situational. The interview is a tool that allows the researcher to explore and explain the reality produced by social construction (Mason, 2002; Runswick-Cole et. al, 2011; Walliman, 2005). Therefore, it is suitable for exploring how mainstream school teachers perceive inclusive education. In this study, teachers were asked about their experiences of teaching students with SEN. As suggested by Mason (2002), we cannot separate the interview from the social interaction between the researcher and the participant. This implies that the researcher leads and interprets interviews based on their perception of social reality. The researcher in this study had a previous experience in mainstream

schools in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia supervising undergraduate students and this experience was helpful for leading and understanding the interviews. Therefore, using semi-structured interviews was considered the most appropriate method to gain more depth of understanding of the social change which promotes inclusion.

The semi-structured interview questions for this study were prepared by the researcher based on the objectives of the study and the themes arising from the literature review. Accordingly, the focus of the questions varied and so they were categorized under the following six main themes:

1. Educators' understanding of inclusion
2. Educators' attitudes towards including students with SEN
3. Educators' beliefs about why they held positive or negative attitudes.
4. Educators beliefs about their self-efficacy in their ability to lead or implement inclusion and teach students with SEN
5. Educators' religious beliefs about individuals with disabilities
6. Teachers' perceptions about barriers and enablers to inclusion.

The interview questions are included in Appendix H. The focus of this study is on inclusive practices in Saudi Arabia in primary schools for girls. This study exclusively focused on female educators as in Saudi Arabia only women are allowed to teach women given gender segregation in educational institutions and therefore it was not possible to conduct interviews in boys' schools. The first stage interviews were conducted in the first semester of 2015-2016 and second stage interviews were conducted in the second semester. Interviews in the four schools took place in the teachers' meeting rooms and each interview lasted for about one hour. Interviews were audio recorded and they were transcribed and translated into English once they were done.

3.5.3.3 Observation

Observation is a data collection tool that aims to find explicit evidence in the study seen through the observer's eyes or a camera (Briggs and Coleman, 2007). It is defined as the "act of noting a phenomenon, often with instruments and recording it for scientific and other purposes" (Morris, 1973, cited in Radnor, 2002, p.48). "Observing can be an invaluable way of collecting data because what you see with your own eyes and perceive with your own senses is not filtered by what others might have (self-) reported to you or what the author of some document might have seen" (Yen, 2011, p.143). Observation is a type of data collection which gives direct insights into complex situations and helps to better understand related people or event (Gray, 2009). It is valuable as it helps the researcher understand what is happening inside the classroom and allows him/her to interpret and understand what he/ she observes. It also allows the researcher to collect data in a natural setting and have a clearer idea about what is happening (Kumar, 2005; Thomas, 2013).

There are two main forms of observation: naturalistic and formal. While in the former, the observer participates in the event s/he is observing, in the latter, s/he does not (Bryman, 2008; Kumar, 2005; Langdridge, 2004). Moreover, observations can be systematic (in that the observer pre-determines the focus of the observation) or non-systematic (Briggs and Coleman, 2007). In the current study, formal systematic observation was used to gain insight on the behaviour of teachers inside classrooms.

The practices of teachers inside classrooms were observed twice – before and after training. The observation before training aimed to explore the interaction between the teacher and students with SEN in the light of the teacher's interaction with other students. Hence, the focus was on what the

teacher did to engage students with SEN in the class and get them involved in classroom activities as well as how she reacted to their behaviours. As for the observation after training, the same interactions were focused on with the aim of detecting changes in the teacher's practices.

Observation is a valuable tool for data collection in its own right, but it is important to integrate observation with other methods such as interviews to support the findings. It is used more frequently as an exploratory phase with other data collection methods. Combining different sorts of data collection methods is a form of triangulation (Flick, 2009, 2015). According to Seal (1999, p.54) "theory triangulation suggests that researchers approach data with several hypotheses in mind, to see how each fare in relation to the data [...] and it is the most widely understood and applied approach". The different methods used in a study should be treated and applied equally (Plano, Clark and Creswell, 2008). Moreover, triangulation of different methods should allow for the collection of the abundance of data that answer the research questions (Flick, 2005). As Flick maintains, triangulation should produce knowledge on different levels, which means insights that go beyond the knowledge made possible by one approach and thus contribute to promoting quality in research. Moreover, observation serves as a supportive method to other types of data collection tools and when it is combined with interview, observation can act as a verification procedure for participants' interview responses (Cohen et al, 2007).

In this study, observation was combined with interviews to help in understanding the barriers and enablers affecting the extent to which mainstream classroom teachers are able to include students with SEN in mainstream classroom. When the researcher observed teachers, she observed complex issues impeding teachers from providing students with SEN the right support. Cohen et al (2007) state that it difficult for researchers to get accurate results during observations because of the reflexive effect that might be caused by the presence of the researcher in the study setting.

In order for the researchers in this study to reduce reflexivity, she twice observed teachers' practice inside the classroom for 20 minutes. The 20 minutes of each stage were observed in two different classes for every teacher participating in the study. The reason for this observation in different settings was to make sure the observed behaviours were consistent and to reduce the effect of the presence of the researchers.

Individual teachers' attitudes and beliefs and the influence of teachers' experience and faith on inclusive practice were explored through observing the interaction between students and teachers. The researcher observed what was happening in the classroom and identified issues to explore the factors that enabled inclusive practices in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. It is very important to identify the best practices for successful implementation of inclusion in elementary schools in Saudi Arabia. Teachers' reactions to students with SEN might be affected by the causes of the disability. If they feel a person's actions are the cause of the disability, they may feel angry, but if the person has nothing to do with the cause of his/her disability, they may feel pity. Another issue is the seriousness of the person's condition. Firstly, it can lead to pity or sympathy or, in an emotional state, it motivates the perceiver to help, nurture or care for that person. In contrast, another person's suffering and illness might lead to anxiety or distress, which may, in turn, lead to avoidance.

The researcher in this study examined the teachers' reactions to the needs of students with SEN and how they adjusted the curriculum to meet them. In addition, interactions between special education teachers and general education teachers and how they cooperated together to improve learning outcomes for students with SEN were observed. This allowed the researcher to get deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions about inclusive education as well as inclusion. It exposed and explored the interactions between teachers and students with SEN on one hand and the

interaction of teachers with their more typically developing peers on the other hand. Furthermore, it enabled the researcher to examine how other factors such as faith, school culture and leadership could influence teachers' attitudes towards students with SEN. It also allowed how teachers handled challenging behaviours by students with SEN to be observed. Another important aspect that was observed was the way teachers accommodated students with SEN by modifying the curriculum to be appropriate for those students.

Based on all this, an observation schedule was designed to facilitate note-taking during the observation. This schedule (see Appendix I) included the themes under investigation as follows:

1. **The environment in the classroom:** Under this theme, the numbers of students with SEN, their position in the classroom in relation to their classmates, the classroom's physical arrangements, the teacher's position in the classroom and any teaching tools she used were recorded.
2. **Students' participation in learning:** How students with SEN behaved in the classroom and how they responded to what was being said or asked by the teacher or their peers were recorded under this theme.
3. **Teachers' reactions to students' behaviours:** How teachers treated students with SEN and reacted when they did something in the classroom were recorded under this theme.

A set of procedures were followed before and during the observation sessions. The teacher was asked to inform the researcher about all students with SEN before the session started. The primary focus of these observations was the interaction between the teacher and students with SEN. Observed classes had a minimum of one and a maximum of three students with SEN. This gave the researcher the chance to focus on the student during and immediately after the interaction to

observe how they responded to an interaction with the teacher. However, at times clashes in observation occurred when teachers moved from one student with SEN to another.

5.5.3.4 Training Workshop

As reviewed in 3.5.3, a number of studies have been conducted in different countries which supported the idea that teachers' development and in-service and pre-service training can have an enormous impact on their attitudes towards and acceptance of teaching students with SEN (e.g. Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2010; Beh-Pajooch, 1992; Shimman, 1990; Voughn et al, 1996). The findings of these studies suggest that teachers' positive attitudes are affected by their knowledge, awareness and experience. This further emphasizes the importance of training to improve teacher's attitude towards students with SEN. In this study, a training workshop was designed to be delivered to the research participants.

A workshop is a very powerful tool to provide engaging and interactive experiences for teachers. One of the benefits of training teachers is that they become aware of (and supposedly obtain) the expertise needed to teach students with SEN. In-service training gives teachers the opportunity to prepare themselves for this. There are a number of skills that need to be mastered in order for mainstream teachers to deliver the best instructional practices for students with SEN in mainstream setting. There are personal skills, the teacher's knowledge about different types of disability, and the best way to interact with students in the classroom, all of which need to be enhanced. In addition, the way teachers adjust materials and the curriculum to meet the needs of students with SEN is an aspect that needs to be taken into account. A further aspect that needs to be considered is the support that comes from outside the classroom, i.e. the school, and this includes communication, teamwork and supportive leadership.

As for the training workshop that was designed for the current study, the aim was to change teachers' attitudes and any inappropriate practices inside classrooms. The workshop was mainly based on material provided by the National College for Teaching and Leadership and available from the UK government's website (Gov.UK, 2014). These training materials are specially designed to help mainstream school teachers to be able to deal with students with SEN. The chosen material focused on four dimensions as follows:

1. **Students with SEN:** This included the definition of SEN, how a student with SEN can be identified, the characteristics of students with SEN and the educational provision that can meet their needs.
2. **Inclusive Education:** This focused on the meaning of inclusion, the rationale for it and different views on inclusion from previous research.
3. **Learning and Students with SEN:** This addressed theories about how learning takes place and techniques to lead and change behaviour.
4. **Leadership:** This covered the meaning of effective leadership, the best practices in effective leadership, key elements of successful leadership and characteristics of effective leaders.

A fifth dimension was added to the workshop as follows:

5. **Disability in Islam:** This focused on how disability was viewed in pre-Islamic and Islam periods, the rights of disabled people in Islam and how they should be treated based on the Holy Quran and the prophet and his follower's perspectives.

Adding this final dimension was deemed essential for the current study. This is because of the religion of the participants is Islam and to rectify any misunderstanding or inappropriate beliefs they might have about the topic from a religious standpoint. The workshop was prepared, translated and delivered by the researcher (see Appendix Y).

After conducting the first phase interviews and observations, the headteachers of the four schools were asked to arrange for a one-day workshop to be delivered by the researcher. In Saudi Arabia, there is a school break for two weeks after the first semester and before the second. The school break in the 2015-2016 academic year started on 7 January 2016. Four workshops were delivered in the schools included in the study during this break. As any workshops attended by teachers are recorded in their files and this is taken into account by the Ministry of Education for promotion and reward, the workshops were attended by not only study participants but also other teachers in these schools. The workshops took place in the resource rooms of these schools and each lasted for six hours between 9am and 3pm including two half-hour breaks. The workshops took the form of presentations by the researcher followed by discussions between the researcher and the attendants. All teachers who came to the workshop were given participation certificates by the headteachers.

5.5.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis helps researchers to understand a phenomenon better and make sense of the data gathered (Holliday, 2002). Another important aspect to consider about the data analysis is the contribution to originality as the data collection answers “why “and “what”, which gives depth in knowledge and creates a deep understanding of the research issue (Briggs and Coleman, 2007, pp. 352-353). In this study, the general inductive approach was adopted to analyse the interviews and observations because it fit well with the aim of the study, to explore the barriers and enablers to

inclusion in Saudi Arabia mainstream schools. This approach to data analysis seeks to construct realities about a phenomenon under investigation based on interpreting what is said or done by the actors in that phenomenon (Maxwell, 2005), which is consistent with the ontological (constructivist) and epistemological (interpretivist) positions underlying the methodology of the study at hand.

Thomas (2006, p.238) defines the general inductive approach as “a systematic procedure for analyzing qualitative data in which the analysis is likely to be guided by specific evaluation objectives.” This requires identifying topics and domains prior to starting the analysis of raw data. In this approach, the researcher reads the raw data in detail and carefully with the aim of deriving themes and concepts based on interpreting the raw data (Silverman, 2005). Although the topics and domains to be investigated are pre-determined by the researcher, this procedure also allows the significant and frequently occurring themes to emerge from the raw data and not from prior expectations (Probert, 2006; Silverman, 2005). This means that the outlined objectives prior to analysis function as criteria for defining the general relevant points of focus to be investigated in the analysis, rather than being treated as expectations about its findings.

Furthermore, the general inductive approach is similar to grounded theory as it is an approach for generating theory from data. It is a systematic procedure to create theory or describe a phenomenon that is grounded in the views of the participants (Creswell, 2007; Glasser and Strauss, 1967; Picard, 2013). This systematic procedure, as Thomas (2006) explains, proceeds to data coding after setting the evaluation objectives. Coding is a powerful tool to help the researcher identify the close connection between data and conceptualization. Charmaz (1983, p.187) defines coding as ‘shorthand devices to label, separate, compel and organize data’. Thomas (2006) describes the stages of data coding in inductive analysis as follows:

1. **Preparing data text:** This includes arranging the data text in all files in a common format (e.g., font size, highlighting the questions and comments of the interviewer) and creating a back-up copy.
2. **Reading the text carefully:** This has the aim of familiarizing the researcher with the data and identifying some of the themes occurring in the text.
3. **Creating themes:** This involves the creation of a coding scheme containing categories and themes and organizing data under these categories.
4. **Reducing redundancy and overlapping among categories:** This stage is essential because after creating categories, some data might appear in different categories and might not be relevant to the study's objectives or any of the themes developed in stage three.
5. **Revising and refining categories:** This involves identifying sub-topics and different views and insights within each category.

In addition, this approach is suitable to explore complex interactive situations in natural human settings such as schools and universities. According to Caelli et al (2003), the purpose of the inductive analysis is to summarize a condense and extensive data text, link the summary to the study objectives in a justifiable and transparent manner and generate a theory based on interpreting the data. Moreover, for this analysis to be of a high quality, according to Creswell (2005), some principles need to be followed. These are (a) rely on all evidence to support the analysis, (b) include all relevant interpretation, (c) discuss all important parts of the research and (d) help to demonstrate the researcher knowledge and skills about the field.

Therefore, adopting a general inductive approach, the data analysis in this study went through the following stages:

1. Evaluation objectives were set, based on the objectives of the study outlined in this chapter relating to participants' perceptions and attitudes towards inclusion, participants' practices inside schools and classrooms, and the barriers to and facilitators of inclusion. These were used to evaluate which parts of the data text was relevant to the study.
2. The data text was read carefully and themes and categories were identified.
3. Based on the themes and categories arising from stage two, a coding scheme was developed.
4. The coding scheme was applied to the data text through copying scripts and pasting them under the relevant category inside the scheme.
5. Developing sub-categories and sub-themes, the data were grouped under each category accordingly.

A portion of coded materials is included in Appendix Z. As will be detailed in Section 5.6 below, the current study adopted some procedures to ensure the trustworthiness of the research process and findings. In the data coding, trustworthiness was ensured mainly by the researcher's multiple and careful readings of the data texts. Given the nature of this (PhD) study, it was not possible to involve another researcher in checking and confirming all coded materials. However, the research supervisor, who is an expert in the field of this study, looked at several drafts of the methodology chapter, which included a description of the data coding procedure, and the findings chapter in which coded materials were included. He commented on the procedure and the conducted coding and his comments were addressed by the researcher. Many researchers (Bowen, 2009; Li, 2004) maintain that having an expert to examine the research process is an effective strategy to ensure research trustworthiness. Moreover, member check, which is a strategy used to ask the research participants about whether the research findings truly represent the situation (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007), was used in the current study. The researcher contacted some of the participants and discussed the findings with them. This procedure was also

essential to ensure the trustworthiness of the research and is supported by many researchers including Lincoln and Guba (1985).

5.5.5 Procedures and Study Piloting

Before data collection, the interview and observation schedules, workshop materials, consent form and information sheet were translated into Arabic. To verify the accuracy of the translations, three bilingual PhD students at Newcastle University were asked to check them. The translations were then sent to three Associate Professors in the Department of Special Education at King Saud University, who kindly checked the Arabic and English versions to ensure they matched. Then the Arabic version was sent to ten teachers, reached through personal contacts, to ensure that the text was clear and understandable.

After receiving all ethical and admission approvals for the study, data collection started on 14 November 2015 and lasted until 12 February 2016. During this period, there was a school break for two weeks at the end of semester one, but this did not affect the progress of the study as the training workshops were delivered in the four schools during this break. While stage one interviews and observations were conducted during semester one, those undertaken in stage two were conducted during the second semester.

The researcher visited the four schools in November 2015. The participants were chosen based on the sampling techniques described above. Those who agreed to participate were contacted and an initial meeting was arranged inside each school. During this initial meeting, the study procedure and purpose was explained thoroughly to all participants and they were given an information sheet and consent form to sign (see Appendixes C and F). Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity before they signed the consent form. In addition, they were given an email address and telephone number to contact the researcher in case they wished to enquire about any aspect of

the study or to withdraw from the study. While the school staff were very welcoming and willing to participate, they were very pressured as school time was very short (running between 6:45 and 11:20) and so it was a challenge to find time to interview the participant teachers. However, this was overcome with the help of the headteachers and other teachers in schools, who kindly cooperated when the timetable had to change to allow a teacher to attend the interview session.

In the first week of data collection, a pilot study was conducted. It consisted of eight interviews and eight observations for the same teachers. The data collected including interview transcripts, observation notes and the reflexive journal notes were inspected and analysed carefully to ensure that the tools were as sound and as effective as possible to yield data appropriate for achieving the objectives of the study. Based on this analysis, although some changes were made to the observation schedule and the wording of some interview questions, the tools were deemed appropriate and no problems were expected to arise. The data collection proceeded based on the modified versions of the tools.

As soon as the data collection was completed, transcription and translation of interviews into English started. This stage was highly time-consuming as every hour of interview took approximately five hours to transcribe and then five hours to translate. Once transcriptions and translations were done, data analysis started. The procedure described above was applied to the data collected from the interviews and observation notes. The observation notes were also analysed to confirm or contradict participants' views. In addition, the second stage interviews and observations were explored to detect any changes in attitudes or practices.

5.6 Research Trustworthiness: Rigour and Quality

To recommend the findings of the research project to be utilized in practice, it is essential to ensure, and allow other researchers to evaluate, the quality of the work (Noble and Smith 2015). There are a number of issues in qualitative studies that researchers need to consider to ensure that the outcome of their research is trustworthy. One key issue in relation to interview research is whether the collected data (e.g. views) are a true representation of the participants' experiences and beliefs or only stated for the purpose of the interview (Silverman, 2010). In observational research, the main concern is whether the reconstruction of the field notes is a true reflection of what happened in the scene and not a reflection of the researcher's own cultural and cognitive views (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Such concerns should be considered carefully by qualitative researchers, who should develop validity procedures to address these issues.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed the concept of trustworthiness and advanced a framework that allows qualitative researchers to ensure the rigour and quality of their research. The original framework developed by Lincoln and Guba consisted of four criteria; these are credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. A fifth criterion was added by Seale (1999), namely authenticity, and these five criteria together are widely embraced by qualitative study authors (Creswell, 2013). These criteria are explained below:

Credibility: This refers to how truthful and plausible the research findings are and whether they truly represent the phenomenon under investigation and the views of the social actors (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004; Holloway and Wheeler, 2002).

Dependability: This refers to whether the findings are stable over time and whether the use of the same data collection method would produce similar results across conditions and over time (Bitsch, 2005).

Confirmability: This refers to the accuracy of the research results and their interpretation in reflecting truth and whether they can be corroborated (Tobin and Begley, 2004).

Transferability: This refers to whether the research results can be transferred to other contexts with different participants (Bitsch, 2005; Tobin and Begley, 2004).

Authenticity: This refers to whether different voices are represented in the research findings (Patton, 2002).

The researcher needs to validate his/her work through a validation process and there is some consensus that researchers involved in qualitative study should ensure that the five criteria in the trustworthiness framework are addressed through going into several processes (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1996). This applies both to the data collected and its analysis. Many strategies can be followed to ensure these criteria and below are those adopted in this research.

Firstly, member check and triangulation were adopted to ensure the credibility criteria. As for member check, it is described by Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.314) as “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility”. There are several procedures that could be used with this process. A very common technique is to ask participants to review the finding of the research and ensure that they represent the situation (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007). The researcher in the current study remained in contact with the participants and the research findings were communicated to them

and discussed. This helped the researcher to confirm that what was found out truly represented the participants' views.

Regarding triangulation, as stated by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007, p. 239), it “involves the use of multiple and different methods, investigators, sources and theories to obtain corroborating evidence”. This helps the researcher to confirm the integrity of participants' responses (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). In the current study, both methodological and source triangulation were adopted. The data were collected through the use of interview and observation and from different sources of data, that is different teacher participants working in different schools.

Secondly, audit trial and peer examination strategies were followed, which ensured dependability. As explained by Bowen (2009) and Li (2004), an audit trial is performed through having an expert researcher examine the research process and the decisions made by the study researcher in all stages of the study from the choice of methods to data collection and analysis. This was applied to the current study as it was supervised by an expert researcher from Northumbria University (the PhD project supervisor), who commented on different drafts of the research methodology before and after data collection and analysis. As for peer examination, it is held by Bitsch (2005) that this strategy involves the discussion of different aspects of the research with neutral peers such as doctoral students who use qualitative research in their PhD studies. According to Bitsch, this strategy helps the researcher to be honest and gives her insight about what might be inappropriate for the study. For the current research, peer examination was adopted through discussions held with doctoral student colleagues studying at Northumbria University. Therefore, these two strategies were helpful in making the methods adopted as sound as possible.

Thirdly, to ensure confirmability, a reflexive journal strategy was followed. A reflexive journal is “reflexive documents kept by the researcher in order to reflect on, tentatively interpret, and plan data collection” (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989, para.77). The researcher keeps a reflexive journal to write down key events that happen during data collection in the research setting as well as personal reflections on these events (Wallendorf and Belk, 1989). Through keeping a reflexive journal and using it during data analysis, the researcher can assess how their own background and perceptions affected data interpretation to reduce the researcher’s bias and enhance the truthfulness of the findings (Krefting, 1991). In the current study, the researcher kept a reflexive journal in which key events that occurred during data collection and personal reflections were written down. This journal was helpful during data coding and interpretation to understand what was meant by the participants.

Fourthly, to address the transferability criteria, a thick description strategy was adopted. According to Li (2004, p.305), this strategy “enables judgments about how well the research context fits other contexts, thick descriptive data, i.e. a rich and extensive set of details concerning methodology and context, should be included in the research report”. Thick descriptions of the study context and research participants were collected for the purpose of this study. In addition, detailed descriptions of the participants and data collection procedures have been reported throughout this chapter. This allows other researchers to judge how well the current study findings fit other contexts and, by this, the current study satisfies the transferability criteria.

Finally, to ensure authenticity, different voices are represented in the study as advised by Patton (2002). The research participants were headteachers, deputy headteachers, classroom teachers and special education teachers. This has given more depth and breadth of understanding of the barriers

and facilitators to inclusion from the perspectives of both classroom teachers and leaders at schools and therefore satisfies the authenticity criteria.

5.7 Ethical Issues and Research Governance

There are ethical principles that should be considered when conducting any type of research (Bear, 2011). As Thomas (2013, p. 131) states, “A key element in starting your project is getting ethical or institutional clearness. This goes under different names in different places but may be referred to as ethical review or institutional review”. Research ethics are compulsory in any research because they offer researchers guiding principles on how to conduct research correctly (Marshall, 2007). Ethical considerations include negotiating access, gaining informed consent from participants, offering the right to withdraw, and protection of identity and confidentiality (Bell and Waters, 2014).

The first step before starting data collection was to gain ethical approval from Northumbria University to conduct the study. The ethics form was approved by the Faculty Ethics committee in June 2015. The next step was gaining approval from the Saudi Cultural Bureau in the UK and Ministry of Education and schools in Saudi Arabia. This took more than five months because the request to collect data coincided with the holy month of Ramadan and a period of holidays (two Eid holidays and summer holidays for schools). Further delay was caused because of the difficulty in finding schools that fit the research criteria (i.e. having different levels of experience of inclusion). It was not until November 2015 that the researcher obtained the necessary ethics and admission approvals.

As outlined in the Procedure and Study Piloting section above, a meeting was arranged for the participants in each school and during this meeting, they were given information about the nature

of the research so that they were able to give their informed consent for involvement before data were collected. The anonymity and confidentiality of all participants was protected through replacing schools' and participants' names on audio recordings and observation and reflexive journal sheets and all these were saved on a password-protected computer and kept in a locked drawer that only the researcher could access. Any information that could lead to the identification of schools or participants was either deleted or, if important to the study, given a code. Participants were informed in the meeting and through the consent form that they could withdraw from the study any time during or after the data collection and if this happened, all data collected from them would be deleted without consequence for them.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodology used in this research, which had the aim to explore inclusive education practice in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. It was discussed that a qualitative approach was considered more appropriate to achieve the research aim and objectives and answer its questions because these relate to exploring and understanding the research participants' perceptions, attitudes, their practices and the barriers and facilitators of inclusion. Underlying this qualitative approach were a constructivist ontology and an interpretivist epistemology. While the constructivist paradigm assumes that the reality of a social phenomenon is constructed based on the interaction between social actors, the interpretivist paradigm maintains that this reality can be understood through interpreting the actions of social actors. Adopting a constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology necessitates a qualitative methodology and it was believed that the three together satisfy methodological congruence.

Following quota and purposive criteria sampling techniques, 32 headteachers, deputy headteachers and classroom teachers were recruited from four schools that differed in the level of

inclusion experience. The data were collected from those participants through semi-structured interviews and observations at two stages, i.e., prior to and post a one-day training workshop. The collected data were then analysed using a general inductive approach. The following chapter reports the findings of this study.

Chapter Six: Findings

6.1 Introduction

The aim for this research is to reveal the factors that enable inclusive practices in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia and therefore the objectives of this thesis study was to explore the following:

- I. Saudi teachers' understanding of inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.
- II. Saudi teachers' attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.
- III. Saudi teachers' inclusive practices and how these are influenced by individual teachers' attitudes and beliefs.
- IV. The factors influencing Saudi teachers' attitudes and inclusive practices.
- V. How training can change teachers' attitudes towards SEN and the inclusion process.

The previous chapter outlined the methodology adopted to achieve these objectives. It underlined that this study adopted a qualitative approach in order to understand complex social processes and realize the crucial aspects of a phenomenon from the participants' perspective to uncover their beliefs, values and motivations. Thus, semi-structured interviews with headteachers, deputy headteachers and general and special education teachers and observations of classroom practices were conducted prior to and post a training workshop.

This chapter presents the findings from the fieldwork investigations to address the research questions and achieve its objectives. It is organized as follows: it starts in Section 6.2 with the

findings about the educators' understanding of inclusive education. Then these educators' attitudes towards inclusion and why they thought they held such attitudes are reported in Section 6.3. Following that, to further explore beliefs that could influence attitudes, the participants' religious perceptions of disability and their beliefs about their self-efficacy in implementing inclusion are presented in Sections 6.4 and 6.5, respectively. After that, what educators do inside schools and classrooms to make inclusion successful is described in Section 6.6. The findings of the investigation of the barriers to inclusive education in the schools studied are provided next in Section 6.7. Finally, the findings about how training influenced teachers' attitudes, beliefs and practices are reported in Section 6.8, before concluding the chapter in 6.9.

6.2 Educators' Understanding of Inclusion

One of the most important objectives of this research is to explore the understanding among educators in schools of what inclusion means (RQ1: *What is the understanding of teachers in Saudi Arabia about including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms?*) This is very important because it is not possible to examine other areas related to inclusion without understanding what it means to those who are responsible for its application in schools. Educators' understanding of inclusion was explored in the interviews. One interview question directly addressed this aspect, i.e., *what does inclusion mean?* but answers to other questions such as *to what extent do you think that the inclusion of students with special educational needs in school is appropriate?* also prompted responses that shed light on participants' understanding.

It is important to note that in exploring this study educators' understanding of inclusion, the literature reviewed in Sections 2.2 and 2.3 relating to the different general perspectives on

disability (medical, social and human rights models) and the corresponding conceptual development of what constitutes an appropriate provision of education for students with SEN (segregation, integration and inclusion views) was used to group and structure the research participants' understanding of the term inclusion. In short, the literature showed that segregating students with SEN in education was mainly triggered by a medical perception of their disability, that is they have individualized problems and thus they need focused support (Oliver, 1990, 2009). By contrast, the integration system, influenced by a social view on disability, called for students with SEN to be placed in mainstream schools, treated equally and taught side by side with their peers without SEN in order to facilitate their social interaction inside and outside schools (Hardie and Tilly, 2012). Based on this, students with SEN were integrated in mainstream schools and expected to fit into the existing system (Booth, 2005). However, inclusion in education, based on a human rights perspective of disability, acknowledges the right of students with SEN to be taught in mainstream but also to receive education that is suitable for them (Avramidis et al, 2000). This requires system and curriculum change in schools to cater not just to students without SEN but also to those with SEN (Clough and Corbett, 2000). This is assumed to lead to a culture promoting acceptance and appreciating diversity (Allen and Cowdery, 2014).

The findings are presented in two subsections addressing the understanding of leaders (i.e. headteachers and deputy headteachers) and practitioners (general and special education teachers).

6.2.1 Leaders' Understanding of Inclusion

The study included four headteachers and five deputy headteachers. Variations in their understanding of inclusion were observed, but the views they stated demonstrated that inclusion was conceived by these leaders in integration terms as the physical presence of students with SEN in mainstream schools. Moreover, while some of these integration views showed traces of the medical perception of disability, others focused on the social benefits of placing students with SEN in mainstream schools. Such understanding exhibits a lack of knowledge of what inclusion means.

A leader in school B understood inclusion to be placing students with SEN in the same school with their non-disabled peers but not in the same classroom:

“Include students with special needs in public school, but not in the same classroom with their non-disabled peers [...] I feel if we put students with disabilities with other students, they feel happy but if they are in the same classroom, they will feel stressed and unhappy because they can't understand the lesson.” (DHB1)

According to this deputy head, inclusion should not be in the same classroom because of the pressure on students with SEN as they cannot keep up with their peers. On a different occasion this leader stated that *“some teachers reported that non-disabled students make fun of students with SEN, which is bad for these students, and teachers can do nothing about it”* (DHB1). Here, this leader maintains that putting students with SEN in special classes is better for them because their peers without SEN might make fun of them in the mainstream context.

Another leader stated that inclusion allows the psychological and emotional needs of students with SEN to be understood: *“Include students with SEN with public school students [...] The inclusion process needs to understand the effect on students’ psychological and emotional needs”* (DHA2). Although this leader viewed inclusion as a process, she identified the main focus of this process to be understanding the psychological and emotional needs of students with SEN.

Both leaders here seemed to be focused on students’ needs and they viewed inclusion as the process of addressing these needs through either keeping them away from peers to enable them to avoid the pressure of keeping up with them and the danger of being ridiculed by them or through understanding their psychological and emotional needs. This shows an effect of a medical perception of disability and it should be emphasized that there was no mention of the educational, social or human rights aspects of inclusion, which also suggests a lack of knowledge of what inclusion means.

A different understanding of inclusion was provided by more than half of the leaders (n=5). One expressed a general understanding of inclusion as the placement of students with certain disabilities within mainstream schools or classes: *“Including students with hearing loss into mainstream classroom”* (HTA1). Another regarded it as the placement of students with any type of disability inside schools along with their non-disabled peers as expressed by the deputy head of school D: *“Include students with special educational needs with their non-disabled peers in mainstream school [...] It is including students with disabilities in the same school with their non- disabled students”* (DHD1). The deputy head of school C defined it as: *“Including students with disabilities in mainstream school (students with disabilities*

including those with physical disabilities, moderate to severe mental retardation)” (DHC1).

Two other leaders in the study (DHA1 and HTD1) shared the same view.

It is clear here that the views articulated by these five leaders limited inclusion to being the mere physical presence of students with SEN in the same classroom or school as their peers without SEN. No further information in the rest of interviews with these participants showed that they had a deeper understanding of the concept.

A slightly different meaning of inclusion expressed in interviews was that offering a suitable environment for students with SEN to break down the barrier between them and other non-disabled students. This was the understanding of the headteacher of school C, who described inclusion as *“giving the opportunity to students with special needs to study in normal environment. Another important advantage is breaking the barriers between special education students and their nondisabled peers”* (HTC1).

The last leader here showed a similar understanding of inclusion as the headteacher of school C above. This is the headteacher of school B who considered inclusion to be providing students with SEN with a suitable environment to be able to integrate within the larger community outside school. This participant stated that:

“Trying to create a suitable social environment that allows individuals with special needs to integrate with the community members in everyday social life [...] The school environment will give an opportunity for individuals with special needs to have experiences that equip them to be better able to integrate in their society outside the school in the future.” (HTB1)

These last two leaders were similar in their understanding of inclusion as both viewed inclusion as providing the suitable environment to students with SEN. However, while the former participant took this to be a way to break barriers between students with and without SEN, the latter considered it a step towards breaking barriers between students with SEN and the community outside school. Therefore, social interaction and relationships were the purposes of inclusion according to these leaders.

All in all, although all leaders viewed inclusion to be the physical placement of students with SEN in mainstream schools or classrooms, they fell into two groups with regard to the focus of inclusion. While the first group focused on students' needs and how inclusion would address them, the second group focused on the social benefits obtained by students with SEN in mainstream schools. However, none of the leaders touched on the educational benefits, the human rights aspects or how they would be assured, demonstrating insufficient knowledge about inclusion. The following is a summary of leaders understanding of inclusion arising from this section:

1. The mere physical presence of students with SEN in the same classroom or school as their peers without SEN (5 leaders)
2. Offering a suitable environment for students with SEN to break the barrier between them and other non-disabled students and the community outside school (2 leaders)
3. Including students with SEN in mainstream schools but not classes to avoid pressures of keeping up with other students in mainstream classes and being ridiculed by them. (1 leader)

4. Inclusion should focus on understanding the emotional and psychological needs of students with SEN. (1 leader)

We move next to general and special education teachers' understanding of inclusion

6.2.2 Practitioners' Understanding of Inclusion

The study interviewed 23 general (N=17) and special (N=6) education teachers in the four schools. Variation in practitioners' understanding of inclusion was also clear from their answers. As will be shown in this section, the majority of these practitioners conceived inclusion in terms of locational integration, demonstrating insufficient knowledge about inclusive education. Moreover, although some practitioners went beyond the locational integration, their views remained short of exhibiting complete understanding of inclusion.

For nine teachers, inclusion meant the physical presence of students with SEN with their non-disabled peers: *"It is integrating students with SEN with their peers in mainstream schools"* (CTA1, CTC1, SETC2 and CTD2). For a teacher in school A, it relates to the physical presence of students with SEN in school but conditioned by the number of students in the classroom: *"It is placing a small number of students with SEN in larger mainstream classrooms, but keeping the total number of students under 20 in each classroom"* (CTA2). Similar views were expressed by CTA6, CTA7, CTA3 and CTB2.

For another three teachers, inclusion is the suitable environment in which students with SEN are placed and to which they need to adapt in order to improve their education:

“It is integrating students with SEN with their peers in mainstream classrooms to adapt within the environment and providing them with special care to raise up their educational level through learning from their peers.” (CTA5)

The same understanding is shared by a teacher in school D: *“It is an attempt to create a favourable environment where students with SEN get along with their peers in mainstream classrooms and learn better” (CTD3)*. The same was voiced by CTB4. Thus, it is placing students with SEN in a suitable environment to which they are able to adapt.

A slightly different view was voiced by five teachers, who maintained that inclusion is the chance given to students with SEN to socialise with their non-disabled peers. For example, one participant stated that *“It is giving students with SEN the chance to socialise with their peers in mainstream schools” (CTD1)*. Another teacher said that *“including students with SEN in the same classroom with their non-disabled peers [...] Inclusive education is successful which makes students with SEN interact socially” (SETA2)*. The same view was shared by CTA8, SETC1 and CTB3. Indeed, the social interaction purpose of inclusion was the focus of these participants.

It is important to note that findings from the 17 teachers presented in this section so far seem to pattern together with those reported in the previous section from 7 leaders. Both groups focused on the physical presence of students with SEN in mainstreams schools and/or the social benefits they would gain from such inclusion. The educational benefit mentioned by three teachers (CTA5, CTD3 and CTB4) was about what students with SEN would gain from their peers rather than teachers or the school. Thus, the educational benefit in terms of what

the school provides and the human rights aspects were absent from what was expressed by participants presented so far.

For the remaining six teachers, inclusion was more than the physical presence of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. A teacher in school A believed that it is the special care and compassion given to these students: *“It is providing students with SEN with special care and treating them with compassion in mainstream classrooms without making them feel that they have special needs”* (CTA4). Although this view was restricted to providing care and compassion, the teacher understood that these students should not feel that they had special needs, which implies that providing care is conditioned with no discrimination.

A deeper understanding articulated by two teachers in schools B and C was that inclusion involves partnerships and sharing among students:

“It is integrating students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. I mean the partnership between the two groups of students in the same classroom one categories has special needs and the other group is non-disabled students in the same classroom.” (CTB1)

A similar understanding was expressed by a teacher in school C: *“It is sharing the classroom between two groups of students, one of which is students with SEN”* (CTC2). The view voiced by CTB1 and CTC2 here goes beyond the physical presence or the suitable environment to the partnership between students and the sharing of the setting. This might refer to the status of students with SEN as equal individuals with their non-disabled peers.

A special education teacher in school A voiced a completely different view from her colleagues when she said:

“They could benefit from mixing with their non-disabled peers and learning from them [...] It is integrating students with SEN in mainstream schools through imposing strict rules on parents and school administration and providing alternative curricula that can be modified to be suitable for students with SEN.” (SETA1)

Thus, she maintained that inclusion is not just the environment that allows the chance for students with SEN to learn better from their peers, but also the modification of curricula to suit their needs.

The special education teachers in school B had a different understanding of inclusion as their focus was not the students themselves but what teachers do: *“It is the cooperation between classroom teachers and special education teachers to integrate students with SEN with their peers in mainstream schools”* (SETB1); and a similar view was echoed by the other teacher as she stated that *“It is the integration of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms and this can be done through the cooperation between the teachers. I mean not only general but also special education teachers”* (SETB2). Both participants held school teachers, and thus the school, responsible for including students, so this is not just integrating students in the school but also making efforts by cooperating to include them.

The understanding expressed by these last six teachers seems to differ from that of all leaders and 17 teachers as the former touched on areas that were not mentioned by the latter. The six teachers focused on the educational and human rights aspects of inclusion as they mentioned

the provision of care with no discrimination, equality, curriculum redesign and cooperation in school to provide better education to all students. The following points summarise the understanding of inclusion held by all teachers:

1. The physical presence of students with SEN with their non-disabled peers. (9 teachers)
2. The chance given to students with SEN to socialise with their non-disabled peers. (5 teachers)
3. Providing a suitable environment in which students with SEN are placed and to which they can adapt. (3 teachers)
4. Partnerships and sharing between students. (2 teachers)
5. Integrating students into the school but also making efforts through teacher cooperation to include them. (2 teachers)
6. The modification of curricula to suit students with SEN. (1 teacher)
7. Providing care to students with SEN with no discrimination. (1 teacher)

All in all, the findings in this section reveal that some leaders (n=2) viewed inclusion to be placing students in mainstream schools in special classes to reduce pressure on them and to be better able to understand their emotional and psychological needs. This understanding is part of the medical perspective on disability and the segregation argument in education as Chapter 2 indicated. Still, 7 leaders and 17 practitioners understood the inclusion of students with SEN to involve their physical presence in school, the creation of a suitable environment for them or their involvement in social interaction in mainstream schools or classes. These combined understandings, as Chapter 2 showed, reflect an integration perspective rather than an inclusion perspective. The majority of leaders and practitioners belong to the four schools

under study, which have varying levels of experience in teaching students with SEN, and these leaders and teachers have varying levels of teaching experience (ranging from 2 to 24 years). This majority also included special and general education teachers and they mostly held Bachelor's degrees but some had higher degrees. The remaining minority (6 teachers) expressed their understanding of inclusion in terms of providing care with no discrimination, equality, curricula redesign and cooperation among staff to teach all students. These understandings, although limited, are much closer to an inclusion perspective, as described in Chapter 2. This minority has similar levels of experience and qualification as the majority group. All of this will be discussed further in the next chapter in connection with the literature examined in Chapter 2.

The next section reports the findings about the participants' attitudes.

6.3 Educators' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

To explore educators' attitudes, I used the Three Component Model (Ajzen, 2005; Avramidis, 2000; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Triandis, 1971) as an analytical framework. As detailed in Chapter Three, this model proposes that attitudes are multidimensional, formed by affective, cognitive and behavioural aspects. While the affective component is the emotions and feelings a person has towards an attitudinal object, the cognitive aspect is made up of the beliefs held by that person towards that specific object; the behavioural aspect, on the other hand, is the reaction towards that object. This study aimed to explore these three components to better understand the participants' attitudes.

For this study on attitudes towards inclusive education and based on the data obtained from participants, these components were identified to be as follows. The participants voiced what

they felt about inclusion in terms of whether or not it was appropriate or not and they supported it. These views were analysed as the affective side of attitudes. The participants then articulated beliefs about why they felt this way about inclusion and these beliefs were considered the cognitive component. However, the interviews also explored participants' beliefs about disability and beliefs about their own abilities to teach students with SEN (self-efficacy), which could be other facets of the cognitive component and thus they were also categorized as cognitive. Finally, what educators did in schools or in classrooms was considered the behavioural component of attitudes. The findings relating to each of these components are reported separately in this chapter. The first section will focus on what participants said about inclusion in terms of whether they supported it or not and considered it appropriate or not. However, to give depth to the findings, their beliefs about why they felt so towards inclusion are also reported. This is addressed in two subsections corresponding to the findings from leaders and practitioners respectively.

6.3.1 Leaders' attitudes towards inclusive education

Leaders in this study included four headteachers and five deputy headteachers. Only a third (n=3) of these seemed very welcoming to or enthusiastic about the idea of including students with SEN in mainstream schooling and the remaining two-thirds (n=6) were unsupportive of inclusion.

Starting with headteachers, three out of four of those interviewed for this study agreed that students with SEN should be included in mainstream classrooms and were supportive of the idea. The headteacher of school A said, "*I think including students with special needs is very important*" (HTA1). The headteacher of school B was even more enthusiastic; she stated:

“I was one of those people who supported inclusive education and I still support inclusive education. When the Ministry of Higher Education presented the idea to me to transform this school into inclusive school, I welcomed the idea with open arms.”

(HTB1)

In school C, the headteacher also welcomed inclusion saying *“Yes, it is appropriate”* (HTC1).

The headteacher of school D, however, had a different opinion on the issue. Her school had not started inclusion at the time of the interview. She clearly stated that inclusion was not welcomed in this school. She believed that inclusion should not take place and students with SEN should have their own special education schools. She stated:

“I think it is not appropriate to include students with SEN in mainstream schools. Those who decided to include student with SEN in mainstream classrooms lack practical experience and have never been into the field.” (HTD1)

Moving on to the deputy headteachers, none of those interviewed thought that inclusion was wise. There were two deputies in school A. Their rejections of inclusion were similar: *“This is crazy”* (DHA1 and DHA2). The deputy in school B stated *“I don’t think it is appropriate at this stage... I don’t think it is appropriate to include students with SEN in normal classrooms with their non-disabled peers”* (DHB1). The same was expressed by the deputy in school C: *“I think it is not appropriate”* (DHC1). Similarly, the deputy in school D shared the same opinion *“I feel it will be difficult to include students with SEN in mainstream classrooms* (DHD1).

Therefore, only three of the senior practitioners perceived the idea of inclusion positively, with the rest clearly voicing their rejection. Their opinions about inclusion ranged from ‘crazy’ to ‘inappropriate’ and ‘difficult’. Those who supported inclusion were all headteachers where inclusive education had been implemented. It is important to note here that inclusion in the three schools started was initiated due to the headteachers’ approval and neither deputy heads nor other staff were involved in taking this decision.

The interviews went further into why these participants had such attitudes. Those who welcomed inclusion and felt it was appropriate or important stated that this was mainly for the benefit of students with SEN. They described this in the following terms: *“because it is better for students”* and *“it helps students with SEN to feel better”* (HTA1), *“students with SEN can interact with their peers”* (HTB1) and *“it is an opportunity of students with SEN to socialise with their peers”* (HTC1). However, according to two headteachers, the appropriateness of inclusion seemed to depend on students’ medical condition and the school’s ability to provide the support they need. The first headteacher said *“Yes, it is appropriate, depending on the students’ situation, for those students who don’t need intensive support”* (HC1). For the second headteacher, inclusion was important but this depended on students receiving effective diagnoses, as well as appropriate support: *“I think including students with special needs is very important but we have to provide support and we have to have the right diagnoses”* (HA1).

In contrast, those who were not supportive of inclusion expressed a number of reasons for this. Lack of experience of dealing with students with SEN was mentioned by one deputy: *“inclusion requires experienced teachers and clear plans and strategies”* (DHA1). Also,

another deputy mentioned the lack of clear guidance as she stated *“In my opinion, if inclusion is established, it should be with good guidance and clear direction. This is not available here”* (DHB1). Others maintained that the atmosphere is not suitable for students with SEN as they might face rejection from both teachers and peers:

“I think it is not appropriate for those students with mild or moderate SEN. This is because students in the school as well as classroom teachers may not accept them. Even students who are not disabled have problems between each other. If the school has students with SEN, they will be bullied by their peers.” (DHC1)

One deputy head believed that because the abilities of students with SEN are different from the abilities of other students, they should not be mixed together: *“I feel it will be difficult to include students with SEN in mainstream classroom as these students are different and so they will have difficulties in coping* (DHD1). Clarifying this, she added *“How can students with disabilities perform well in intelligence tests if the normal students find it so difficult?”* (DHD1). The headteacher in the same school voiced a similar view stating that

“I think it is not appropriate to include students with SEN in mainstream school because I cannot compare the abilities of students with SEN with the abilities of their non-disabled peers. For example, students with a visual disability use Braille for their learning. How can we teach them mathematics and mathematical calculations, science, language and religion? In addition, in science the teachers and students need to do experiments in the lab. In the lab teachers and students use sulphuric acid and carbon dioxide. Let’s be realistic here. These students should not be allowed to study

here. They should be taught in a separate institution or in a separate centre, not with other students.” (HTD1)

Thus, both leaders in school D focused on the disabilities of students with SEN and they considered them the main reason why they felt inclusion was inappropriate.

The following is a summary of the findings of this section:

1. One-third of leaders were supportive of inclusion:
 1. This is because it is socially better for students with SEN
 2. However, this depended on students needing relatively little care and the school being able to provide the support they needed

2. Two-thirds of leaders were unsupportive of inclusion:
 1. This is because of their lack of experience of working with students with SEN, lack of clear guidance, the perceived unsuitable environment for students with SEN, and differences in abilities between students with and without SEN.

We move next on to practitioners’ attitudes.

6.3.2 Practitioners’ attitudes towards inclusive Education

All teachers (except one, CTA5) believed that including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms was unwise.

Starting with the teacher who was supportive of inclusion, she stated *“Inclusive education is very appropriate and students with SEN have the right to be educated in mainstream schools”* (CTA5). She seemed to focus on the human right of students with SEN, considering inclusion appropriate because they have equal human rights to those without SEN. It is important to note that this teacher has three children with multiple disabilities.

In contrast, all the other teachers (n=22) were unsupportive of inclusion. All of the teachers in school A (apart from CTA5 above) rejected the idea of including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. All those teachers expressed an opinion in line with the following statement made by one of them: *“I think including students with SEN in the mainstream classroom is not appropriate”* (CTA1).

In schools B, C and D, all the classroom and special education teachers were against inclusion. Their opinions ranged from *‘inappropriate’* (CTB1), *‘unsuitable’* (SETB1), *‘unwise’* (CTC2), *‘it should not be applied’* (SETC1) to *‘it is the worst thing that could happen to these students’* (CTD1). In school D, where no students with SEN existed, one teacher said, *“I moved to this school because my old school had students with SEN. If they bring students with SEN to this school, I will retire”* (CTD2).

As can be seen here, all but one of the teachers rejected the idea of inclusion. The interviews went further to ask them about their rationale for this. They had different reasons. For some teachers, it was because of lack of training. For example, one teacher stated: *“it should not be applied here because all teachers are not trained to deal with students with SEN”* (SETC1). The same reason was expressed by CTA6 and SETB1. For others, it was because the school did not have the necessary facilities to accommodate students with SEN: *“It is unwise. The*

school is not prepared, not is the classroom. You have seen the building. Is it appropriate for such students to move around?” (CTC2). Still, other teachers (CTA8 and CTB3) mentioned lack of guidance as their reason as, for example, one teacher stated: “there should be clear guidance from the headteacher about how we should be dealing with these students. She accepted this school becoming inclusive, but she does not know what we should do to help these poor students” (CTB3).

The following summarizes practitioners’ attitudes and their reasons:

1. One teacher was supportive of inclusion
 1. This is because students with SEN have equal human rights to those without SEN

2. Twenty-two teachers were unsupportive of inclusion
 1. This is because of lack of training in how to teach students with SEN, as well as lack of facilities and guidance.

It has become obvious from the findings presented in this section that the difference between positive and negative attitude holders in this study cannot be attributed to length of experience with SEN or in general education, type and level of degree held or age. However, it could be triggered by the position held in school as only the three headteachers of schools where inclusion was implemented, along with one teacher, had positive attitudes towards inclusion. Moreover, the only teacher who expressed a positive attitude towards inclusion had children with disabilities, which must have influenced her attitude. All these findings from both leaders and practitioners will be discussed further in the next chapter.

We will now look into other factors that might have an influence on the participants' attitudes by examining their religious beliefs and sense of self-efficacy, prior to moving to the findings concerning school and classroom practices.

6.4 Educators' Beliefs about Disability

As discussed in Chapter Four, in a country such as Saudi Arabia the religious element is an important influence in forming people's perceptions about the special needs of some individuals. Moreover, misunderstandings of religious texts are widespread and different interpretations, which are sometimes contradictory, exist (Gaad, 2011). Educators' perceptions of students' disabilities might be greatly influenced by their interpretations of religious texts and/or general beliefs that have spread among people. Understanding the perceptions of school staff about people with disabilities is critical for this study because it gives us the opportunity to understand if attitudes towards inclusion are influenced in any way by these beliefs.

In the light of the previous section finding that the majority of educators had negative attitudes towards inclusion, negative religious beliefs are expected to be prevalent among participants if such beliefs are truly the driver behind such attitudes. However, on the contrary, the great majority of participants had positive religious beliefs about disability, demonstrating that there seemed to be no relation between participants' attitudes towards inclusion and their religious beliefs. The religious beliefs that were uncovered by the data collected for this study are presented below.

To begin with, all participants believed that God and Islam ask us to treat individuals with disabilities well. A headteacher said that *“I think Islam asks us to care about vulnerable people. Also, the Quran recommended that we should take care of the elderly, poor, orphans and disabled people”* (HTA1). Another headteacher said, *“Students with SEN are gifted from God and we should support them to be independent”* (HTC1). A special education teacher maintained that *“students with SEN are gifted from God and we should give them education and treat them with respect”* (SETB2). This belief was held by participants from all four schools including school D, which rejected inclusion. The headteacher in school D said, *“in our religion God asks us to help anyone in need”* (HTD1). A teacher in the same school stated that *“God asks us to care about animals, so how about humans?”* (CTD3). This idea of the religious obligation to help and treat disabled people well seemed to prevail among all school staff without exception. They also believed that they would be rewarded by God if they did this and punished if they did not. A deputy headteacher said that *“our religion asks us to care about vulnerable people such elderly, individual with special needs. God will reward us if we are going to help them and will punish us if we don’t treat them well”* (DHA1). A headteacher also said:

“God asks us to help anyone in need. Those categories of people need support and help and acceptance to help them mix in the society and the first step happens through school. God will reward each and every one who is caring and kind to people with disabilities.” (HTB1)

The headteacher from school C also stated that *“Islam honoured those individuals and asked us to be kind to them and God promised to reward us for patience”* (HTC1). One special education teacher maintained that *“as a teacher I feel it is very important to care about*

students with SEN and God will reward me” (STC1). Based on all this, it can be safely concluded here that all school staff members had a belief that helping students with SEN is a religious obligation for which God will reward those who perform it well and punish those who do not.

Another belief held by some participants was that disabled people are a test by God to the people surrounding them; they are given to a community to test its individuals’ patience and punish or reward them based on how they treat these people. One headteacher stated that *“They are gifted from God and God asks us to help them”* and she added *“God tests us by sending those people and then God watches what we do”* (HTA1). One teacher in school B believes that *“students with SEN are gifted from God. God tests us on how to treat them and tests our patience towards them. God will reward us and cleanse our sin”* (STB1). Another teacher from the same school said, *“I feel these students with SEN are gifted from God to test our patience”* (STB2). The same belief spreads among teachers of school D, where inclusion was rejected:

“In general, any problem has two main reasons: either punishment for people who are not obeying God, or a test of people’s patience. In both cases, God will cleanse our sin and reward us with paradise.” (CTD2)

Five participants had the belief that God creates people with disabilities to reward them and/or their families. A deputy headteacher stated:

“Some people have a certain place in heaven and they have not done the good deeds necessary to take them to that place, so God gives them a child with disability to allow them to do good deeds that raise them to a good position in heaven.” (DHA1)

Some teachers believed that God creates people with disabilities to test their families in life and purify them from their sins before they are taken to heaven: *“Disability in children sometime happens to cleanse parents of their sins or test parents’ patience”* (CTC1). A teacher from a different school stated that *“God tests those people in life to put them in a certain place in heaven”* (CTA1) and another teacher held that *“I and other parents who have children with disabilities, God tests us in this life to reach a better place in heaven. We just have to be patient”* (CTA5).

Four participants believed that disabled people have the same human rights as all other people and we should engage with them accordingly. The headteacher of school B stated that *“teachers need to accept inclusion positively especially students with mental challenges because of the humanitarian side. In addition, they share with us the same human rights”* (HTB1). The headteacher in school A stressed that Islam supports these human rights as she said: *“Islam gives individuals with special needs their rights and it emphasizes including them in the community”* (DHA1). A classroom teacher in the same school stated that *“our religion asks us to give them their rights, give their legitimate rights”* (CTA3). Equality among all people, whatever their mental or physical abilities, was also mentioned by a special education teacher in school B: *“Islam is built on equal relationship between people”* (SETB1).

Only three teachers held a slightly negative belief that disability might be a punishment from God. One of them said that *“disability is a test from God or punishment. In either way, God rewards parents for their patience with heaven”* (CTA4). A special education teacher also stated that *“Anyone who has needs, this could be punishment from God or God will reward those people for their patience”* (SETC1). A third teacher voiced the same belief as she said: *“Disabilities or anything bad that happens in our life is either a punishment or a test from God. Both are to cleanse our sins in life before judgment day”* (SETC2).

Furthermore, all participants, except one teacher (CTB2, more on this below), felt sympathy for disabled students. To describe their feelings, they used words such as “sympathy” “pity” and “affection”. The deputy head in school A was fairly representative of this when she stated: *“I feel sympathy towards students with SEN and we should support them”* (DHA1). This was the general feeling of all participants including those from school D, where inclusion had not started. Even those who expressed their rejection of inclusion had the same feelings. An example of this is a teacher in school A, who said *“I feel sympathy for children with SEN, although this school is not the right place for them”* (CTA1). Another teacher in school D stated *“Although, I feel sympathy for students with SEN, I reject inclusion as it creates a stressful situation for teachers in the classroom”* (CTD3).

Exceptionally, one teacher from school B expressed her anger and stated that she felt scared when students with SEN were around: *“I don’t want them in my classroom [...] I am scared when they are in my classroom [...] I don’t want those children, I don’t want a reward from God. I have other ways to be rewarded by God without having those children”* (CTB2). This position might be explained by what this teacher said on a different occasion during the interview: *“they always scream and hit each other, causing trouble in the classroom [...]*

One girl hit another on the hand with scissors [...] Last semester a girl went up to the roof of the building and was about to throw herself down” (CTB2).

To summarise the participants’ perceptions of students’ disabilities, it became clear that all school staff had religious beliefs and at least some sympathy for students with SEN, with some focusing on the humanitarian dimension. These views are summarised as follows:

1. Helping students with SEN is a religious obligation for which God will reward those who perform it well and punish those who do not.
2. Disabled people are a test from God for the people they encounter.
3. God creates people with disabilities to reward them and/or their families.
4. God creates people with disabilities to test their families in life and purify them from their sins before they are taken to heaven.
5. Disabled people have the same human rights as all other people (four participants).
6. Disability might be a punishment from God (three participants).
7. All participants, except one teacher, felt sympathy towards students with SEN.
8. One participant expressed her anger and stated that she felt scared when students with SEN were around.

It is important to note that the beliefs that disability is a reward, test or punishment from God have no roots in Islam (see Section 4.2.2) and one part of the training workshop focused on challenging these beliefs. All this will be discussed in the next chapter. The following section reports the findings about educators’ beliefs about their own abilities to implement inclusive education.

6.5 Educators' Beliefs about their Abilities (self-efficacy) to Implement Inclusive Education

The following subsections deal with the findings relating to leaders' and practitioners' perceptions of their self-efficacy. It was found that about half of leaders and all teachers had low self-confidence in implementing inclusion or teaching students with SEN, which might explain why they had negative attitudes towards inclusion. We start with leaders' beliefs.

6.5.1 Leaders' beliefs about self-efficacy

There were clear distinctions in the perceptions of leaders of schools A and B on one hand and schools C and D on the other. The leaders of the latter schools were more confident in their own capacity to support inclusion than the leaders of the schools A and B.

The leaders of schools A and B clearly demonstrated their awareness that they and their schools lacked the ability and resources necessary to make inclusion work as intended. They acknowledged their lack of ability to provide the required supervision: *"There is no clear understanding of leadership or supervision [...] there are difficulties in evaluating therapists in school because we don't have knowledge about their work"* (HTA1). The headteacher of school B articulated a similar view: *"We need to know how to supervise SEN teachers and what to focus on when we try to evaluate special education teachers and therapists in school because I have no idea how to do it"* (HTB1). They also stated that they do not know how to deal with students with SEN: *"I have to admit that I have no clue about how to deal with students with mental challenges and what is the process and what is right and what is wrong"* (HTB1). Moreover, they showed awareness of their teachers' inability to deal with students with SEN: *"Teachers ignore students inside the classroom because they don't understand how to deal with them [...] Teachers' skills and expertise don't correspond to*

students' learning needs" (HTA1). It is important to note that both leaders expressed supportive attitudes towards inclusion (in Section 6.3 above).

The deputy heads in these two schools (A and B), who were unsupportive of inclusion, clearly stated their inability to lead inclusive education. One of them said *"I am doing everything I can, but when it comes to how teachers deal with students with SEN, I don't know what they should be doing, so I leave it to them"* (DHA1). The same was expressed by her colleague in the same school as she said:

"I usually observe teachers in the classroom to make sure they are doing the right thing, but to be honest I don't know whether what they are doing with students with SEN is right or wrong. I see students with SEN sitting in their desks and they seem happy and that is enough for me." (DHA2)

The deputy head in school B seems to share the same opinion; she said *"leading teachers to implement inclusion requires experienced staff and I don't have this experience. But, personally, I believe it is the responsibility of classroom teachers and special education teachers to know how they should deal with these students"* (DHB1). Therefore, all leaders in schools A and B had low self-confidence in relation to how they lead inclusion.

By contrast, leaders in schools C and D had different beliefs about their self-efficacy. The headteacher of school C, who had a positive attitude towards inclusion and has a PhD in education, stated that she had the abilities to implement inclusion as she said *"I definitely have what it takes to lead this system. I wouldn't have agreed to it, if I didn't"* (HTC1). When she was asked about her teachers' abilities, she answered, *"They have four or five years of*

experience now, so I do believe they are able to do their job for students with SEN” (HTC1).

The deputy of the same school didn’t see any problem with her or other teachers’ abilities: *“I can mention so many difficulties and problems in this school, but I have full confidence that I am able to guide other teachers to make this school successful and the teachers are truly very good” (DHC1).*

Like in school C, leaders in school D, where inclusion has not been implemented, had confidence in their abilities. When the leader was first asked about her ability to lead inclusion, she stated *“that is impossible” (HTD1).* However, what she meant was that she would not allow the school to be inclusive. She was asked to imagine that the Ministry of Education forced inclusion on her school and say whether she would be able to lead the school and whether teachers have the skills to manage the situation. She replied:

“I am not sure what you are aiming at here, but look, I have been leading this school effectively for years. I will still be a good leader even when there are students with SEN inside this school. I don’t see the problem in myself or with the teachers. These students have special needs and they should be in special need schools because it is better for them.” (HTD1)

Her deputy expressed the same belief with regard to her and other teachers’ abilities. She said *“Do you mean adding students with SEN her would make a difference to myself or other teachers? We are competent teachers and having students with SEN in this school would not change this” (DHD1).* Both leaders in this school were either not aware of any challenges to their and other teachers’ abilities if students with SEN are included in the school or did not consider such challenges because they rejected the idea of inclusion.

The following is a summary of leaders' beliefs about self-efficacy:

1. The leaders of schools A and B had little confidence in their abilities to lead other teachers in relation to inclusion and of other teachers' abilities to teach students with SEN.
2. The leaders of schools C and D were confident of their abilities to lead inclusion and their teachers' abilities to teach students with SEN.

We move next to teachers' self-efficacy.

6.5.2 Practitioners' beliefs about self-efficacy

The data shows that the teachers in the four schools were aware of a number of issues with regards to their abilities to implement an inclusive approach. One of the aspects raised by the majority of teachers was classroom management. These were associated either with time limitations: *"the lesson is short and I cannot manage a class which has students with SEN"* (CTA1); the number of students: *"I cannot teach them even if I want to because I have 40 students in the classroom in addition to those with SEN"* (CTA2); or their inability to control the students: *"we don't know how to control them inside the classroom"* (CTB1). One teacher gave an example of being unable to control a student: *"In one incident, a student with mental challenges hit me in front of the class and I couldn't react because I didn't know what to do"* (CTB1). It is clear from these reports that although the number of students in classrooms was large, they felt the presence of students with SEN would make it harder to manage the class as teachers are not trained in how to deal with these students. Such beliefs

were cited by the majority (n=12 out of 14) of classroom teachers in the schools which had implemented inclusion.

Another weakness that was mentioned by some participants was their lack of ability to communicate information. In one school, students had hearing loss and teachers could not use sign language to express their ideas. One teacher stated that *“I always find it difficult to make students with SEN understand the information since I do not understand sign language, so it is so difficult for me to convey information”* (CTA1). Another teacher in the same school felt that *“students with SEN included in this school have hearing loss and we find it difficult to communicate with them”* (CTA2). Even in schools B and C where there were no students with hearing loss, teachers found it difficult to communicate information. One teacher from school B said *“Another problem that I face is how to communicate with students with SEN. What are the best strategies?”* (CTB1). This was echoed by a teacher from school C who articulated that *“The most important challenge is that we don’t have the abilities and the knowledge to communicate with them and teach them correctly”* (CTC1).

Furthermore, their inability to deal with students with SEN was an issue emphasised by several participants: *“I feel very stressed because I don’t know how to deal with SEN students and keep the lesson going to cover the curriculum”* (CTA1). One teacher attributed this to her lack of experience when she stated that *“I don’t have experience of working with students with SEN [...] I am trying to improve myself to work with them”* (CTB1). In school D where there were no students with SEN, two teachers emphasised their lack of experience when they said: *“It is very difficult for me to engage with students with SEN in the classroom as I don’t know how to teach them because I don’t have experience in this field”* (CTD1) and *“I don’t know the best way to teach students with SEN”* (CTD3).

Special education teachers were also aware of their weaknesses and the fact that they lacked the skills necessary to communicate with and teach students with SEN. All special education teachers in school A and B said this. One teacher said: *“the special education teacher feels stressed as she tries harder to communicate with students with SEN but will still be unable to reach them”* (SETA1). A second teacher echoed this and attributed it to their lack of knowledge about some school subjects: *“We are not able to teach certain skills such as maths, English and science. We have the strategies but not the curriculum”* (SETA2). A third teacher from school B merely stated that *“We don’t know how to deal with them”* (SETB1). A similar idea was alluded to by the second special education teacher in school B as she said: *“The Ministry of Education transfers students who have mental challenges to us and we find it difficult to teach them”* (SETB2).

Special education teachers in school C were also aware of their inability to teach the curriculum, although they had strategies for teaching students with SEN. One of the special education teachers emphasised the importance of cooperation among classroom teachers to bridge this gap:

“Special education teachers have the ability to use strategies to teach students with SEN. However, they need help and support from classroom teachers to explain the curriculum so that they can explain it to students with SEN.” (STC1)

The second special education teacher in school C stated that *“students with SEN here are supposed to have learning difficulties, but because of misdiagnosis we have students with severe disabilities and I find it very difficult to teach them”* (SETC2).

The following summarizes the findings about teachers' beliefs about self-efficacy:

1. All classroom teachers in the four schools had low confidence in their abilities to teach students with SEN. They highlighted issues with:
 1. Their ability to manage the classroom.
 2. Their ability to communicate information to students with SEN.
 3. Their ability to deal with students with SEN.

2. All special education teachers in the three schools also had low confidence in their abilities to teach students with SEN. They highlighted issues with:
 1. Their ability to communicate information to students with SEN.
 2. Their knowledge of some school subjects.
 3. Their ability to deal with students with SEN.
 4. Their ability to teach the curriculum.

We move next to the participants' actual practice.

6.6 Educators' Practices

This section reports the findings relating to leaders' and practitioners' practice, based on what they said in interviews and what the observations found. In the Three Component Model I used to analyse the study's data, it is held that there is a link between feelings and beliefs on one hand and behaviour on the other (Ajzen, 2005; Avramidis, 2000; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Triandis, 1971). If an individual holds positive thoughts and feelings towards an object, approaching it positively could be the result. Conversely, if an individual holds negative or

neutral thoughts and feelings towards an object, approaching it negatively or avoiding it might be the result. Furthermore, according to Eagly and Chaiken (1993), this behaviour might be overt or covert. This means that, for example, when an individual holds negative thoughts and feelings towards an object, s/he might act negatively (overt behaviour) or do nothing (covert behaviour). The findings in the previous sections revealed unsupportive attitudes based on negative beliefs about different elements including self-efficacy and indeed, as proposed by the Three Component Model, these led to negative behaviours, although they appeared covertly as ignoring students with SEN was the prevalent behaviour, especially among teachers. We start with leaders' practices.

6.6.1 Leaders' actual practices

Although one headteacher and all five deputies thought inclusion was an unwise step and more than half of them (two headteachers and three deputies) acknowledged their lack of confidence and ability in this area, all leaders stated that they would try everything they could to make inclusion successful. For example, one deputy said: *"It is difficult, but my ethics and beliefs force me to deal with the situation properly"* (DHB1). Another, who complained all through the interviews, stated at one point that *"After all, I have to do my best for the sake of these poor creatures. God will reward me"* (DHA1). The ethical and religious elements clearly played a significant role in how all the leaders approached issues involving students with SEN.

Nevertheless, in practice none of the schools had a clear plan to implement inclusion. It was clear that all senior leaders in schools where there were students with SEN (three headteachers and four deputies) addressed the situation in the way they personally thought was appropriate without having a clear understanding of their students' disabilities or how to

differentiate between one disability and another. When asked about the school's plan to deal with students with SEN, one headteacher said *"I always ask teachers to report any problems inside the class immediately. I do my best to sort them out"* (HA1). A deputy said while laughing: *"what plans are you talking about? Our plan is that there is no plan. We deal with things on a daily basis as they come up"* (DHC1). It was clear from the leaders' responses in the three schools that there were no standard procedures or strategies for working with SEN students.

Since no clear plans existed in any of the three schools (A, B and C), different practices are expected. They will be presented here on school by school basis for clarity and ease of presentation. In the interviews, I used to ask leaders about what they generally do in the school to assist teachers and what they do specifically to make inclusive practice successful, so the findings relating to leaders' practice were mainly self-reported.

Practice of senior leaders in school A

In School A, the headteacher (HTA1) monitored the teachers in the classrooms. She observed each teacher once a month. She acknowledged that she did not know what was correct or incorrect with everything related to students with SEN but believed that her presence in the classroom would push the teachers to do their best. After her observations of teachers in the classroom, she usually commented on the general performance of teachers, but she said nothing relating to students with SEN unless it was very clearly correct or incorrect. She rewarded teachers when they performed well in the class. She did not intervene in anything related to students with SEN unless there was a problem reported. In such a case, she felt obliged to try to solve the problem: *"We work with teachers to solve a problem in school."*

We develop an appropriate plan” (HTA1). Because she was aware of her lack of experience, she consulted other staff members to find out the best way to deal with such a problem.

As for the deputy headteachers in this school, only one of them (DHA1) dealt with issues related to students with SEN, with the other having other tasks to do. The role of the former was wider than that of the headteacher as she not only assisted her in observing and evaluating classroom teachers once a month, she also contacted the students’ parents to discuss any issues related to their children. This deputy was responsible for everything related to students with SEN including how they got to and from school and return home and dealt with any problems that arose inside the school. She was the first resort for teachers if anything happened. She agreed that she did not have the appropriate knowledge and experience to know how to deal with these students. She tried sometimes to direct teachers to behave in a certain way with them, but teachers did not follow what she said because they insisted on doing what they thought appropriate. She said that she had plans to deal with the situation more effectively, but she did not have the authority to put it into force:

“We need strict regulations to organize the work. Dealing with different types of personality is a very difficult job, especially those people who never agree on anything. They refuse to do anything, and their goal is to let others down.” (DHA1)

So, although this deputy tried to intervene, teachers did not follow what she said because they did not have confidence that she could lead in relation to students with SEN.

Practice of senior leaders in school B

The headteacher in this school also acknowledged her lack of knowledge and experience. However, she observed classroom teachers in order to push them to give their best: *“when I attend their sessions, I don’t know whether their work is right or wrong. I find it difficult evaluating them”* (HTB1). She was also aware of the need for an experienced individual to guide the frontline staff through the process. *“We need a deputy head specialized in special education”* (HTB1). When the special education teachers started their work in her school, she sent them to another school where there were therapists with more experience from whom to learn about dealing with students with SEN. She thought this was a good step because she and her deputy were unable to guide them in school: *“We need a training workshop to help us understand the psychological needs of students with SEN”* (HB1). This headteacher also tried to solve any problems reported to her. She felt that classroom teachers and special education teachers did not cooperate or communicate well with each other, to the disadvantage of students with SEN. She tried to solve this problem through asking special education teachers to write reports about each student with SEN, explaining the case and how teachers should deal with him/her. After distributing the reports about these students, teachers claimed to understand them better.

The deputy in this school expressed her interest in students with SEN and the effort she exerted to understand this field. She reported that *“I attended many workshops about special education to educate myself and also read many books”* (DHB1). She tried to be close to classroom teachers to be able to guide and direct them: *“I brought a trainer to school to train teachers, but her session lasted for 30 minutes and teachers didn’t benefit from that”* (DHB1). She was aware of the communication gap between special education teachers and other teachers. This is why she agreed with the headteacher’s strategy of writing reports

about individual cases of students with SEN and distributing them to teachers to be able to deal with these students better. This deputy put herself in direct contact with students with SEN to see if they needed anything she could help with. She said that, doing this, she discovered that some cases were misdiagnosed. She particularly mentioned one case, which she reported to the Ministry of Education. This was about a girl who was misdiagnosed as having mental health problems. She was in another school and because she failed in her class for three consecutive years, she was referred to a specialist, who diagnosed her as having an intellectual disability. Based on this, she was moved to this school as her previous school did not have an inclusion programme. After the girl was moved to this school, the deputy noticed that she was different from other students with SEN. She got closer to the girl and found that the girl preferred to keep silent all of the time, but she was not intellectually disabled. The deputy talked to other teachers in the school and they had the same opinion. Accordingly, they prepared a report and sent it to the Ministry asking for rediagnosis. The diagnosis this time stated that the girl did not have any special needs.

Practice of senior leaders in school C

Unlike leaders in schools A and B, the leaders in school C did not admit to lack of experience and knowledge in relation to directing teachers about working with students with SEN. In general, the headteacher and the deputy alternated to monitor classroom teachers on a monthly basis and gave feedback to teachers to improve their performance. However, their feedback related to the general performance of teachers:

“Teachers know that we do not know how to deal with students with SEN, so they would not take any comment in this regard seriously. There are special education

teachers and they know more about how to manage this and we do not interfere in what they do.” (DHC1)

In this school, the headteacher and the deputy head developed a strong relationship of friendship and seemed to do everything together. They set up a general monthly meeting, at which they discussed all arising issues including those of students with SEN. They believed that having the special education teachers discuss these issues in a meeting would benefit all other teachers, who would learn more about how to deal with students with SEN.

Another procedure relating to students with SEN introduced by this school’s senior leaders was that they set up meetings that put the parents of these students and special education teachers together in the same room to discuss issues:

“I formed a committee of teachers to organize communication between families and other teachers to create community partnership. By communicating together things will become easier for both teachers and parents and any problems that arise can be easily solved.” (HTC1)

One purpose of these meetings was for these teachers to collect more information about the students and their development and inform other staff members about this. This was believed to have a positive impact on practice in the school in general. Teachers became more able to understand the needs of these students and how to deal with them.

The following is a summary of the practice by leaders in the three schools:

1. None of the schools had a plan on how to implement inclusion; they dealt with problems as they arose.

1. **School A:** Dealing with students with SEN was left to classroom teachers. The senior leaders' roles were restricted to observing teachers' performance in general and managing these students' non-academic issues. However, they did not intervene at all academically. This was because the headteacher did not feel she knew what was correct or incorrect in relation to students with SEN or because teachers did not listen to what the deputy head said.

2. **School B:** The senior leaders intervened to close the gaps created by the lack of collaboration between teachers through asking special education teachers to write reports about students with SEN to help classroom teachers to understand these students better. The knowledge of the senior staff, which they obtained voluntarily, seemed to help them understand what was needed to improve the situation. The deputy head brought a specialist to provide training, but this did not last for more than 30 minutes and teachers did not benefit from this.

1. **School C:** Leaders observed classes very month, organized monthly meetings involving general and special education teachers during which students with SEN were discussed. They also organized regular meetings between teachers and parents of students with SEN.

6.6.2 Practitioners' actual practices

The findings in this section came from the interviews with class teachers and observations in classrooms. In schools A, B, C, there were 14 classroom teachers, whom I observed in the first stage of the research twice in different classes, each time for 20 minutes. Prior to observation sessions, I asked teachers to behave in the classroom as they usually did and act as if I were not there. I told them that behaving as they usually do would help me tailor the training workshop in ways that would benefit them. I used to enter the classroom before the teacher arrived and position myself where I could see all students and specifically those with SEN. This used to be just beside the front leftmost desk, in front of and to the right of the teacher. Sitting in a chair facing the classroom door (the teacher to my left and students to my right), I used to show myself busy with a pen and paper in my hands to decrease teachers' and students' stress.

Based on the classroom observations, I found that all teachers, apart from CTB1 and CTC1 (see below), totally 'ignored' students with SEN in their classrooms and delivered their lessons as if no students with SEN were present (except for occasions 1 to 4 below). The twelve teachers believed it was the special education teacher's duty to deal with students with SEN. During the interviews, teachers justified their 'negligence' strategy by stating that these students needed special care that they could not afford. During the sessions in which I observed these teachers, students with SEN used to stay in their desks looking at, reading or writing in their books. The following four instances were the only occasions when something different took place during the observation sessions:

1. **Observation sessions for CTB2 in two different classes:** The teacher entered the classroom and, after greeting the students, took out two blank sheets of paper and

pens and put them in front of two students with SEN, who were sitting beside each other. She addressed them nicely and while she was holding a pen in one hand and pointing to the sheet of paper by the other, she said “*write here, OK here. Good students*” (CTB2). She handed them the two pens and returned back to her place in front of the class. The students showed no direct reaction, but soon after they started writing on the sheets of paper. In the second occasion I observed this teacher, she behaved similarly with one student with SEN, who was in her class. In both classes, the teacher started lesson delivery by totally ignoring these students, who were busy writing.

Part of my interview with this teacher focused on what happened in the classroom. She explained what happened as follows: “*I try to make them busy in order not to disturb the flow of the lesson. If I leave them to listen to me during the lesson, they would disturb the lesson and really affect the progress of other students*” (CTB2). When I asked her about how these students would progress academically if she kept doing this every time she entered the classroom, she said: “*these students are the responsibility of special education teachers in this school, but for me I would prefer that they are taken to special education schools*” (CTB2). It is important to note that this was the only teacher who did not express sympathy with students with SEN (see Section 6.4 above).

2. **Observation sessions for CTA3 and CTB3:** At these two occasions, teachers asked students with SEN a question to check their understanding. The students remained silent for some time and other students started to laugh. The teacher responded with “*silence please*”, but both times laughing continued until the teacher asked someone else or started a new activity.

CTA3 observation session took place after I interviewed her, so I had no chance to ask her about what happened in the classroom. However, in my interview with CTB3, she explained as follows: *“sometimes this particular student usually responds, but yesterday she was not OK. I feel relieved when she responds because I feel like I have done something great”* (CTB3). When I asked her about the other students’ reaction of laughing at her, she commented that *“this is normal. They would have done the same had this happened with any other student, but, yes I understand what you mean. This is not a good behaviour”* (CTB3).

3. **Observation sessions for CTA1 in two different classes:** she explained the lesson to all students, but she could not be sure that the students with SEN understood what she said. However, she asked one of their peers, the students sitting next to them, to help them. *“Fatima, please help your sister, Shahed”* (CTA1). In both occasions, the student called by the teacher moved and sat beside the student with SEN and started to point out to places in the opened book on the desk. The students with SEN both times looked in the book where the other student was pointing

In the interview, this teacher explained that *“I have a difficulty in communicating with these students. They have a hearing difficulty. But I cannot leave them. I usually ask Fatima and Renad [two students] to help with this”* (CTA1). She also mentioned that she sometimes got questions from students with hearing difficulties, but she said she did not understand what they wanted most of the time. So, she felt obliged to neglect them to be able to complete the lesson before the time ran out.

4. **Observation session for CTA2:** At one occasion, the teacher asked students to go to a specific page and all students seemed to manage to do as directed apart from one student with SEN, who did not seem to understand what was going on. The teacher came close to her and helped her open her book on that page.

In the interview, when I asked this teacher whether this was how she usually helps students with SEN, she replied: *“of course. I always do my best, but these students really need more than what we do for them here. Either a special education teacher should come to help them in class or these students should go to special education schools”* (CTA2)

Only two teachers in schools B and C (i.e., CTB1 and CTC1) had a different approach. These are presented in 5 and 6 below.

5. **Observation sessions for CTB1 in two classes:** She used the projector to deliver the lesson. Students with SEN seemed more interested than they usually were in other classes. This teacher allocated few slides in her presentation to make things easier for students with SEN. She went slowly over these slides and when she was done, she asked all students a question to check understanding. On both occasions, none of the students with SEN raised her hand and when the teacher called their names to answer, they did not respond. In one occasion, one student with SEN got close to the teacher and held her hand while she was delivering the lesson. She tried to take her back to her seat, but the student insisted on holding her hand and so the teacher gave up and left her keep hold of her hand. She asked her questions about the lesson, but the student did not answer at all.

In the interview, I asked about what happened in the classroom when I was present. She said *“this student [referring to the student who held her hand] was crying when she arrived at school in the morning. I cuddled her and calmed her down and then she refused to leave me”* (CTB1). When I asked her whether she always uses the projector to deliver the lesson, she said *“this is not possible, but I try to use it as much as possible because I feel all students become more interested and more responsive, but not all teachers use it because it needs extra effort to design the lessons in this way”* (CTB1). This teacher sounded more passionate and caring than other teachers towards students with SEN during the interview.

6. **Observation sessions for CTC1 in two classes:** This teacher used a projector to deliver the lessons. When she finished, she asked questions to check understanding and on one occasion, a student with SEN raised her hand. She gave her priority and picked her to answer. However, the student could not answer. The teacher waited for some time and then she picked another student and asked her to say the correct answer and explain it to her classmates.

The interview with this teacher was before the observation sessions, so I could not ask for explanation of what happened in the classroom. However, based on the interview data, I knew that she had bought a portable projector because she thought this could help students with SEN better and the school would not provide her with one. She always tried to focus on students with SEN when time allowed. However, she had 65 students in the classroom in three classes joined together. These used to be joined together on two days every week. She stated that during those sessions, she could not give enough time to students with SEN.

The following is a summary of the findings about teachers' practice in classrooms:

1. Twelve teachers ignored students with SEN, justifying this by emphasizing that they felt that these students were the responsibility of special education teachers. Among these teachers:
 - One teacher gave them a pen and a sheet of paper to keep them busy during the lesson.
 - Two teachers asked a question to check the understanding of students with SEN, who could not respond as other students were laughing.
 - One teacher asked students without SEN to help those with SEN.
 - One teacher helped a student with SEN to open the course book.
2. Two teachers used the projector because they thought it made the lesson more interesting and that students with SEN would benefit more from such lessons. Both teachers sounded more passionate than other teachers during interviews and looked more caring during observations.

The following section focuses on the findings relating to the identified barriers to inclusion in these schools.

6.7 Barriers to Inclusion

A number of barriers to inclusion were identified based on what was expressed by educators in this study. Sometimes, some of these barriers were expressed directly in the interviews, but at other times they were deduced from what educators articulated.

6.7.1 Curriculum

One of the barriers that was emphasised by some educators and could be deduced from what most of them said was the current curriculum. It is important to note that while in schools A

and C no change or modification was introduced to schools' curriculum when inclusion was introduced, a new additional curriculum for students with SEN was introduced in school B. In one part of the interviews, educators focused on the difficulties they faced as a result of the unsuitability of the curriculum to students with SEN in schools A and C and to the extra effort to prepare lessons based on two different curricula in school B. I will present the cases from schools A and C, on one hand, and school B, on the other, separately.

In schools A and C, having a curriculum that did not consider student's special needs and using the teacher evaluation procedure followed by the Ministry of Education seemed to push teachers to ignore students with SEN. Teachers had to choose between a) covering the curriculum and paying little attention to the needs of some students and b) giving more time to students with special needs and failing to cover the educational content they were supposed to deliver. Most teachers felt they had to choose the former option because the Ministry of Education assessed them based on how much and how well they delivered the current curriculum. Support for and the development of students with SEN were not criteria that school inspectors used to assess teachers. All this was apparent in what the teachers in these schools said. For example, one teacher said:

"I really don't have time to pay attention to students with SEN. When the inspectors visit our classes, they focus on how much we have covered from the curriculum. They don't understand that we have students with SEN." (CTC4)

This focus on the time factor and inspectors' evaluation appeared in what the majority of teachers in schools A and C said. Even when inspectors were not mentioned, teachers

articulated something in line with what this teacher said: *“Teaching the curriculum to students with SEN is very difficult within the limitations of lesson time”* (CTA2).

Moreover, some teachers were clear that they felt that the curriculum needs to be modified. For example, the headteacher in school A said *“the curriculum needs to be adjusted to meet the ability of students with SEN. The curriculum is not ready”* (HTA1). In line with this, the deputy head in school C said: *“many teachers complain that the content of the lessons is not suitable for students with SEN. Something should be done here”* (DHC1). When I followed up by asking *“like what?”*, she stated *“curriculum modification”* (DHC1). This point was also raised directly by a special education teacher in school A: *“We need an alternative curriculum or to adjust the current one to make it suitable to the students with SEN”* (SETA1). In addition, a teacher in school C mentioned why the curriculum had not been changed or modified, a rationale she did not agree with as she articulated:

“Prior to including students with SEN, the curriculum needs to be adjusted to address their needs. We are trying to make them feel that they don’t differ from their peers in the classroom, but we, as teachers and syllabus designers, cannot treat them like this because they need a different approach to get the best out of them.” (CTC2)

Moving to school B, here an additional curriculum for students with SEN was introduced and teachers had to focus on teaching two different curricula in the same class at the same time. This put teachers under considerable pressure. However, since inspectors sent by the Ministry of Education would assess teachers based on the main classroom curriculum, they chose to ignore the other curriculum because they did not have time to do otherwise.

One teacher in this school pointed out that having two curricula requires extra effort to prepare from two different books. She expressed this saying *“I am required to teach two different curricula at the same time. Preparation from two books and different curricula is a very difficult job. Also, teaching time is very limited”* (CTB1). The same idea was stressed by another teacher in the same school who stated that *“The problem is that the curriculum we teach to students with SEN is very difficult. The big issue I am facing is that I am required to teach different curricula”* (CTB2). For a third teacher, the solution was focusing on the main curriculum and ignoring the other justifying this as *“the special education teachers can deal with students with SEN and I decided to focus on other students. Even the Ministry inspectors don’t ask me about the students with SEN”* (CTB4).

Based on this, the current curriculum in the three schools seems to be a barrier to inclusion.

6.7.2. Lack of training

The lack of teachers’ training was one of the most noticeable barriers in the three schools. It should be noted that prior to inclusion, no training on how to deal with the new situation was provided in any of these schools. To show how this lack of training negatively affected inclusion, the background to it needs to be explained. Based on my interviews with educators in the three schools (A, B and C), I found that the strategy adopted by teachers and advised by leaders to implement inclusion was to behave as they had before inclusion was introduced. The headteacher of school C explained the situation when teachers were informed about the inclusion programme:

“Teachers panicked when they heard they would have students with SEN in their classrooms. I asked them to keep doing things as normal because we want these

students to feel that they don't differ in any way and this was the purpose of their inclusion in the first place.” (HTC1)

Based on this, teachers at first continued with their methods of teaching and strategies to deliver the necessary educational content and to interact with students and react to their behaviours. A classroom teacher in school A described how she behaved when she first had students with SEN as follows:

“I tried first to continue teaching students as I normally do. I explained things in the same way as if nothing had changed. I noticed that some students with SEN started to cope and they only needed some more attention as they sometimes didn't get the idea from the initial explanation.” (CTA3)

Another teacher in same school was aware that this was not an ideal situation, but teachers had to follow this path because they didn't have an alternative:

“It was difficult in the beginning but because we didn't have an alternative, we had to continue teaching students as we used to before the arrival of students with SEN. This was not ideal, but it worked well with some students.” (CTA4)

This only sometimes proved successful. Some teachers started to modify their methods and strategies to make them suitable for all students in the classroom. This was clarified by a teacher in school C:

“We were asked to treat these students similarly to their non-disabled peers. This didn’t work simply because they have special needs, which we cannot neglect. We have to address these needs for inclusion to be successful.” (CTC2)

Another teacher in school A emphasised the same issue: *“Students with SEN are different from their non-disabled peers. Dealing with them as if they were similar is not fruitful. We have to find new ways that are suitable for them” (CTA2).*

When teachers’ traditional methods to deal with the new situation fail, they might feel frustrated which could lead them to ignore students with SEN. This was exactly what happened in the three schools under study. The following participants from schools A and B illustrated this as follows: *“we feel stressed because we don’t know what to do for these students. We tried everything we can but all in vain” (CTA1)* and *“I feel sympathy for them because I couldn’t teach them. I had to ignore them in class in order to be able to teach other students” (CTB1).* A third teacher in school B explained the situation as follows:

“Ignoring them was not my first approach. I tried so many times to find ways to teach them but nothing worked. I had to focus on other students because the school inspectors write their reports based on the performance of mainstream school students.” (CTB2)

The Ministry of Education strategy to address this problem was to employ special education teachers to help classroom teachers deal with students with SEN. However, special education teachers stated that they could not be available in classrooms because they perceived their job to be sitting in their offices and helping students referred to them by classroom teachers.

Furthermore, with high instances of misdiagnosis (see Section 7.8 below), special education teachers often found themselves unable to deal with the disabilities they faced in their schools. For example, a special education teacher in school A explained the difficulty as follows: *“It is a great challenge for us to deal with students with SEN. We don’t have the strategies to deal with them and most of the time we are asked to explain things that we don’t know”* (SETA1). This was also emphasised by two special education teachers in school B: *“classroom teachers believe that we can do what they cannot do, but we encounter in this school cases that we cannot deal with unfortunately”* (SETB2). She also said: *“It is not always easy for us to deal with students with SEN. We feel unable to do anything sometimes. Of course, this makes classroom teachers unhappy because they think we have the magic bullet to solve everything”* (SETB1).

The solution for this dilemma might be providing training to all teachers, which could teach them about how best to deal with students with SEN. This need for training was realized by many educators in the three schools. The following quotations come from the three schools which had introduced inclusion and shed light on this issue: *“We need training to help us understand how to teach students with SEN”* (DHA1); *“There is an urgent need of training to address sign language”* (CTA2); *“We need ongoing training on how to teach students with SEN”* (CTB2); *“there is a need for ongoing training to teach us how to teach students with SEN. We need training about how to evaluate students with SEN”* (CTB3); *“This will create an urgent need for training about sign language”* (CTA7); *“There is an urgent need for training for teachers”* (CTC2). This awareness of the need for training came directly from teachers’ realization of their inability to deal properly with students with SEN.

6.7.3 Lack of staff cooperation

The purpose of the presence of special education teachers in the three schools was to help classroom teachers in issues related to students with SEN. Classroom teachers believed that this help from their colleagues should not only be outside classrooms but also in classrooms as they delivered their lessons. The following was said by a classroom teacher from school A:

“The reason we have special education teachers is to help us with teaching students with SEN. They just sit in their offices doing nothing. They don’t even tell us what to do to help these students. When we ask them to come to the class, they refuse.”

(CTA4)

Another teacher in school B complained about this situation saying that *“Special education teachers do nothing. They say they don’t want to be with us in the classroom. This is very bad”* (CTB1). The same complaint was voiced by a teacher in school C, who said that *“special education teachers don’t help us and they don’t cooperate with us. They don’t enter the classroom”* (CTC1).

On the other hand, special education teachers refused to work as assistants inside the classroom and believed that they were only responsible for students referred to them by other teachers. They worked with these cases in their offices. A special education teacher in school A expressed this as follows: *“We face many difficulties in this school. The teachers ask us to work with them inside the classroom, but we can’t work like this. We ask them to send students to us”* (STA1). A special education teacher from school B complained about this saying that *“They [classroom teachers] keep nagging. They want us inside the classroom”* (STB2). A special education teacher from school C attributed this lack of cooperation to

classroom teachers being irresponsible as she stated: *“We can be of a great help if classroom teachers cooperate with us but they do what they want and they don’t listen to what we say”* (SETC1). There did not seem to be clear guidelines in the three schools about the responsibility of each teacher, which created a conflict between teachers.

Based on this, lack of cooperation prevails in all aspects of teaching forming an important barrier directly affecting the inclusion programme. The headteacher in school A seemed aware of this problem and its consequences. She said that *“I need more cooperation from mainstream teachers as well from special education teachers to make the inclusive program successful.”* (HTA1). The same issue was raised by the headteacher of school B *“The big problem in the school is that mainstream classroom teachers and special education teachers don’t get along. They even don’t say ‘H’ or ‘Good morning’ to each other”* (HTB1) and school C: *“We always have a meeting with teachers to communicate and discuss the school vision and the changes in school, but classroom teachers and special education teachers don’t help each other”* (HTC1).

6.7.4 Lack of effective leadership

It was apparent in this study that most school leaders lacked the leadership skills necessary to lead inclusion. This was apparent from both their practice in schools and what they said. In the findings about leaders’ inclusive practice (see Section 6.6 above), it was found that although leaders monitored classroom teachers, they did not know how to direct them in issues related to students with SEN as stated by the leaders in schools A, B and C. In addition, leaders in schools A and B followed some practices that they considered appropriate for inclusion, but they did not have the skills or respect to get teachers to accept them. For example, the deputy head in school A stated that she tried to direct teachers, but they did not

listen to her. The deputy head in school B had brought a specialist to provide training, but teachers did not respond to this and the training did not last longer than 30 minutes.

Furthermore, special education teachers and classroom teachers did not have clear guidelines about their responsibilities, reflecting the absence of the role of leaders in clarifying this aspect. In a previous section (Section 6.6), it was found that a general strategy followed by classroom teachers was ignoring students with SEN and they justified this by claiming that these students were the responsibility of special education teachers. On the other hand, another section (6.7.3) revealed that special education teachers refused to help students in classrooms and they justified this by saying that they were only responsible for students referred to them. This obviously demonstrates a lack of clarity about responsibilities and signals poor communication, lack of cooperation among staff, and ineffective leadership.

This finding is also supported by the findings reported about leaders' self-efficacy (see Section 6.5.2). It was found that the leaders of schools A and B were not confident about their ability to lead inclusion. Training leaders in how to lead and supervise other school staff was one of the suggestions advanced by both schools' leaders: "*I think there should be training on how to supervise teachers with SEN*" (HTA1). The headteacher of school B stated that:

"I suppose there should be some sort of training for headteachers who lead schools for students with disabilities [...] We need to know how to supervise SEN teachers and what to focus on when we try to evaluate them." (HTB1)

Other suggestions went as far as employing leaders who have special education qualifications: "*Leaders should have special education qualifications [...] The inclusive*

programme in this school needs to have its own administration and leadership” (HTA1). The headteacher of school B also suggested that: “We need deputy heads specialized in special education” (HTB1). All this demonstrates that leaders in schools A and B were aware of their lack of skills to lead inclusion. Furthermore, some of their teachers also echoed this. For example, one teacher stated that “the school’s leaders lack the abilities to guide the school effectively” (CTC1), an opinion shared by CTC4.

6.7.5 Lack of parental involvement

Parents of students with a disability play a key role in helping school teachers understand their child’s needs. When parents meet with teachers and discuss issues related to their children’s needs and behaviors, teachers become more informed about the students in their classes and more able to deal with them. Without this type of cooperation and in the light of the fact that schools do not have specialists to diagnose students’ disabilities and provide clear guidelines on what works best for these students, lack of parental involvement becomes a barrier. This is indeed what was identified by many participants from the three schools. The headteacher of school C explained the importance of involving students’ parents:

“We hold meetings in which parents of students with SEN and classroom teachers meet face to face and discuss issues related to the needs and behavior of these children. We believe these meetings truly help us understand the situation better and help us deal with the students better.” (HTC1)

This shows that there is an awareness and appreciation of the role of parents in making inclusion successful in school C, where the leaders organized meetings to involve parents.

However, the situation in schools A and B was different as no meetings with parents were held, although educators were aware of the importance of such procedures. The headteacher of school A articulated this as follows:

“It is important to see the students’ parents and especially those who have children with SEN. Unfortunately, when we ask them to come to school, most of them don’t come. Some teachers call them to ask something, but the parents most of the time don’t open up or provide useful information.” (HTA1)

The headteacher of school B said: *“One thing that might help us to deal with students with SEN better is communicating with parents. However, we still don’t have a strategy to involve them.” (HTB1).*

6.7.6 Physical location and facilities

The data collected from the three schools showed that physical location and facilities were important barriers to inclusion. The suitability of school buildings and their facilities were not taken into consideration when the decision to introduce the inclusion programmes were made. Schools were set up to be suitable for students without disabilities. When students with SEN were admitted to these schools, no changes to the schools’ environments or facilities was introduced. As one headteacher said:

“There are no facilities to serve students with SEN. This was a big mistake as we should have taken this into consideration before including these students. For example, there are no lifts or escalators and the toilets are not accessible to students with SEN.” (DHA1)

Classrooms were also not prepared for the inclusion of students with SEN and in one teacher's words:

“Classrooms are suitable for everything but students with SEN. Classrooms are small relative to the number of students and we have to use the board to explain things. There are no smartboards, projectors or any aids that help with teaching and learning. While this might be OK for mainstream school students, it is not for students with SEN.” (CTA1)

The same complaints were voiced by leaders and practitioners in the other schools with inclusion programmes (schools B and C).

The schools in this study were located in three storey buildings. The offices of the headteacher, the deputy and other staff were located on the ground floor and stairs led to the first and second floors where classrooms are situated. Classrooms were designed to fit 20 to 30 students. There was a school yard in front of the building where students usually spent their time during breaks. Toilets were in one corner of the school yard. This description applies to all four schools under study. None of the four schools were equipped with any facilities suitable for disabled students. The nature of schools requires students with disabilities to be accompanied by an assistant all day, but none of the schools had assistants for this purpose. Teachers found themselves responsible for taking these students up to their classes and down to the yard during breaks or to the toilet, which might occur during lessons. Some classes had 7 to 10 students with SEN and sometimes all of them needed this type of assistance at the same time.

The fact that schools were not prepared to accommodate students with SEN created many problems for these students and affected their education and that of other students. This was expressed by one teacher in school B as follows:

“The big problem is that we have to interrupt the lesson to take these students to the toilet [...] I arrive in class two minutes early but sometimes I don’t see some students and I know from their classmates that they are in the school yard. I go after them to bring them up to the class as they cannot come by themselves. So, this takes about 10 to 15 minutes out of the session time. Imagine if one or two of them want to go to the toilet after that. I am talking here about something I face nearly every day.” (CTB1)

All this takes time from the lesson, which leads to teachers failing to cover the educational content of the curriculum and affects all students as well as teachers’ assessments conducted by school inspectors. One teacher in school A went into detail:

“Inspectors send reports about our performance to the Ministry of Education and they tell them that we fall short of covering the curriculum. The ministry keeps sending warnings to us, but they don’t take the reasons for that into account. It is an unbearable situation and I am seriously thinking about retiring. Nobody listens to our complaints.” (CTA5)

Another teacher in the same school echoed this and added: *“This puts me under great pressure to cover the curriculum” (CTA4).*

6.7.7 Resources

The data showed that lack of resources was a barrier to successfully including students with SEN. Teachers in the three schools (A, B and C) relied mainly on whiteboards to deliver their lessons. This was how they had been delivering their lessons for a long time and they considered this method to be successful when they did not have students with SEN in classrooms. However, the presence of students with SEN made this method ineffective according to one teacher in school B who said *“the classrooms we have are primitive. We don’t even have a projector”* (CTB2). Another teacher in school A complained about this, saying that *“A lot of classroom resources are missing. It is not our fault that we don’t have them and the absence of these resources makes our mission much more difficult”* (CTA1). This is because these students require methods that can capture their attention to be able to focus on what is presented to them. One teacher from school C suggested:

“Visit the classrooms and see for yourself. You will see a board and desks. Is this suitable for students with SEN? Where is the smart technology that can make learning easier for them? Nobody listens to what we say.” (CTC2)

Some of the resources highlighted by teachers in the three schools included a projector and smartboard. For a teacher in school C, the case was as follows

“In order for inclusive education to be implemented successfully, there is an urgent need to provide the school with appropriate equipment and improve school facilities to help students with SEN to use school facilities freely without obstacles. The

classroom needs to be fitted with the necessary equipment which will help students with SEN to understand lessons easily.” (CTC1)

Other resources lacked in these schools and highlighted by the teachers were books and journals about students with SEN. Some teachers believed that when they taught students with SEN, they sometimes needed to consult books and journals in order to be able to do so effectively. What was considered a good course of action some time ago might be not good today in the light of new research findings. So, teachers need to be informed about up-to-date information in this field for inclusion to be improved. A teacher from school A highlighted this issue:

“I sometimes think that it is my duty to inform myself about the situation of students with SEN and learn about how best to teach them. There is no library in the school to borrow books or read journal articles, which might be very informative and might help.” (CTA3)

A teacher from school B agreed: *“Unfortunately, they don’t tell us how to deal with these students and they don’t give us the chance to look at what is new in the field to understand these students’ needs better” (CTB1).*

Some teachers also pointed out to the lack of language labs and special equipment used by students with SEN: *“there are no extra hearing aid devices to be used in case students with SEN leave theirs at home” (HTA1);* The headteacher of school B shared the same opinion: *“there is a failure to provide necessary equipment such as special desks and chairs suitable for their needs. There is no play room for those who are hyperactive” (HTB1).*

6.7.8 Large class sizes and shortage of staff

In the three schools where there were inclusion programmes, large class size seemed to be hampering teachers' efforts to include students with SEN. Classrooms had a large number of students, more than teachers could manage or control. For example, a teacher in school A said: *"you expect a class to have between 15 and 25 students, but our classes have more than 35. This is far more than it should be"* (CTA3). The same problem was echoed by teachers in school B: *"The large number of students makes it difficult for us to deal with all students equally"* (CTB1). Teachers in school C also highlighted the problem: *"It is unbelievable. I have 38 students in one classroom"* (CTC2).

Students with SEN need extra attention from their teachers, which requires additional time. However, in the three schools under study, the amount of time allowed to cover the curriculum was the same as was allowed before the start of inclusion. Furthermore, the large number of students in the classroom prevented teachers from giving special attention to their students with SEN. Teachers found themselves under great pressure as they had to cover the curriculum and address their students' special needs within a very limited time: *"the length of the lesson is too short to focus on those students with SEN"* (CTC2). Another teacher in school A complained about the same issue and suggested what should be done as follows:

"The number of students in the classroom should not be more than 15 in order to allow us to give equal attention to each individual student. Also, lessons should be more than 40 minutes or the number of lessons should be increased so that we can cover the curriculum." (CTA5)

Moreover, educators in the three schools believed that there was a shortage of staff, which created a barrier for the inclusion programme. Classroom teachers found it difficult to manage classes with students with SEN and asked for classroom assistants:

“The number of special education teachers and general classroom teachers is small in comparison to the large numbers of students with SEN and their non-disabled peers. Special education teachers teach 16 lessons and there are only 8 teachers. There should be more special education teachers, classroom teachers and classroom assistants.” (HTB1)

Some schools’ staff believed that the condition of some students with SEN required staff such as doctors and nurses to be available who can offer medical support. For example, a teacher in school A said: *“Some students have very serious conditions and we don’t know how to treat them and we need to have a female doctor or a nurse in school to help in dealing with these students”* (CTA2).

6.7.9 Misdiagnosis

The last barrier that the findings revealed was the misdiagnosis of the type of disability that students with SEN had. When inclusion programmes were approved by schools’ headteachers, it was on the basis of admitting students with specific types of disabilities. The headteachers in the three schools mentioned this. The headteacher of school A said: *“I agreed on including students with hearing loss only”* (HTA1). This was also stated by the headteacher of school B: *“the plan was to include students with learning disabilities”* (HTB1). This was also consistent with what the headteacher in school C stated: *“the Ministry of Education promised that they would send students with general learning disabilities only*

and that was why I approved it” (HTC1). Accordingly, school plans were drawn and special education teachers were chosen based on their knowledge and ability to deal with those types of disabilities, as the headteacher of school A emphasised: *“I still remember that I held a number of meetings with school staff and informed them about the change and we started discussing what we needed to cope with the new situation”* (HTA1). Similar feelings were expressed by school C’s headteacher: *“when we chose our special education teachers, it was on the basis of their ability to deal with students with this type of disability”* (HTC1). However, the Ministry of Education started sending students without taking the school’s criteria for inclusion into account and the schools did not have standard procedures for diagnosis. In all cases, schools did not have the power to reject students sent by the Ministry of Education. The headteacher of school A said the following: *“we ended up having students with various types of disabilities and they really do not fit in here, but we cannot reject them”* (HTA1). The headteacher of school B explained her inability to reject students sent by the Ministry as follows:

“The Ministry has been sending children with different types of difficulties and I cannot say no because I might get fired if I do. They claim that they have standard procedures for inclusion and that they know more than we do as regards what is best for these students.” (HTB1)

The same issue was noted by the headteacher of school C who explained the teachers’ attitudes as follows:

“Teachers in this school always complain that they have students with severe learning difficulties and they don’t know what to do for them. We agreed first to include only

those with mild to moderate difficulties. We don't have a diagnostic procedure in the school, so we cannot reject these students.” (HTC1)

This situation led to the unplanned presence of students with different types of disabilities. This finally affected the educational process and the individuals involved.

We move next to the findings from the post training stage

6.8 Post-training Stage Findings

The main findings from the interviews and observations conducted in the first stage of this research with 32 leaders and practitioners in four schools in Saudi Arabia were that the majority of educators had insufficient knowledge about inclusive education and negative attitudes towards it triggered by negative beliefs about self-efficacy to teach students with SEN or to lead inclusion. Issues were also identified in relation to the suitability of the school environment for these students, the guidance provided by the school leaders to practitioners and how to work with the abilities of these students compared to students without SEN. Moreover, ignoring students with SEN seemed to be the prevalent strategy by most practitioners. The participants also identified many barriers to inclusion. These included the current curriculum in schools, lack of training, lack of staff cooperation, lack of effective leadership, lack of parental involvement, lack of suitable facilities, lack of resources, large classes, shortage of staff and misdiagnosis. It is believed in this research that although some factors hampering inclusion relating to the absence of resources and facilities can only be eliminated by making them available, many other factors affecting the participants' attitudes such as lack of knowledge and low self-confidence can be changed through providing training to these educators.

The training workshop provided as part of this study in the four schools was attended by 46 leaders and practitioners, 17 of whom had participated in the first phase of the study (3 leaders, 13 classroom teachers and 1 special education teacher). The purpose of the training session was twofold. The secondary reason was to give something back to educators who kindly agreed to participate in this study. Indeed, all of those who undertook the training were appreciative of the experience and most of them expressed their gratitude at the end of the session. The second, and more important, reason for this was to help them understand the importance of training in making inclusive education successful through testing whether it could have any effect on the attitudes, beliefs or practices of teachers and other school staff working with students with SEN. This section presents the findings of the training session in terms of its effects on teachers' attitudes, their beliefs and practice.

In the first stage of the study, attitudes were assumed to consist of three components interacting together. These were affective information, cognitive information and behavioural information expressed as feelings, beliefs and reactions, respectively. What the participants said about whether they felt inclusion appropriate or not and supported it or not were considered as feelings and thus the voiced attitudes; what they said about why they believed they held such attitudes were interpreted as the underlying beliefs. Moreover, their behaviour inside schools and classrooms was taken as their reaction. The same framework was also adopted in the analysis of the data from this stage to allow comparisons to be made and changes to be detected.

We start first with the attitudes.

6.8.1 Training effect on attitudes

As reported in Section 6.3 above, all participants, except for the headteachers of schools A, B and C and one classroom teacher (CTA5), had negative attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream schools. This was expressed in terms of being ‘inappropriate’, ‘unwise’ and/or ‘crazy’. The attitudes of the 17 participants who participated in the training workshop based on the second stage interviews are summarised in Table 6.1. The first stage attitudes from these specific participants are also included in the table to allow for comparisons. Some changes in teachers’ attitudes in the post-training stage can be observed. These are highlighted in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: *Change of attitudes after training*

Attitudes		
Participant	Before Training	After Training
DHA1	“This is crazy”	“I still believe it is not appropriate for our school”
CTA1	“I think including students with SEN in the mainstream classroom is not appropriate” “It is very difficult to include students with SEN”	“inclusion might be the best thing we do for students with SEN”
CTA2	“I didn’t feel positive at all about inclusive education”	“inclusion is something good”
CTA3	“It is inappropriate”	“we must help them with this”
CTA4	“It is inappropriate”	“Inclusion is beneficial to students with SEN”
CTA5	“Inclusive education is very appropriate”	“Inclusion is better for students with SEN”
CTA8	“I am completely against this”	“To be honest, I am not convinced it is the right approach for these students ”
DHB1	“I don’t think it is appropriate to include students with SEN in normal classrooms with their non-disabled peers”	“Mainstream schools, under current circumstances, are not the right place for students with SEN”
CTB2	“It is inappropriate”	“Inclusion is fabulous”
CTB3	“It is inappropriate”	“inclusion is not the best option”
CTB4	“We shouldn’t have accepted this from the beginning”	“I was against it from the start”
SETB2	“It is unwise”	“I agree that inclusion is something good...”
CTC1	“I am doing my best, but it is truly inappropriate”	“inclusion is truly a great approach to education ”
CTC2	“It is unwise”	“After your workshop, I feel passionate about teaching students with SEN.”
DHD1	“I feel it will be difficult to include students with SEN in mainstream classrooms ”	“It is a good concept, but it doesn’t work here”
CTD1	“it is the worst thing that could happen to these students”	“I thought first that inclusion is inappropriate, but it seems that I was mistaken”
CTD3	“I reject inclusion”	“I totally agree with everything you said regarding inclusive education. I think students should be included”

Regardless of how short the training was, it seemed to have a positive effect as some teachers started to show acceptance of the idea of inclusion. The table clearly shows that these educators (except CTA5) had a negative attitude prior to training exhibited by their descriptions of inclusion as “inappropriate” and “unwise”. However, in the post-training stage, 10 out of these 17 educators changed their attitudes describing inclusion as “the best thing we do”, “something good”, “we must help them with this”, “beneficial”, “better for students with SEN”, “fabulous”, “a great approach to education”, “I feel passionate about teaching students with SEN”, “I was mistaken” and “students should be included”. One teacher (CTA5) had positive attitude in both stages. However, six educators (3 leaders and 3 leaders) held negative attitudes in the first stage and did not change it after training.

We move next to the beliefs underlying these attitudes.

6.8.2 Training effect on beliefs

It was found in Sections 6.3 and 6.5 above that educators in the four schools had negative beliefs about different aspects such as school preparedness, teachers’ ability to teach students with SEN and leaders’ ability to lead inclusion, as well as self-efficacy in teaching these students or leading their inclusion. These were assumed to be partly the trigger for the negative attitudes held by participants. Section 6.6.4 also showed that all participants had religious beliefs about disability, but these were mostly positive and hence cannot apparently be associated with negative attitudes. The aim in this section is to uncover the beliefs triggering the change of attitudes. In line with the first stage interviews, for those conducted in the second stage, anything that was said by participants to justify their attitudes was considered the underlying belief triggering the attitude. Table 6.2 presents the participants’ beliefs in the second stage, but also their beliefs from the first stage are included to facilitate

comparison. Only beliefs of educators who changed their attitudes are reported as no difference between first and second stage beliefs was detected in the words of those who did not change their attitudes.

Table 6.2: *Beliefs underlying attitudes before and after training*

Beliefs		
Participant	Before Training	After Training
CTA1	“they need special care and this is not possible to provide in this school”	“they will learn better in inclusive schools” “these students will be accepted by people around them and it is their right”
CTA2	“this will put teachers between two situations, either ignore students with SEN or ignore the curriculum and not finish it on time”	“including these students in mainstream classrooms is good for them”
CTA3	“This is because we don’t have experienced teachers and suitable facilities for them”	“the inclusion of students with SEN helps them develop socially” “Students with SEN are human beings just like us and they have human rights to be taught in the same way as others”
CTA4	“we don’t have the infrastructure needed for this”	“because it helps them develop” “We must give these students their right to be treated equally”
CTB2	“we don’t understand these students and we can’t teach them”	“I think those students have the ambition to learn and we should help them and accept them [...] but we need more training.”
SETB2	“because there are many obstacles... teachers cannot deal with students with SEN”	“as it helps students with SEN educationally and socially, but we need to put more effort into it”
CTC1	“we don’t have the abilities and the knowledge on how to communicate with them and teach them correctly”	“because it focuses on treating all human beings equally” “they are not different, but they learn in a different way”
CTC2	“the school is not prepared and even the classroom. You have seen the building; is it appropriate for such students to move around?”	“they are human beings like us and they should receive equal attention”
CTD1	“It is very difficult for me to engage with students with SEN in the classroom as I don’t know how to teach them as I don’t have experience in this field”	“it develops students with SEN better.” “They are born like this and only God knows the reason. Above all, they are human beings and should be treated equally in every sense.”
CTD3	“it leads for a stressful situation for teachers in the classroom”	“I feel this is their right to be educated with non-disabled peers”

The table shows that these teachers justified their attitudes in the first stage referring to their schools' inability to provide special care, the teachers' inability to handle the curriculum and deal with students with SEN, teachers' lack of experience, absence of facilities and the stressful situation that the presence of these students created. However, in the second stage, obviously different beliefs were expressed by the same teachers. The beliefs centred on the educational and social benefits of inclusion and the human rights of students with SEN. This does not necessarily show that educators abandoned their beliefs stated in the first stage, but it clearly indicates that their focus has shifted towards the benefits brought to these students and their rights to equal experiences in education.

We move next to examine whether this affected teachers' practice inside classrooms.

6.8.3 The effect of training on practice

Before the training, ignoring students with SEN was the most widely used strategy among teachers in the three schools. To examine how training changed this practice, observations were conducted in 11 classrooms for teachers who took part in the training workshop. Changes in practice were detected in the second stage and these appeared in the form of new strategies followed by some teachers to engage students in the lesson more effectively. The practices of these particular 11 teachers in both stages of the research are summarized in Table 6.3 below. The highlighted rows in the table show the change in practice.

Table 6.3: *Change of practice after training*

Practice		
Participant	Before Training	After Training
CTA1	She asked students without SEN to help students with SEN understand the lesson	She continued with the same strategy. However, she seemed to check their understanding every time she presented a new idea.
CTA2	The teacher got closer to student with SEN and helped her open the course book	She did the same. In addition, she moved students with SEN (N=3) and seated them beside students without SEN.
CTA3	The teacher asked a student with SEN a question to check understanding	Teacher asked students to go to page 79 of the book. Teacher got closer to a student with SEN and checked if she was on the right page. She checked students' understanding more often.
CTA4	Ignoring students with SEN	Ignoring students with SEN
CTA5	Ignoring students with SEN	Ignoring students with SEN
CTA8	Ignoring students with SEN	Ignoring students with SEN
CTB2	Ignoring students with SEN. She gave students with SEN sheets of paper and pens to keep them busy.	Teacher gave instructions to the whole class and got closer to students with SEN and checked their understanding
CTB3	The teacher asked a student with SEN a question to check understanding	She did the same thing
CTB4	Ignoring students with SEN	She gave a task to all students. She then approached students with SEN and asked them to do a different task from their course book
CTC1	She used a projector to explain the lesson. She regularly checked understanding of students with SEN and made them a priority	She did the same thing
CTC2	Ignoring students with SEN	Teacher asked a question. A student with SEN raised her hand. Teacher picked her to answer. The student hesitated and the teacher encouraged her. The student answered correctly and the teacher praised her and asked for a round of applause

In the first stage, with the exception of CTC1 who used the projector to facilitate understanding of the lesson among students with SEN and checked their understanding

regularly, all other teachers either ignored these students completely or did one of the following: asked their peers to help them, helped them open their books, or asked questions to check their understanding. Six out of 11 teachers exhibited different practices in the second stage: checking understanding appeared more often and in addition to helping students open their books and asking peers to help students with SEN, these practices were adopted by more teachers. Moreover, new practices were detected in the second stage in some teachers. One teacher (CTA2) seated students with SEN beside their non-disabled peers. Another teacher (CTB4) explained the lesson and set a different task to students with SEN from their curriculum. Also, a third teacher (CTC2) encouraged a student with SEN to participate and praised her.

6.9 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of a study exploring inclusive education in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia based on interviews with school leaders and practitioners and observations of their practice. Based on examining what understanding these educators had about inclusion, it was found that the majority of them (N=9 leaders and N=17 teachers) lacked sufficient knowledge as they conceived it to be merely locational integration. This majority focused on the social aspect of this integration, with no mention of educational or human rights aspects and the responsibility of schools in ensuring them. A small minority of participants (N=6 teachers) touched on these aspects of inclusion, but still with a limited focus on one or another aspect.

The exploration of these educators' attitudes towards inclusive education revealed that the majority of leaders and practitioners held negative attitudes about inclusion as "inappropriate", "unwise" or "crazy". Digging deeper to understand the beliefs underlying

these voiced attitudes uncovered that the educators believed that their schools were not ready for inclusion, the teachers were not experienced or trained to teach students with SEN and these students differed in their abilities from their non-disabled peers. However, only three leaders and one teacher expressed supportive attitudes towards inclusion considering it 'appropriate'. Although this minority of educators expressed similar views elsewhere in the interviews to those expressed by the majority, when they were asked about why they thought inclusion was "appropriate", they stated that it was because of the social benefits inclusion brings to students with SEN (3 leaders) and because it is a human right for students with SEN (1 teacher). In addition, the difference between positive and negative attitude holders might be due to their position at school as headteachers. In contrast, all the other leaders and all teachers (except one) were supportive of inclusion..

Furthermore, since Saudi society is highly religious, the assumption that religious beliefs held by educators about disability might have an influence on their attitudes was also explored in the interviews conducted in this study. It was found that all educators (except one teacher) believed that helping people with disabilities is a religious obligation for which God will reward those who perform it well and will punish those who do not. All of them (except three teachers) perceived disability to be a reward or a test from God to people with disabilities and/or people surrounding them to purify their sins. Only three teachers stated that disability might be a punishment from God for wrongdoing. Therefore, because the religious beliefs held by our participants were mainly positive, they could not be associated with their negative attitudes towards inclusion.

However, examining the beliefs of educators about their self-efficacy in teaching students with SEN or leading inclusion revealed different findings, which might demonstrate a link

with educators' attitudes. It was found that all educators (except for leaders in schools C and D) exhibited low self-confidence about their abilities to deal with students with SEN, communicate with them or teach them and to implement inclusion. Such widely held negative beliefs in the four schools can then be interpreted as a factor explaining why educators had unsupportive attitudes towards inclusion.

Investigating educators' practice in schools and classrooms revealed consistent attitudes. None of the schools was found to have a plan to implement inclusion and any problems arising from the process were dealt with when they came up. Leaders lacked knowledge about special education and hence left issues related to students with SEN to teachers without providing guidance. Most classroom teachers, on the other hand, decided to ignore students with SEN because they did not know how to teach them and they could not give them sufficient time due to pressure to cover the curriculum. However, some efforts to make inclusion successful were found. Some leaders organized meetings between classroom and special education teachers to enhance their cooperation and between teachers and students' parents to understand students better. In addition, some teachers tried to include students with SEN by using the projector to make the lesson easier for them.

The study also found a number of barriers to inclusion. One of the most important was the current curriculum. When inclusion started in schools A and C, no modification to the curriculum was made and so teachers faced difficulties in using it to teach students with SEN and although a new curriculum for students with SEN was introduced in school B, teachers did not have time and were not willing to teach using two different course books. Lack of training was another barrier as teachers did not know how to teach and deal with students with SEN. In addition, the lack of staff cooperation caused by the lack of clarity about their

roles and responsibilities towards students with SEN was an obvious barrier. The lack of effective leadership and of parental involvement were also found to negatively influence the implementation of inclusion. Other uncovered barriers included the lack of resources and facilities suitable for students with SEN, large classes and shortage of staff as well as misdiagnosis of the type of disability that students had.

Finally, the post-training findings suggested that some changes in attitudes and underlying beliefs occurred. A good number of those who held negative attitudes prior to the training voiced positive attitudes afterwards. When the underlying beliefs were explored, it was found that participants shifted their focus from what was lacking in their schools (beliefs they used to justify their negative attitudes) to the educational and social benefits of inclusion to students with SEN. This change also was reflected in their practice as some of them started to use strategies to include students with SEN in their classrooms.

These findings will be discussed in the next chapter in the light of the previous literature reviewed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented the findings of a study comprising of interviews with 32 school leaders and practitioners and observations of their inclusive practices in schools and classrooms prior to and following a training workshop. The participants belonged to four schools varying in their levels of experience in teaching students with SEN (10 years in school A, 7 years in school B, 5 years in school C and no experience in school D). They had varying levels of teaching experience in general education schools (2 to 24 years) and held different types of degrees (special and general education) and levels of degrees (mostly Bachelor's but some Diplomas, Master's and PhDs). The objectives of this study were to explore the following:

- I. Saudi teachers' understanding of inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.
- II. Saudi teachers' attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.
- III. Saudi teachers' inclusive practices and how these are influenced by individual teachers' attitudes and beliefs.
- IV. The factors influencing Saudi teachers' attitudes and inclusive practices.
- V. The extent to which training can change teachers' attitudes and the inclusion process.

This chapter discusses the findings of this study in the light of the literature reviewed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. The main finding arising from the previous chapter is that the majority of school staff lacked sufficient knowledge about inclusion, had negative attitudes towards inclusion, had positive religious beliefs about disabilities and had doubts about their abilities

to implement inclusive education. Some of these factors, in addition to a number of identified barriers to inclusive education, prevented educators from following inclusive practices. However, a promising outcome was that exposure to a relatively short (one-day) training session led to a change in general attitudes towards inclusive education and some of teachers' behaviours in classrooms. Unlike previous studies in the Saudi context (e.g., Abduljabber, 1994; Al-Ahmadi, 2009; Al-Faiz, 2006; Alhudaithi, 2015; Alquraini, 2011; AlShahrani 2014; Aseery, 2016) which located the problem of inclusive education in educators' attitudes and the non-personal factors influencing them (e.g., preparedness of setting to inclusion), it will be argued throughout the chapter that personal factors and specifically educators' insufficient knowledge of inclusion and their beliefs about their own abilities to implement inclusive education are major problems. These are the drivers behind the development of negative attitudes and the main barrier to creating proper inclusive practices and this may be why a short training session was effective in beginning to change attitudes and behaviours to some extent.

7.2 Educators' Understanding of Inclusion

The findings of the study showed that there is a variation in both leaders' and teachers' understanding of the concept of inclusion. These understandings will be discussed in this section in the light of the previous research reviewed in Chapters 2 and 4. It will be argued in this section that the majority of these understandings clearly show a lack of knowledge about inclusion.

It was discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis that the development of thought on what constitutes the best provision of education has passed through three main stages, conceptualized and put into practice as the segregation view, integration view and inclusion

view, influenced to a great extent by three general perceptions of disability captured in terms of the medical model, social model and human rights model, respectively. The understandings of inclusion voiced by the majority of participants in this study can be understood in the light of medical and social models and thus they are more likely to be segregation and integration rather than inclusion views. Still, although the remaining minority of educators expressed an understanding that is consistent with what inclusion is, as characterized in Chapter 2, their understanding was restricted to limited aspects of inclusion.

Starting with those understandings which will be interpreted as having been affected by medical views of disability and consistent with segregation arguments, two leaders regarded inclusion as putting students with SEN into mainstream schools but in special classes to remove the pressure to keep up with their non-disabled peers, the danger of being ridiculed by them, and to focus on meeting their emotional and psychological needs. It is widely perceived that segregating students with SEN in special education schools was based on the medical model, which sees disability as an individualised problem that requires special help (Dixon, 2005; Shogren et al., 2017). In the segregation view, it was thought that special education institutions are more appropriate because students with SEN are situated in a less pressured environment where they do not need to ‘keep up’ with other students without SEN (Bauer, 1994; Low, 2007). Although these two participants did not call for segregating students with SEN in special centres, the first wanted to keep them away from their non-disabled peers and the second saw their individualized problems as deriving from emotional and psychological needs. Therefore, these participants’ views seem to be consistent with the medical and psychological reasons cited by those who supported segregation.

Having educators in Saudi Arabia who still view disability as a medical problem that needs special attention is not surprising, as this was also found in previous research conducted in the same context (Alanazi, 2012; Alothman, 2014). In Alothman's study, some teachers expressed views demonstrating that they believed special centres were better for students with SEN because they would provide better care and others maintained that students with SEN should be kept away from non-disabled peers in order not to be bullied. Alothman's participants and these two leaders in this study did not seem to be aware that introducing an inclusive education system, as stated by Mitchell (2014) among others, means acknowledging the rights of students with SEN to be treated indiscriminately. This lack of awareness of the rights of students with SEN, and thus understanding the purpose of inclusion policy, is driving these educators to suggest segregating them inside mainstream schools or in special centres in order to keep them away from bullying. Had these educators been aware of this right, they could have looked for other ways to save their students from bullying.

Segregating students in special centres was not mentioned by the majority of our participants, possibly because they were expressing their views while remembering the policy of the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education that students with SEN belong to mainstream schools (Chapter 4). In other words, they tried to frame their views on what was best for students with SEN within the inclusion policy forced on their schools by an authority they could not contradict. Based on this, they thought that the inclusion policy would meet its objective simply by having students with SEN inside mainstream schools and all other decisions relating to the education of these students were left to the teacher. If this is truly the case, most educators should consistently understand inclusion to be including students with SEN in mainstream schools, but they would vary on what should be done after that. Indeed, the two participants discussed here mention integrating students with SEN in mainstream schools and while the

first suggested segregating them in special classes inside mainstream schools because it is better for them, the second stated that the focus should be on their emotional and psychological needs. This view was not restricted to these two participants but also applies to the majority of participants in the study as it will be shown below.

Seven leaders and 17 practitioners understood inclusion of students with SEN to be the physical presence of students with SEN in mainstream schools or classes. Some went further to state that this is a more suitable environment for these students and others explained that this is because it allows for social interaction inside schools and facilitates social interaction outside school. It seems that these understandings are influenced by the social model and thus they are integration rather than inclusion views. Back in Chapter 2 of this thesis, it was discussed that integrating students with SEN in mainstream schools (the integration view) was based on the *social model*, which considered the society to be disabling when it does not account for their individual needs and called for students with SEN to be integrated into mainstream schools to allow them to participate equally with their non-disabled peers (Barton, 2003; Hardie and Tilly, 2012). In the integration view, students with SEN are thought to be situated in a less restrictive environment where they share some classes with their peers without SEN but would have other classes away from their peers inside the same school (Ashman and Elkins, 2002). The integration system focused on the social benefits to students with SEN as it allows a more natural interaction between students with and without SEN (Booth, 2005; Foreman, 2005; Zions, 2005). The understanding of this majority of the participants in this research seems to be consistent with these arguments of the integration view.

On the face of it, these understandings (of 9 leaders and 17 practitioners in total) seem unproblematic as they focus on the psychological and emotional needs of students with SEN or the social benefits they would obtain from the social interaction they would be involved in. However, what seems to be missing is the educational dimension and the responsibility of schools and teachers to lead inclusion. For example, two teachers referred to inclusion as: *“integrating students with SEN with their peers in mainstream classrooms to adapt to the environment and providing them with special care to increase their educational level through learning from their peers”* (CTA5) and *“an attempt to create a favourable environment where students with SEN get along with their peers in mainstream classrooms and learn better”* (CTD3). So, they seem to view inclusion as only placement in the school and they hold students with SEN responsible for adapting to the new environment. Even when ‘better learning’ was mentioned, it was associated with what students with SEN would obtain from peers rather than the school or teachers. They seem totally unaware that inclusion involves providing education that is deemed suitable through redesigning curricula to fit all students. Although, as the findings in the previous chapter showed, some educators in this majority pointed out that the curriculum needs to be modified or changed, this was only because they experienced difficulties teaching students with SEN using the current curriculum. Thus, it was not part of their understanding of what inclusion implies, but a difficulty they were facing when teaching students with SEN (this will be discussed further in Section 7.5 below).

These views of the majority can only be understood as integration views. Many researchers pointed out that these were the characteristics of schools that adopted integration in the west. Mittler (2000), for example, argued that making system or curriculum changes was not the focus of such schools, as they were mainly concerned with the physical placement of students with SEN in them. Also, Vislie (2003, p.20) states that “integration did not have much focus

on teaching and learning or on classroom processes.” This is exactly the case for the majority of educators whose views are under discussion and the schools they work in.

Alanazi (2015) found similar findings based on a study in Saudi Arabia and, following an argument advanced by Stockall and Gartin (2002), she perceived having such a shared understanding among educators to be positive as it avoids the marginalization of some students with SEN. She argues that although these students do not experience a curriculum that is suitable for them, they would be enabled “to develop specific skills which they would need for everyday life outside school and in later life” (Alanazi, 2015, p. 235). However, viewing these views of educators positively and justifying them based on the social benefits students with SEN would gain does not help to advance the educational system in Saudi Arabia. What is problematic in this shared understanding is that it is not based on knowledge of inclusive education, a system that these educators are assumed to be adopting. Moreover, if we argue that the merely physical placement is positive because of the social benefits, why would we not accept the argument that segregation is also positive because of the special care and education that students with SEN receive? Such a view of the situation of students with SEN in schools in Saudi Arabia will not help to develop inclusion. What is needed is to identify what is missing from this shared understanding and to explore its effects on classroom practices and this might help eventually in enhancing the quality of provided education. It is argued throughout this chapter and the rest of this thesis that this lack of understanding of inclusion is one of the major problems facing the inclusive education system in Saudi Arabia and the findings in the previous chapter relating to how it reflects educators’ attitudes and their practices support this argument, which are discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

Similar findings to these arising from the majority of our participants were also reached by Alhammad (2017), who conducted his study in the same context. Alhammad categorised his participants as being aware of what inclusion means and did not highlight any issues with his participants' understanding of inclusion, although almost half of his study participants (10 out of 24) articulated similar views to those expressed by the participants in the current study. For example, some of Alhammad's study participants' answers to what inclusion means was restricted to teaching students with SEN beside their non-disabled peers in the same classroom and these were still categorised among those who had "a clear understanding and knowledge" about inclusion (Alhammad, 2017, p. 118). However, inclusion is not merely the physical placement of students with SEN in schools which requires these students to cope with the environment as is the case with integration (Atkinson et al. 1997; Mathews, 2009; Oliver, 1990), but it is rather a process of arranging schools' environment to accommodate all differences, promote acceptance and appreciate diversity (Avramidis et al, 2000; Barton, 1999; Gale, 2001; Nilholm, 2006). Indeed, Alanazi (2015) considered similar views in her study to be lacking sufficient knowledge, although she viewed them positively (as discussed in the previous paragraph). Similar to Alanazi and based on the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, we consider the physical placement of students with SEN in mainstream schools alone or combined with social interaction opportunities to reflect insufficient knowledge about inclusion and this is an integration- rather than inclusion-based view of education.

What remains here is the understanding of a minority (N=6) of this study participants. The findings chapter showed that this minority expressed their understanding of inclusion in terms of providing care with no discrimination, equality, curriculum redesign to fit all students or the cooperation among staff to teach all students. These understandings, although limited, are truly inclusion rather than integration views. As discussed in Chapter 2, inclusion is a part of

the human rights approach in social relations (human rights model), which aimed to create an integral vision for the whole society (Barton, 1997). The United Nations' policies with this respect have been enacted in order to ensure the rights of all children in receiving equal treatment and equal opportunities in mainstream education (Blandual, 2010; Sebba and Ainscow, 1996). Equal opportunities can be realized through allowing students with SEN full access to school activities and resources and eliminating discrimination from schools (Alderson, 1999; Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Bradley and Switlick, 1997; Knight, 1999). Consistent with this conceptualization of inclusion, three of our participants focused on providing care without discrimination and with equality among students with and without SEN. Their views seem to be based on their acknowledgment of the equal rights of students with SEN.

However, although equal rights acknowledgment is a true step towards inclusion, the participants' understanding failed to capture the full meaning of inclusion which might be realized in restructuring the school system and educational curriculum to eliminate exclusionary practices (Clough and Corbett, 2000). This latter meaning of inclusion was expressed by only three teachers in the study as they focused on curriculum change and the cooperation between staff in an attempt to teach all students.

All in all, the participants' understanding of inclusion was clearly based on insufficient knowledge or limited to some aspects of inclusion. This seems to be an expected result of how inclusion was implemented in Saudi Arabia. In informing one of the participants about the findings of my study, she commented on this specific aspect (i.e. insufficient knowledge about inclusion) as follows:

“This is not surprising to me. Do you know how it happened? One day I went to school and found two students in the classroom who learned later had special needs. Nobody told us about it before and when I asked the headteacher, she said the Ministry of Education sent them to us to teach them in this school because it was better for them.”

(CTA1)

While, in the light of this, it is unsurprising to learn that educators in Saudi Arabia have insufficient knowledge about inclusion, it is leading to failures in implementing inclusive education as is argued in this chapter.

The following section will discuss the findings relating to educators’ attitudes in the light of different factors proposed in previous research to be influential in this respect.

7.3 Educators’ Attitudes

This section discusses the findings relating to teachers’ attitudes and the possible affecting and non-affecting factors on these attitudes in the light of the literature reviewed in Chapters 3 and 4. Recall that the Three Component Model of attitudes (Ajzen, 2005; Avramidis, 2000; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Triandis, 1971) was used as an analytical framework in the study. In this model, as clarified in Chapter 3, proposes that attitudes are multidimensional formed by affective, cognitive and behavioural aspects. It is assumed that the cognitive component (including beliefs of individuals on an attitudinal object) have an effect on the affective component (realized through individuals voiced emotions and feelings) and both of these have an effect on the behavioural component (how individuals react to an attitudinal object).

7.3.1 Educators' attitudes and non-affecting factors

The findings of the study, reported in the previous chapter, revealed that one headteacher, five deputy headteachers and 22 general and special education teachers had negative unsupportive attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. This was expressed in terms of rejecting inclusion considering it 'inappropriate', 'unsuitable' or 'unwise'. By contrast, three headteachers and one classroom teacher were found to hold positive attitudes towards inclusion. Some previous studies, reviewed in Chapters 3 and 4, indicated that some factors such as teachers' age, educational level and specialism and experience in general and inclusive education play a role in influencing positively or negatively attitudes towards inclusion. However, the difference in the attitudes of the majority (n=28) and minority (n=4) of our participants did not seem to be affected by any of these factors, as will be discussed in this section.

Starting with the age factor, the findings revealed that it did not play a role in our participants' attitudes towards inclusion. Chapter 5 showed that the participants of this study fell in either the 30-39 or 40-49 age groups. No distinction revealing that younger or older educators held more positive attitudes was found. This finding is incompatible with some studies which found age-related attitude differences among teachers (e.g. Schmidt and Vrhovnik, 2015; Vaz et al, 2015). Both Schmidt and Vrhovnik (2015) and Vaz et al (2015), in research conducted in Slovenia and Australia respectively, revealed that younger teachers were more positive and older teachers were more negative towards inclusion. Such a difference was not realized in this study as the majority of educators held negative attitudes. However, this finding is consistent with Carroll et al (2003) and Dapudong (2014), in research involving Australian and Thai teachers respectively, as well as with all Saudi studies

(i.e., Abduljabber, 1994; Al-Ahmadi, 2009; Al-Faiz, 2006; Alquraini, 2011; AlShahrani, 2014; Aseery, 2016) that examined the age factor.

As for the educational level of educators who participated in this study, this did not seem to play a role in our participants' attitudes towards inclusion. The study included 25 educators with bachelor's degrees and seven educators with Diplomas, (i.e., HTA1, CTA7, CTB4 and HTD1) Master's (i.e., DHA1, SETB2) or PhDs (i.e., HTC1). Only two of the bachelor's degree holders (i.e., HTB1 and CTA5) and two of those who held higher degrees (HTA1 and HTC1) had positive attitudes towards inclusion, with the rest holding negative views. Such findings do not indicate that the higher the educational level of educators is, the more positive they are. While this is consistent with Vaz et al (2015), who found no difference among Australian educators holding educational degrees at different levels, it does not support the findings of Errol et al, (2005) and Parasuram (2006), who detected such a difference among educators in the USA and India, respectively. None of the studies conducted in the Saudi context investigated this factor and, therefore, this is the first study to show that level of education does not have an influence on teachers' attitudes.

Similarly, the specialism of the participants in this study did not seem to have an impact on their attitudes. It included six teachers with special education degrees, but none of them expressed a positive attitude towards including students with SEN in mainstream schools. Their views reflected most general education teachers in the study. In previous research in Saudi Arabia, Al-Ahmadi (2009) and Alhudaithi (2015) found that special education teachers were supportive of inclusion and held more positive attitudes than general education teachers. Our findings contradict what was found in these two studies. However, both authors interpreted their findings as revealing that special education teachers found it less difficult to

work with and teach students with SEN and thus they felt more positive about their inclusion. This could also explain why the participants held negative attitudes: all special education teachers in the study indicated that they were facing difficulties in dealing with students with SEN and complained about the lack of guidance in their schools, which might explain why they did not differ from the general education teachers in the study. However, the reasons for the difference between these findings and those of Ahmadi (2009) and Alhudaithi (2015) is unclear. (This is discussed in more detail below).

Furthermore, as reviewed in Chapter 3, previous studies conducted in different contexts (e.g. Australia, USA, Egypt) showed that the higher the level of experience of teachers, the less positive they become towards inclusion and conversely the less experienced they are, the more accepting of the idea of inclusion they appear (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Emam and Mohamed, 2011; Forline, 1996; Gilmore et al., 2003; Leyser and Tappendorf, 2001; Taylor et al., 2003). In contrast to these studies and as reviewed in Chapter 4, in the Saudi context Al-Faiz (2006) revealed that experience in teaching in general education correlated positively with teachers' positive attitudes, an effect that was not found by Aseery (2016), who conducted her study in the same context. Like Aseery and in contrast to the studies mentioned in this section, the findings of this study did not show that previous experience in general education had an effect on attitudes. The participants' background information presented in Chapter 5 showed that they ranged in general education teaching experience between three and 26 years. However, despite this, negative attitudes prevailed among educators, indicating no effect for this variable.

Furthermore, in studies conducted in the UK and Greece, it was found that when teachers have experience of working in inclusive education, outcomes are reversed. Teachers with

more experience of inclusive education are more positive towards inclusion than those with less experience (Avramidis et al., 2000; Avramidis and Kalyva, 2007; Vaughn et al., 1996). Similarly, in the Saudi context, as reviewed in Chapter 4, Alquraini (2011) and Aseery (2016) found that previous experience with students with SEN positively affected teachers' attitudes. The findings of this study do not reveal such an effect. The schools' experience of inclusive education ranged between 0 years (School D), 5 years (School C), 7 years (School B) and 10 years (School A) and most teachers were working in these schools during this period. Yet, negative attitudes prevailed in the four schools with no noticeable differences between them.

In summary, teachers' age, educational level, specialism and experience in general or inclusive education teaching did not appear to have an effect in this study. However, the role of such factors cannot be completely dismissed as it could be the case that the prevalence of negative attitudes among educators in the four schools obscured their effect. Still, the findings of this study contradicted what was found in the same context by other studies in respect of some of these factors and the prevalence of negative attitudes (e.g., Al-Abduljabber, 1994; Al-Ahmadi, 2009; Alhudaithi, 2015; Al-Faiz, 2006; Alothman, 2014). I propose that this could be due to the difference in research methodology: all these studies were based on quantitative surveys to measure attitudes, whereas this study used face to face interviews. As proposed in Chapter 4, teachers in Saudi Arabia might fear contradicting government policy and thus when they are given questionnaires to complete, they provide idealistic answers. In contrast, they express their opinions more freely in interviews because they can justify what they say and feel more secure. This might provide an interpretation as to why the participants in this study expressed negative attitudes more readily than in previous studies. This interpretation might be supported by Alhudaithi (2015), who found contradictory results based on surveys and interviews. While the surveys revealed that

teachers (N=497) had positive attitudes, none of the participants in interviews (N=12) expressed a positive attitude.

7.3.2 Educators' attitudes and religious beliefs

None of the previous studies conducted in the Saudi context examined whether or how the religious beliefs of Saudi educators affect their attitudes. However, based on the hypothesis of some researchers such as Gaad (2011) and Alquraini (2011) that since Saudi society is generally religious, educators' religious beliefs might play a role in forming their attitudes, this study sought to explore this factor. However, the findings reported in the previous chapter revealed that there appears to be no relation between educators' attitudes towards inclusion and their religious beliefs towards disability. Yet, it will be argued in this section that educators' insufficient knowledge about inclusion and low self-confidence in self-efficacy in teaching students with SEN might have obscured the link between positive religious beliefs and attitudes.

No research on Saudi Arabians' religious beliefs about disability has been conducted. However, it is plausible that if religious beliefs about disability and attitudes towards inclusion are related, positive religious beliefs about disability would lead to greater acceptance of the idea of inclusion. In the previous chapter, it was found that all participants believed that helping students with SEN is a religious obligation for which God will reward those who perform it well and punish those who do not. Other positive beliefs held by many educators in the study included that disabled people are a test from God to the people surrounding them, God creates people with disabilities to reward them and/or their families, God creates people with disabilities to test their families in life and purify them from their sins before they are taken to heaven and disabled people have the same human rights as all

other people. Moreover, all participants, except one teacher, said that they felt sympathy towards students with SEN. In contrast, only three participants expressed a belief that could be interpreted as negative and which was that disability might be a punishment from God. Also, only one participant said that she did not feel sympathy towards students with SEN.

The wide prevalence of positive religious beliefs might be expected to lead educators to accept students with SEN in mainstream schools. However, despite these beliefs, the majority of educators expressed unsupportive attitudes towards inclusion. This could be interpreted in three different, but interdependent, ways in the light of the findings on different aspects in the previous chapter. First, these educators' insufficient knowledge about inclusion did not allow them to realize that inclusion could be a good option for students with SEN. Second, the awareness of these educators of their own lack of abilities to teach students with SEN led them to believe that inclusion was not a good option for students with SEN in their schools. Third, other school-related barriers (see Section 6.7 in the previous chapter) made educators think that inclusion was inappropriate for students with SEN.

Nevertheless, the post-training findings might shed light on which interpretation/s is/are more valid. After the training workshop, the majority of those who participated in the training workshop changed their attitudes and they became more supportive of inclusion. Yet, what led participants to change their attitudes? As will be argued in Section 7.6 below, while such a short (one-day) training session might have the power to bridge participants' lack of knowledge about inclusion and/or increase their self-confidence in teaching students with SEN, it is unreasonable to believe that it eliminated school-related barriers. Thus, it could be the case that increased knowledge about inclusion and confidence in their teaching abilities might have led to a change in attitudes. Therefore, in the light of this, it seems that the

participants' insufficient knowledge about inclusion and their low confidence in their own abilities to teach students with SEN might be more valid interpretations of why their positive religious beliefs about disability did not appear to have an effect on their attitudes towards inclusion in the pre-training phase.

7.3.3 Educators' attitudes and affecting factors

The findings in the previous chapter demonstrated that the majority of educators who expressed negative attitudes towards inclusion had low confidence in their abilities to teach students with SEN. The only teacher who expressed a positive attitude towards inclusion had three children with SEN. These findings could indicate a possible link between educators' negative perceptions of self-efficacy and their negative attitudes towards SEN and the more positive effect of having relatives with SEN.

As for self-efficacy, it was found that all participants, apart from leaders in schools C and D (N=4), had low confidence in their abilities in teaching students with SEN. The leaders in schools A and B stated that they lacked the skills to implement inclusion and to guide practitioners in their schools (e.g. *"We need to know how to supervise SEN teachers and what to focus on when we try to evaluate special education teachers and therapists in school because I have no idea how to do it"* (HTB1)). In addition, all classroom teachers had low self-confidence in their abilities to teach students with SEN and their reason for this was their inability to manage the classroom, to communicate information to students with SEN and to deal with students with SEN. Similarly, all special education teachers in the three schools had low confidence in their abilities to teach students with SEN. The reasons mentioned by these teachers were their lack of ability to communicate information to students with SEN, to deal

with students with SEN and to teach the curriculum and their lack of knowledge about some school subjects.

Moreover, in a previous section on attitudes (Section 6.3) it was found that 25 out of these 28 teachers expressed unsupportive attitudes towards inclusion. This indicates that low perceptions of self-efficacy might be associated with negative attitudes. Indeed, many participants mentioned their lack of ability to guide the inclusion process or deal with students with SEN as a direct cause to why they did not support inclusion. For example, two deputy headteachers said the following directly after they stated their negative attitudes: *“inclusion requires experienced teachers and clear plans and strategies”* (DHA1); *“In my opinion, if inclusion is established, it should be with good guidance and clear direction. This is not available here”* (DHB1). Similar statements were voiced by practitioners to justify their unsupportive attitudes. For example, CTA6 and SETB1 expressed something in line with what was said by SETC1 *“it should not be applied here because all teachers are not trained to deal with students with SEN”*. This association between educators’ perception of their self-efficacy and negative attitudes was not investigated previously in the Saudi contexts, but it is widely supported by previous studies in other contexts. The literature review in Section 3.3.5.4 showed that teachers’ perceptions of self-efficacy was found to be the best predictor of their attitudes in Australia primary schools (Subban and Sharma, 2006), Palestinian and Israeli primary schools (Lifshitz et al, 2004) and Portuguese primary and secondary schools (Lopes et al, 2004).

Moving to another potential factor, I started my interviews with the study participants by asking questions to obtain biographical information. One of the questions I asked was whether the participant had a relative with SEN. Only one of the participants stated that she

had three children with SEN. This was a classroom teacher in school A (i.e., CTA5). When the participants' attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream schools were explored, this was the only practitioner (out of 23) who showed that she was supportive of the idea. She stated: "*Inclusive education is very appropriate and students with SEN have the right to be educated in mainstream schools*" (CTA5). This indicates that this teacher is supportive of inclusive education and considers it a human right for these students. Given that having children with SEN was the only obvious difference between this teacher on one hand and other practitioners in the other, this could be the factor that led her to take a positive attitude towards inclusion.

I argued above in this section that the educators' insufficient knowledge about inclusion prevented them from realizing the benefits of inclusion and this was why they did not consider it a good option for students with SEN, which might have obscured the effect of positive religious beliefs on attitudes. It follows that if this is a valid argument, why was this teacher (CTA5) different? Indeed, this teacher was not only different in her attitude, but also in her understanding of inclusion. She was one of only three teachers who mentioned the educational benefit of inclusion when she was asked about what inclusion meant to her. She articulated that "*It is integrating students with SEN with their peers in mainstream classrooms to adapt within the environment and providing them with special care to increase their educational level through learning from their peers*" (CTA5). This teacher also believed that inclusion has educational benefits. This is in contrast to the majority of teachers who did not mention such a benefit for inclusion. Yet, according to CTA5, educational benefits come from "*learning from their peers*"; it is not the curriculum or the teacher that provide this benefit, it is other students in the classroom. Indeed, in observing this teachers' practice, it

was found that she ignored students with SEN completely in her classes, even after the training.

The different findings from interviews with CTA5 and observation of her classes seem to be consistent and do not contradict, but support, the argument that educators' insufficient knowledge about inclusion prevented them from realizing its benefits and led to them holding negative attitudes towards it. CTA5, unlike the majority of teachers, thought that inclusion had educational benefits. She realized one benefit of inclusion and this led her to believe that inclusion was a good option for students with SEN. Further, she had children with SEN and because she would naturally attempt to provide them with whatever she believed was good for them, she supported inclusion. Had not she realized the educational benefits of inclusion, she could have reflected the other teachers in holding a negative attitude towards inclusion. Yet, because she believed that the educational benefit comes from "*learning from their peers*", she did not attempt to do anything in the classroom to help students with SEN. These findings do not only show a possible link between having a relative with SEN and attitudes, but also support our argument that lack of knowledge about inclusion and its benefits to students with SEN could be the major driver of educators' negative attitudes.

This link between having a relative with SEN and positive attitudes was also found by Al-Faiz (2006), who conducted a study on the inclusion of students with autism in elementary schools in Saudi Arabi. Al-Faiz found that teachers who had relatives with SEN expressed positive attitudes towards inclusion more than those who did not. However, Aseery (2016) did not find such a link upon investigating teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with deafness. How can this inconsistency in the results of different studies in Saudi Arabia be explained? Based on what was found in my study, I suggest that studies examining

the link between having a relative with SEN and positive attitudes should also examine teachers' understanding of inclusion; it appears that this factor (having a relative with SEN) has a positive effect on attitudes when teachers realize the benefits of inclusion for students with SEN. Unfortunately, Al-Faiz (2006) and Aseery (2016) did not examine their participants' understanding of inclusion, so it is not possible to test this argument. Yet, this seems the case in other contexts such as Australia: Subban and Sharma (2006) found that those who had relatives with SEN and had knowledge about governmental policies relating to disabilities were more positive than other educators.

7.4 Practice in schools and classrooms

The previous chapter reported findings about how leaders implement and guide inclusion and how teachers deal with and teach students with SEN in classrooms. The practice of the majority of leaders and practitioners was ignoring students with SEN. Leaders stated that they did not have plans for implementing inclusion and that they left matters related to students with SEN to teachers to deal with. Most leaders mentioned that they monitored teachers' classes, but they were not able to give them feedback about their performance in relation to students with SEN. However, some of the leaders in schools B and C tried to improve the inclusion situation by adopting strategies that can be summarized as 1) asking special education teachers to write reports about students with SEN to help classroom teachers to deal with students with SEN (school B), 2) arranging meetings between special and general education teachers to discuss matters relating to students with SEN (school C) and 3) arranging meetings between parents and teachers, through which both parties could inform each other about students with SEN.

As for practitioners, the majority of them were observed to ignore students with SEN in the classroom and they did state this on different occasions during interviews. One teacher (CTB2) gave students with SEN pens and sheets of paper to keep them busy while she was delivering the lesson. However, some positive practices by a small minority of teachers were observed as well. CTB1 and CTC1 used a projector to facilitate learning for students with SEN; CTA1 asked other students to help their peers with SEN; CTA3 and CTB3 asked students with SEN questions to check their understanding of the lesson; CTA2 helped a student with SEN to open her book on a specific page.

The practices of the majority of study participants seemed to be consistent with their negative attitudes in the way proposed by Eagly and Chaiken (1993). These authors maintain that when individuals hold negative attitudes towards and beliefs about an object, they might act negatively, either overtly or covertly, for example by avoiding it. The majority of the participants expressed negative attitudes towards inclusion and they held negative beliefs about their self-efficacy in leading inclusion or teaching students with SEN and about the barriers to inclusion in their schools. They mostly ignored students with SEN; this falls into the covert action category. Moreover, as mentioned above, one teacher gave students with SEN pens and papers to keep them busy while she was delivering the lesson and this seems to fall into the overt action category.

Nevertheless, what seems to be inconsistent here are the religious beliefs of participants; all participants believed that helping students with SEN is a religious obligation for which God will reward those who perform it well and punish those who do not. Such a belief might be expected to lead participants to put more efforts to help students with SEN in the classroom. However, they did not behave in such a manner. So, how can this be interpreted? By linking

the participants' practice with their negative attitudes, we might assume that they knew what they should ideally have been doing, but they acted negatively because they held negative attitudes. However, maintaining this assumption would prevent us from understanding why participants held positive religious beliefs, but behaved to the contrary in the classroom. It could be the case that these participants lacked knowledge and skills, which did not enable them to behave otherwise. In such a scenario, it is not the negative attitudes that led our participants to behave in the way they did; rather, it is their lack of knowledge and skills. This explains why participants behaved negatively although they held positive religious beliefs about helping students with SEN. What gives support to this interpretation is that the majority of participants believed that they could not deal with or teach students with SEN and that they needed training to be able to do this.

Avramidis (2000) maintains that researchers should be careful when linking attitudes with reactions as the latter are complex and could be the result of not just attitudes and beliefs, but also other factors relating to the person and the context. This appears to be the case for this study's participants. They might have lacked sufficient knowledge about inclusion and lacked the knowledge and skills to be able to teach students with SEN, as they stated themselves. They also faced many barriers (e.g., unsuitable curriculum, large class size and pressures to cover the curriculum) which made them believe that mainstream schools were not a good option for students with SEN. Hence, it seems that all these factors relating to teachers, their attitudes and beliefs and the barriers faced in the educational setting acted in combination and led educators to behave in the way they did.

7.5 Barriers and facilitators to inclusion

The previous chapter reported findings about a number of barriers that were identified by the study participants. This section will discuss these barriers in the light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. However, it will be argued here that some facilitators were also found in the findings reported in different sections (i.e. positive religious beliefs and the promotion of staff-staff and staff-parent cooperation by some leaders). These will be discussed in this section as well.

Avisar (2012) states that curricula that are flexible and accessible are essential for creating an inclusive setting and indeed many researchers (e.g. Jackson et al, 2001; Moodley, 2002) maintain that having a curriculum that is inflexible to adaptation could be a great barrier for successful inclusion. In this sense, curricula in the three schools (A, B and C) were identified as barriers to inclusive education. While in schools A and C, no change to the general education curriculum was made when inclusion started, another curriculum for students with SEN was introduced in school B. This was a barrier to inclusion in the three schools although in different ways as demonstrated in the previous chapter. In schools A and C, the general education curriculum was preserved even after the classes contained students with SEN. This posed challenges to practitioners because of the difficulty of adapting the current curriculum to meet the needs of students with SEN. Indeed, this was articulated by both practitioners and leaders. The deputy head in school C stated that *“many teachers complain that the content of the lessons is not suitable for students with SEN. Something should be done here”* (DHC1). That the curriculum should be changed was voiced by many teachers in the interviews in schools A and B.

What made this situation created by unsuitable curriculum even worse was that the inspectors sent by the Ministry of Education focused only on how much of the curriculum was covered by the teacher. This led teachers to ignore students with SEN in the classroom because they did not have sufficient time to teach them. One teacher in school C expressed this as follows: *“I really don’t have time to pay attention to students with SEN. When the inspectors visit our classes, they focus on how much we have covered from the curriculum. They don’t understand that we have students with SEN”* (CTC4). Therefore, the inflexibility of the curriculum for adaptation and the evaluation procedure followed by the Ministry of Education seemed to push teachers to ignore students with SEN.

In school B, a new curriculum for students with SEN was introduced but this put the teachers in a situation where they had to prepare from two different curricula. One teacher in this school stated that *“I am required to teach two different curricula at the same time. Preparation from two books and different curricula is a very difficult job. Also, the teaching time is very limited”* (CTB1). Moreover, the Ministry of Education inspectors focused only on the mainstream curriculum and this was another factor that led teachers in this school to teach only this curriculum and ignore students with SEN. One teacher for example articulated *“the special education teachers can deal with students with SEN and I decided to focus on other students. Even the Ministry inspectors don’t ask me about the students with SEN”* (CTB4).

Furthermore, a great body of research (e.g. Carrington et al., 2010; Dickens-Smith, 1995; Lipsky and Gartner, 1998; Moodley, 2002; O’Brien, 2001) has identified training as essential for inclusion to be successful and the lack of training was found to be a barrier to inclusive practice in schools. For example, studies by Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) and Leyser et al.,

(1994) revealed that teachers who had received training were more supportive for students with SEN and performed more positively in classrooms. In the Saudi context, AlShahrani (2014) and Aseery (2016) found that Saudi teachers with no training expressed more negative attitudes. In the three schools under study here (A, B and C), training was not provided to teachers after inclusion had started. This indeed created a barrier for inclusion as so many teachers stated that they did not know how to deal with or teach students with SEN. For example, a teacher in school B said that *“Another problem that I face is how to communicate with students with SEN. What are the best strategies to be effective?”* (CTB1), and the same issue was emphasised by a teacher from school C as she articulated that *“The most important challenge is that we don’t have the abilities and the knowledge about how to communicate with them and teach them correctly”* (CTC1). Consequently, teachers ignored these students, who were effectively excluded from learning most of the time as observations of the classrooms showed and the teachers themselves confirmed.

One further barrier that was discussed in the literature and was confirmed by the findings reported in the previous chapter was the lack of staff collaboration. Many researchers maintained that collaboration among staff is essential for the success of inclusion (Boavida and da Ponte, 2011; Rose, 2000). It helps educators to set aims and objectives and draw plans to achieve them and make inclusion successful (Randiki, 2002). This collaboration also leads to school system reform, which aims to maximize the outcomes of inclusion (Mclesky, 2010). In addition, teachers would benefit from being able to share expertise to overcome the lack of experience problem (Hui NG, 2015). Yet, in schools A, B and C of this study, it was found that general and special education teachers did not cooperate. One general education teacher in school C stated that *“special education teachers don’t help us and they don’t cooperate with us. They don’t enter the classroom”* (CTC1) and a special education in the same school

said that *“We can be of a great help if classroom teachers cooperate with us, but they do what they want and they don’t listen to what we say”* (SETC1). The result of this was ignoring students with SEN in classrooms because classroom teachers did not know how to deal with them or teach them, a situation that could have been possibly avoided through the cooperation between teachers. This indeed seemed to be a problem although the leaders of school C mentioned that they arranged monthly meetings for teachers to sit together and discuss matters relating to students with SEN. This is related to the lack of effective leadership, which is discussed next.

Lack of effective leadership was clear in the three schools. As discussed in Chapter 2, Zollers et al, (1999) proposed that an effective leader is a key feature of successful school culture. Such leader will be able promote an inclusive culture, set directions for other staff, develop them professionally and build relationships with students’ parents and whole society (Fullan, 2007). However, the leaders in schools A, B and C were not effective in this sense to varying extents. Leaders in school A stated that teachers did not listen to what they advised as the deputy stated that *“we need strict regulations to organize the work. Dealing with different types of personality is a very difficult job, especially those people who never agree on anything. They refuse to do anything and their goal is to let others down”* (DHA1). A deputy in school B tried to provide training to teachers, but she was not able to make it successful and in her words: *“I brought a trainer to school to train teachers, but her session lasted for 30 minutes and teachers didn’t benefit from that”* (DHB1). Moreover, the lack of clear guidelines about teachers’ responsibilities apparent from the two teachers in school C mentioned in the previous paragraph (this applies to schools A and B as well) obviously indicates a lack of effective leadership. This aspect is clearly preventing teachers from

implementing inclusion in the way they should be doing, creating a barrier to the success of this system.

Furthermore, parental involvement specifically in schools A and B was non-existent, which was a barrier to full inclusion. Leaders in these schools were aware of the importance of this aspect, but they stated that they did not have strategies to implement it. For example, the headteacher of school B said that *“One thing that might help us do better regarding dealing with students with SEN is communicating with parents. However, we still don’t have a strategy to involve them in this process”* (HTB1). Many researchers (e.g. Epstein, 2001; Friend and Cook, 2007; Mittler, 2000) suggest that schools should have policies to involve parents, which would benefit both students (academically) and teachers (allowing them to understand students’ needs). Empirical research (e.g., Bennett et al., 1997; Singal, 2005) on this revealed that parents’ involvement improved the performance of students and teachers. However, for the teachers in our study, many of them stated that they did not know how to deal with students with SEN, a matter that might partly be due to the lack of parental involvement.

Other barriers that were discussed in the literature and confirmed by the findings of the current study were the physical location and facilities, resources and classroom size. In the three schools (A, B and C) under study, these aspects were found to be unsuitable for inclusion. For example, the deputy head in school A stated:

“There are no facilities to serve students with SEN. This was a big mistake as we should have taken this into consideration before including these students. For

example, there are no lifts or escalators and the toilets are not accessible to students with SEN.” (DHA1)

Also, a teacher in the same school articulated that:

“Classrooms are suitable for everything but students with SEN. Classrooms are small relative to the number of students and we have to use the board to explain things. There are no smart boards, projectors or any aids that help with teaching and learning; while this might be OK for mainstream school students, it is not for students with SEN.” (CTA1)

The same complaints were heard by leaders and teachers in schools B and C as well. These aspects have been explored in many previous studies and they were found to be hampering the success of inclusion. For example, it was found that the physical structure of school (inaccessible by students with disabilities) and classroom size (small) negatively affected the success of inclusion (Singal, 2005; Al-Zyoudi, (2006). Also, Avramidis (2001) showed that the lack of material resources such as hearing aids and IT caused a difficulty for some students with SEN. This seems to be the case in our three schools.

What seems also to make the situation in these schools even worse was the shortage of staff and misdiagnosis of students with SEN. Teachers were not able to manage their classrooms properly and as stated by the headteacher in school B:

“The number of special education teachers and general classroom teachers is small in comparison to the large numbers of students with SEN and their non-disabled

peers. Special education teachers teach 16 lessons and there are 8 teachers only. There should be more special education teachers, classroom teachers and classroom assistance.” (HTB1)

As for the misdiagnosis of students with SEN, this also created problems because, as stated by the leaders, they approved of the inclusion of students with a specific type of SEN and special education teachers were chosen based on their ability to deal with that specific type of SEN. However, the Ministry of Education started sending students with SEN that did not meet the school criteria for inclusion. Consequently, this resulted in a situation where even special education teachers were not able to deal with the included students with SEN in these schools. Indeed, the headteacher of school C stated that:

“teachers in this school always complain that they have students with severe learning difficulties and they don’t know what to do for them. We agreed first to include only those with mild to moderate difficulties. We don’t have a diagnostic procedure in the school, so we cannot reject these students.” (HTC1)

However, some facilitators to inclusions were detected by the study. The first facilitator was the wide prevalence of positive religious beliefs towards students with SEN among all the educators who participated in the study. Indeed, Hunt and Goetz (1997) found that a morally driven commitment to children was an important element for making inclusion successful in the schools explored in their study. The positive religious beliefs held by our participants were truly a morally driven commitment to children; these beliefs did not have a positive effect on the participants’ attitudes and practice because of (as argued in the previous sections of this chapter) other factors such as the lack of knowledge about inclusion and about

teaching students with SEN as well as other barriers discussed in this section. The second facilitator was detected in School C and this was the promotion of staff-staff and staff-parent cooperation by some leaders. These leaders stated they arranged meetings for school teachers to discuss matters relating to students with SEN and meetings for teachers and parents of students with SEN. Indeed, this type of collaboration was identified by researchers (e.g., Boavida and da Ponte, 2011; Rose, 2000) as one of the most important aspects leading to the success of inclusion.

7.6 The training effect

In the previous chapter and previous sections in this chapter, it was found that in the pre-training stage the majority of educators had negative attitudes towards inclusion, negative beliefs about self-efficacy in teaching students with SEN and the situation in their schools and negative practices appearing as ignoring students with SEN in classrooms. While these negative beliefs might be the trigger for negative attitudes and both together led to negative practices, it was argued that one more important factor playing a role in giving rise to negative attitudes and practices was teachers' insufficient knowledge about inclusion. Specifically, they did not seem to be aware of the rationale of inclusion or the benefits it could bring to students with SEN. For example, many participants thought that social interaction was the main purpose of inclusion, and the educational benefit of inclusion was mentioned by only three participants in the study. This was because students with SEN would learn from their non-disabled peers rather than from teachers. In this section, the findings from the post-training stage are discussed and it is argued that the change of attitude, shift of focus in underlying beliefs and change of practice after training are indicators that participants' insufficient knowledge about inclusion and their lack of skills about dealing

with students with SEN were the major drive for negative attitudes and negative practice in the pre-training stage.

Seventeen participants (out of 32) attended the training workshop and participated in the post training interviews and 11 of these were observed in classrooms. As the findings in the previous chapter showed, 10 out of the 17 participants changed their attitudes. While they described it negatively prior to training as *'inappropriate'* and *'unwise'*, they described it positively post training as *"the best thing we do"*(CTA1), *"something good"* (CTA2 and SETB2), *"we must help them with this"* (CTA3), *"beneficial"* (CTA4), *"fabulous"* (CTB2), *"a great approach to education"* (CTC1), *"I feel passionate about teaching students with SEN"* (CTC2), *"I was mistaken"* (CTD1) and *"students should be included"* (CTD3).

These findings are consistent with various previous studies conducted in different contexts reviewed in Sections 2.4.4 and 3.5.5. Beh-Pajooch (1991) and Shimman (1990) were conducted in the UK; Leyser et al (1994) conducted their study in the United States, Germany, Israel, Ghana, Taiwan, and the Philippines; Van Reusen et al (2000) explored the USA context; Subban and Sharma (2006) studied the Australian context; Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) was conducted in Greece, and AlShahrani (2014) and Aseery (2016) based their study in Saudi Arabia. All these studies found that teachers with prior training were more positive towards inclusion than those without prior training. Only teachers with prior training were able to apply inclusive education principles (Leyser et al., 1994). In addition, prior training had a noticeable effect on promoting the positive performance of teachers in an inclusive setting (Avramidis and Kalyva, 2007). Furthermore, Dickens-Smith (1995) provided 100 classroom teachers with training and measured their attitudes prior to and post training; it was found that teachers expressed more favourable attitudes after training.

However, the question arising here is why training influences teachers' attitudes and performance. According to Moodley (2002), training has these effects because teachers gain more skills to deal with their students with SEN and develop a better understanding of their needs, which gives them more confidence in their work setting. In addition, Hammond and Ingalls, (2003, p. 26) state that "educators need opportunities to collaborate on inclusive programs in their schools. Teachers need adequate training from pre-service and in-service programs that will help them develop skills for effective collaboration and for implementing inclusive services".

This seems indeed the case for the participants in this study. The majority of them lacked the skills to deal with students with SEN as they stated and was also observed in their classrooms. The training workshop informed them about strategies to deal with and teach students with SEN and gave them the opportunity to discuss these with their colleagues. This seems to have provided them with what they lacked and increased their confidence in their abilities as well. The post-training observations revealed that the practice of classroom teachers who changed their attitudes after training demonstrated that they put in more effort and started to use more strategies to include students with SEN in the lesson.

Nevertheless, there seems to be another reason for the change that took place in attitudes. In the findings from the first stage of the research, it was surprising that all educators held positive religious beliefs towards students with SEN and at the same time expressed negative attitudes towards inclusion. It was argued that if these educators truly believed that inclusion was a good option for students with SEN, they should have expressed supportive attitudes towards inclusion because they held positive religious beliefs towards these students. It was

also argued that these educators' insufficient knowledge about inclusion might have prevented them from considering it a good option and this was why inconsistency between religious beliefs and attitudes appeared. It seems that the post-training findings provided further evidence for this argument.

In the pre-training stage, educators justified their negative attitudes with beliefs such as schools' inability to provide special care, teachers' inability to handle the curriculum and deal with students with SEN, teachers' lack of experience, lack of facilities and the stressful situation that the presence of these students created. However, after the training, educators whose negative attitudes became more positive changed their beliefs; they justified this by citing the social and educational benefits of inclusion and the human rights of students with SEN. It seems that through the training workshop these educators realized that inclusion was a good option for students with SEN. For example, one classroom teacher stated: *"I thought first that inclusion is inappropriate, but it seems that I was mistaken"* (CTD1). Teachers did not abandon the beliefs with which they justified their previously held negative attitudes but they seemed to have shifted their focus to other positive beliefs. This is apparent in what was said by the following two teachers: *"I think those students have the ambition to learn and we should help them and accept them [...] but we need more training."* (CTB2) and *"it helps students with SEN educationally and socially, but we need to put more effort into it"* (SETB2). These teachers still thought that there were barriers to inclusion, but despite this they viewed inclusion as appropriate for other reasons such as the social and educational benefits.

Therefore, the training workshop seems to have provided these educators not just with strategies to deal with and teach students with SEN, but also with knowledge about inclusion

which allowed them to realize its benefits. In this sense, their positive religious beliefs about students with SEN held also helped facilitated this positive change in their attitudes.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the study findings in the light of the literature reviewed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. The main argument in the chapter was that educators' insufficient knowledge about inclusion as well as their lack of skills to deal with and teach students with SEN were the main triggers for negative attitudes towards inclusion and negative practice in schools and classrooms. When this lack of knowledge and skills was bridged by the training workshop, educators became more positive towards inclusion and started to employ new strategies to teach students with SEN. This has important implications for inclusion policy in Saudi Arabia, which will be discussed in the following chapter in which this thesis will be concluded.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This is the last chapter in the thesis. The findings of this research are summarized in the light of the research questions in Section 8.2. The implication of these findings will be discussed in Section 8.3. Following that, some recommendations to improve inclusive education in Saudi Arabia are provided in Section 8.4. Next, the study limitations, its original contribution and suggestions for further research are presented in Section 8.5. Prior to concluding the chapter, Section 8.6 provides the researcher's personal reflections on her PhD journey.

8.2 Findings summary and research questions

This study aimed to explore the barriers to and enablers of the implementation of inclusive education in Saudi Arabia elementary public schools. It focused on educators' attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms, their practices in schools and classrooms and factors influencing these educators' attitudes and practices. The study also examined the effect of a training intervention on these attitudes and practices. Thirty-two teachers working in four different elementary schools which had been involved in inclusive education for different lengths of time were interviewed and observed prior to and after a training workshop. Five research questions led the study of the thesis. In this section, the study findings are summarised in relation to these questions. The first research question was as follows:

Q1: What is the understanding of teachers in Saudi Arabia about including students with SEN in mainstream classrooms?

The findings of this study revealed that the majority of educators (n=26) had insufficient knowledge about inclusion. Most leaders and teachers in the study understood inclusion to be placing students with SEN in mainstream classrooms, with the understanding of some going beyond this to recognize the social benefits that students with SEN would gain through their interaction with their non-disabled peers. Such an understanding was considered an indication of insufficient knowledge because it did not realize the educational and human right aspects of inclusion and it neither showed an awareness of schools' and teachers' responsibility in this system. Only three of this majority said that inclusion might have an educational benefit and this was seen as a result of learning from non-disabled peers, rather than from what teachers deliver. In addition, only a minority of teachers (n=6) demonstrated that they were aware of different aspects of inclusion beyond the physical placement and social benefit, but their understanding was interpreted as limited because they were aware of one or the other aspects and none of the teachers in this minority exhibited a full understanding of what inclusion means.

The second research question was as follows:

Q2: What attitudes do teachers in Saudi Arabia have towards students with SEN?

It was found that, apart from four participants, all other educators (n=28) held unsupportive negative attitudes towards including students with SEN in mainstream schools. They described inclusion as 'inappropriate' or 'unwise'. By contrast, only three out of nine leaders and one out of 23 practitioners voiced supportive attitudes describing it as 'appropriate'. A number of factors were found to affect these attitudes, which will be summarised under Q4 below.

The third research question was as follows:

Q3: How do teachers' attitudes towards including students with SEN influence their classroom practices?

First, it was found that none of the schools had a plan for how to implement inclusion and they dealt with problems as they arose. In school A, dealing with students with SEN was left to classroom teachers. The senior leaders' roles were restricted to observing teachers' performance in general and managing the non-academic issues of these students. However, academically, they did not intervene at all and they complained that teachers did not listen to what they said in relation to students with SEN. In school B, leaders asked special education teachers to write reports about students with SEN to help classroom teachers to understand students with SEN better. The leaders in this school brought in a trainer, but they could not implement this step properly because teachers did seem to be interested. In school C, leaders held monthly observations to classes, organized a monthly meeting with general and special education teachers during which the situation of students with SEN was discussed, and organized regular meetings between teachers and parents of students with SEN.

As for practitioners, the majority of classroom teachers in schools A, B and C (n=12 out of 14) ignored students with SEN, justifying this by stating that these students were the responsibility of special education teachers. Among these, one teacher gave them a pen and a sheet of paper to keep them busy during the lesson. However, four out of this majority of teachers showed some positive practices, if inconsistently, asking students with SEN questions to check their understanding and asking students without SEN to help those with

SEN. Also, two out of the fourteen classroom teachers from schools A, B and C used the projector because they thought students with SEN would benefit from such an approach.

Assuming that educators' attitudes are built on a good understanding of inclusion (which did not seem to be the case), the negative practices could be interpreted as a result of these attitudes influencing their attitudes and behaviours. However, one particular finding, which will be summarized below, shed doubt on this. This related to the positive religious beliefs that were expressed by all educators in the study. All educators believed that they should help students with SEN because God would reward them if they did and punish them if they did not. Such beliefs are expected to generate positive attitudes and practices, but they did not. All this was interpreted as suggesting that educators' insufficient knowledge about inclusion and its benefits prevented them from considering it a good option for students with SEN. This means that both negative attitudes and practices were partly a result of a lack of knowledge about inclusion and its benefits. Their lack of skills to deal with and teach students with SEN was another affecting factor as will be summarised below. This interpretation was supported by the post-training findings (summarised below) that once teachers were informed about the benefits of inclusion and equipped with some teaching strategies, they drastically changed their attitudes and started to act in a more inclusive manner in classrooms.

The fourth research question was as follows:

Q4: What are the factors that influence Saudi teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEN and inclusive practices?

This question received much attention because improving inclusive education requires identifying barriers as a first step towards eliminate them and being aware of enablers in order to promote them. This was pursued through asking direct questions to participants to allow them to justify their attitudes and practices and through examining factors that are hypothesised to play a role (e.g. educators' age, experience in general and special education, qualification type and level, beliefs about self-efficacy in dealing with students with SEN or implementing inclusion, and religious beliefs about disability).

First, one-third of leaders (n=3) were supportive of inclusion, which they justified as because they considered inclusion socially better for students with SEN. However, they stated that they supported inclusion only when students did not need much care and the school could provide the support needed. As for the teachers, only one of them initially had a positive attitude and that was because students with SEN have equal human rights to those without SEN. Through the interviews, this teacher, unlike all other educators, was found to have three children with SEN, which was held as a possible explanation for her positive attitude.

The beliefs held by the two thirds of leaders and which were mentioned to justify the unsupportive attitudes towards inclusion were that there were 1) a lack of experience to deal with students with SEN, 2) a lack of clear guidance, 3) an unsuitable atmosphere for students with SEN and 4) a difference in abilities between students with and without SEN. Moreover, the practitioners justified their negative attitudes as due to 1) a lack of training to teach students with SEN, 2) a lack of necessary facilities and 3) a lack of guidance.

Given that the majority of participants held negative attitudes, their age, experience in general and special education, and qualification type and level either did not seem to have an effect or

other more important factors obscured their effects. However, educators' beliefs about self-efficacy in teaching students with SEN or leading inclusion seemed to play a role in both their attitudes and their practice. Only leaders of schools C and D were confident of their abilities to lead inclusion and their teachers' abilities to teach students with SEN. By contrast, the leaders of schools A and B had low confidence in their abilities to lead other teachers and in other teachers' ability to teach students with SEN. Similarly, both general and special education teachers had low confidence in their abilities to teach students with SEN. General education teachers mentioned that they lacked the ability to 1) manage the classroom, 2) communicate information to students with SEN and 3) deal with students with SEN. In addition, special education teachers thought that they lacked 1) the ability to communicate information to students with SEN, 2) the knowledge about some school subjects, 3) the ability to deal with students with SEN and 4) the ability to teach the curriculum. These beliefs seemed to have an effect on the negative attitudes and practices of educators.

Furthermore, all the educators (except one teacher) held positive religious beliefs, which did not seem to have an effect on their attitudes and practice or their effect was perhaps obscured (as was argued in the previous chapter). Our educators believed that God and Islam ask them to help individuals with disabilities and that they will be rewarded if they do and punished if they do not. They also thought that disabilities are a test from God to individuals with disabilities or their families and the people surrounding them. Such beliefs were expected to generate positive attitudes towards inclusion and lead to positive practice, but they did not. This was interpreted as suggesting that educators did not believe that inclusion was a good option for students with SEN and that was the reason why they rejected inclusion and behaved negatively in classrooms. Therefore, it was theorized that their lack of knowledge

about inclusion and its benefits obscured the effect of their religious beliefs on attitudes and practice.

Other factors that might have affected educators' attitudes and practice and were considered barriers to the success of inclusion in the examined schools were 1) unsuitable curriculum, 2) lack of training, 3) lack of staff cooperation, 4) lack of effective leadership, 5) lack of parental involvement, 6) lack of resources and suitable facilities to students with SEN, 7) large classes and shortage of staff and 8) misdiagnosis of the type of disability that students had.

The fifth research question was as follows:

Q5: How can teachers' attitudes and practices be changed by a training intervention?

Interesting findings emerged from the post-training investigations. Some changes in attitudes with a shift of focus in the underlying beliefs were found. A good number of those who held negative attitudes prior to the training expressed positive attitudes post-training. When their underlying beliefs were explored, it was found that participants shifted their focus from what was lacking in their schools (beliefs they used to justify their negative attitudes) to the educational and social benefits of inclusion to students with SEN. This change also was reflected in their practice as some of them started to use strategies to include students with SEN in their classrooms such as peer-tutoring, checking understanding more often and taking needs into consideration when assigning activities.

8.3 Implications of the study findings

Introducing inclusive education in the same manner as it was done to the schools under study did not seem to be leading to success. As indicated by a teacher in the study, the headteacher did not consult them when students with SEN were introduced to the school. Whether a school was inclusive or not depended mainly on the headteacher's approval. It was not clear from this study why headteachers agreed to make their schools inclusive, but other studies (e.g. Alzaidi, 2017) hypothesized that it could be the 30 per cent pay rise offered by the Saudi Ministry of Education to headteachers that encouraged them to accept students with SEN in their schools. Even if this was the case in all schools in Saudi Arabia, it is not an excuse for not implementing inclusion properly or taking steps to make it successful. The pre-training findings showed a dark picture of the status of inclusive education in the three schools under study. Indeed, teachers had negative attitudes and beliefs and followed negative practices. There were many barriers showing that no efforts had been made to include students with SEN beyond physically placing them in the setting. Nevertheless, positive religious beliefs about disability, which are an indication of moral commitment towards students with SEN, and the fact that the training intervention had a positive effect at least in the short term seem to be two critical points of focus which could be exploited by school leaders and policy makers in the Saudi Ministry of Education to improve inclusive education in the country.

8.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, some recommendations can be made to improve inclusive education in Saudi Arabia:

1. Inclusive education should be introduced appropriately to schools in Saudi Arabia through consulting all stakeholders in schools and not just head teachers.

2. The Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia should ensure that all school staff are fully aware of the purpose and rationale of inclusion prior to implementing it.
3. The Ministry of Education should ensure that schools approved to be inclusive have clear plans about how to implement this system.
4. The Ministry of Education should ensure that school leaders are properly trained to be able to guide the inclusion process and follow practices that lead to its success. This can be through providing training for existing leaders or employing specialised leaders who have skills to manage the process. These leaders should be able to promote staff cooperation and parental involvement and guide their staff appropriately.
5. Providing regular training for teachers to be able to deal with and teach students with SEN is an essential step. Both the Ministry of Education and school leaders should take responsibility for this.
6. The Ministry of Education and school leaders should work on ensuring that the curricula adopted in inclusive schools are appropriate for all students.
7. The Ministry of Education should liaise with school leaders on what schools require to accommodate students with SEN more effectively. This includes improving school resources and facilities.
8. The Ministry of Education should consider employing classroom assistants to help teachers to manage large classes.

Further recommendations relate to supporting further research in this area by the Ministry of Education in order to form a more comprehensive and deeper view of the obstacles and enablers of inclusive education in the country. The current study was conducted in one area of the country and in schools that included students with different special educational needs. Future

research could be conducted in other areas of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and could also focus on schools that include students with specific educational needs. Such research could reveal enablers and obstacles for inclusive education specific to these areas and schools.

Additionally, further research could consider replicating this study and conducting quantitative studies to (dis)confirm the generalisability of the present study findings in other areas in Saudi Arabia. To clarify, further research is needed to confirm the transferability of the findings of this study. A large-scale, quantitative study including schools from different areas in Saudi Arabia can serve this aim. For example, a questionnaire survey based on the findings of the current study can be designed and distributed to teachers in other schools and areas in Saudi Arabia. Such a study would collect important information that could help educational policy makers in the country to take decisions to improve inclusive education.

Furthermore, given that the current study focused on inclusive education in elementary schools, it could also be replicated to explore the barriers to and enablers for inclusive education at other school levels. This is important because different findings might be reached based on exploring the situation of schools teaching older students with special educational needs and improving inclusive education in Saudi Arabia requires information from such schools as well.

8.5 Limitations of the study and original contribution

The study which is the subject of this thesis is qualitative in nature which makes its findings subject to conscious or unconscious bias from the side of participants or even the researcher. Such bias might be created by the researcher's positionality as an insider or outsider, as discussed in Section 1.6. However, as asserted by Bourke (2014), although this might be a

concern in all qualitative research, the researcher can reduce such bias through being transparent about their positionality and addressing what this implies. In the current study, the researcher had the combined position of being an insider (sharing religion, nationality and gender with participants and being familiar with the Saudi educational system) and an outsider (not being part of the teacher community). The researcher's insider position might have led participants to conceal important information based on the assumption that she already knew it. However, the researcher was aware of this disadvantage and sought more clarifications when this occurred during interviews. In addition, the researcher's outsider position could generally have led to data misinterpretation due to the possible lack of understanding of the study context. However, this did not apply to the current study as the researcher also held an insider position.

One limitation of the current study is that given the limited time allowed by the Saudi Ministry of Education to conduct the study (three months), the sample was small in size and area range: 32 educators participated in the study from four elementary schools located in Riyadh. Although the depth of the exploration in this study has revealed findings about different aspects of inclusion in the elementary schools under study, such a small sample does not allow the findings to be generalized.

This study is the first in Saudi Arabia to explore how a training intervention can influence teachers' attitudes and practice to inclusive education. In addition, it is also the first study in this context to explore educators' religious beliefs about disability and how they affect inclusion of students with SEN. The findings revealed the importance of these factors in the Saudi context and, therefore, this constitutes an original contribution to the body of research

conducted in this field of study in Saudi Arabia and a new line of research that could be pursued in this context to improve inclusive education.

8.6 The researcher's personal reflections

My PhD study is the most interesting and challenging life experience I have ever had. It started at Northumbria University in September 2013, after I was awarded a Master's degree in special education from Newcastle University and continued until September 2018. When I started my study, I had already finished receiving chemotherapy drugs to treat the breast cancer I had and, then, during the five years of my study, I had to have five reconstructive surgeries to treat the effects of my illness. Coping with this situation and doing my research at the same time were not easy, but both tasks were accompanied by hopes that I would be fully cured and my research would have a positive impact on the lives of students with SEN. These hopes gave me the power to rise up from my bed in which I had to rest for a few days after a surgery to sit in front of my computer to complete a section of my thesis that I had promised my supervisor to send to him. These were the same hopes that prevented me from abandoning my PhD study when the tasks I had to complete were very challenging. Dark (but realistic) thoughts, such as *'doing a PhD study is challenging for a healthy student, so how would it be for a student who has to spend much of her time dizzy in her bed?'* used to crawl into my mind but soon faded away once I started thinking about the bright future in which I would be healthy and without pain, working very hard to improve the education and the quality of life of those in need.

After reading intensively about inclusive education in the international context including Saudi Arabia in the first two years of my study, I managed to write my literature review chapter, draw the design for my study and obtain the approvals required to conduct the study.

Indeed, in January 2016, I travelled to Saudi Arabia to collect data. Visiting Saudi schools and collecting data was the most enjoyable phase of the study. I listened to the same teachers' experiences and observed their practices inside the classroom twice: before and after a training workshop. The most delightful result was the change of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education from negative before the workshop to positive after the workshop. The change of these attitudes was also reflected in teachers' practices inside the classroom as they started to put more efforts to include students with SEN in the lesson. My happiness and excitement were indescribable as I felt that I had succeeded in doing something that improved the educational environment for students with SEN. At the time, I wished that I could visit all Saudi inclusive schools to deliver the training workshop in the aim of extending this achievement to all other schools in the country.

Having collected my data, I had to hurry to analyse the data and write up the findings. Although this was an interesting experience, it took a full year between April 2016 and April 2017 because I had to suspend my study during this period to have a surgery. Having successful surgeries gave me a stronger faith in the impact my research would have in the future on inclusive education in Saudi Arabia and charged me with more energy to write up the rest of my thesis between April 2017 and September 2018.

Based on the experience I have gained during completing this research, I can assert that making inclusive education successful in Saudi Arabia is achievable but requires more efforts from the Ministry of Education. These efforts should be directed towards informing teachers in mainstream schools more effectively about the purpose of inclusive education and providing them with the training needed to implement this system effectively. In doing this, the religious beliefs of these teachers should be employed to strengthen their moral

commitment towards students with SEN. This can be achieved through linking the purpose of and need for inclusive education with Islamic teachings and values, which are consistent with this system of schooling. The training workshop designed in the current study is an example about how this can be done.

8.7 Concluding remarks

This study has explored inclusive education in Saudi Arabia. Particularly, it focused on educators' attitudes, practices and how they were affected by different factors as well as the barriers to and enablers of implementing inclusion policy in the country. It also investigated how a training intervention could influence these attitudes and practices. Relevant previous research was reviewed and discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of this thesis and, after outlining the methodology used to conduct the study in Chapter 5, the findings were reported in Chapter 6 and discussed in Chapter 7. The findings were summarised in this chapter and they were used to develop a number of recommendations to improve inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.

References

- Abberley, P. (1996). Work, utopia and impairment. In L. Barton (Ed.), *Disability and Society: emerging issues and insights*. Harlow: Longman.
- Afeafe, M. Y. (2000). Special education in Saudi Arabia. Available at: <http://www.khayma.com/education-technology/PrvEducation3.htm> (Accessed: 15 July, 2018)
- Ainscow, M. (1998) 'Developing links between special needs and school improvement'. *Support for learning*, 13(2), pp.70-75.
- Ainscow, M. (1998) 'Would it work in theory? Arguments for practitioner research and theorising in the special needs field.' In Clark, C., Dyson, A. and Millward, A. (eds.) *Theorising special education*. London: Routledge. (pp.7-20)
- Ainscow, M. (2007) 'Taking an inclusive turn'. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 7 (1), pp.3-7.
- Ainscow, M. Dayson, A and Weiner, S (2013) *From Exclusion to Inclusion: Ways of Responding in Schools to Students with Special Educational Needs*. Centre for Equity in Education, University of Manchester. CFBT Education Trust
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The Theory of Planned Behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, pp.179-211.
- Ajzen, I. (2005) *Attitude, Personality and behavior*. (2nd ed.) Berkshire, Open University Press
- Al- Keraigi, F. S. (1989). *Special Education Development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 1958 to 1987*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Syracuse.
- Al- Mosa, A. (1999). *Development of Special Education in the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. Riyadh, King Fahad Library.
- Al Saloom, H. (1995). *Education in Saudi Arabia*. Belleville, MD: Amana Publication.
- Al Sumaiti, R. (2012). *Parental Involvement in the Education of Their Children in Dubai* Policy Brief. Available at: www.dsg.ae/en/Publication/Pdf_En/223201211810458340000.pdf (Accessed 3 July 2018)

Al-Abduljabbar, A. (1994). *Administrators' and educators' perceptions of inclusive schooling in Saudi Arabia*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. Illinois University

Al-Ahmadi, N. (2009). *Teachers' perspectives and attitudes towards integrating students with learning disabilities in regular Saudi public schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Ohio University, Athens, OH.

Al-Ajmi, N. S. (2006). *The kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Administrators' and special education teachers' perceptions regarding the use of functional behavior assessments for students with mental retardation* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. AAT 3222888)

Alan, B. (2008). *Social research methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alanazi, M. (2012) *Teachers' and parents' attitudes towards inclusion in inclusive schools in Saudi Arabia*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Warwick.

Al-Asmari, F. (2013) *Women's education and work in Saudi Arabia*. Umm Al Qura University. Available at: <http://uqu.edu.sa/page/ar/162878> (Accessed 2 August 2018).

Alderson, P (1999) 'Human rights and democracy in schools do they mean more than "Picking up litter and not killing whales"?' *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 7, pp.185–205.

Al-Faiz, H. S. (2006). *Attitudes of elementary school teachers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia toward the inclusion of children with autism in public education* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI NO. AAT 3262967)

Al-Habil, W. (2011). Positivist and Phenomenological Research in American Public Administration. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 34(14), pp.946-953.

Al-hamad, K. (2006). *General education and special education teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education of students with emotional and/or behavioral disabilities (EBD)*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado.

Alhammad, M. (2017) *The Issues of Implementing Inclusion for Students with Learning Difficulties in Mainstream Primary Schools in Saudi Arabia*. PhD .University of Lincoln.

Alhudaithi, G. (2015) *Saudi Arabian Female Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Inclusion of Children with Autism into mainstream classrooms*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Leeds

Ali, M.M., Mustapha, R. and Jelas, Z.M. (2006) An empirical study on teachers' perceptions towards inclusive education in Malaysia *International Journal of special Education*, 21(3) Available at: <http://www.internationalsped.com/documents/5Malaysia.doc> (Accessed 26 June 2017)

Allan, J (2003) 'Productive pedagogies and the challenge of inclusion'. *British Journal of Special Education*, 30(4), pp.175-179

Allport, G. (1935) 'Attitudes'. In Murchison, C. (ed.) *Handbook of social psychology*. Worcester, MA: Clark University Press.

Al-Mosa, N. (1999a) School buildings and appropriate environment for those with disabilities. *Constructing*, 18, pp.108-117

Al-Mousa, A. (1999b). *The Journey of special education in the Ministry of Education: marking the one hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Ministry of Education. King Fahad Library

Al-Mousa, N. A. (1992) *Mainstreaming Visually Handicapped Children in Regular Schools: Its Nature, Programs, and Rationale*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: King Saud University, The Center of Educational Research

Al-Mousa, N. A. (2010) *The Experience of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Mainstreaming Students with Special Educational Needs in Public Schools (A Success Story)*. Riyadh: The Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001916/191663e.pdf> (Accessed 2 April 2018)

Al-Mousa, N. A., Al-Sartawi, Z. A., Al-Abduljbar, A. M., Al-Btal, Z. M., and Al-Husain, A. S. (2006). *The national study to evaluate the experiment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in mainstreaming children with special educational needs in public education schools*. Available at the Directorate General of Special Education website: <http://www.se.gov.sa/Inclusion.aspx> (Accessed 10 July 2018)

Allothman, A. (2014) *Inclusive Education for Deaf Students in Saudi Arabia: Perceptions of Schools Principals, teachers and Parents*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Lincoln.

Alquraini, T. (2010). Special education in Saudi Arabia: Challenges, perspectives, future possibilities. *International Journal of Special Education*, 25, 139-147.

Alquraini, T. A. (2012). 'Factors related to teachers' attitudes towards the inclusive education of 132 students with severe intellectual disabilities in Riyadh, Saudi'. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 12(3), pp.170-182

Alshahrani, M.M. (2014) *Saudi educators' attitudes towards deaf and hard of hearing inclusive education in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Exeter.

Al-Thani, H. (2006) 'Disability in the Arab region: Current situation and prospects'. *Journal for Disability and International Development*, 3, pp.4-9

Altheide, D. L., and Johnson, J. M. (1994). 'Criteria for assessing interpretive validity in qualitative research'. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (pp. 485-499).

Alzaidi, F. (2017). *An exploratory Study on Educating Learners with ASD in Primary Inclusive Setting in Saudi Arabia, Issues, Attitudes, and Challenges*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Lincoln

Al-Zyoudi, M. (2006) 'Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusion Education in Jordanian Schools'. *International Journal of Special Education*, 121(2), pp.102-116.

Arksey, H. and Knight, P. (1999) *Interviewing for social scientists*. London: Sage

Arthritis Foundation. (2012). *Ehlers-danlos syndrome (EDS)*. Available at: <http://www.arthritis.org/conditions-treatments/disease-center/ehlers-danlos-syndromeneeds/> (Accessed 12 June 2017)

Ashman, A and Elkins, J (2002) *Education for Inclusion and Diversity*. Pearson Education Canada.

Assery, F. (2016) *Teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing students in regular education classroom in Saudi Arabia*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Ball State University.

Atkinson, D., Jackson, M. and Walmsley, J. (1997) *Forgotten Lives: Exploring the History of Learning Disability*. Kidderminster: BILD.

Avissar, G (2012). 'Inclusive Education in Israel from a curriculum perspective An Exploratory study'. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 27(1) pp.35-49

Avramidis, E. (2001). *Mainstream Teachers' Attitudes Towards The Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs in The Ordinary School*. PhD thesis. Exeter: Exeter University

Avramidis, E., and Kalyva, E. (2007). The influence of teaching experience and professional development on Greek teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 22(4), pp.367-389

Avramidis, E., and Norwich, B. (2002). 'Teachers' attitudes towards integration/ inclusion: A review of literature'. *European Journal of Special Education*, 17 (2), pp.129-147.

Avramidis, E., Baylis, P., and Burden, R. (2000). 'A survey into mainstream teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the ordinary school in one local education authority'. *Educational psychology*, 20(2), pp.191-211.

Bagozzi, R. P. (1986) 'Attitude formation under the theory of reasoned action and a purposeful behavior reformulation'. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 25(2), pp.94-107.

Bandura, A (1977) 'Self Efficacy: Toward Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change'. *Psychological Review*. 84, pp.191–215

Banister, P. B., G. Burman, E. Daniels, J. Duckett ,P. Goodley, D. Lawthom, R. Parker, I. Runswick- Cole, K . Sixsmith, J. Smailes, S. Tindall, C and Whelan, P. (2011). *Qualitative Methods in Psychology A research Guide* (2nd edition). England: Open University Press.

Barnes, C. (1996) Foreword. In J. Campbell and M. Oliver, *Disability Politics: Understanding our Past, Changing our Future*. London: Routledge.

Bartolome, L.I. (1994) 'Beyond the methods fetish: towards a humanising pedagogy'. *Harvard education review*, 54, 2, pp.173-194.

Barton (1999) 'Market ideologies, education and the challenge for inclusive in Dantels, H. and Garner, P. (eds) *Word year book of education: Inclusive education* London: Kogan. (pp.54- 63).

Barton, L. (Ed.) (1987). *The Politics of Special Educational Needs*. Lewes: Falmer Press.

Barton, L. (1997). 'Inclusive education: romantic, subversive or realistic?' *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1(3), pp.231–242.

Barton, L. (2003) *Inclusive Education and Teacher Education. A Basis for Hope or a Discourse of Delusion*. London: Institute of Education.

Bauer, N. (1994). *The politics of inclusion: A dissenting perspective*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service

Beh-Pajoo, A. (1991). 'The effect of social contact on college students' attitudes toward severely handicapped students and their educational integration'. *Journal of Mental Deficiency Research*, 35, pp.339–352.

Bender, W., Vail, C. and Scott, K. (1995). 'Teachers' attitudes to increased mainstreaming: Implementing effective instruction for students with learning disabilities'. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 28(2), pp.87–94.

Berg, L. (2009). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon

Bernard, H., R. (2013). *Social Research Method Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage.

Beveridge, S (1999) *Special Educational Needs in Schools*. (2nd ed). Routledge

Bickenbach, J.E. (2001) 'Disability Human Rights, Law, and Policy'. In G. L. Albrecht, K.D. Seelman and M. Bury (eds.). *Handbook of Disability Studies*. London: Sage Publications. (pp.565-584).

Black-Hawkins, K., Florian, L. and Rouse, M. (2007) *Achievement and inclusion in schools*. London: Routledge

Blaikie, N. (2007) *Approaches to social Enquiry: Advancing knowledge*. (2nd ed). Cambridge. Polity press

Blandual, V. (2010) International Approaches to Inclusion of children with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Education. *Problems of education in the 21st century*, 21(8), pp.29-36

Booth, T. (2005). 'Keeping the future alive: Putting inclusive values into action'. *Forum for Promoting 3–19 Comprehensive Education*, 47(2–3), pp.151–8

Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2011) *Index for Inclusion: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools*. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, Bristol.

Bordens, K. and Horowitz, I. (2001) *Social psychology* (2nd edition). New Jersey: Lawrence

Bourke, B. (2014). 'Positionality: Reflecting on the Research Process'. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(33), pp.1-9.

Braddock, D. (2002a). 'Public financial support for disability at the dawn of the 21st Century'. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 107(6), pp.478-489.

Braddock, D. (Ed.). (2002b). *Disability at the dawn of the 21st Century and the state of the states*. Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.

Bradley, D. F., King-Sears, M. E., and Tessier-Switlick, D. M. (1997). *Teaching students in inclusive settings from theory to practice*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Brady, K and Woolfson, L (2008) 'What teacher factors influence their attributions for children's difficulties in learning?' *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 78(4), pp.527-544.

Braunsteiner, M., and Mariano-Lapidus, S. (2014). 'A perspective of inclusion: Challenges for the future'. *Global Education Review*, 1(1), pp.32-43.

Breakwell, G. F.-S., S and Smith, J. (2006). *Research Method in Psychology* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Briggs, A. and Coleman, A. (2007). *Research methods in educational leadership and management*. London: Sage

Brown, R. (2005) 'Inclusive education in Middle Eastern cultures: the challenge of tradition.' In Mitchell, D. (ed.) *Contextualizing inclusive education: evaluating old and new international perspectives*. London: Routledge. (pp. 253-278)

Bryman, A. (2004). *Social research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Bryman, A. (2008), "Why do researchers integrate/combine/mesh/blend/mix/merge/fuse quantitative and qualitative research?", in Bergman, M.M. (Ed.), *Advances in Mixed Methods Research*, Sage, London. (pp.87-100)

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods*. Oxford: Oxford university press.

Caelli, K., Ray, L., and Mill, J. (2003). "Clear as mud": Toward greater clarity in generic qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(2), pp.1-24.

Cannell, C.F., and Kahn, R.L. (1968). Interviewing. In G. Lindzey and E. Aronson (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology and Research method*. New York: Addison-Wesley.

Carrington, M.J., Neville, B.A. and Whitwell, G.J. (2010). 'Why ethical consumers don't walk their talk: towards a framework for understanding the gap between the ethical purchase intentions and actual buying behaviour of ethically minded consumers', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 97, pp.139-58.

Carroll, A., Forline, C., and Jobling, A. (2003). 'The impact of Teacher Training in Special Education on the Attitudes of Australian preservice General Educators towards People with Disabilities'. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 26, 65-79.

Carter, .S. and Little, M. (2007) Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: epistemologies, methodologies, and methods in qualitative research. *Qual. Health Res.* 17, pp.1316–1328.

Cassady, J. M. (2011). 'Teachers' Attitudes toward the Inclusion of Students with Autism and Emotional Behavioural Disorder'. *Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education*, 2(7), pp.77-93.

Charmaz, K. (1983) The grounded theory method: An explanation and interpretation. In R Emerson(ed) *Contemporary Field Research: A collection of readings*. Boston: Little, Brown

Chesley, G.M., and Calaluca, Jr., P.D. (1997). The deception of inclusion. *Mental Retardation*, 35(6), pp.488-490

Clark, C, Dyson, A, Millward, A and Robson, S. (1999). 'Theories of inclusion, theories of schools: deconstructing and reconstructing the 'inclusive school''. *British Educational Research Journal*, 25, pp.157–177.

Clark, V. C., J. and Nebrask, L. (2008). *The Mixed Methods Reader*. London: Sage.

Clough, P. and Corbett, J. (2000) *Theories of inclusive education: A students' guide*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.

Cochran-Smith M (2004) 'Stayers, leavers, lovers and dreamers Insights about teacher retention'. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55(5), pp.387-392

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison., K (2007). *Research Methods in Education* (5th edition). London: Routledge.

Corbett, J. (1996) *Bad-mouthing: The language of special needs*. London: The Falmer Press.

Corbin, J. S., A. (2008). *Basics of Qualitative research 3e Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (3rd edition.). London: Sage

Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design Choosing Among Five Approaches* (3rd edition). Singapore: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., and Clark, V. L. P. (2007). 'Designing and conducting mixed methods research'. Charmaz, K (2000) Grounded theory; Objective and constructive method. In Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods* (2nd edition. pp 509- 535).

Creswell, J. W., and Creswell, J. D. (2005). Mixed methods research: Developments, debates, and dilemmas. *Research in organizations. Foundations and methods of inquiry*, 12, pp.325-326.

Creswell, J. W., and Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, 39(3), 124-130.

Croll, P. (2006). *Systematic Classroom Observation*. London: Routledge.

Dapudong, R. (2014). 'Teachers' Knowledge and Attitude towards Inclusive Education: Basis for an Enhanced Professional Development Program'. *International Journal of Learning and Development*, 4(4), pp.1-24

Darling-Hammond, L., and McLaughlin, M. W. (1995). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi delta kappan*, 76 (8), pp.597-604.

Davis, T. (2009) *General and special educators' attitudes toward students with severe disabilities included in the regular education classroom*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Walden University.

Dean, J., Furness, P., Verrier, D., Lennon, H., Bennett, C. and Spencer, S. (2018). 'Desert island data: an investigation into researcher positionality'. *Qualitative Research*, 18(3), pp.273-289.

DEDH (Department for Education and Department of Health) (2014) *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years*. London: Department for Education and Department of Health.

Degener, T (2016) *A human rights model of disability*. London: Routledge.

Denscombe, M. (2010). *The Good Research Guide for Small- Scale Social Research Project* (4th Edition). England: Open University Press

Denzin, N. K., (1978). *Sociological Methods: a Sourcebook*. McGraw-Hill.

Denzin, N., and Lincoln Y (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd edition). California. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Department of Education and Science (1978) *Special educational needs*. Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People (The Warnock Report). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Dickens-Smith, M. (1995) *The effect of inclusion training on teacher attitude towards inclusion* Chicago Public Schools, IL. Available at <http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED381486> (Accessed 27 July 2018).

Directorate General of Special Education (2013) *Statistics of Special Education in Saudi Arabia*. Riyadh: Ministry of Education.

Directorate-General of Special Education. (1981). *Directory of special education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Ministry of Education.

Dixon, S (2005) 'Inclusion--Not Segregation or Integration-Is Where a Student with Special Needs Belongs'. *Journal of Educational Thought*, 39(1), pp.79-117

Dunn, L. M. (1968) 'Special education for the mildly retarded: is much of it justifiable?' *Exceptional Children*, 35, pp.5-22.

Dwyer, S. and Buckle, J. (2009). 'The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research'. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), pp.54-63.

Eagly, A. and Chaiken, S. (1993) *The psychology of attitudes*. Fort worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Education Act (1996) London: The Stationery Office. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/pdfs/ukpga_19960056_en.pdf (Accessed 10 Sep 2018).

Elhoweris, H. and Alsheikh, N. (2006) Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. *International Journal of Special Education*, 21, (1), pp.155-118.

Ellis, S., Tod, J. and Graham-Matheson, L. (2008) *Special educational needs and inclusion: Reflection and renewal*. Birmingham: National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers.

Elsayed, E. (2009) *The inclusion of children with special education needs in mainstream school in Egypt*. PhD thesis, UK: University of Exeter

Emam, M and Mohamed, A (2011) *Preschool and Primary School Teachers 'Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education in Egypt: The Role of Experiences and Self Efficacy*. Procedia Social and Behavioral Science

Encyclopedia of Education in Saudi Arabia (2003) *Encyclopedia of Education in Saudi Arabia in One hundred years*. Riyadh: Ministry of Education.

Epstein, J. L. (2001). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Errol, D., Clara, W., and Elisa, E. (2005). 'Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion integration of students with disabilities in Haiti and the United States'. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 52(1), pp.43-58.

Erten, O. and Savage, R. S. (2012). 'Moving forward in inclusive education research'. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 16(2), pp.221-233.

Farrel, P. and Ainscow, M. (2002). *Making special education inclusive*. London: David Fulton.

Farrell, P. (2001) 'Current issues in special needs: Special education in the last twenty years: Have things really got better?' *British Journal of Special Education*, 28(1), pp.3-9.

Fishbein, M. and Ajzen, I. (1997), *Belief, Attitude, Intentions and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research*". Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA

Flick, U (2015) *Introducing research methodology: A beginner guide to doing a research project*. (2nd ed). London :Sage

Flick. (1992). 'Triangulation revisited: strategy of validation or alternative?' *Journal of the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 22, pp.175-197.

Flick., U. K., E. and Steinke., I. (2005). *A companion to Qualitative Research* London: Sage

Flyvbjerg, B. (2004). 'Five misunderstandings about case -study research'. In Seale, C., Gobo, G. Gubrium, J and Silverman, D (eds). *Qualitative Research Practice*. London: Sage.

Foote, M. and Bartell, T. (2011). 'Pathways to equity in mathematics education: How life experiences impact researcher positionality'. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, 78(1), pp.45-68.

Foreman, P. (2005) *Inclusion in Action*. Victoria: Nelson Australia

Forlin, C., Douglas, G. and Hattie, J. (1996) 'Inclusive practices: How accepting are teachers?' *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 43, (2), pp.119-133.

Frankfort-Nachmias, C. a. N., D. (2000). *Research Methods in Social Sciences*. New York: Worth.

Franzoi, S. L (1995) *Social Psychology*. Madison: Brown and Benchmark Publishers.

Friend, M., and Cook, L. (2007). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals*. (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education Inc.

Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change*. New York: Teachers College Press

Gaad, E. (2011) *Inclusive Education in the Middle East*. New York: Rutledge

Gale, T. (2001) 'Critical policy sociology: historiography, archaeology and genealogy as methods of policy analysis'. *Journal of Education Policy*, 16(5), pp.379–393.

Gavin, H. (2008). *Understanding Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology*. London: Sage

Gbrich, C. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction* (2nd edn). London: Sage Publications

Gilmore, L, Campbell, J., and Cuskelly, M. (2003). Changing student teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusion. *Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 28(4), 369-379

Gray, D (2009) *Doing research in the real world*. (2nd ed). London: Sage

Guba, E. G., and Lincoln, Y. S. (1981). *Effective evaluation: Improving the usefulness of evaluation results through responsive and naturalistic approaches*. Jossey -Bass.

Guba, E. G., and Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (pp.105-117).

Hammond, H., and Ingalls, L. (2003). 'Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion: Survey results from elementary school teachers in three South-western rural school districts'. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 22(2), pp.24-31

Hardie, E. and Tilly, L. (2012) *An introduction to supporting people with a learning disability*. London: Learning Matters.

Harding, J. (2013) *Qualitative data analysis from start to finish*. London: Sage

Hargreaves, D. and Hopkins, D. (2005) *The empowered school: The management and practice of development planning*. London: Cromwell Press.

Hassler, R. M. (1992). 'Social research methods'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27, pp.820-830.

Healy, M. P., C., (2000). 'Comprehensive Criteria to Judge Validity and Reliability of Qualitative Research within the Realism Paradigm'. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 3(3), pp.118–126.

Hennink, M. H. and Bailey, A. (2011). *Qualitative Research Methods*. London: Sage

Hodkinson, A. and Vickerman, P. (2009) *Key issues in Special Educational Needs and Inclusion*. London: Sage

Hogg, M. and Vaughan, G. (2005) *Social psychology* (4th edition). Essex: Pearson Education limited, Prentice Hall.

Holliday, A. (2002) *Doing and writing qualitative research*. London: Sage

Hollins, E (2011) Teacher Preparation for Quality Teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 62(4), pp.395 - 407

Horsburgh, D. (2003) 'Evaluation of qualitative research'. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 12, pp.307–312.

Howitt, D and Cramer, D (2014) *Introduction to Research Methods in Psychology*. Pearson

Howitt, D. (2010). *Introduction to Qualitative Methods in Psychology*. England: Pearson Education Limited.

Hui Ng, M (2015) *Factors Influencing the Success of Inclusive Practices in Singaporean Schools: Shadow Teachers' Perspectives*. Master's Thesis: University of Oslo

Humphrey, R (1994) 'Thought on Disability Arts'. *Arts Magazine*, 4(1), pp.66–67

Hunt, P. and Goetz, L. (1997) 'Research on inclusive education programs, practices and outcomes for students with severe disabilities'. *The Journal of Special Education*, 31(1), pp.3-29

Idol, L. (1997). 'Key questions related to building collaborative and inclusive schools'. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 30(4), pp.384-394.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) 20 U.S.C. § 1400. Available at: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1400> (Accessed 20 August 2018).

Janney, R., Snell, M., Beers, M. and Raynes, M. (1995) 'Integrating children with moderate and severe disabilities into general education class'. *Exceptional Children*, 61(5), pp.425-439.

Johnson, J. (1996). *Perceptions of regular education teachers' regarding students with learning disabilities in their classrooms*. Ph.D. Thesis, Northern Arizona University.

Jonas, K., Eagle, A. H. and Stroebe, W. (1995) 'Attitudes and Persuasion'. In M. Argyle, and A. M. Colman (Eds.) *Social Psychology*. London: Longman

Kalyva, E., Gojkovice, D., and Tsakiris, V. (2007). 'Serbian Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusion'. *International Journal of Special Education*, 22(3), pp.30-35.

Kivirauma, J., Klemelä, K., and Rinne, R. (2006). 'Segregation, integration, inclusion: The ideology and reality in Finland'. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 21(2), pp.17–133.

Knight, P. and Swanwick, R. (1999) *The Care and Education of A Deaf Child: A Book for Parents*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd

Koutrouba, K., Vamvakari, M. and Steliou, M. (2006) 'Factors Correlated with Teachers' Attitudes towards the Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs in Cyprus'. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 21(4), pp.381-394.

Krosnick, J., Judd, C. and Wittenbrink, B. (2005) 'The measurement of attitudes' in Albarracín, D., Johnson, B.T. and Zanna, M.P. (eds.) *The handbook of attitudes*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers. (pp.21-76)

Kumar, R (2005) *Research methodology A step by step guide for beginners*. (3rd ed). London: Sage

Ladson- Billings, G., and Donnor, J. (2005). The moral activities role in critical race theory scholarship. In Denzin, N.K. and Licon, Y.S, *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods* Thousand Oak: CA. Sage.

Landorf, H. and Nevin, A. (2007) Inclusive global education: Implications for social justice. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 45(6), pp.711-723.

Langdrige, D. (2004) *Introduction to research methods and research methods for students, academics and professional management and system data analysis in psychology*. Pearson: London

Leyser, Y. and Tappendorf, K. (2001) 'Are attitudes and practices regarding mainstreaming changing? A case of teachers in two rural school districts'. *Education*, 121(4), pp.751-761.

Leyser, Y., Kappennan, G. and Keller, R. (1994). 'Teacher attitudes toward mainstreaming : a cross-cultural study in 6 nations'. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 9, pp.1-15.

Lifshitz, H., Glaubman, R. and Issawi, R. (2004) Attitudes towards inclusion: The case of Israeli and Palestinian regular and special education teachers, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 19(2), pp.171-190.

Lincoln, Y. S., and Guba, E. G. (1985). Ethics: The failure of positivist science. Paper Accepted for presentation at *the annual meeting of the American Evaluation Association*, Kansas City, MO, October 30-November I, 1986

Lipsky, D. and Gartner, A. (1998) 'Factors for successful inclusion: learning from the past, looking toward the future.' In Vitello, S. and Mithaug, D. (eds.) *Inclusive schooling. National and international perspectives*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (pp. 98-112)

Lopes, J., Monterio, I., and Quinn, M. (2004). Teachers' perceptions about teaching problem students in regular classrooms. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 27(4), pp.394-419.

Marchant, R and Jones, M (1999) *Practice guidance on assessing disabled children and their families*, in *The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families*. London: Department of Health

Marks, D. (1997) 'Models of Disability'. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 19(3), pp.85–91

Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching* (2nd edition). London: SAGE.

Mathews, N (2009) 'Teaching the 'invisible' disabled students in the classroom: disclosure, inclusion and the social model of disability'. *Teaching in Higher Education*, (14)3, pp.229-239

Matthews, B., and Ross, L. (2010). *Research Methods A Practical Guide For The Social Sciences*. Italy: Pearson.

May, T (2001) *Social research issues, methods and process*. (3rd ed). Bukingham: Open University Press

McBurney, D. W., T. (2010). *Research Methods*. USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning).

McLeskey J and Waldron,N (2007) 'Making differences ordinary in inclusive classroom'. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 42(3), pp.162–168.

McLeskey, J. and Waldron, N. (2002) Inclusion and school change: Teacher perceptions regarding curricular and instruction adaptations. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, (25), pp.41-45.

McLeskey, J., Waldron, N. L., So, T. H., Swanson, K., and Loveland, T. (2001). Perspectives of teachers toward inclusive school programs. *Teacher education and special education*, 24(2), pp.108-115.

Mercer, J. (2007). 'The challenges of insider research in educational institutions: Wielding a double-edged sword and resolving delicate dilemmas'. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(1), pp.1-17.

Merriam S., Johnson-Bailey J., Lee M-Y., Kee Y., Ntseane, G. and Muhamad, M. (2001). 'Power and positionality: negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures'. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 20(5), pp.405-416.

Miles, S. (2000) 'Enabling inclusive education: Challenges and dilemmas'. Paper presented at a symposium on development policy entitled 'Children with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of the Child'. Gustav Stresemann Institute, Bonn, Germany October 27-29.

Ministry of Education (2002) *Regulation of Special Education Institutes and Programmes*. Riyadh: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education (2008) National report on education development in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In *48th Session Education International Conference*, 25-28 November, Geneva. (pp.1-108).

Ministry of Education (2008). *Development of education in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: AL-Frazdak Printing Press.

Ministry of Education (2018). *Regulations of special education programs and institutes of Saudi Arabia*. Available at: <https://www.moe.gov.sa/en/PublicEducation/Gov/Pages/SpecialEducation.aspx> (Accessed 20 July 2018).

Ministry of Health Care (2010). *Care of people with disabilities*. Available at: <http://mosa.gov.sa/portal/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=11> (Accessed 14 July 2018)

Mislan, N. Kosnin A, and Yeo, K (2009) 'Teacher-parent collaboration in the development of Individualised Education Programme (IEP) for special education'. *International Journal of Learner Diversity*, 1 (1). pp.165-187.

Mitchell, D. (2014). *What really works in special and inclusive education: Using evidence-based teaching strategies* (2nd edition). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge

Mittler, P. (2000). *Working Towards Inclusive Education: Social contexts*. London: David Fulton

Mittler, P. (2002). 'Moving toward inclusion: The role of the United Nations'. Paper presented at *the Third International Conference on Developmental Disabilities-Challenges and Opportunities: Policy, Practice, and Research*, Tel Aviv, Israel

Moodley, P. (2002) 'Building a culturally capable workforce – an educational approach to delivering equitable mental health services'. *Psychiatric Bulletin*, 26(2), pp.63–65.

Morris, J. (1991) *Pride against Prejudice*. London: Women's Press

Nader, A. (1980). Special Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *Special education: forward trends*, 7(4), pp.30-37

National Committee for Special Education (2006) *Report of the national committee for special education for the academic year 2005/2006*. Riyadh: Ministry of Education

Nayak, J. (2008). 'Attitude of parents and teachers towards inclusive education'. *Edutracks*, 7(6), pp.18-20.

NCERI (National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion) Bulletin. (1995). *An inclusion talkback: Critics' concerns and advocates' responses*. The City University of New York The Graduate School and University Centre.

New Zealand Ministry of Education (2003) *Special education aims and policy*. Available at: <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/> (Accessed 23 March 2018).

Nilholm, C. (2006) Special Education, Inclusion and Democracy. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 21(4), pp.431-445

Norwich, B. (1990). *Reappraising Special Needs Education*. London: Cassel.

Norwich, B. (1999) The connotation of special education labels for professionals in the field. *British Journal of Special Education*, 26(4), pp.179-183.

Norwich, B. (2004) 'Moderate learning difficulties and inclusion: the end of a category?' In: *British Educational Research Association Annual Conference*, 16-18 September, Manchester. Available at: <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00003833.htm> (Accessed 20 August 2018).

Norwich, B. and Kelly, N. (2005) *Moderate learning difficulties and the future of inclusion*. Abingdon: RoutledgeFalmer.

O'Brien, T. (2001). *Enabling inclusion: Blue skies—Dark clouds*, London: Stationery Office.

O'Toole, C. and Bruke, N. (2013). 'Ready, willing and able? Attitudes and concerns in relation to inclusion amongst a cohort of Irish pre-service teachers'. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28, pp.239-253.

Ogot, O. (2004). *Developing inclusive environments*. Oriang, Kenya.

Oliver, M. (1990) 'The individual and social models of disability'. In: *Joint workshop of the Living Options Group and the Research Unit of the Royal College of Physicians on people with established locomotor disabilities in hospitals*, 23 July. Available at: <http://disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/files/library/Oliver-in-soc-dis.pdf> (Accessed 10 Sep 2018)

Oliver, M. (2009). *Understanding disability: From theory to practice*. Tavistock: Palgrave

Olsen, W. (2013). *Data collection Key Debates and Methods in Social Research*. London: Sage.

Otiato, C. (2002). *Teaching and learning strategies in an inclusive setting*. Nairobi: KISE

Parasuram, K. (2006). 'Variables that affect teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusive education in Mumbai, India'. *Disability and Society*, 21(3), pp.231-242.

Pavlović, S., and Šarić, M. (2012). Partnership Between School and Parents – Reality or Illusion of Inclusive Education. *Croatian Journal of Education*, 14(3), 511-522.

Petty, R. and Cacioppo, J. (1981) *Attitudes and persuasion: Classic and contemporary approaches*. Dubuque, Iowa: W.C. Brown Co. Publishers.

Picard, A (2013) *Research Methods in information*. (2ed ed). London: Sage

Power-Defur, A., and Orelove, A. (1997). *Inclusive Education: Practical Implementation of the Least Restrictive Environment*. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers, Inc.

Priestley, M. (2003) *Disability: a life course approach*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Prince Salman Center for Disability Research. (2004). *Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provision code for persons with disabilities*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Prince Salman Center for Disability Research.

Probert, A (2006) Searching For an Appropriate Research Design: A Personal Journey. *Journal of Research Practice*. 2(1), pp1-12

Punch, K. (2005). *Introduction to Social Research Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (2nd edition). London: Sage.

Rabinow, P. (1984). *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Radnor, H. A. (2002) *Researching Your Professional Practice – doing interpretative research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Randiki, F. (2002). *Historical development of special needs education*. Nairobi: KISE

Ratcliffe, J.W. (1983). 'Notions of validity in qualitative research methodology'. *Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization*, 5(2), pp.147-167.

Richardson, L. (1997). *Fields of play: Constructing an academic life*. New Brunswick,NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Rist R.(1975). 'Race, Policy, and Schooling'. In I.L. Horowitz (ed.). *The Use and Abuse of Social Science* New Bruns- wick (N.J.): Trans-Action Books.

Ritchie J. and Lewis, M. (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: Sage.

Robson, C. (2011). *Real World Research* (3rd edition). John Wiley and Sons.

Rombo, J, L (2006). 'Inclusive education policies, teachers' attitudes and perspectives contemporary PNG studies'. *DWU Research Journal*, 55(5), pp.702-727

Ross, I. (1951) *Journey into light: The Story of the Education of the Blind*. New York, NY: Appleton Century, Crofts, Inc

Rug, G. and Peter, M. (2007) *A gentle guide to research methods*. England: Open University Press

Runswick-Cole, K. (2006) 'Interviews'. In P.Bannister (ed.) *Qualitative Methods in Psychology* (3rd edition). Buckingham: Open University Press

Runswick-Cole, K. (2006a) 'Ethnography', in P.Bannister (ed.) *Qualitative Methods in Psychology* (3rd edition). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Salloom, I. H. (1995). *Education in Saudi Arabia* (2nd ed.) Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications

Sapon-Shevin, M. (1996). 'Full inclusion as disclosing tablet: Revealing the flaws in our present system'. *Theory into Practice*, 35(1), pp.35-41.

Sarantakos. S. (2013). *Social research* (Fourth edition). UK: Macmillan Publisher Limited.

Saunders, M. L., P., and Thornhill, A. (2009) *Research Methods for Business Students* (Fifth edition). Italy: FT Prentice Hall.

Schmidt, M. and Vrhovnik, K. (2015) 'A attitudes of Teachers of children with Special Needs in primary and Secondary Schools'. *Hrvatska Revija Za Rehabilitacijska Istrazivanja*, 51, pp.16-3

Schnorr, R.F. (1990). "'Peter? He comes and goes": First graders' perspective on a Part-time mainstream student'. In D. L. Ryndak and D. Fisher (Eds.), *the foundations of inclusive education: A compendium of articles on effective strategies to achieve inclusive education*. Baltimore, MD: TASH. (pp. 227-236).

Scruggs, T. E. and Mastropieri, M. A. (1996). 'Teacher perceptions of mainstream /inclusion, 1958 - 1995: a research synthesis'. *Exceptional Children*, 63(1), pp.59-74

Seale, C. (1999). *Introducing Qualitative Methods: The Quality of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

Sebba, J. and Aiscow, M. (1996). 'International developments in inclusive education: mapping the issues'. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 26(1), pp.5-18.

Semmel, M.I., Abernathy, T.V., Butera, G. and Lesar, S. (1991). Teacher perceptions of the Regular Education Initiative. *Exceptional Children*, 58, pp.9-24.

Shakespear, T. and Watson, N. (1997) 'Defending the social model'. *Disability and Society*, 12, pp.293-300.

Shakespeare, T. (2009) Disability: A complex interaction. In: Daniels, Harry., Lauder Hugh. and Porter Jill. (eds.) *Knowledge, values and education policy: A critical perspective*. London: Routledge. (pp.184-198)

Shakespeare, T. and Watson, N. (2002) The social model of disability: an outdated ideology? *Research in Social Science and Disability*, 2(1), pp.9-28

Sharma, U. Folrin, C. and Loreman, T. (2006) 'Impact of training on pre-service teachers' attitudes and concerns about inclusive education and sentiments about persons with disabilities'. *International Journal of Special Education*, 21(2), pp.80–93.

Shimman, P. (1990). 'The impact of special needs students at a further education college: a report on a questionnaire'. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 14, pp.83–91.

Singal, N. (2005) 'Mapping the field of inclusive education: A review of the Indian literature'. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 9(4), pp.331-350

Skidmore, D. (2004). *Inclusion: The dynamic of school development*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Smith, A (1998), 'Learning about Reflection'. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 28(4), pp.891-898.

Smith, E. and Mackie, D. (2007) *Social psychology* (3rd edition). New York: Psychology Press.

Smith, J. (2008). *Qualitative Psychology Apprctical Guide to Research Method* (2nd edition). London: Sage.

Snow, K. (2001). *Disability is natural: Revolutionary common sense for raising successful children with disabilities*. Woodland Park, Co: Braveheart Press.

Snyder, L., Garriott, P., and Aylor, M.W. (2001). 'Inclusion confusion: Putting the pieces together'. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 24 (3), pp.198-207.

Solity, J.E. (1991) 'Special needs: A discriminatory concept?' *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 7(1), pp.12-19.

Somaily, H and Al-Zoubi, Suhail and Abdel Rahman, M. (2012). Parents of students with learning disabilities attitudes towards resource room. *International Interdisciplinary Journal of Education*. 1, pp.1-5.

Spatz, C., and Kardas, E. P. (2008). *Research methods in psychology: ideas, techniques, and reports*. Boston, [Mass.] McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Special Educational Needs and disability Code of Practice (2014) Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25> (Accessed 08 Sep 2018)

Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. New York: Holt: Rinehart and Winston.

Stahlberg, D. and Frey, D. (1996) 'Attitudes: Structure, measurement and functions'. In Hewstone, M., Stroebe, W. and Stephenson, G. (eds.) *Introduction to social psychology* (2nd edition). Oxford: Blackwell. (pp. 205-275).

Stockall, N. and Gartin, B. (2002) The Nature of Inclusion in a Blue Ribbon School: A Revelatory Case Exceptionality, Vol.10, no.3, p.171–188

Stoll, L., McMahon A, Wallace M and Thomas, B.. (2006). Professional Learning Communities: A Review of the Literature. *Journal of Educational Change*, 7, pp.221–258.

Strauss, A and Corbin, J.M (1998) *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

Subban, P (2005) 'Understanding educators' attitudes toward the implementation of inclusive education'. *Disability Studies Quarterly*. 25(2), pp. 70-88

Subban, P., and Sharam, U. (2006). Primary School Teachers' Perceptions of Inclusive Education in Victoria, Australia. *International Journal of Special Education*, 21(1), pp.42-52.

Swain, J., French, S. and Cameron, C. (2003). *Controversial issues in a disabling society*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Tassoni, P. (2003) *Supporting special needs: Understanding inclusion in the early years*. Oxford: Heinemann Educational.

Taylor M, Y. A., Meyer L H and Kinsella P (2011). Teacher professional leadership in Support of teacher professional development. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27, pp.85-94.

Taylor, R. L., Richards, S. B., Goldstein, P. A., and Schilit, J. (1997). Teacher perceptions of inclusive settings. *Teaching Exceptional Children*. 29(3), pp.50-54.

Taylor, R.L., Smiley, L.R., and Ramasamy, R. (2003). 'Effects of educational background and experience on teacher views of inclusion'. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 26(3), pp.3-16.

The Directorate General of Special Education in Saudi Arabia. (2008). *Statistics of special education*. Available at: <http://www.se.gov.sa/database/index.htm> (Accessed 20 April 2018)

The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD). (2013). *Accommodations for students with learning disabilities*. Available at: <http://www.nclld.org/studentsdisabilities/> (Accessed 15 April 2018)

The Regulations of Special Education Institutes and Programs. (2001). The Ministry of Education. Available at: http://www.se.gov.sa/rules/se_rules/index.htm (Accessed 15 April 2018)

Thomas, C. (2002) 'Disability theory: key ideas, issues and thinkers.' In Barnes, C., Oliver, M. and Barton, L. (eds.) *Disability studies today*. Cambridge: Polity. (pp. 9-57)

Thomas, C. (2013) 'The worldview matrix as a strategy when designing mixed methods research'. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, 7(1), pp.110-118

Thousand, J. and Villa, R. (1992). *Restructuring for caring and effective education: administrative guide to creating heterogeneous schools*. US: P.H. Brookes.

Thousand, S., Villa, A. and Nevin, I. (1994). *Creativity and collaborative Learning: A practical guide for empowering students and teachers*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Triandis, H .C. (1971). *Attitude and attitude change*. New York: Willey

Tuli, F., (2010). The basis of distinction between qualitative and quantitative research in social science: Reflection on ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives. *Ethiopian Journal of Education and Sciences*, 6(1), pp.97-108

UN Standard Rules of Equalisation for Opportunities for Person with Disabilities (1993)

UNESCO (1994) *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. Document produced at the world conference on Special Needs Education, 7-10 June, 1994 Salamanca, Spain. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO (2004) *Investing in the Future: Financing the Expansion of Educational Opportunity in Latin America and the Caribbean*. UIS

UNESCO (2015) *Guideline for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) (1976) *Fundamental principles of disability*, London: UPIAS

United Nations (UN) (1989) *The convention on the rights of the child*. Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Children's Fund.

United Nations. (1993). The United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for People with Disabilities.

United Nations (2006) The convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD). Available at: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml> (Accessed 17 June 2017]

Van-Reusen, A., Shoho, A., and Barker, K. (2000). 'High schoolteacher attitudes toward inclusion'. *The High School Journal*, 84(1), pp.7-20.

Vasey S (1992) 'A response to Liz Crow'. *Coalition*, 3, pp.42-44

Vaughn, S., Schumm, J., Jallad, B., Slusher, S., and Saumell, L. (1996). 'Teachers' views of inclusion'. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 11(2), 96-106.

Vaz S, Wilson N, Falkmer M, Sim A, Scott M, Cordier R, et al. (2015) Factors Associated with Primary School Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Inclusion of Students with Disabilities. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0137002> (Accessed 06 Sep 2018)

Vescio V, R. D., Adams A. (2008). A review of research on the impact of professional Learning communities on teaching practice and student learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education* 24, pp.80-91.

Vislie, L (2003) 'From integration to inclusion: focusing global trends and changes in the western European societies'. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. 18(1), pp.17-35

Waldron., N and Mcleskey., J (2007) 'Making Differences Ordinary in Inclusive Classrooms'. *Journal of Intervention in School and Clinic*, 42(3), pp.162-168

Waldron., N and Mcleskey., J (2010) Establishing a Collaborative School Culture Through Comprehensive School Reform. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 20(1), pp.58-74

Walliman, N. (2005) *Your Research Project A Step by Step Guide for the First Time Reseach.*(2nd ed). London:Sage

Wang., L. (2009) 'Should All Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) Be Included in Mainstream Education Provision? - A Critical Analysis'. *International Education Studies*. 2(4), pp.154-161.

Wearmouth, J. (2009) *A beginning teacher's guide to special educational needs*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Wilkerson, S (2012) *Assessing teacher attitude toward the inclusion of students with autism*. PhD Dissertation. University of Louisville

Williams, T., Lamb, B., Norwich, B. and Peterson, L. (2009) 'Special educational needs has outlived its usefulness: A debate'. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 9(3) pp.199-217.

Winter, E (2006) Preparing new teachers for inclusive schools and classrooms. *Support for Learning*, 21(2) pp.85-91

Wisker, G. (2009) *The Undergraduate Research Handbook*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

World Health Organization (WHO) (1980) *International classification of impairments, disabilities, and handicaps*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

Yin, R. K. (2011). *Applications of case study research*. London: Sage.

Yin, R. K., (2008). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (4th edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Zionts, P. (2005) *Inclusion strategies for students with learning and behaviour problems: Perspectives, experiences, and best practices*. Austin, TX: Pro-ed

Zollers, N.J., A.K. Ramanathan, and M. Yu. (1999). The relationship between school culture and inclusion: How an inclusive culture supports inclusive education. *Qualitative Studies in Education* 12(2), pp.157-74.

Appendixes

Appendix A: School Access Permission Form

Dear Ms. xxx,

My name is Fozah Alzemaia and I am currently a PhD student at Northumbria University. My PhD research explores the inclusive practice in mainstream elementary school in Saudi Arabia. The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that might prevent successful inclusion of children with Special Educational Needs in mainstream primary schools in Saudi Arabia. The resulting report will be a form of a thesis which I hope will inform developments in inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.

I am contacting you to ask if I might visit your school this term (November /December / January) to carry out an important aspect of my research. I am aware of the workload that all teachers have to cope with and want to take up as little as possible of their times. Therefore, I would be grateful if you allow me to undertake the following:

1. Interview with headteachers, classroom teachers, recently qualified teachers, special education teachers and teacher assistants. The teachers will be interviewed twice before and after a training workshop.
2. Visit classroom and observe the interaction between teachers and students with (SEN). The teachers will be observed twice before and after workshops.
3. Deliver a training workshop that is designed to address a number of factors which help to implement successful inclusive practice inside classroom. This, I hope, will help to improve the teachers 'practices and the learning outcome for pupil with (SEN).

I will observe ethical guidelines in dealing with teachers and participants to ensure that every one who takes part does so willingly. So I can also assure that no data will be passed on to anyone in the school or local authority. Furthermore, the local authority, school and individual teachers will not be identified, thus ensuring confidentiality. If you require any further information about specific aspect of my research referred to below or the research more generally, please feel free to contact either myself, or my supervisor Professor in

Education Michael Jopling. If you require any further information about specific aspects of my research referred to above, Michael Jopling , whose details are included at the head of this letter. I would be happy to come to your school to answer any queries you might have and, if you consider it appropriate, to confirm possible arrangements in more detail.

I should be very grateful to be allowed to carry out this research.

Yours Sincerely

Fozah Alzemaia

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Appendix B: Participant Invitation Letter

Invitation Letter – Interview, Observation and Training Workshop

Dear Teacher,

My name is Fozah Alzemaia and I am a PhD researcher at Northumbria University in England. Before I started my PhD, I was a lecturer at King Saud University in Riyadh. At the moment I am carrying out research entitled ‘An Exploration of Inclusive Practice in State Schools in Saudi Arabia’. The purpose of this study is to explore the factors which might prevent the successful inclusion of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in mainstream primary schools. The resulting report will be a form of a thesis which I hope will inform developments in inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.

I would like to invite you to take part in the research. This will involve two 45 minute interviews with me at the meeting room, observation by me of two of your classes and a two day workshop that will be delivered by myself.

In order to help you to make a decision as to whether you would like to participate, I have included full details of the research with this letter, including why the research is being carried out, what you would be asked to do if you were to become involved and how the research will be used. I am approaching you about this research as you have experience in the research topic area.

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet.

Yours faithfully,

Fozah Alzemaia

Fozah.alzemaia@northumbria.ac.uk

Tel: [Tel:07841655101](tel:07841655101)

Tel: +009665671885836

Name

School name

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

Study title: An Exploration of inclusive Education in mainstream school in Saudi Arabia

Researcher: Fozah Alzemaia, Room H005, School of Health, Community and Education Studies, Coach Lane Campus East, Northumbria University, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE7 7XA



Please tick the box

		YES	NO
1.	I have read the information sheet and understand the purpose of the study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	I have been given the chance to ask questions about the study and these have been answered to my satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	I understand that my participation in the research is voluntary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I understand that I can withdraw from the research at any point without giving a reason	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	I am aware that my personal information will be kept confidential and will not appear in any published documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	I understand that my words may be cited in publications, reports and other research outputs but that they will be anonymised so that I am not identifiable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. I have been given the contact details of the researcher who I can contact if I have any further queries about the research

I agree to the University of Northumbria recording and processing this information about me. I understand that this information will be used only for the purposes set out in the information sheet supplied to me and my consent is conditional upon the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998. By signing this statement I agree to take part in the research.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Appendix D: Interview Audio Clip Consent Form

Project Title: An exploration of inclusive practice in mainstream school in Saudi Arabia

Named Researcher: Fozah Alzemaia; fozah.alzemaia@northumbria.ac.uk

1. I have changed my mind and permission to use audio clips from the interview today has been withdrawn.
2. I agree that all audio clips taken from my interview today can be used by the researcher in any future presentation.
3. I agree that audio clips take from the interview today may be used. However I would like the researcher to contact me again to gain permission before they are used.
4. I agree that audio clips from part of the interview today can be used. The issues I don't want to be used have been shared with the researcher.

Please sign, print your name and date

Signature of participant _____

Date _____

NAME (IN CAPITALS) _____

The named researcher sign/dates in the space provided to confirm the participant understands the question being asked about the use of audio clips in future presentations

Signature of Researcher _____

Appendix E: Participant Debrief Sheet

Project Title: an exploration of inclusive practice in state school in Saudi Arabia

Name of the researcher: Fozah Alzemaia

1. What is the purpose of the project?

The overall objective of this study is to explore the factor that enables inclusive practice in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. The research has the following specific aims:

- To explore the inclusive practice and how it is influenced by individual teachers' attitudes and beliefs.
- To explore the influence of leadership within schools on inclusive practice.
- To explore diversity on the implantation of inclusive practice in Saudi Arabia.

2. What will I be asked to do?

Your participation involves three stages. In the beginning, you will be interviewed for 45 minutes and the researcher (Fozah Alzemaia) will attend one of your classes. Then, you will be invited to attend a 2 day workshop. After that, you will be interviewed again and the same researcher will attend one of your classes.

3. What will I be asked to do in the **interviews**?

In the interviews, you will be asked some questions which are related to your teaching experience with children with SEN and about your ideas on the inclusion of these children in mainstream schools.

4. Why does the researcher intend to **observe** my classes?

The purpose of the observation will not be assessing your performance and practices; the researcher rather aims to observe the general classroom interaction between you and your students.

5. What is the **training workshop** for?

The workshop will address a number of factors that help teachers make inclusion a successful experience.

6. How will I find out about the results?

If requested, once the study has been completed and the data analysed, the researcher will e-mail a general summary of the results to participants. This is likely to be in 2016.

7. What will happen to the information I have provided?

Your data will be stored safely, and will remain confidential. It will be destroyed 3 years after the end of the research.

8. How will the results be disseminated?

The data might be published in academic journals or may be presented at a conference. Please be reassured that the data will be generalized, and your personal information will not be identifiable.

9. Have I been deceived in any way during the project?

No

10. If I change my mind and I wish to withdraw the information I have provided, how do I do this?

If, for any reason, you wish to withdraw your data please contact the named researcher within one month of your participation. After this date, it may not be possible to withdraw your individual data as the results may already have been published. As all data are anonymised, your individual data will not be identifiable in any way.

11. If I require further information whom should I contact, and how?

If you would like to ask any further questions, register a complaint, or withdraw you data, please contact:

Named Researcher

Fozah Alzemaia

Principale Supervisor

Michael Jopling

PHD student

Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
Learning

Room H005

Coach Lane Campus East

Benton

NE7 7XA

Tel:07841655101

Professor in Education

Department of Education and Lifelong

Northumbria University

Newcastle- Upon-Tyne

Tel: 07941508648

fozah.alzemaia@northumbria.ac.uk

michael.jopling@northumbria.ac.uk

12. Who should I contact if I am unhappy with the conduct of the research?

If you are in any way unhappy with the conduct of the research, you may approach

Principale Supervisor

Michael Jopling

michael.jopling@northumbria.ac.uk

Professor in Education

Department of Education and Lifelong Learning

Tel: 07941508648

Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet

Project Title: An Exploration of inclusive practice in state school in Saudi Arabia

Researcher: Fozah Alzemaia

What is the aim of the study?

The aim of this study is to find out how teachers implement policies that support the inclusion of children with special educational needs in state schools in S.A. In order to understand the role of classroom teachers I also wish to explore the influence of school culture and leadership on inclusive practice.

Why is this research being undertaken?

Inclusion is very important for students with special educational needs. Teachers play an important role in the improvement of the education of students with special educational needs. Therefore, this research will help to provide greater understanding and knowledge which will hopefully lead to the development and improvement in the area of special educational needs and an inclusion policy in Saudi Arabia.

Why are you asking me to take a part?

This study is very important. It can help improve the quality of education given to students with special educational needs. Therefore, I am interested to find out about your experiences as a teacher working in the classroom with children with special educational needs. If you are willing to help with this research then please sign the sheet provided.

If I choose to take part what will I have to do and how will my information be used?

If you choose to take part in this research you will be asked to give 50 minutes of your time to answer interview questions. Each interview will take place in a staff room in the school at

a mutually convenient time. During the interview I will take notes and if you allow me I will record the information.

The question will be about your experiences with inclusion students with special educational needs in your classroom. Even though you are encouraged to speak without restrictions, you will never be pushed to speak about anything you don't want to talk about. You have the right to withdraw from the interview any time. You can take a break any time you want throughout the entire interview.

Is there any risk to talking part of this research?

There are no risks to participating in this study. The findings of this study will be used to help improve the inclusion process in Saudi Arabia.

Confidentiality

All information you provided even your personal details will be kept confidential. I will use the information for publication or conferences but your personal details will remain anonymous. All of the information that is collected will be stored in a restricted access room in a locked cupboard and only my supervisor and I will read it. Any electronic files will be kept in a password-protected folder that only I have access to. Your personal details will be destroyed once the research is over.

Other important information

If you need any information please feel free to get in touch and discuss the research with me at any point. My contact details are provided below.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Contact details:

Named Researcher

Fozah Alzemaia

PHD student

Department of Education and lifelong learning
learning

Principal Supervisor

Michael Jopling

Professor in Education

Department of Education and lifelong learning

Room H005

Coach Lane Campus East

Benton

Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

NE7 7XA

[Tel:07841655101](tel:07841655101)

fozah.alzemaia@northumbria.ac.uk

Room BO15

Northumbria University

Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

NE7 7XA

[Tel: 07941508648](tel:07941508648)

Appendix G: Teachers' interview schedule

School number: _____

Teacher number: _____

Background information:

How old are you?

Under

21-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 55 or over

₁ ₂ ₃ ₄ ₅

What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

₁ Bachelor degree

₂ Masters degree

₃ Doctorate degree

What is your subject specialism?

.....

How long have you been working as a teacher?

0-3 years	4-7 years	8-15 years	16-23 years	24-30 years	Over 30 years
<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆

How long have you been working as a teacher at this school?

0-3 years	4-7 years	8-15 years	16- 23 years	24 -30 years	More than 30 years
<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5	<input type="checkbox"/> _6

Appendix H: Interview Questions

Dimensions of the Interview:

1. Understanding of Inclusion and Attitudes
2. Training Experience and Self-Efficacy
3. Perceptions about Barriers and Enablers to Inclusion and Required Changes
4. Teachers' Feelings towards Students with SEN and Religious Beliefs
5. Leadership and Inclusion for Headteachers
6. Leadership and Inclusion for Teachers

Understanding of Inclusion and Attitudes

1. What does inclusion mean to you?
2. To what extent do you think that the inclusion of students with special educational needs in school is appropriate? Why?

Training Experience and Self-Efficacy

I would like you to share with me your experience of teaching students with special educational needs in your classroom.

3. Have you received any training in teaching generally?
4. Have you received any training in teaching students with SEN?
5. I would like you to tell me about the period when you started teaching students with SEN. Do you think it was difficult in the beginning? What makes it easier now?
6. In your opinion, what type of training will help improve inclusion?
7. How have you adapted your teaching methods to meet the needs of both pupils with and without special needs?
8. How would you describe the educational programmes available at your school? In your opinion, to what extent do they meet the level of SEN students?

Perceptions about Barriers and Enablers to Inclusion and Required Changes

9. Are there any challenges to teaching students with SEN? (follow up: how do you tackle them?)
10. In your opinion, what is the source of barriers for successful inclusion?
11. What do you think are the factors that facilitate inclusive education?

Teachers' Feelings towards Students with SEN and Religious Beliefs

12. How do you feel when you have contact with students with SEN? Angry / Sympathy (Why?)
13. Describe your reaction to students with SEN misbehavior?
14. Can you describe your feeling when students with SEN fail the task (anger- sympathy)?
15. What do you think about students with SEN?
16. How do Sharia and Sunnah see children with SEN?

Leadership and Inclusion for Headteachers

17. How do you think leadership affects the success of inclusion?
18. How do you describe your relationship with the other teachers in school?
19. Do you cooperate together in any matters that are related to students with SEN?
20. What policies have you adopted to promote inclusive practice?
21. How do you communicate your visions to other teachers?

Leadership and Inclusion for Teachers

22. How do you think leadership affects the success of inclusion?
23. How do you describe your relationship with the other teachers in school?
24. Do you cooperate together in any matters that are related to students with SEN?
25. How do you respond to the headteacher's visions and policies with regard to students with SEN?

26. How do you share your visions with others teachers?

The non-directive prompts used in the interview

1. Can you expand on this a little bit more?
2. Can you think of any other reasons?
3. What are the other issues involved?
4. Why do you feel that way?
5. In what way?
6. Anything else?

Appendix I: Observation Sheet

THEME	NOTES
The environment in the classroom	classroom furniture: setting: class size: resources:
Students' learning participation	Competitive - active - involved – none...
kind of participation during activities	Engagement/on task Support from: teacher - LSA – peers off task:

<p>Other:</p>	<p>–Using worksheet: (reducing long writing assignment, careful planning and design to avoid language difficulties)</p> <p>–Developing process skills: such as recognising the features of objects; recognising that some features are the same, while others are different; grouping objects.</p>
---------------	--

Appendix K: Arabic Version: Participant Invitation Letter



خطاب دعوة المشاركين في البحث

خطاب الدعوة للملاحظة – المقابلة – وورشة العمل

عزيزتي المشاركة في البحث:

المدرسة) (:

أود تقديم نفسي اليك. أنا الاستاذة فوزة الزميع والمحاضرة في جامعة الملك سعود والمبتعثه لدراسه الدكتوراه في التربيه الخاصه الى جامعة نورثمبريا في المملكة المتحدة. بحثي في الدكتوراه بعنوان إكتشاف معوقات دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصه في المدارس العاديه في المملكة العربية السعوديه مدينة (الرياض). وهدفي من هذا البحث إكتشاف العوامل المعيقه لدمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصه في المدارس العاديه. ونتائج هذا البحث سوف تقدم الحلول التي من شأنها تذليل الصعوبات لدمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصه في المدارس العاديه وسوف تساهم في تمكين ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصه بأن يكونوا أعضاء فاعلين في المجتمع ويستطيعون خدمة انفسهم بالدرجه الاولى من ثم القيام بواجباتهم تجاه مجتمعهم. بعد نهاية هذا البحث سوف نقوم بطرح نتائج هذا البحث لتطوير تعليم ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصه.

لذا فاتي ارجب بدعوتكم للمشاركة في هذا البحث وذلك للقيام بمايلي: مقابله لمدة ٤٥ دقيقه في غرفة الاجتماعات او اي مكان مناسب لك و الملاحظه في اثنتين من الصفوف الدراسيه وحضور ورشة عمل سوق اقوم بعرضها بنفسي.

من اجل مساعدتك في اتخاذ القرار وهل تودين المشاركة في هذا البحث ام ارفقت اليك التفاصيل الكامله للبحث في هذا الخطاب. وماهو المطلوب منك لوقرتت المشاركة في هذا البحث وماهي طبيعة الاسئله المتوقع طرحها عليك والكيفيه التي سيتم استخدام البحث. ولان لديك الخبره المناسبه فانا اتقدم اليك للاستفاده من خبراتك وتجاربك في العمليه التعليميه.

اشكر لكي مجددا تعاونكي معي واخذ الوقت اللازم لقراء المعلومات الخاصه بهذا البحث.

اسأل الله العلي العظيم ان يجعله في ميزان حسناتك

أختكم / فوزة الزميع

وسيلة التواصل:

Fozah.alzemaia@northumbria.ac.uk

44+7841655101

009665671885836

الاسم :..... التوقيع :.....



Appendix L: Arabic Version: Informed Consent Form



استمارة التوقيع بالموافقة

مقابلة المعلمات:

عنوان الدراسة: اكتشاف معوقات دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في المملكة العربية السعودية في مدينة الرياض

اسم الباحث: فوزة الزميع

العنوان باللغة الانجليزية:

Room H005, School of Health, and Life Science, Coach Lane Campus East,
Northumbria University, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE7 7XA
An Exploration of inclusive Education in Saudi Arabia

الرجاء وضع العلامة أمام الاجابه المناسبه :

لا	نعم	
		لقد قرأت المعلومات وفهمت الغرض من الدراسة
		لقد تم إعطائي الفرصة لطرح الاسئله والاجابه عليها من قبل الباحثه
		اتفهم ان مشاركتي في البحث تطوعيه
		اتفهم ان من حقي الانسحاب من المشاركه في هذا البحث في اي قت وبدون إبداء اي أسباب
		ادرك ان المعلومات الشخصيه ستبقى سريه ولن تظهر في اي الوثائق المنشوره
		اعرف ان كلامي قد يتم الاستشهاد به في البحث ولكن هويتي سوف تبقى مجهوله
		لقد تم اعطائي جميع وسائل التواصل والتي من خلالها يستطيع التواصل مع الباحث او مشرفه اذا كان لدي اي استفسار

اوافق على تسجيل جامعة نورثمبريا جميع المعلومات المقدمه من قبلي وانا اتفهم ان هذه المعلومات لن تستخدم الا للاغراض المنصوص عليها في استمارة المعلومات وموافقتي مشروطه بامتنال جامعة نورثمبريا با انضمام جامعة نورثمبريا الى قانون حماية المعلومات والذي اصدر عام ١٩٩٨م. وبذلك اوقع على الموافقه في المشاركه في هذا البحث

الاسم:



Appendix M: Arabic Version: Interview Audio Clip Consent Form



إستمارة الموافقة على التسجيل الصوتي

عنوان الدراسة:

اكتشاف معوقات دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في المملكة العربية السعودية في مدينة الرياض

أسم الباحث: فوزه الزميع

fozah.alzemaia@northumbria.ac.uk

	انا غيرت رأيي ولن اسمح بالتسجيل الصوتي
	أوافق على السماح للباحث باستخدام جميع المقاطع الصوتية المأخوذة مني اليوم في اي عرض سوف يستخدمه الباحث
	أوافق على السماح للباحث باستخدام الباحث لجميع المقاطع الصوتية المأخوذة مني اليوم ولكن بشرط الاتصال قبل استخدامها
	أوافق على السماح للباحث باستخدام المقاطع الصوتية لمواضيع معينه ذكرتها للباحث

أرجو تسجيل اسمك مع التاريخ والتوقيع

..... الاسم: التوقيع:

..... التاريخ: توقيع الباحث:



Appendix N: Arabic Version: Participant Debrief Sheet



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عزيزتي المعلمة

انا الاستاذة فوزة الزميع والمبتعثه من قبل جامعة الملك سعود الى المملكة المتحدة لتحضير رسالة الدكتوراه والتي بعنوان اكتشاف معوقات دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في المدارس الابتدائية في المملكة العربية السعودية وتحديدا في مدينة الرياض. هدف الدراسة هو اكتشاف العوامل المعيقه من نجاح عملية دمج ذوي الاحتياجات في المدارس العادية. ونتيجة هذا البحث سوف تكون بحث دكتوراه والذي أمل ان يساهم في طرح الحلول للمشاكل التي تواجه عملية دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة.

هدفي من هذا الخطاب هو التواصل معكي واياغكي انني ارغب في زياره مدرستكم في هذا الفصل الدراسي والذي يوافق شهر نوفمبر وديسمبر ويناير من عام ٢٠١٦/٢٠١٥م والقيام ببعض المهام والتي من شأنها ان تضيف الى نتائج بحثي . انني وانا واقوم بزيارة ادرك الجهد الذي تبذلينه انتي والمعلمات في المدرسه والعيون التدريسي والاداري الذي تقومون به. لذا فاني اقدم شكري وتقديري وسوف اكون ممتنه لكم لو سمحتوا با عطائي القليل من وقتكم في القيام بمايلي:

عمل مقابلات مع مديرة المدرسه ومعلمة الفصل ومعلمة التربية الخاصة ومعلمه تم تعيينها حديثا ومساعدة معلمة الفصل. سوف اقوم بعمل مقابلات معكم مرتين الاولى قبل ورشة العمل والثانيه بعد ورشه العمل.

عمل بزياره للفصول لملاحظة تفاعل الطالبات اللاتي لديهن احتياجات خاصه مع زميلاتهن ومع المعلمات قبل وبعد ورشة العمل.

تقديم ورشة عمل تدريبيه تم تصميمها لمعالجة العديد من العوامل التي لها علاقة بانجاح عملية دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في المدارس العادية. وامل ان تساهم هذه الورشه في نجاح مخرجات تعليم طالبات من ذوات الاحتياجات الخاصه .

سوف اراعي القواعد الاخلاقيه في التعامل مع جميع المشاركين في هذا البحث وذلك بضمان ان من يشارك في هذا البحث تكون مشاركته عن طيب خاطر. كما اؤكد لكي ضمان السريه التامه لجميع المعلومات التي سوف تقدمينها او سوف احصل عليها منك. كما اؤكد لكي ان البحث لن يحتوي على الاسماء او اي شي يوضح هويتك. اذا رغبت في معلومات إضافيه عن اي جزئيه من هذا البحث ماعليك سوى الاتصال بي او بمشرفي الدراسي في الجامعة وسوف تجددين معلومات عنه وعني برفقه هذا الخطاب. البروفسور مايكل جويلنق.

وختاما اتقدم لك بالشكر الجزيل واسال الله ان يرفع بماقدمتميه ويجعله في ميزان حسناتك وان يرفع به ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصه

اختكم الباحثة/ فوزة الزميع

الاسم : التوقيع :



Appendix O: Arabic Version: Participant Information Sheet



ورقة المعلومات للمشاركين

عنوان الدراسة:

اكتشاف معوقات دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في المملكة العربية السعودية في مدينة الرياض
اسم الباحثة: فوزة الزميع
fozah.alzemaia@northumbria.ac.uk

ما هو الغرض من هذه الدراسة؟

الهدف العام من هذه الدراسة هو اكتشاف العوامل التي تساهم في نجاح او عاقبة دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في المدارس الابتدائية في المملكة العربية السعودية في مدينة الرياض. والاهداف المحدده لهذا البحث كما يلي:

اكتشاف ماهية الدمج في المملكة العربية السعودية وماهو تأثير معتقدات واتجاهات المعلمت على عملية الدمج

اكتشاف تأثير القيادة المدرسيه على نجاح تاسيس عملية الدمج

اكتشاف الاختلافات و التنوع في تاسيس عملية الدمج

٢. ماهو المطلوب مني القيام به؟

سوف تكون مشاركتي في هذا البحث على ثلاث مراحل

المرحلة الاولى: عمل مقابله مع الباحثة فوزة الزميع وحضور درسين من دروسك للملاحظه.

المرحلة الثانيه: القيام بورشه عمل لتناقش العوامل التي تساهم في نجاح عملية الدمج.

المرحلة الثالثه: عمل مقابله وملاحظه مره اخري

٣. ماهي الاسئله التي سوف تطرح علي اثناء المقابلات؟

في المقابلات سوف يطلب منك الاجابه على بعض الاسئله والتي لها علاقه في خبرتك في دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصه وعن ارائك حول إدماجهم في المدارس العاديه مع قرنائهم.

٤. لماذا تعتزم الباحثة ملاحظه صفي؟

الهدف من الملاحظه ليس تقييم اداء المعلمه وإنما ملاحظه التفاعل الصفي بين المعلمه وطالباتك.

٥. ماهو الهدف من ورشه العمل؟

هدف ورشه العمل مناقشه العوامل التي من شأنها إنجاح عملية الدمج.



٦. كيف يمكنني معرفة نتائج هذا البحث ان رغبت في ذلك؟
إذا رغبتني في معرفة نتائج البحث فسوف تقوم الباحثه بعد الانتهاء من دراسته و تحليل النتائج فإن الباحثه سوف تقوم بإرسال النتائج على بريدك الإلكتروني وذلك في عام ٢٠١٦ م
٧. ماذا سيحدث للمعلومات التي سوف أقوم بتقديمها؟
سيتم تخزين المعلومات في مكان سري لمدة ثلاث سنوات وبعد ثلاث سنوات سيتم إتلافها .
٨. كيف سيتم نشر النتائج ؟
قد يتم نشر النتائج في المجلات علميه او المؤتمرات ولكن اود ان أوكد لكي ان معلوماتك سوف تظل في سريه تامه.
٩. هل هناك امكانية لان اخذ في هذا البحث؟
لا طبعاً
١٠. إذا قررت ان اسحب المعلومات التي قدمتها للباحثه فماذا علي فعله؟
إذا رغبتني في سحب مشاركتك في البحث فما عليك سوى الاتصال بالباحثه خلال شهر من تاريخ تقديم المعلومات بعد مرور شهر قد يكون من الصعب سحب المعلومات التي قدمتها . لكني أوكد لك مرة أخرى ان هويتك سوف تبقى مجهوله او اي معلومات خاصه بك.
١١. عند الحاجة لمعرفة معلومات إضافيه فكيف احصل على ذلك؟
ستجدين في الاسفل معلومات عن الباحثه وعن المشرف الدراسي وماعليك سوى الاتصال بأحدهم للاجابة على استفساراتك.

الباحثه
فوزه الزميع
+٤٤٧٨٤١٦٥٥١٠١



المشرف الدراسي
مايكل جوبلنق
+٧٩٤١٥٠٨٦٤٤٤

michael.jopling@northumbria.ac.uk
fozah.alzemaia@northmbria.ac.uk

Appendix P: Supervisor's letter to conduct the field work data collection



Department of Education and Lifelong Learning, Northumbria University,
Coach Lane Campus West, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7XA

To whom it may concern

4 November 2015

Re: Fozah Alzemaia

This letter is formal confirmation that Fozah Alzemaia, a PhD candidate at Northumbria University for whom I am principal supervisor, has permission from the university to collect the data necessary to complete her research study in schools in Saudi Arabia between 10th of November and 10 February 2016. Her study explores inclusive practices in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia and the planned data collection is crucial to her work. The research has the potential to influence policy and practice in Saudi Arabia and contribute to the international evidence base relating to inclusion in schools.

Please contact me if require any further information.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Jopling".

Michael Jopling
Professor in Education

Appendix Q: Permission letter from Head of Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia

Cultural Bureau in London

ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA
CULTURAL BUREAU
LONDON



سفارة المملكة العربية السعودية
الملحقية الثقافية
لندن

التاريخ 1436/11/26 هـ

إفــــــــــــادة

رقم الملف R698

تفيد الملحقية الثقافية بالمملكة المتحدة بأن الطالبة / فوزه بنت علي فهد الزميع (سجل مدنى 1086627724) والمبتعثة من قبل جامعة الملك سعود لدراسة الدكتوراه في مجال Health Education بجامعة Northumbria وقد التحقت بالبعثة بتاريخ 1429/09/29 هـ ومن المتوقع ان تنتهي بعثتها بتاريخ 1437/12/26 هـ . وترغب القيام برحلة علمية الى المملكة العربية السعودية لغرض جمع بيانات تتعلق بالبحث الخاص بدراستها لمرحلة الدكتوراه، يرجى مساعدتها في جمع البيانات المطلوبة وقد أُعطيت لها هذه الإفادة بناءً على طلبها.

وتقبلوا فائق التحيات،،،

الملحق الثقافي

يسفارة المملكة العربية السعودية في لندن

فيصل بن محمد المهنا الخليل

الرقم: التاريخ: الموافق: المرفقات:
630 Chiswick High Road, London W4 5RY Tel: +44 (0) 20 3249 7000 Fax: +44 (0) 20 3249 7001 E-mail: sacbuk@uksacb.org
www.uksacb.org

Appendix R: Permission letter from Head of Special Education Department at King Saud University

جامعة الملك سعود (034)
هاتف +966 11 805 18 87
فاكس +966 11 805 45 56

المملكة العربية السعودية
ص.ب. الرياض 7695 11472
www.ksu.edu.sa

جامعة
الملك سعود
King Saud University



أقسام العلوم الإنسانية

المحترم

سعادة مدير عام ادارة التعليم بمنطقة الرياض

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته...

نفيد سعادتك بأن طالبة الدكتوراه / فوزة الزميع المبتعثة من جامعة الملك سعود الى جامعة نورثمبريا - بالمملكة المتحدة بصدد اجراء بحث علمي يتناول اكتشاف معوقات دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة بالمدارس الابتدائية في كلا من :

- المدرسة الابتدائية ٣٩١ في حطين .
- المدرسة الابتدائية ١٦٥ في حي النخيل .
- المدرسة الابتدائية ٢٥٥ في حي الغدير .
- مدرسة ٣٨١ في حي السلام .

عليه ارجو من سعادتك التكرم بتسهيل مهمتها والسماح لها بتطبيق الاداء على عينة الدراسة علماً بان الدراسة الميدانية تستغرق ثلاثة اشهر ابتداء من ١٤٣٦/١٢/١٧ هـ الموافق ٢٠١٥/٩/٣٠م وعليه تجدون برفقه كافة ما يلزم .

وتقبلوا خالص التحية والتقدير ،،،

وكيلة قسم التربية الخاصة
١٤٣٦
د. نورة بنت علي الكثيري



الرقم:
التاريخ:
الموقع:

Appendix S: Permission letter from Ministry of Education to school

الرقم: ٣٦٦٣٤٤٢٢
التاريخ: ٥١٤٣٧/٩/٤
المشروعات:



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(١٠١)
إدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير
Planning & Development
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

" تسهيل مهمة بحث "

اسم الباحث/ة	فوزة بنت علي الزميع
الكلية / الجامعة	جامعة الملك سعود / نورثمبريا - في المملكة المتحدة
الغرض من الدراسة	متطلب للحصول على درجة الدكتوراه
عنوان الدراسة	اكتشاف معوقات دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في المدارس الابتدائية في مدينة الرياض
نوع التسهيل	زيارات ميدانية استطلاعية لإجراء مقابلات مع أعضاء هيئة التدريس في المدرسة والقيام بزيارة للفصول للملاحظة (الهدف منها ملاحظة سلوك الطالبة وتفاعلها داخل الفصل

حفظها الله

المكرمة / مديرة المدرسة الابتدائية (11-158-156-391)

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد ،،،

بناءً على تعميم معالي وزير التعليم رقم 55/610 وتاريخ 1416/9/17هـ بشأن تفويض الإدارات العامة للتعليم بإصدار خطابات السماح للباحثين بإجراء البحوث والدراسات ، وبناءً على تفويض مدير عام التعليم إدارة التخطيط والتطوير في الخطاب ذي الرقم 11/33674823 والتاريخ 1433/4/14هـ بشأن تسهيل مهام الباحثين والباحثات ، وحيث تقدم إلين الباحثة (الموضحة بياناتها أعلاه) بطلب إجراء الدراسة ، تأمل تسهيل مهمتها/ها وتزويده بالإحصائيات المطلوبة ، مع ملاحظة أن الباحثة يتحمل كامل المسؤولية المتعلقة بمختلف جوانب البحث ، ولا يعني سماح الإدارة العامة للتعليم موافقتها بالضرورة على مشكلة البحث أو على الطرق والأساليب المستخدمة في دراستها ومعالجتها.

شاكرين طيب تعاونكم ،،،،،،،،،،

مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

سعود بن راشد آل عبداللطيف
٢١٤



ص / قسم الدراسات والبحوث
ن / الصالح

6ن

رمز العملية ط ج

الإصدار: 1.0

تاريخ الإصدار : 1436/8/5هـ

صفحة 11 من 18

Appendix T: Letter from the headteacher of school (A) to the Ministry of Education to inform about ending of data collection



الرقم :
التاريخ :
Planning & Development
وزارة التخطيط والتطوير



وزارة التربية والتعليم
Ministry of Education

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٨٠)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض

" إفادة "

الموضوع :

ضوره على شهر الزميع	اسم الباحثة
جامعة الملك سعود/ كلية التربية / قسم الرياضيات	كلية / جامعة
جامعة نورثبريا البرطية في المملكة المتحدة	
٢٤٣٢ ٤٤٣١٣ ٢٦٢١٣	رقم وتاريخ خطاب التسهيل
٢٠١٤ / ٢ / ١٩	
زيارة ميدانية استلامه لاجراءات مع الاطار	مهمة الباحث الواردة من إدارة التخطيط
هذه الدراسة في المراسلة واتصالهم بزيارتهم للتحصول على	
اكتشاف صعوبات دفع ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة	عنوان الدراسة
في المدارس التي لا يتاح فيها	

المكرم مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير حفظة الله

وبعد ،،،، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

بناء على خطاب تسهيل مهمة باحثة/ة ذي الرقم والتاريخ الموضحة أعلاه تفيدكم أنه تم تنفيذ المهمة الأدائية من قبل الباحثة/ة ، وقد أنهيت كافة إجراءات الدراسة وتطبيق الأداة في مجال البحث على عينة من (الطاسم مدرسي) وبناء على طلبها/ا تم منح الإفادة.

شاكرين طيب تعاونكم ،،،،

اسم المديرية : وخا الرويعي

التوقيع : 

التاريخ :



12

رمز العملية ط . ح 6
الإصدار : 1.0
تاريخ الإصدار : 1436/8/5 هـ
صفحة 17 من 18

Appendix U: Letter from the headteacher of school (B) to the Ministry of

Education to inform about ending of data collection



الرقم :
التاريخ :
المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التخطيط والتطوير



وزارة التربية والتعليم
Ministry of Education

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٢٨٠)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض

” إفادة ”

الموضوع :

عوزة علي محمد الزميع	اسم الباحثة
جامعة الملك سعود / كلية التربية / قسم التربية الخاصة جامعة نورعربيانف المرحلة المتوسطة	كلية / جامعة
٣٠٦٣ ٣٤٤٣٣ ١٤٣٧ / ٤ / ٤	رقم وتاريخ خطاب التسهيل
زيارات ميدانية لمتابعة استطلاعية لإجراء المقابلات مع أعضاء هيئة التدريس في المدارس وإستكمال زيارته لتقديم التقرير	مهمة الباحث الواردة من إدارة التخطيط
استكمال إجراءات وضع ذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة في المدارس الخاصة في منطقة الرياض	عنوان الدراسة

المكرم مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

حفظه الله

وبعد ،،،،

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

بناء على خطاب تسهيل مهمة باحثة/ة ذي الرقم والتاريخ الموضحة أعلاه نفيديكم أنه تم تنفيذ المهمة الأداة من قبل الباحثة/ة ، وقد أنهيت كافة إجراءات الدراسة وتطبيق الأداة في مجال البحث على عينة من (**المدارس**) الخاصة وبناء على طلبها/ا تم منح الإفادة.

شاكرين طيب تعاونكم ،،،،

اسم المديرية :
التوقيع :
التاريخ :



الحرم

12٥



رمز العملية ت . ط . ع 6
الإصدار : 1.0
تاريخ الإصدار : 1436/8/5 هـ
صفحة 17 من 18

Appendix V: Letter from the headteacher of school (C) to the Ministry of

Education to inform about ending of data collection



الرقم :
التاريخ :
المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التخطيط والتطوير



وزارة التربية والتعليم
Ministry of Education

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٢٨٠)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض

” إفادة ”

الموضوع :

صورة علي فهد الزويج جامعة الملك سعود / كلية التربية / قسم التربية الخاصة جامعة نورثمبريا - في المملكة المتحدة ٣٣٤٤٣٣ / ٣٦٢١٣٣ ١٤٣٣ / ٢ / ٤ زيارات ميدانية استطلاعية لاجراء مسح ابحاث كمشاهدة ورش في الدراسة فاقصافاً لزيارة ليعرفون للمعلمين	اسم الباحثة كلية / جامعة رقم وتاريخ خطاب التسهيل مهمة الباحث الواردة من إدارة التخطيط عنوان الدراسة
--	---

المكرم مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير **حفظه الله**

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته **وبعد ،،،**

بناء على خطاب تسهيل مهمة باحثة/ة ذي الرقم والتاريخ الموضحة أعلاه تفيدكم أنه تم تنفيذ المهمة الأبحاثية من قبل الباحثة/ة ، وقد أنهيت كافة إجراءات الدراسة وتطبيق الأداة في مجال البحث على عينة من (الطالبات) وبناء على طلبها/ها تم منح الإفادة.

شاكرين طيب تعاونكم ،،،

اسم المديرية : **د. هدى يوسف**
 التوقيع : _____
 التاريخ :



وزارة التعليم
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير
الختم



وزارة التربية والتعليم
لجنة الدراسات
الإحصائية
البحوث
١٥٨٠
مكتب
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض

120

رمز العملية ط. ح 6
الإصدار : 1.0
تاريخ الإصدار : 1436/8/5 هـ
صفحة 17 من 18

Appendix W: Letter from the headteacher of school (D) to the Ministry of Education to inform about ending of data collection



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٢٨٠)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض

" إفادة "

الموضوع :

اسم الباحثة	فوزة علي فهد الزميع
كلية / جامعة	جامعة الملك سعود / كلية التربية / قسم التربية الخاصة جامعة نورثداكوتا - في ولاية أوكلاهوما
رقم وتاريخ خطاب التسهيل	٤٤٣٣ ع ٦٦١٣ ٢٠١٣ / ٤ / ١٤٣٥ هـ
مهمة الباحث الواردة من إدارة التخطيط	زيارة ميدانية استطلاع لاجراء معالجات مع بعض اخصائيه التربية في المدارس والشام ببارايل للفقير والملاذظ
عنوان الدراسة	اكتساف جوتات ربح ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في المدارس الابتدائية من مدينة الرياض

حفظه الله

المكرم مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

وبعد ،،،،

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

بناء على خطاب تسهيل مهمة باحثة/ة ذي الرقم والتاريخ الموضحة اعلاه نفيدكم أنه تم تنفيذ المهمة الادانية من قبل الباحثة/ة ، وقد أنهيت كافة إجراءات الدراسة وتطبيق الأداة في مجال البحث على عينة من (^{المدارس}) وبناء على طلبها/ا تم منح الإفادة.
والله اعلم
والله اعلم

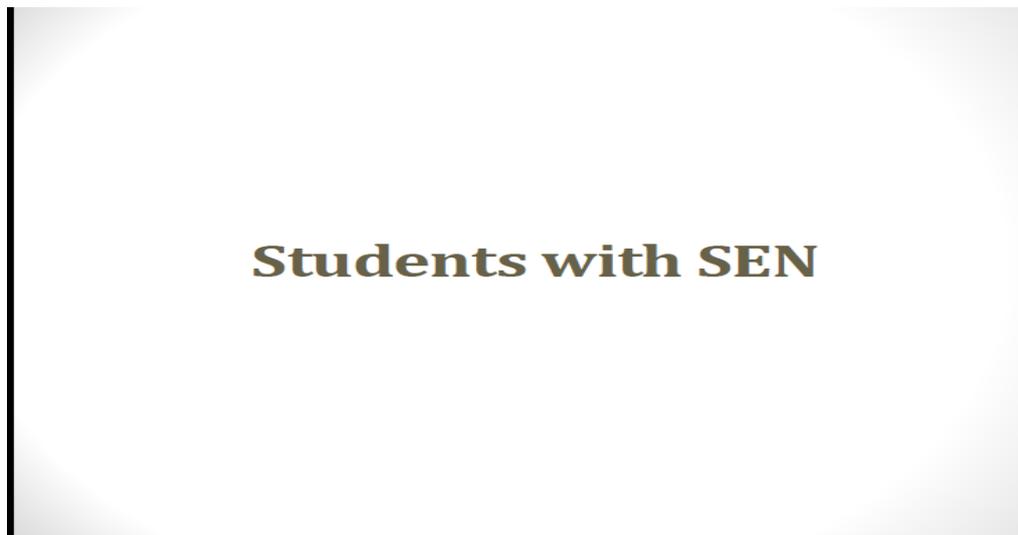
شاكرين طيب تعاونكم ،،،،

اسم المديرية : وسوية المحمود
التوقيع :
التاريخ : ١٤٣٩ ، ١٤٣٩ ، ١٤٣٩



12٥

Appendix Y: Training Workshop Materials



Special Educational Needs

- The UK Education Act 1996 says that a child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
- In turn a child has a learning difficulty if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age.
- It also says that a disability, which prevents or hinders them from making use of education facilities, amounts to a learning difficulty if it calls for special educational provision to be made.
- Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or otherwise different from provision that is normally available in the area.

Special Educational Needs

The definition of SEN is relative in two important ways:

- children are compared to the majority of children of the same age: a child has a *learning difficulty* if he or she has a *significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age*;
- and provision to meet their needs is defined relative to the provision that is normally available in the area

Special Educational Needs

The approach adopted in the SEN Code of Practice is to guide professional judgment with a series of broad indicators. Across different areas of special educational needs, these rely on notions of:

- adequate progress
- responsiveness to earlier interventions.

A consequence of the relative nature of the definition of SEN is that the number of pupils identified as having SEN varies significantly between schools

Inclusive Education

What is inclusion?

Inclusion

- Some researchers (e.g., Power- Defur & Orelove, 1997; Barton, 1997) maintain that the segregation of children with SEN in special education institutes is a form of discrimination against them and thus they should be included in mainstream schools.

Inclusion

- Power- Defur & Orelove (1997) define inclusion in terms of providing children with SEN equal access in mainstream education classrooms and the relevant support for the student.

Inclusion

- For Booth (2005), inclusion occurs through increasing participation of children with SEN in mainstream schools and adjusting curriculums to meet their individual needs. This concept seeks to eliminate special schools or classrooms and emphasises on full participation by students with SEN.
- Therefore, inclusion cannot be described as a fixed state but it is a moving process (Barton, 1999).

Inclusion

- As Jones (2004) puts it, “inclusion is more than just a placement; it is a process that involves identification, removal of barriers, participation, collaboration and achievement of all students”.

Theories of learning

Why do we need to know about learning theories?

Why do we need to know about learning theories?

- To understanding and explaining how students learn.
- Theories of learning are valuable to teachers in so far as they provide a framework in which they can operate and adjust their practice.

Theory: Operant Learning and applied Behaviour Analysis

- Behaviour is learned and therefore it can be unlearned or can be taught
- Analysing Antecedents and consequences

Methods to change or lead to a behaviour:

- Instructional content: making activities more interesting, incorporating student preferences, reducing task difficulties or length, providing choice
- Classroom rules: set the classroom rules with the help of the students to increase their commitment.
- Peer interactions

Methods to change or lead to a behaviour:

- Positive and negative reinforcement (and secondary reinforcers)
- Shaping
- Premack Principle
- Group Contingencies
- Extinction

Methods to change or lead to a behaviour:

- Differential Reinforcement
- Response cost
- Punishment
- Time-out
- Peer confrontation system

Leadership

Leadership

SENIOR LEADERSHIP

- Effective leadership is critical to changing ethos and approach in schools and colleges
- It is school and college leaders who drive the ethos and direction of their institutions.

Leadership

- There are important key elements for effective leadership which will help teachers to deliver the best knowledge for students with SEN.
- As a result, teachers who are getting at it will improve the learning outcome for students with SEN

The best practice for leadership:

- Building vision and setting direction
- Understanding and developing people
- Redesigning the organisation
- Managing teaching and learning program

The best practice for leadership:

- Encouraging initiative
- Showing interest
- Knowing the names
- Being a community minded
- Building teams

The best practice for leadership:

In addition, there are other important skills head teachers of school should be achieved which is as followed:

- Motivating
- Modelling
- Providing opportunities to undertake responsibility
- Promoting professional development

Leadership

There are four Key elements for successful leadership:

- 1- Shared vision
- 2- Commitment
- 3- Collaboration
- 4- Communication

1- Shared vision

- At the heart of successful leadership of inclusion lies core set of values and belief about children and their entitlement and aspiration.
- A shared vision gives staff confidence to be flexible and innovative in reviewing evaluating and developing effective provision for children and young people with SEN
- Leadership at all level within the school promotes a clear and consistence vision and exception for engage with parents.
- A shared vision and expectations ensure that provision for and outcomes achieved by children and young people

2- Commitment

- Successful leaders reflect on their values and beliefs in their commitment to children and young people. They are working hard to obtain the most suitable provision. They are committing to provide high quality resources to children with SEN as well as engage in special staff where appropriate

2- Commitment

key commitments for effective leadership in school:

- Commitment to improve staff confidence and skills
- Commitment to provide resources for ownership of the vision for achievement for all
- Commitment to create an ethos and culture of inclusion.

2- Commitment

key commitments for effective leadership in school:

- The commitment of successful leaders is also seen in the way they equip children for an ever-changing technological world, give experience of life skills and understanding of enterprise opportunities and inspire the children to constantly question and set personal targets.

3- Collaboration

- Successful collaboration is based on the creation of an environment of engagement for all stakeholders and outside agencies within and beyond the school. It may involve other schools – groups, clusters and partnerships – which are prepared to be outward facing and to transfer information and practice.

3- Collaboration

- Successful collaboration in support of pupils with SEN is evident when there is effective interaction and communication between staff in different classes, departments and schools to ensure that knowledge about pupils and what they have achieved and what helps them learn is shared effectively.

4- Communication

- Skill leaders model positive engagement with parents, children and teachers.
- They communicate their vision for inclusion well- formally and informally- and through the way in which they behave and interact with all those involved.
- Effective communication is evident in the clarity expectations, roles and responsibilities, particularly the collective responsibility for provision and achievement of children and young people identified with SEND.

4- Communication

- Successful communicators ensure that staff, parents and children and young people share high expectations and plan for maximum progress as early as possible and throughout their school life.
- Successful communication means listening actively to and valuing what parents and carers know and understand about their children's needs and preferred way of learning
- Leader a cross school may work together to make transition and make transition positive experiences and as early as possible for maximum continuity and progression

Characteristics of effective leaders

For support staff effective leaders

- Recognise and value the work of others.
- Communicate fully and effectively with all staff.
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Provide development opportunities

Characteristics of effective leaders

For support staff effective leaders

- Adopt an open, consultative approach
- Are visible
- Have a constructive approach to performance management
- Act and feed back on concerns raised

Characteristics of effective leaders

For teachers, effective leaders

- Are visible and approachable
- Are supportive
- Have in-depth knowledge of the school and the wider community
- Are interested in wider issues rather than just results

Characteristics of effective leaders

For teachers, effective leaders

- Are non-hierarchical and consultative
- Distribute leadership effectively
- Act and feed back on concerns raised

Disability in the Pre-Islamic Period

Disability in Pre-Islam

- ❖ Social Isolation and prevention.
- ❖ For example, people in the city of Medina used to prevent the limping and blind people from sharing food with them (Al-Jadid,2013).

Disability in Islam

Disability in Islam

Disability is a natural part of human nature

- ❖ In Surah Yusuf the Qur'an states, "truly no one despairs of Allah's soothing mercy, except those who disbelieve" (12:87)

Disability in Islam

- **Islam is against discrimination.**
- “There is not upon the blind any guilt or upon the lame any guilt or the ill any guilt. And whoever obeys Allah and his messenger, he will admit him to gardens beneath which rivers flow: but whoever turns away, he will punish him with a painful punishment.” (Qur’an, 48, 17)

Disability in Islam

- ❖ “He frowned and turned away. Because there came to him the blind man. But how can you know, perhaps he might be purified.” (Qur’an, 80: 1-3)

Disability in Islam

Positive attitude towards disadvantaged individuals

Omar Ibn Al-Khattab:

- gave a house to a blind person to be able to reach the mosque.

Walid ibn Abd Al Malik:

- first care home
- first hospital
- Assigned each disabled a caregiver

Disability in Islam

Qur'an and Sunnah stress that society is responsible for taking care of people with disability

“The believers, in their love, mutual kindness, and close ties, are like one body; when any part complains, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever” (Hadith)

Rights of Disabled

Rights to have shelter, food, safety and care and be well-treated.

“And do not give the weak-minded your property, which Allah has made a means of sustenance for you, but provide for them in it and clothe them and speak to them words of appropriate kindness.” (Qur’an, 4:6)

Rights of Disabled

Rights to be respected

“O you who have believed, let not people ridicule other people [...] And do not insult one another and do not call each other by offensive nicknames..” (Qur’an, 4:6)

Rights of Disabled

Rights for education

“He frowned and turned away. Because there came to him the blind man. But how can you know, perhaps he might be purified.” (Qur’an, 80: 1-3)

Application of Islamic Perspective

Muslims’ attitude towards disability is generated from faith and beliefs on Allah. Principles of faith are:

- 1- Believing in ‘qadar’ (a belief in preordination)
- 2- Believing in the concept of ‘reward and punishment’
“Whosoever does an atom weight of good will see it, and whosoever does an atom weight of evil will see it” (99, 7-8)

Disability in Saudi Arabia

Disability Estimates in Saudi Arabia

- ❖ The population in Saudi Arabia is 28,376,355.20 (Al-Jadid 2013)
- ❖ 3.73% of the population has functional disabilities (Al-Jadid 2013)

Causes of Disability in KSA (Al-Jadid, 2013)

- Genetic cause (Consanguinity marriage)
- Cerebral palsy
- Road traffic accident
- Stroke
- Head and spinal cord injuries
- Infection and inflammation

Disability in Saudi Culture

- ❖ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is based on the Islamic Sharia, which emphasizes human rights.
- ❖ Persons with disabilities have the right to live with dignity and benefit of welfare.

Disability in the Past in Saudi Arabia

Decades ago, people with disability were used to be:

- left behind closed doors.
- ignored to attend the social gatherings.
- seen as a stigma for the families.

Disability Today in Saudi Arabia

The special education services for disabled people was initiated in KSA in **1958** (Alquraini,2012)

Informal attempt to include students in mainstream schools start in **1984** (Almousa, Alsratawi and Alabdulabar, 2006)

In**1987**, the legislation of disability (LD) : disabled people have rights equal to those of other people in the society.

In **2000**, people with disabilities started to have access to free and appropriate medical, psychological social, educational, and rehabilitation services through public agencies.

Appendix Z: A portion of coded materials

Categories	Themes	Codes	Quotation (participant Code)
Understanding of inclusion	Leaders' understanding of inclusion	Including students with SEN in mainstream schools but not classes	"Include students with special needs in public school, but not in the same classroom with their non-disabled peers [...] I feel if we put students with disabilities with other students, they feel happy but if they are in the same classroom, they will feel stressed and unhappy because they can't understand the lesson." (DHB1)
		Including students with SEN in mainstream schools to understand their emotional and psychological needs	"Include students with SEN with public school students [...] The inclusion process needs to understand the effect on students' psychological and emotional needs" (DHA2)
		physical presence of students with SEN in public schools	"Including students with hearing loss into mainstream classroom" (HTA1) "Include students with special educational needs with their non-disabled peers in mainstream school [...] It is including students with disabilities in the same school with their non-disabled students" (DHD1)
		Offering a suitable environment for students with SEN in public schools	"giving the opportunity to students with special needs to study in normal environment. Another important advantage is breaking the barriers between special education students and their nondisabled peers" (HTC1). "Trying to create a suitable social environment that allows individuals with special needs to integrate with the community members in everyday social life [...] The school environment will give an opportunity for individuals with special needs to have experiences that equip them to be better able to integrate in their society outside the school in the future." (HTB1)
	Practitioners understanding of inclusion	Physical presence in public schools	"It is integrating students with SEN with their peers in mainstream schools" (CTA1, CTC1, SETC2 and CTD2).

			<p>“It is placing a small number of students with SEN in larger mainstream classrooms, but keeping the total number of students under 20 in each classroom” (CTA2).</p>
		The suitable environment to adapt to	<p>“It is integrating students with SEN with their peers in mainstream classrooms to adapt within the environment and providing them with special care to raise up their educational level through learning from their peers” (CTA5).</p> <p>“It is an attempt to create a favourable environment where students with SEN get along with their peers in mainstream classrooms and learn better” (CTD3).</p>
		The chance to socialise with nondisabled peers	<p>“It is giving students with SEN the chance to socialise with their peers in mainstream schools” (CTD1).</p> <p>“including students with SEN in the same classroom with their non-disabled peers [...] Inclusive education is successful which makes students with SEN interact socially” (SETA2).</p>
		Providing care to students with SEN with no discrimination	<p>“It is providing students with SEN with special care and treating them with compassion in mainstream classrooms without making them feel that they have special needs” (CTA4).</p>
		The partnership and sharing of the setting	<p>“It is integrating students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. I mean the partnership between the two groups of students in the same classroom one categories has special needs and the other group is non- disabled students in the same classroom” (CTB1).</p> <p>“It is sharing the classroom between two groups of students, one of which is students with SEN” (CTC2).</p>
		The modification of curricula to suit students with SEN	<p>“They could benefit from mixing with their non-disabled peers by learning from them [...] It is integrating students with SEN in mainstream schools through imposing strict rules on parents and school administration</p>

			and providing alternative curricula that can be modified to be suitable for students with SEN” (SETA1).
		Teachers’ cooperation to include students with SEN	<p>“It is the cooperation between classroom teachers and special education teachers to integrate students with SEN with their peers in mainstream schools” (SETB1).</p> <p>“It is the integration of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms and this can be done through the cooperation between the teachers; I mean not only general but also special education teachers” (SETB2).</p>
Attitudes toward Inclusive Education (Affective component)	Leaders’ attitudes toward inclusive Education	Supportive of inclusion	<p>“I think including students with special needs is very important” (HTA1).</p> <p>“I was one of those people who supported inclusive education and I still support inclusive education. When the Ministry of Higher Education presented the idea to me to transform this school into inclusive school, I welcomed the idea with open arms” (HTB1).</p> <p>“Yes, it is appropriate” (HTC1).</p>
		Unsupportive of inclusion	<p>“I think it is not appropriate to include students with SEN in mainstream schools. Those who decided to include student with SEN in mainstream classrooms lack practical experience and have never been into the field” (HTD1).</p> <p>“This is crazy” (DHA1 and DHA2).</p> <p>“I don’t think it is appropriate at this stage... I don’t think it is appropriate to include students with SEN in normal classrooms with their non-disabled peers” (DHB1).</p> <p>“I think it is not appropriate” (DHC1).</p> <p>“I feel it will be difficult to include students with SEN in mainstream classrooms (DHD1).</p>

	Practitioners' attitudes toward inclusive education	Supportive of inclusion	"Inclusive education is very appropriate and students with SEN have the right to be educated in mainstream schools" (CTA5).
		Unsupportive of inclusion	"I think including students with SEN in the mainstream classroom is not appropriate" (CTA1). "inappropriate" (CTB1). "unsuitable" (SETB1). "unwise" (CTC2). "it should not be applied" (SETC1). "it is the worst thing that could happen to these students" (CTD1). "I moved to this school because my old school had students with SEN. If they bring students with SEN to this school, I will retire" (CTD2).
Attitudes toward Inclusive Education (Cognitive component)	Leaders' attitudes toward inclusive Education (supportive)	Inclusion is (socially) better	"because it is better for students and it helps students with SEN to feel better" (HTA1). "students with SEN can interact with their peers" (HTB1). "it is an opportunity of students with SEN to socialise with their peers" (HTC1).
		Provided that schools can provide the support needed	"Yes it is appropriate depending on the students' situation, for those students who don't need intensive support" (HC1). "I think including students with special needs is very important but we have to provide support and we have to have the right diagnoses" (HA1).
	Leaders' attitudes toward inclusive Education (unsupportive)	lack of teachers' experience	"Inclusion requires experienced teachers and clear plans and strategies" (DHA1).
		lack of clear guidance	"In my opinion, if inclusion is established, it should be with good guidance and clear direction. This is not available here" (DHB1).

		Public schools are unsuitable environment for students with SEN	“I think it is not appropriate for those students with mild or moderate SEN. This is because students in the school as well as classroom teachers may not accept them. Even students who are not disabled have problems between each other. If the school has students with SEN, they will be bullied by their peers” (DHC1).
		differences in abilities between students with and without SEN	<p>“I feel it will be difficult to include students with SEN in mainstream classroom as these students are different and so they will have difficulties in coping. How can students with disabilities perform well in intelligence tests if the normal students find it so difficult?” (DHD1).</p> <p>“I think it is not appropriate to include students with SEN in mainstream school because I cannot compare the abilities of students with SEN with the abilities of their non-disabled peers. For example, students with visual disability use Braille for their learning. How can we teach them mathematics and mathematical calculations, science, language and religion? In addition, in science the teachers and students need to do experiments in the lab. In the lab teachers and students use sulphuric acid and carbon dioxide. Let’s be realistic here. These students should not be allowed to study here. They should be taught in a separate institution or in a separate centre, not with other students” (HTD1).</p>
	Practitioners’ attitudes toward inclusive Education (supportive)	Because of equal human rights	“Inclusive education is very appropriate and students with SEN have the right to be educated in mainstream schools” (CTA5).
	Practitioners’ attitudes toward inclusive Education (unsupportive)	Because of lack of teachers’ training	“it should not be applied here because all teachers are not trained to deal with students with SEN” (SETC1).
		Because of lack of guidance	“there should be clear guidance from the head teacher about how we should be dealing with these students. She accepted this school to

			be inclusive, but she does not know what we should do to help these poor students” (CTB3).
		Because of lack of facilities	“It is unwise the school is not prepared and even the classroom. You have seen the building; is it appropriate for such students to move around?” (CTC2).