A study of the development, implementation and perception of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Programme' at three government primary schools in Lebanon

دراسة تصور وتطوير وتنفيذ "برنامج تطوير المدارس الدامجة" في ثلاث مدارس ابتدائية حكومية في لبنان

by

ZEINAB YEHYA AGHA KASSBAH

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION

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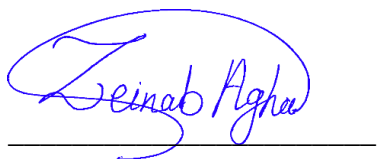
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ABSTRACT IN ENGLISH

This research investigates the Toward Inclusive School Development Programme (TISDP) launched in Lebanon, in January 2018. The project is a joint initiative of the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and is supported by the Government of Canada.

The study investigates the perceptions, development, and implementation of the TISDP. A mixed methods approach is used to collect quantitative data through surveys and qualitative data through focus groups, semi-structured interviews, participatory and non- participatory observation, and document analysis. The exploratory sequential mixed methods design was adopted to provide the qualitative data. The paradigm of pragmatism was also applied to bridge the gap between the scientific method and naturalistic methods. Thus, the use of triangulation aimed to increase validity and trustworthiness. The research questions focused on the aspects of development and how the provision services were implemented for the target group of students. It also explored the perspective of different stakeholders of the development and implementation. Findings revealed that there are several gaps realised during the implementation process towards inclusion. The following areas of concern need to be addressed to ensure sustainable development of the programme in the future. These gaps include:

1. Lack of alignment - There is a disconnect or misalignment between what the management level of the programme wants to achieve and what the principals and paraprofessionals in the schools actually do. This has a direct impact on the effectiveness of the programme.

2. Enforcement - It was noted that there is an obsessive forced hierarchical system rather than a participatory system in the programme.

3. There is no clear inclusive education policy at the national level and there is a lack of resources to provide provision services, which leads to frustration among paraprofessionals.

The study concludes with recommendations for future practises based on lessons learned from TISDP. Finally, detailed suggestions for further research have been made to help fill the research gap with the aim of improving inclusive services in Beirut, Lebanon.

ملخص تنفيذي

يتناول هذا البحث "برنامج تطوير المدارس الدامجة "والذي يطلق علية اختصارًا باللغة الإنجليزية (TISDP). تم إطلاق هذا البرنامج في كانون الثاني/يناير 2018 في لبنان تحت اسم "برنامج تطوير المدارس الدامجة" في ثلاث مدارس ابتدائية حكومية. يعتبر هذا البرنامج مبادرة تعاونية تقودها وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي اللبنانية (MEHE) ومنظمة الأمم المتحدة للطفولة (اليونيسيف) بتمويل من الحكومة الكندية.

ويمثل "برنامج تطوير المدارس الدامجة" جهدًا مشتركًا لتعزيز تطوير البيئات التعليمية الدامجة، وبناء قدرات أنظمة المدارس العامة، وتزويد أصحاب المصلحة بالمعارف والمهارات الأساسية، كما يهدف أيضًا إلى ضمان التنفيذ الفعال لمبادرات دمج الأشخاص من ذوي الإعاقة، واتباع نظام تعليمي من الدرجة الأولى.

وتبحث الدراسة في تصور وتطوير وتنفيذ "برنامج تطوير المدارس الدامجة"، على أمل الكشف عن ما قد تتضمنه هذه الرحلة نحو الدمج في المدارس الحكومية في بيروت حيث يتم تنفيذ البرنامج. وتسعى الدراسة إلى تحديد ماهية الخطط الدامجة التي يتم وضعها وكيفية تطبيق الممارسات التربوية الدامجة الحالية لتفعيل هذه الخطط، وتنتهي بتوصيات للممارسات المستقبلية بناء على الدروس المستفادة من التجربة الحالية.

تم استخدام منهج الطريقة المختلطة لتنفيذ الدراسة ومع ذلك، عند عرض "برنامج تطوير المدارس الدامجة" وخدماته ظهرت ثغرات ومصادر قلق متعلقة بالممارسة العملية، والتي قد تحتاج إلى المعالجة من أجل ضمان التنمية المستدامة للبرنامج.

وأخيرًا، تم فحص العواقب من منظور أصحاب المصلحة المتعددين. كما تم أيضًا تقديم توصيات لزيادة الوعي المجتمعي الخاص بالبرنامج وزيادة الشفافية، وخاصة فيما يتعلق بتمويل المشروع وإدارته.

تم من خلال هذا البحث تقديم مجموعة من التوصيات التي انبثقت من البيانات التي تم جمعها من أصحاب المصلحة عن طريق الاستبيانات، ومن واضعي السياسات والأخصائيين في مجال الدمج عن طريق المقابلات شبه منظمة، فضلًا عن البيانات التي تم جمعها عن طريق الملاحظات التشاركية وغير التشاركية، والبيانات التي تم الحصول عليها عن طريق تحليل عينة من العمل. وتنتهي الدراسة بتقديم اقتراحات مفصلة لإجراء المزيد من البحوث في المستقبل، والأمل معقود على دعم أصحاب المصلحة، والذي بدوره سيؤدي إلى توفير خدمات دمج أفضل في بيروت، علمًا بأن التثليث المستخدم في جمع البيانات يهدف

إلى تعزيز صحة هذه الدراسة وصدقيتها. كما أنه من الإنجازات التي تحسب لهذه الدراسة المساهمة في سد الفجوة البحثية في

هذا المجال.

DEDICATION

I am writing this dissertation and I feel so grateful, blessed and thankful for this unique adventure and experience. The teacher in me learned so much, the parent in me changed (clarity and peace pervaded the inner world of inclusivity in my native land), and the researcher in me thrived on finding information about my own native country that I would have never dreamed of finding if I did not do such study! I look forward to embark on investing more time and effort in investigating inclusive educationin the region. For my beloved parents, you are the treasure I have. For my husband, you are the love of my life. For my children (Jamil, Karim, Yehya, Rama and Mohammad Eid); you are my heart. For my brothers and sisters, thank you for always believing in me you are a bone of strength.Thank you all for your genuine love, support, and encouragement that enabled me to achieve anything I need in life.

I dedicate my work to Professor Dr. Eman Gaad to whom I proudly respect, who has always provided me with support and love. Being your student is one of the biggest blessings I can ever hope for.

Thank God for everything...

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
BUiD	British University in Dubai
CERD	The Center for Educational Research and Development
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
IEP	Individual Education Plan
KG	Kindergarten
LD	Learning Disability
LIENPF	Lebanese inclusive educationnational policy framework
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MTSS	Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
PD	Professional Development
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
RTI	Response to Intervention
SENCO	Special Education Needs Coordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SIE	Special and Inclusive Education
SLT	Speech and Language Therapist
SWD	Student with Disabilities
TA	Teacher Assistant
TISDP	Towards Inclusive School Development Program
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE (INTRODUCTION)

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In Lebanon, Law 220/2000 which details the rights of people with disabilities specifies all children be given equal access to education without discrimination. The law 220 was issued, in 2000, and has not been updated up until this moment. It is driven by the 'Education for all' philosophy which states that "children that learn together, whenever possible, learn to live together regardless of differences they may have" (Salamanca 1994, p.11).

The country signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2006, which promises equal educational rights to those with special needs and the treaty has not been ratified yet.

A WHO (2011) study revealed that one billion people, or 15% of the world's population, experience some form of disability and this global estimate for disability is on the rise due to many reasons such as the improvements in the methodologies used to measure disability. Thus, provision support services to cater for the needs of this category of learners are expected to be on the rise accordingly. Research demonstrated that 17% of the global population, adolescents and youth, with an estimate of 258 million children are not in school (UNESCO, 2020). Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are neither granted equal opportunities nor quality education. According to a recent report by the human right watch (2018), five percent of children below the age of fourteen have a disability. Also, a declaration by the government agency, that is responsible for enrolling students with disability, stated that only 8,558 of children aged five to fourteen are registered in Lebanon for receiving the needed support to cater to their disabilities. According to UNESCO (2020b) there are around 58 million children not enrolled in primary education worldwide and approximately 100 million did not complete the mandatory stage of education. In the Arab region, UNICEF (2020) estimated that

only 74 percent of students from the poorest quintile and 95 percent from the richest quintile completed their primary education in 2019. Thus, discrepancies in statistics indicate that tens of thousands of Lebanese children with SEND are not registered in the Rights and Access databases. The result is that many of these students not only may not have access to education at all but also their basic needs are not catered for by the country (HRW 2018). Consequently, the number of out of school children in Lebanon is growing and exclusion is becoming the norm. To address such drastic current state, the "Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program" (TISDP) of provisions and services was launched in January 2018. This initiative was collaboratively led by the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) support and financed by the Canadian Government. The aim was to promote the development of Inclusive education environments, build the capacity of the public-school systems and equip stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure quality education for all students including SEND students by targeting 30 public schools in all governorates of Lebanon.

A report published on the Arab human development by both the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank in 2007 stated that the quality of education in the Arab region has deteriorated and needs urgent reform to meet the demands of the 21st century (Jurdak & BouJaoude, 2011).

This study aims to investigate the TISDP's development, implementation and perceptions in order to drive radical change in Lebanese public schools, educational culture and society.

In regards to the personal rationalisation of the study, the triggering factors for me were both (a) my personal experience of my children (Jamil & Karim) who were diagnosed with ADHD. I was lucky in seeking out a private inclusive school in Dubai, UAE that was equipped to support children with special needs. From this experience, I learnt essential skills of how to be

effectively involved in their school life. The knowledge I gained permeated into my practice in working in private schools for the last twelve years. Having lived through the success of their cases overcoming their obstacles due to and transforming into a university student studying the second year of computer science and a sporting swimming champion. (b) observing the trauma experienced by Lebanese people of the port explosion in Beirut in 2020. It affected many people, and the situation was exacerbated by the impact of the socio-economic challenges experienced by them. It was then that I came to realize the importance of investigating TISDP to help students with disabilities who are the last on the list to be considered for support in such context. Subsequently, I was ready to share my humble experience to help others in a similar situation. I now advocate for inclusive education. What I experienced with my two sons should not be experienced by other people.

TISDP: School Development

This study is built on the belief which states, the inclusion of students with SEND not only supports them but also improves their holistic wellbeing in line with similarly developing peers in terms of emotional, social and academic achievement (Ajuwon 2008; Katz & Mirenda 2002). Internationally, a significant increase in the proportions of students being categorized in need of support make schools look hard to develop and earn additional resources to cater for the needs of all learners (Fulcher 1989; Meijer & Watkins 2019). Though, effective school development helps every learner thrive and prosper.

Inclusive education is a journey through which expected equity issues will arise in three interlinked areas within, between and beyond schools Ainscow (2020) as shown below:

Within schools:

It stems from school and teacher practices, including:

1) The ways in which students are taught and engaged within the teaching and learning process.

2) The ways in which teaching groups are organized and the different kinds of opportunities that result from this organization.

3) The ways in which the school responds to diversity in terms of attainment, gender, ethnicity and social background.

4) School characteristics related to the kinds of social relations and the provided personal support.

5) The kinds of relationships the school builds with families and local communities.

It is worth noting that, school improvement projects of reform, aims at improving practices in ways of responding positively to student diversity. The key point here is to celebrate individual differences and not to see them as problems to be fixed, but as opportunities for enriching learning. A common characteristic of an inclusive school model involves being welcoming, supporting and tracking the progress of all students in general and vulnerable students in particular.

Between schools

Inclusive practices may vary from school to school within the same country due to several reasons such as collaborative inclusive culture. Moreover, teachers need to have the flexibility to cooperate not only with other staff members and students but also with other schools, and with stakeholders beyond the school gate.

Beyond schools

Socio-economic circumstances, may vary across countries, that make some countries poor and others affluent. Consequently, this has an impact on the implemented practices.

Underlying social and economic processes at global levels may affect local conditions out of which inclusive practices are driven.

Therefore, wider policy context beyond the national forces, might affect the results:

1) The family processes and resources which shape how children learn and develop.

2) The professionals'perspectives working in schools.

3) The demographics, economics, cultures and histories of the areas served by schools.

Accordingly, the school development process shows that during the implementation stage many forces act as a contextual influence, which may become barriers and obstacles or its support and encouragement. It is worth knowing about the characteristics and aspects of this development. As a result of such development in competencies: Teachers may establish learning situations for children to develop their key competencies for life. Teacher's self-development is an on-going path. This is illustrated in Figure 1.1 which is adapted from Mouawad (2013 p.182).

Start by questioning identity | Explore challenges and emotions | Accept them as part of destiny and mission | Make a new decision | Find ways to implement it | Reproduce what has been learnt
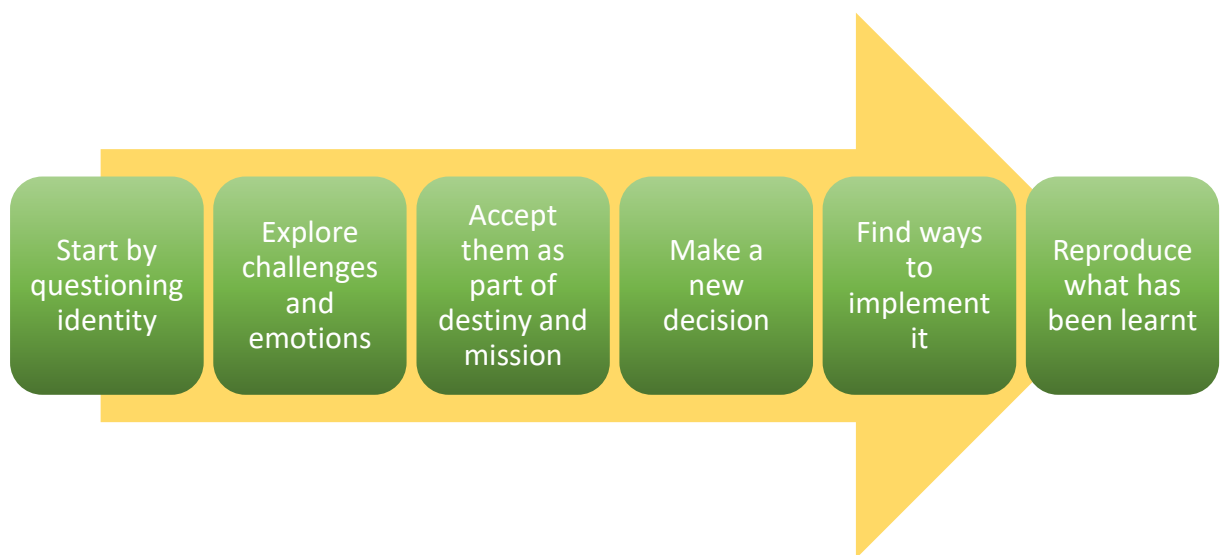
Figure 1 TISDP: Implementation Process

The whole-system approach framework developed by Ainscow (2020), guided the current research to investigate the aspects and the development journey of the three case schools into inclusivity (see Appendix 2).

The framework is used as a tool to structure thought processes around the promotion of inclusion, equity and excellence within the education system. To reach inclusive goals, studies revealed that the equity-excellence dilemma relate to one another through sustaining effective schools (Handy1994; Florian (2019).

Research also concluded that, implementing inclusive strategies in effective schools can be achieved in the presence of four interrelated forces 4P's namely; policy, place, process and practice. The school development plan (see Appendix 1.2) guides schools on their journey into inclusive education. It is a road map providing lessons learnt from international experiences on how to promote inclusion and equity; yet it needs to be adopted and adapted with care in Lebanon to fit the local context. Metaphorically, these 4P's are viewed as the wheels of an effective inclusive car (Gaad 2021).

Policy: Inclusion & Equity as principles

Policy constitutes the first wheel of the effective inclusive car. Policies are meaningless papers if policy implementers do not believe in their contents and action them. Importantly, a clear-cut inclusive policy is needed in each school to help every learner thrive and flourish. Inclusive policy is a so-called "right" by law. So that day-to-day school operations be effectively implemented for such purpose. For example, equity principles involve the belief that education is the foundation for a more just society. Therefore, it is extremely important that stakeholders' understandings of these concepts and their attempts to develop inclusive schools' values become clear so that the intended progress is smooth and seamless. On the other hand, the

external policy environment needs to be compatible with school developments policies in order to support the efforts of school's work.

The 'ecology of equity' (Ainscow et al. 2012) mentioned that students' holistic development is not dependent only on the educational practices implemented by teachers in schools. Instead, it is affected by a myriad of external interacting processes which exert influence on the school from the outside. Therefore, when schools' actions are aligned in a coherent way with external efforts and policies from other local players, community groups, universities and public services then results can multiply the impacts of each other's efforts (Kerr, Dyson, & Raffo 2014).

Place: Involving the wider community

Place constitutes the second wheel of the effective inclusive car. What is worth aiming for is to place the child in the right environment taking into consideration what suits each students' development and growth to thrive. Place is as equally important as producing inclusive policies. It requires forming partnerships with and among key stakeholders who can own the process of change and support it.

The essential issue of the place becomes to investigate the current culture and teaching (Ainscow & Messiou 2017) to know the language of the ongoing practices (Ainscow et al. 2006) related to presence, participation and achievement of all students.

In inclusive places, a collaborative multidisciplinary team choose adopted learning support provisions Mitchell (2015) through Response-to-Intervention Model (RTI) which suits the settings and case (Figure 2.2) e.g. the 'push-in', which means providing a continuum of evidence-based best practices in Tier1 of in the classroom support; Or pull-out purposes, which means learners who need additional help receive it at Tier 2 through small group intervention which takes place in some cases outside of classroom doors. The last Tier 3 employs daily individual intensive remediation of one-on-one in a separate setting. Also, it may require

support from outside specialists such as speech and language therapy or psychology services (Fairbanks et al. 2007).
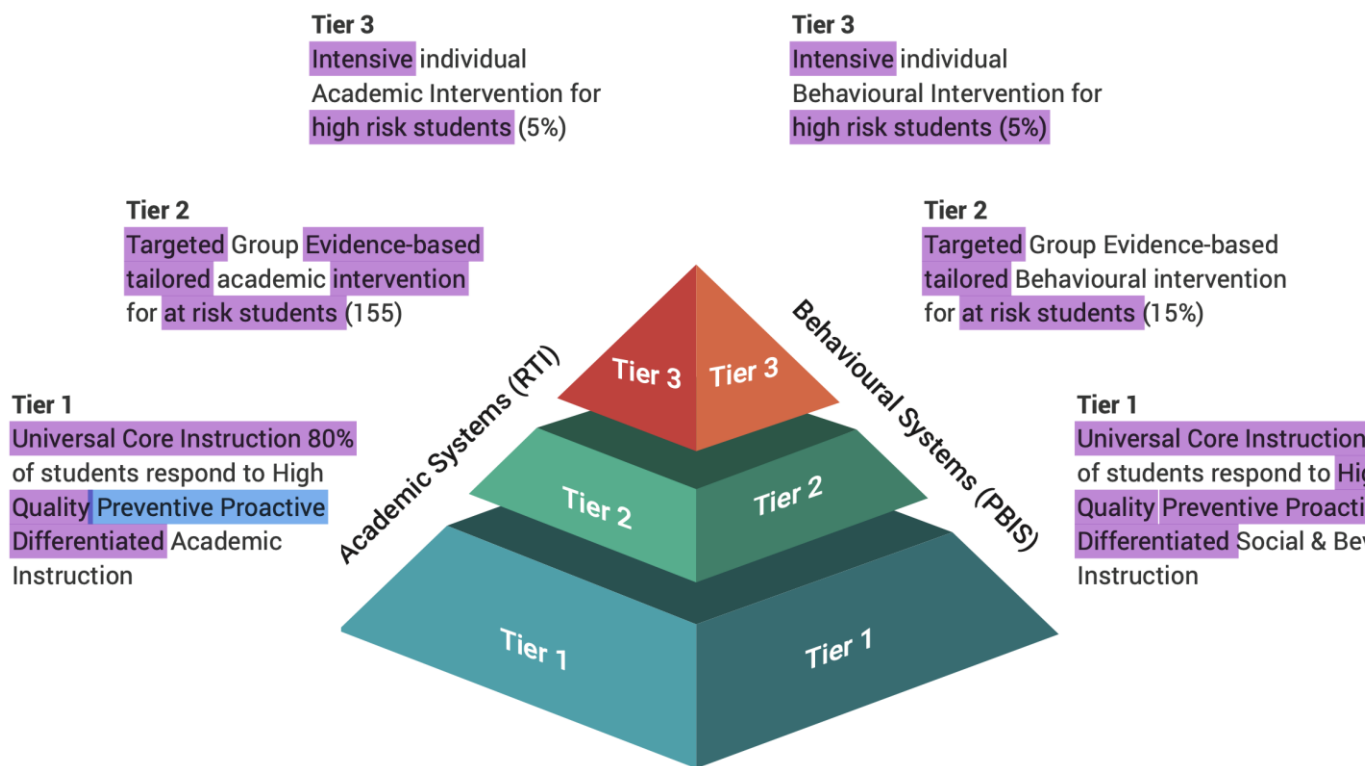
Figure 2 TISDP: Implementation ProcessOr the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support model Source: Haigazian (2021, p.18).

Process: Use of evidence

Process is the third wheel of the effective inclusion car. It starts with ensuring that a policy is issued and the right place is chosen. Subsequently, the aim of the process is to foster the participation in learning for all students. The basis involves having a systematic road map, which indicates the different stages carried to serve the child from the initial referral in day one to the graduation on the last day of presence at school.

In contexts, where there is a culture of collaboration that encourages and supports problem solving (Ainscow 2016, Dyson et al. 2004) inclusive education is more likely to be successful because all staff are broadening their repertoire of responses. Thus, the clarion call for teachers

to work with and through other adults to secure meaningful learning experiences for all children in the classroom community (Florian 2014; Florian & Spratt 2013) remains upheld. It is proven that quality teaching is fostered within a supportive community, providing opportunities for learning, reflection and transformation (Fulton et al. 2005) and that teachers no longer should be 'alone' in their classrooms; instead, they should work collaboratively with their colleagues to improve the quality of their work (Clift et al., 1990; and Gore & Zeichner, 1991).

On the other hand, not all learning in 'communities of practice' is valuable, as some persons may acquire undesirable forms of practice or values (Salomon & Perkins, 1998). Clement and Vandenberghe (2000), stated that autonomy and collegiality complement each other, and professional development (PD) is the result of the interplay between the individual and the group. In order to work alone, teachers need to collaborate with others, and vice versa (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000).

Ainscow and Sandhill (2010) illustrated in their study that preparation, implementation and review of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) need to be based on shared decision-making and democratic principles.

Yet, to improve current inclusive practices and cause the desired culture changes a common language called 'inclusive dialogue' (Huberman 1993) needs to be developed not only between teachers but also amongst teachers and their students. Like this, to promote inclusion in schools then inclusive inquiry, which is the student-teacher dialogue used as a mean to an end of making lessons more inclusive (Messiou & Ainscow 2020) is imperative. Also, a distribution of leadership is needed as an 'engine' to enable such inquiry as a common goal.

Therefore, the use of evidence from dialogues may cause reflections and self-questioning which needs to be harnessed as a lever for change (Senge 1989). Hence, improving current practices

results in experimenting new ones and reaching out to all students including hard to reach learners (Ainscow 2016).

Organizational flexibility is the foundation for introducing these new practices. It indicates that senior staff administrators be actively supporting the processes of experimentation and collaboration amongst teachers. These are seen as the 'glue' that can bind a community together to foster the participation in learning for all students. Support check points and evaluation process are needed in order to explain to what extent the implemented process is effective (Ainscow 2016).

Practice: Administration

Practice is the last wheel of the effective inclusive car. Practice is reinforced by preparing staff members (e.g. teachers and paraprofessionals) for INCLUSIVE EDUCATION, to enhance teaching and learning for all students. It involves the input of competent teachers and administrative members in the experience of INCLUSIVE EDUCATION. It is underpinned by a clear philosophical policy made not only at school level but also at classroom level (Ball 2010). Adopting the 'leading from the middle' approach, schools' collective inclusive practices become drivers of change for students' success (Ainscow 2020). It is one way of reducing variations among staff members by promoting collaboration. Therefore, they become more competent via sharing resources, ideas and expertise to improve practice. Collaboration is defined as 'an interactive process where a number of people with particular expertise come together as equals to generate an appropriate process or find solutions to problems' (NCSE, 2006b, p. xi). Empowering practitioners with the "good practice" in inclusive educationwas mentioned by Forlin et al. (2013) and emphasized by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY). It outlined the initial teacher education, PD and in-service learning of quality teaching. Including technology, the universal design for learning (UDL)

which is a teaching approach. It accommodates the needs of all students with disabilities and in their learning process; as well as individual planning, adaptive curricula, alternative curricula all of which supports in the development of students' well-being and to reach the social-emotional, behavioral and educational attainments (Agha & ElDaou 2018) of success.

To achieve inclusivity goals, a multidisciplinary team needs to hold everyone accountable to envision what is to be reached and work together to achieve it with potential to support 'deep-level collaboration' (Vangrieken et al. 2015). Acknowledging the influence of school context on collaborative practices, research highlights the pivotal role of leadership in fostering collaboration and creating collaborative cultures (King 2011, 2014). A research study reported the positive impact of peer collaboration on teachers' professional learning (Attard Tona and Shanks 2017; Witterholt, Goedhart, and Suhre 2016).

Hence, adopting inclusion as a pillar was examined to uncover how educational provisions were promoting inclusion to support all students and reach out to students who are excluded at the moment.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Inclusive educationdevelopment is a complex process. It requires structural transformation plan to be in place for fostering systematic and meaningful learning towards inclusive schools (Said et al. 2017). In Lebanon, legislation indicates that the law guarantees the equal education opportunity for all children or adults with disabilities; however, article 59 does not clarify how the decisions of the journey into inclusive education should be made. In the absence on how inclusion is translated into practice (Florian & Blackhawkins 2011); teachers report that they are inadequately trained in inclusive practices (Allan 2015, Robinson & Goodey 2018). Consequently, the development of TISDP and the implementation procedure needs to be investigated since the process to promote inclusivity is still unclear in the absence of detailed manuals on how it is to be executed, in the current Lebanese settings. Bassous (2019) also revealed that school leaders in Lebanon need to shape the competencies of teachers to engage with SEND students by constructing their knowledge. She added that, there is still a need to investigate school development characteristics because currently public-school teachers are incompetent and less qualified than their colleagues in the private sector due to the fact, they rely on rote learning pedagogical practices.

By the same token, another study indicated that school principals are not appropriately trained for leadership in special education Lynch (2012). This means a challenging road from policy to practice was expected to be long, complex and winding (Karteri 2021) and worth investigating. According to Jurdak and BouJaoude (2011, p. 3), teachers, parents and students are rarely being heard as "educational reform has been conceptualized, initiated, funded, managed, and evaluated at the highest level" of the MEHE and such governmental institutions as the Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD) but not actually implemented at school levels. In addition, SEND families face psychological and financial difficulties; their children are being bullied by their classmates in inclusive settings, i.e., in mainstream schools, and their

therapeutic services are costly thus their parents cannot afford proper diagnosis and treatment (Lakkis & Thomas, 2003).Thus, stakeholders' perceptions on the development and implementation procedure of inclusive education, was a need to explore because it might either be a factor to promote or impede inclusivity. Nonetheless, no studies were found by the researcher in Lebanon to explain how TISDP was practically executed towards the shift to effective inclusive education system.

1.3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this research study is to investigate the development, implementation and stakeholders' perceptions of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon. The objective is to investigate the three factors of TISDP's namely the: aspects of its development process, the implementation procedure and the perceptions of stakeholders on the development and implementation of TISDP. This study aims to examine the TISDP goals (see Appendix 1.1), the planning and development stage, staff training and PD, community input and the provided technological resources due to their paramount importance of impacting practices. The aim is also to investigate the implementation procedure of promoting inclusivity in the three selected public schools in Beirut. Subsequently, recommendations are given after exploring stakeholders' perceptions on the development and implementation of TISDP as a catalyst for change to either further (a) sustain inclusivity in the three schools' settings or (b) encourage a better inclusive developmental awareness plan.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overarching research question is:

How are Lebanese public primary schools in Beirut moving towards inclusive education, by the implementation of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program'?

RQ1: What are the aspects of the development of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) for public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

RQ2: How the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) is implemented at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

RQ3: What are stakeholders' perceptions of the development and implementation of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program (TISDP) at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

1.5 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The value of the current study lies in its uniqueness and the paucity of data exploring this specific problem. No mixed method Arab world studies investigating TISDP journey into inclusive education relevant to the nature of the implementation process from stakeholders' perceptions with a focus on the aspects of the teaching and learning process were found. In the Arab region, rigorous research evaluating current initiatives and practices on inclusion in the region is scarce. Existing research focuses on the attitudes towards inclusion. Specifically, on the contribution of the implemented initiatives on the change of attitudes; which is a much-needed information that is still limited. Frederickson and Cline (2002) highlighted that any successful school development and reform needs to consider the views and feedback of the beneficiaries, this constitutes a rich source of information. In addition, in Lebanon, poor information management systems are considered barriers for decision makers because it prevents them from the availability of the required information to make their informed decisions as well as to monitor and track the progress of any initiative. In particular, examining the views of the primary school children (ages 4 – 12) and their parents contributed to bridging the research gap in the literature (Gonzalez etal. 2017) and thus ensured a more effective and successful future restructuring plans for TISDP (Hornby & Witte 2010).

The current study identified best practices for educating SEND students which is a much needed information to cater for the needs of this category of learners, in Lebanese public primary schools. The outcomes were instrumental to understand how current school practices were implemented to support school's future development plans. Inclusive education development is 'everybody's business' (Slee 2011; Rogers 2012), which is an evolutionary and not a revolutionary process. Thus, all the peripheral policies (that are not directly related to educational issues) including: social protection, cross sectoral reforms, attitudinal youth development, environmental and infrastructures; which are not related to educational issues (Du Plessis 2013) were thoroughly examined. Henceforth, this study offers contributions to knowledge and bridge the current research gap. The recommendations were provided to guide stakeholders to promote inclusivity in the best way that goes hand in hand with the current political status, settings and context of the country. This research study does not only stress the importance of the development, implementation and stakeholders' perceptions as a starting point to reflection (Loughran 2006) on the attainment of the educational reform; it also considers the intervening variables of the current socio-political and economic context of the country, which acted as a factor to impact the program and the wider school community,which acted as a trigger to a more widely change in the society as pinpointed by the current research . Also, further research will be inspired via the current research results to increase the knowledge base for educating SEND students in Beirut, Lebanon amid the current context.

The current study adopts the mixed method approach as seen in the figure 1.2b below. It means mixing both the quantitative and qualitative methods to seek an answer to the inquiry. Thus, this process involves integrating simultaneously the process of collecting quantitative data

through surveys and qualitative data through focus groups, semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis as shown.

The exploratory sequential mixed method design was adopted in the beginning because the focus group, semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis were conducted to provide qualitative data. The pragmatism paradigm was also adopted because pragmatism bridges the gap between the scientific method and the naturalist methods. It means the investigation was done

quantitatively using scientific tools and frameworks (the index for inclusion) to understand the reality of how TISDP was implemented in practice within the naturalistic setting of the Lebanese context. Pragmatism is used to focus on the research problem. The researcher is a learner, who does not know whether the qualitative or the quantitative data would be more important for answering the research questions. Pragmatism is so flexibile and is considered loose (Plano Clark & Ivankova 2016).

Next, results were constructed from knowledge gained to bring change in the reality of the journey towards inclusivity. Pragmatism is focused on finding practical solutions by integrating the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data tailored to Lebanese setting.

Mixed Method Approach
Research Approach and Design

01

Exploratory Sequential Mixed method Design

02

Pragmatism Phenomenological Paradigm

03

Inductive / Deductive

Qual Data Collection

Quan Data Collection

Qual Data Collection

Results Integrated analysis of Quan & Qual Data
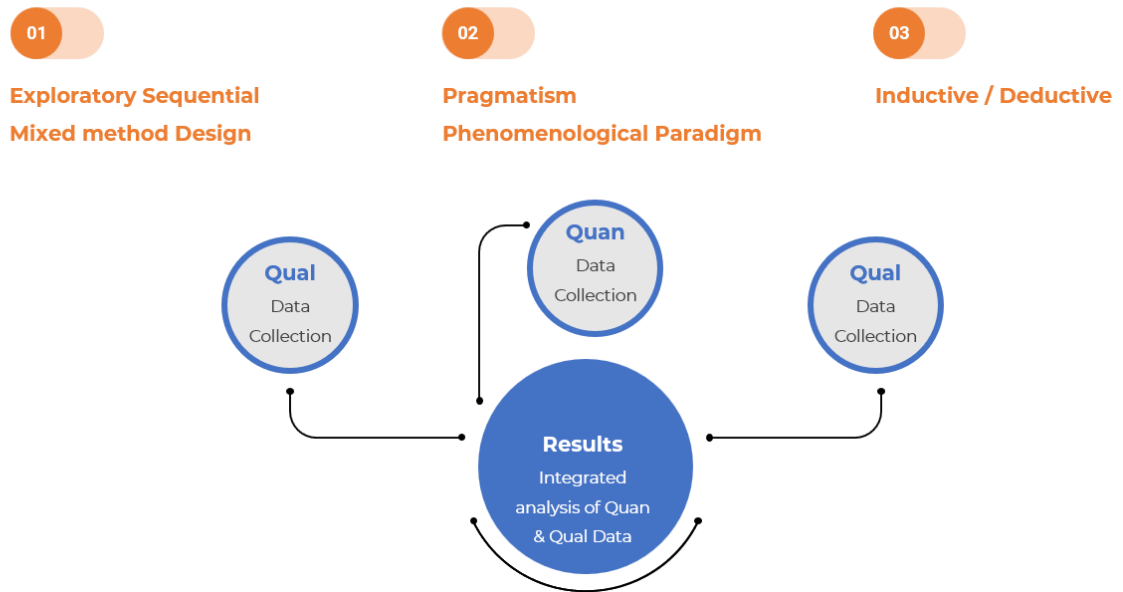
Figure 3 Mixed Method Visual Plan

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE CHAPTERS

The current study is organised into six chapters. In chapter one, a review of the background of TISDP and the Lebanese education system was revealed, the aim was to pinpoint the purpose, and clarify the rationale and significance of the study. Also, three research questions were presented. In chapter two, literature was reviewed to provide a snapshot of the different aspects of literature related to the historical development of inclusive frameworks, models and theories like the 'Index for Inclusion', in addition to mentioning local Lebanese and international debates around inclusive education as to what inclusion is as well as to what it is not. The aim of chapter two was to provide the background and conceptual understanding for the current study of the TISDP in Lebanese government primary schools. In chapter three, the approach and methodology were described along with the design of the data collection methods and ethical considerations that are relevant to the study. In addition, a descriptive account was given

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of the conducted pilot study and the researcher's role. It ended with measures of validity, reliability, trustworthiness, and the methodological challenges that were encountered. In Chapter four, the findings of the study started with an overview of the chapter followed by the qualitative and quantitative data reflecting the development process, implementation procedure and the perceptions overview. Each one addressed the three research questions respectively. In chapter five, the results, analysis and discussion were mentioned with which followed responses to each research question accordingly. TISDP's teaching and learning standards and indicators of inclusive practices, were analysed in depth based on the 'Index for Inclusion' with respect to the three school dimensions of cultures, policies and practices. In chapter six, a conclusion was presented at both level one, two and three stakeholders with respect to detected barriers to inclusivity, finally, personal gains and recommendations for further studies ended the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO (LITERATURE REVIEW)

2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter includes a review of the literature and chronologically presents the development of inclusive education. It involves the 'inclusion' conceptual understanding from global and local perspectives. Also, it captures detailed description of the major role played by stakeholders' perceptions in promoting inclusivity. The literature review indicated what needs to be accomplished in the process of the transition of government schools to inclusivity.

To understand the landscape and local context in which TISDP took place, it was vital to pinpoint frameworks used as tools to guide the process smoothly and clearly. Conceptual understanding of inclusivity was revealed according to TISDP guidelines and local context. The aim was to identify best practices which could unlock the learning potentials of students with SEND at TISDP, in Lebanon.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

To investigate how Lebanon transformed its education system to move towards inclusion, the study conceptual framework was thus divided into three different themes: The development, implementation and perceptions (Figure2.1).

The Conceptual Framework of the study

Development

TISDP: 1. Goals 2. planning & development Stage, 3. Staff Training & professional development 4. Community Input Support services, 5.Resources such as Technology

Implementation

Index for Inclusion:1. Creating inclusive cultures 2. Producing inclusive policies 3. Evolving inclusive practices

Perceptions

On Four fronts- Administration, Teachers, Students and Parents

The Lebanese Social, Economic and Political Crisis

Figure 4 The Conceptual Framework of the study

Figure 4 represents the conceptual framework. It includes the three themes:

1. TISDP development stage: This is the stage where the researcher examined international frameworks to explore how planning was carried out for the development of inclusion for all learners in thirty Lebanese public schools. All issues and challenges were thoroughly investigated through the use of the Whole Systems Approach Framework developed by Ainscow (2020) and the Inclusive Car Framework developed by Gaad (2021). Subsequently, TISDP goals were investigated as well as the planning and development stage, staff training & professional development, community input support services and the resources such as technology.

2. Implementation stage: The focus is the implementation of the on the teaching and learning process so, the created inclusive culture, produced inclusive policies and the evolved inclusive practices were investigated. It constitutes of the adopted pedagogical inclusive practices. Hartetal. (2004) theory, the Multi-Tiered System of Support

(MTSS) intervention academic and behaviour pyramid, which changes the way schools support students with disabilities and behaviour problems and the guide to in-class observation of inclusive teachers. Then, a collaboration framework was adopted for exploring the development of collaborative practices of students with support plans.

3. Stakeholders' Perceptions: The index for inclusion was adopted as a tool for investigating the perceptions of stakeholders on four fronts-administration, teachers, students and parents in regards to school dimensions (culture, policies and practices).

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of the study is based on the basic principles of inclusive education UNICEF (2015) in inclusive schools. Theories are based on what is needed to be covered along the way of journey into promoting inclusivity. Therefore, along the transformation process major changes need to investigated by policy makers and implementers to the way inclusion is planned, implemented and evaluated to provide educational benefits for all children (CEC 2003).

The three premises for inclusive education are used as pillars to implement effective inclusivity process as such: (1) The so-called Human-rights based approach: which is divided into these main goals namely: rights to access, participation and achievement and progressive realization of rights. (2) Learning as a social process: It indicates that learning is the result of interactions of children with others and the world, learning is not only the reproduction of knowledge but the creation of new knowledge. (3) Learning is based on competencies: where children develop key competencies for life and teachers create learning situations where children develop competences.

Vygotsky's (1980) Social Constructivist Theory: learning takes place in social contexts, connection to others, social elements ease individuals' learning	Gardner's (1987) multiple intelligence theory: Diversity, MTSS model, behaviour and emotional management	Piaget's constructive cognitive theory (1973): learning is an active process, attention and awareness, habits and goals
Goleman's (1995) the theory of emotional intelligence: Teacher-student connections to enhance learning, psychological wellbeing	Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs humanistic theory: self-actualization, make life positive, accomplishment, self-confidence, strength, perseverance	Bandura's (1977) "Social learning theory": academic/ behavioral education occurs through modelling, observation and imitation.

Figure 5 Theoretical Framework. it is based on the *Source: UNICEF (2015) TOT Modules on Inclusive Education.*

Premises and principles of Inclusive education

Basic Foundations

Goals

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

So-called Human-rights based approach

- Rights to access, particpipation and achievement
- Progressive realization of rights

Learning as a social process

- Learning takes place in social context
- Learning is the creation and reproduction of knowledge
- Children learn from each others' diverse skills and abilities

Learning based on competencies

- Children develop key competencies for life
- Teachers create learning situations where children develop competencies

Figure 6 Premises and principles of inclusive education UNICEF (2015). *Source: UNICEF (2015) TOT Modules on Inclusive Education***.**

Figure 5 and Figure 6 depict the theoretical framework of the current study, which is built on key related studies and is derived from the premises and principles of inclusive education UNICEF (2015).

To reach basic foundations goals of the so-called human rights, learning as social process and to be based on competencies (as shown above in Figure 6); the common goals were to improve the quality of education by making classes more child-centred. These targets are achieved via teacher practice, which is a mixture of beliefs and knowledge that influence what teachers do in classrooms. The real problem is the absence of clearly identified principles by which inclusive practice can be measured (Black-Hawkins 2014; Florian 2014; Loreman et al. 2014). Subsequently, policy makers need to develop procedures for inclusive schools to allow teachers to find better ways of responding to the diversity of needs of all learners. As stated earlier, some research confirmed that some teachers lack the skills and knowledge to be effective inclusive educators. Accordingly, the goal for policy makers is to improve the teachers' self-efficacy.

Bandura distinguished between confidence and self-efficacy by stating that: Confidence is a nondescript term that refers to strength of belief but does not necessarily specify what the certainty is about. Perceived self-efficacy refers to belief in one's agentive capabilities, that one can produce given levels of attainment (Bandura, 1997, p382.). Hence, Self-efficacy is a cognitive factor and a continuous teachers' professional development is essential for its development to support teachers' confidence level. In turn, such implementation not only support teachers to understand the governments' expectations but also it empowers them with the knowledge of effective inclusive learning strategies. In addition, it offers the positive methods for managing classroom behavioural issues. Bandura's theory states that perceived self-efficacy refers to "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required producing given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p.3). According to Bandura (1997),

teachers' perceived efficacy influences both the kind of environment that teachers make for their students as well as their judgements about different teaching tasks they will perform to enhance student learning. Teachers' self-efficacy and their beliefs in their ability to influence their students to learn in the classroom. Teachers' competency helps them to focus on what matters which is their skills to teach all children in their classrooms and not to focus on the diagnosis itself. High teacher efficacy corresponds with a belief that students can be effectively taught and poor efficacy means there is very little teachers can do to change the pattern around and include students with disabilities to effectively learn, achieve and participate (Umesh etal. 2012).

Therefore, teacher confidence and school type are determined to be significant predictors for the self-efficacy of teachers in inclusive education (Chao etal. 2017). To link theory to practice; the provision of contextually relevant input to improve teacher efficacy and confidence has been highlighted as a significant approach to train teachers for inclusive education (Sharma & Jacobs, 2016). Similarly, what inclusive education training materials, toolkits, checklists, processes, assessment tools and guidelines need to be prepared and these developments need to reflect inclusive education principles of the government decrees, circulars and normative acts. Also, policy documents need to be developed in a participatory manner and include multidisciplinary team. In addition to this, policy documents need to be developed in a participatory manner and involve multidisciplinary teams including the input of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In reality, the development of training programmes for subject teachers, special educators and paraprofessionals needs to be conducted in schools and beyond. The aim is to distribute information brochures and awareness sessions to everyone involved in the process. It causes a shift in perspective from a focus on difference to one which is centred on shared values, acceptance and affirming the dignity and worth of all as well as it

produces the sense of belonging for all. It is worth noting that research by Nind et al. (2004) found that although teachers used the same teaching strategies, their manifestation in classroom activities varied.

Also, during the development stage, plans need to include the observation grids as stated below:

1. Screening: 10-15 percent globally are living with a disability as the estimate from UN's declared (WHO, 2021). Consequently, it is crucial to go for diagnostic tests, developmental checklists, classroom and home observation. The reported data available of the prevalence rate of disability in the Arab region ranges from 0.19 percent in Qatar to 5.07 percent in Morocco (UNESCWA 2017a) do not reflect the population of people with disabilities because some students have never been enrolled in schools or identified as being disabled. The type of formative assessments to be used as well as learner's portfolio from current and previous years to be checked. The informed decision entails a policy for: Establishing a referral per tier, criteria, number of students, action plan, procedure for IEP, grading system, reporting to parents, assessments, and IEP methodology.

2. Data-based decision making: based on the screening defined earlier the needed support services inform the placement in either Tiers 1or 2. Then, data manuals support to define the need for either going for academic or behaviour plan or both. Research confirmed that students with send have more behavioural problems than their typically developing peers (Hemmeter, Ostrosky, & Fox, 2006)

3. Learners who do not respond to interventions in Tiers 1& 2; then need to see an educational psychologist that conduct a formal assessment using clinical standardized formal assessment, whenever needed.

Moving on to the implementation: Understanding teacher development and learning is one way of also understanding educational reform (Desimone 2009) to see its effect on implementation. In reality, teachers need to be empowered by providing them with coaching sessions to map their instructions and learning resources to match the curriculum objectives. In Lebanon, the law is clear about providing best conditions for examinations for students, yet it is not as such about specifying the ways and conditions to study (Kiwan 2021). According to Mouawad (2013), The European Agency for Special Needs Teachers profile for inclusion states that there is a need for teachers to be armed with core values to implement inclusive practices. Therefore, preparing teachers for inclusion is a combination of both a dedicated unit of study on diversity, together with a greater emphasis on how to modify curricula that is infused across all disciplines to cater for the education of students with special educational needs (Winter 2001).

One of the major responsibilities of promoting inclusivity is to aim for quality assurance; where the main agents for effective implementation are teachers. The transformation in perception by stakeholders was explained by Scharmer (2009) as the "theory U" (Figure 2.3) , which works on aspects of presencing- a blending between two words presence (act from one's highest future potential) and sensing (to sense) Scharmer (2009). The core of 'presencing' is when we are conscious of our 'old self' and our deeper 'future self' so they could meet. As a result, we let go everything that is not essential to let in our highest, 'future self'. This process requires to access not only the intelligence of the hand but also the heart and head Scharmer's (2007). According to Nabhani and Bahous (2010), no research has been undertaken on teachers' perceptions of their professional development. Yet, international studies on teachers' perceptions of their professional development were found. Figure 2.3 illustrates that when teachers learn about their own professional identity through processes as shown below; this could be considered an innovative approach in TPD (Mouawad 2013). Figure 2.3 shows that via TPD teachers need to start by observing their deep qualities; then, in the second step, they need to relate these characteristics to their 'inner self'. The third step is when they digest this information by comparing and contrasting the different characteristics, and giving examples from their practical work. The fourth process is 'individualization', meaning that teachers relate

what they had learnt to their individuality. Thus, they internalize, reflect and explore their tasks, in turn, it leads to their acceptance of their destiny. The final three learning processes relate to 'maintaining', 'growing" and 'reproducing' what they learnt. This path or journey through the seven destiny-learning processes aim to awaken the self-development of the teachers by establishing new faculties within them, and developing their sense of moral awareness.

To clarify the journey of development through the seven destiny-learning processes, I have designed an illustration, presented in Figure 1, which shows the 'path of knowledge' leading to the 'path of choice'. It is also the link between the 'outer' and the 'inner' world, and between the past and the future. In other words, my research focused on the present as the four teachers learnt to accept their destiny and allowed "inner knowing to emerge" (Scharmer, 2009; Allison, 2007; and van Houten, 2000). Figure 1 illustrates how the seven learning processes were implemented in allowing them to reflect on their identity and mission.
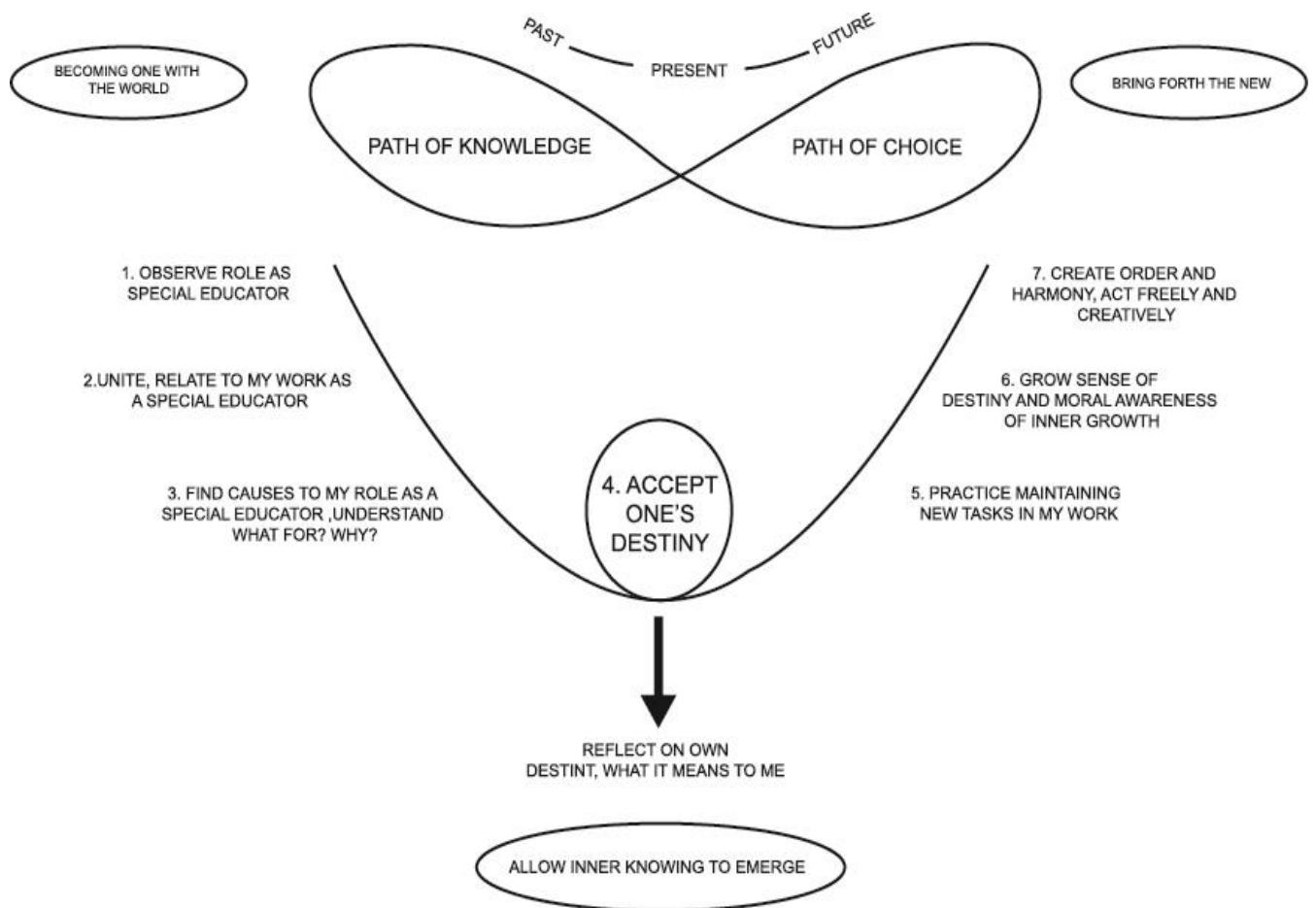
Figure 7 Path of destiny learning. *Source: Adapted from van Houten (2000), Allison (2006) and Scharmer (2009).*

2.3.1 Inclusion: the meaning and confusion

Inclusion and inclusive values, might mean different things to different people because disability is a disputed concept. There is no globally agreed-upon conceptualization and universal definition on inclusion to date (Goransson & Nilholm 2014; Loreman etal. 2014; Slee 2018;) also there is no general consensus on it (Norwich 2010). UNESCO (2017) defines inclusion as a process that helps overcome barriers limiting the presence, participation and achievement of learners. It means equitable participation of all children therein and it refers to a system reform that aims at welcoming all learners by increasing their achievements. UNESCO asserts that inclusion should be seen as a principle that is central to all education policies, as

opposed to being a separate policy. Inclusion focuses on learners to follow a common framework of objectives and activities by working at different paces in different ways (UNESCO, 2017).

Internationally, inclusive education is recommended as the most effective mean of best practice schooling for educating all students (Loreman et al.2013) and the concept of "education for all" is the focus of that process. Thus, an agreed upon definition of concepts and building of consensus around inclusion are needed in any school community and setting. Inclusion is achieved when all students regardless of their special needs are educated in the same class as their peer using varied techniques with appropriate learning goals. Hence, inclusion is a process to improve the quality of education for every learner by removing attitudinal, social and environmental barriers within the education system (Booth 2003). Though, the essence of inclusion is simply revealed as every learner matters and matters equally (Ainscow 2020). Inclusion is a world-wide trend that consider the problem is with schooling practices not with the student.

Internationally, it is worth noting the progress made by some countries in the development of inclusion and equity. For example, Finland as cited in (Sabei et al. 2011) outperforms most countries on the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests in the educational outcomes of the lowest performing students (Sabel et al. 2011). Portugal has gone the extra mile in implementing the inclusive framework in its education system for all students (Alves 2019). In 1977, the Italian government passed a law that closed all non-inclusive provision and special school units where the legislation is still in force to date (Lauchalan & Fadda, 2012).

2.3.2 Inclusive Education

The lack of direction on what the definition of "Inclusive Education" is; which is still largely absent from national policies and documentations (UNESCO, 2020) makes it difficult to develop the teaching and learning inclusive environments. The three basic principles of inclusive education are: (a) the presence which means providing equal opportunities of access to education, (b) participation to execute quality of the learning experience while implementing inclusive education and (c) achievement is to competently reach effective learning process and better outcomes of all learners. Also, it is about learning how to live with difference, and learning how to learn from difference. Inclusive education is defined as a process (Booth & Ainscow 2011) of improving educational provisions for all learners (UNESCO 2005). An authentic inclusive school requires more than simply placing all students in the same environment. A complicating reality is that detailing what inclusive education is and what it means to act 'inclusively' has thus far lacked consensus (Forlin et al. 2013). Generally, it is an approach for all learners regardless of having a disability or not. It is about a societal reform and there is a lack of direction on what the definition of "Inclusive Education" is. It is still largely absent from national policies and documentations (UNESCO, 2020) makes it difficult to develop the teaching and learning inclusive environments.

It involves a shift in underlying values and beliefs held across the system that children need to be provided with appropriate learning opportunities to participate and to be engaged in the learning process to achieve their full potential. A general comment No. 4 to Article 24 of CERD (2016) described inclusive education as involving 'a process…to provide all students…with an equitable and participatory learning experience and environment that best corresponds to their requirements and preferences' (p.13).

Success of inclusive education is only achieved through diversity when people learn how to live together, with each other and value each other (Messiou & Ainscow, 2020). Carrington (1999) suggests that the goal is to establish a 'culture of difference' within schools, where the concept of diversity is embraced, and differences are celebrated; irrespective of the potential ability, the type of disability or severity. Inclusive education not a mere gift granted to all students. It is adopted because every child deserves an equal educational experience as stated by law it is a so-called 'right' based approach. Hence, collaborative decision-making and problem-solving is at the core of inclusive education for all students (Ainscow & Sandhill 2010; Clarke 2000; EC 2013).

2.3.3 Inclusive dimensions

Inclusive culture

Effective inclusive culture needs to be promoted within inclusive schools because moves to promote inclusion have the potential to stimulate changes that will benefit many, if not, all students within a school (Ainscow, 2020). Studies confirmed that students' scholastic failures are achieved when ineffective school inclusive dimensions are implemented in the school system (Booth & Ainscow 2011; Mitchell 2005).

Similarly, research proved that a disability is not an attribute of the person. It is the result of the individual's interaction with society, if barriers to participation for that person are not removed (DIEPF 2017). Environmental barriers prevent granting equal opportunities, full and effective participation for individuals with disabilities (Abberley 1999). Thus, inclusive culture is crucial to examine in order to uncover the ongoing inclusive practices implemented by stakeholders to produce better inclusive policies (Ainscow et al. 2006). Therefore, school culture needs to combat any 'attitudinal, social and/or environmental barriers', which are layers of discrimination. For example, displaying positive images, promotional materials, messages of

SEND students in the school are means to demonstrate that inclusion encompasses not only school prospectus but also social media posts and display boards (Ainscow et al. 2006).

Inclusive Practice

In inclusive classrooms competent teachers are policy implementers and change agents. The key to students' growth and development are those teachers deciding on how to respond to individualization. Their aim is to scaffold, differentiate instruction, accommodate, modify and adapt the content, process and product in order to unlock the learning potentials and reach students' success (Tomlinson 2000). The Individual Education Plan (IEP) can be used as a pedagogical tool to individualize teaching and learning for students with SEND while ensuring access to the general curriculum (NCSE 2006; Loreman, Deppeler, & Harvey 2010; Wakeman, Karvonen, & Ahumada 2013). It is worth noting that, IEP plan is developed through a collaborative process involving all stakeholders: teachers, parents/guardians, the students themselves and outside professionals. It facilitates student participation and learning, reflects a commitment among teachers to securing individually relevant learning for their students (Ferguson 2008; Griffin & Shevlin 2007; Loreman, Deppeler, & Harvey 2010).

Teacher professional learning causes a conceptual change that leads to transformative changes in the teaching and learning process and also helps to implement inclusive practices as well as achieve higher student learning outcomes (Attard Tona & Shanks 2017). Thus, teachers need to learn new strategies that promote the inclusion of all learners. It means to grasp knowledge of content and pedagogy (e.g., knowing students' characteristics, selecting instructional goals, adapting instruction to meet individual needs, using co-operative learning (Danielson 1996; Nougaret et al., 2005; Winter 2006) in order to manage classroom environment and behaviour (e.g., designing the classroom environment so as to prevent behaviour problems). In addition, competent teachers need to have the ability to work collaboratively with parents and

paraprofessionals (Groom and Rose, 2005). The mentioned above studies confirmed that improving knowledge, confidence and competency of pre-service teachers provide them with skills and strategies that will enable them to teach inclusively. Yet, some studies confirmed the lack of gain in positive attitudes following engagement with people with disabilities during the applied experience (Brain 2007) while other studies reported positive outcomes (Forlin 2007). Therefore, teachers' negative attitudes toward inclusion are considered attitudinal barriers (Warnock et al. 2010) and currently are becoming stronger (Kisanga & Mbonile 2017). Forthwith, there is a need to nurture positive teachers' attitudes because negative attitudes towards some learners can impede inclusive education (Sharma et al. 2013; Forlin 2013). Professional development (PD) programs to support teachers are based on Gardner's (1987) multiple intelligence theory, clarifying that people differ in the way they learn. They learn faster when they use their more prominent type of the eight types of intelligence – linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial, bodily/kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic Gardner (1983). Also, Goleman (1995) tries to bridge the gap between intellect and emotion, stepping beyond the academic, traditional concept of intelligence. Thereupon, the theory of "emotional intelligence" states, thinking involves creativity and interpersonal skills, that is connected to our 'feelings' and 'willingness' Goleman (1995). He added, if adults have a low EI, their learning may be affected. It implies that learning does not depend only on intellectual ability, but also on emotional adaptation.

Thakur (2014) as well as Vygotsky's learning and social development (1993), demonstrates that effective learning depends upon positive interactions between learners and teachers. They both agreed that ssocial inclusion becomes effectual when there is a posture of listening, learning and looking both inward and outward as well as of leaning into change. When that happens, the communities can affirm the voice for all through a positive and embracing

inclusive environment (Chih etal. 2017). Henceforth, Mitchell (2015) concluded that, Response-to-Intervention Model (RTI) or Multi-Tiered Systems of Support MTSS (applying a three-tier intervention model) is a fundamental tool to support the effective teaching and learning process for inclusive practices (see Appendix 2.1).

Inclusive Policy

inclusive education encompasses having set of inclusive policies, which are characterized by providing equal learning opportunities to everyone so that all learners are able to meaningfully participate in classroom life (Florian & Black-Hawkins 2010; Florian & Kershner, 2009). Policies are formulated or adopted by program developers and program implementers. They are defined as principles, rules, and guidelines to reach inclusivity goals. Inclusive policies and procedures are usually published in guides or other forms (such as booklets) that are widely accessible to all stakeholders. They define and impact school's major decisions and actions. In addition, all school's related activities take place within the limits set by the adopted school policies; which differ from place to place. For example, policy status of IEP is directly linked to legislation in a number of countries (DFES 2001; Ekstam, Linnanmäki, and Pirjo 2015; Forlin 2001; New Zealand Ministry of Education 2004; SFS 1994).

In this research, the characteristics of the three selected school systems (Stainback & Stainback 1992) were revealed to show how policies were implemented while moving in the directional change to inclusivity.

2.4 TISDP: ASPECTS OF ITS DEVELOPMENT (LEARNING BASED ON COMPETENCIES)

The introduction included all the needed details of how the aspects of the development were executed.

2.5 LEBANON AND INCLUSION: CHANGING THE STATUS QUO

The Lebanese context: Lebanon is a developing country which suffers from a lack of funds and resources, as well as from instability and insecurity due to ongoing political conflicts and the enduring effects of a fifteen-year civil war (Mouawad 2013). Culturally, Lebanon comprises a heterogeneous society with diverse ethnic, social and religious groups. There are seventeen Christian and Muslim denominations, in addition to a Jewish minority (Frayha, 2003). In general, the country is open to cultures and influences of the world; however, the delicate, pluralistic and heterogeneous nature of the social structure has made Lebanon vulnerable to internal conflicts (Frayha, 2003). When referring to the country's complex and conflicting social and religious culture, Joseph (2000) uses such adjectives as 'fragmented', 'sectarian' and 'pluralistic' to describe the Lebanese society. In particular, teachers in Lebanon experience difficulties with regard to inconsistencies between home, school and society (Akar, 2006) in their perceptions towards disabilities.

Some teachers have to deal with problems of shame and stigma against people with special needs expressed by some in the society (Azar & Badr, 2006). Such attitudes are the result of numerous misconceptions, one being the fear of disability; for example, regarding disability as contagious, or assuming that a person with a disability does not have abilities (Wehbi & El-Lahib, 2007). Wehbi (2006) calls for an urgent need to raise awareness on disability issues especially in a country of continuous instability (Bahous & Nabhani, 2008). In Lebanon, lack of qualified teachers, as well as political and religious interference in the hiring of staff, makes the field of education complex and in need of reform (Bahous & Nabhani, 2008).

Globally, among the most severe crises since the mid-nineteenth century, the Lebanon financial and economic crisis is likely to rank in the top three (LEM, 2021). Also, the port explosion in Beirut in 2020 affected many people, and the situation is exacerbated by the impact of the socio-

economic challenges experienced by them. Henceforth, the social context affects teachers' emotions and their beliefs – in other words, their rational thinking (Dirkx, 2001) in the current Lebanese context. According to Wilkinson (1993), education is a social matter; however, persons with SEND in Lebanon are still not respected by society, nor fully protected by legislation Bassous (2019).

The Educational Context

Educational policies and practices in Lebanon were influenced first by French colonization from 1918 to 1945, then by global trends mainly from the United States and Britain (Nabhani, Busher & Bahous, 2012). Since the 1970s and the beginning of the civil war, government policies have not addressed effectively the educational challenges, and social stability and the rights of ordinary citizens have not been advocated (Lakkis & Thomas, 2003).

The country has signed and declared a number of international conventions- such as UNCRPD and the so-called Universal Declaration of Human Rights Assembly (1948).

In a country where there is a genuine need for major reform of the education system with large numbers of unqualified teachers working in special education and no centralized system for professional development (Nabhani & Bahous, 2010). Continuing professional development is not mandatory in Lebanon, and the PD programmes that exist frequently are fragmented, lack follow-up and evaluation to ensure their efficiency, and fail to meet the needs and requirements of teachers (Nabhani & Bahous, 2010). The quality of education provided by NGOs are not monitored by MEHE nor by ministry of social affairs (MSA). Schools are short of a budget spending for buying resources such as braille "audio" recording and they need adjustments such as ramps and sanitation to accommodate SEND children. Also, government schools suffer from centralization; for example, a school principal does not have the authority to decide on budget allocation or teacher development (Bahous & Nabhani, 2008) with many educational resources

and materials are needed to facilitate education. In fact, traumatic war events can devastate systems of education. Also, war can affect the sense of control and level of stress of individuals (Herman, 1997, as cited in Magro & Polyzoi, 2009) that is already exacerbated with the current socio-economic challenges the country is going through. Lebanon, can learn lessons from a small but strong country, Singapore, which shows that countries can respond to downturns they face in the economy. Henceforward, the power of education arena can make it successfully to globalisation and diversity with grits, hope and determination (Gopinathan 2007).

The current situation

Currently, SEND students are not able to attend formal education due to the logistical, social and economic pitfalls of the poor country, Lebanon (HRW 2018). Statistics revealed that SEND students are marginalized and not included in mainstream schools (Peters 2009). So in 2012, the CERD executed the 'National educational inclusive plan' to guide the process of supporting SEND. It was entrusted by the task of decree (3087) on the 4th of November 1972. Consequently, the country's inclusive plan mirrored UNCRPD goals and witnessed a major transformation to the field of special education. It claims to provide equal learning opportunities, to implement the needed support services and to ensure no discrimination is practiced. Despite all of the exerted government efforts and great leaps made by Lebanese schools to support students with SEND, the Law is still not being fully implemented.

The educational agenda of United Nation 2030 plan is to promote inclusion in order to achieve excellence through equity within education systems (UNESCO 2017). Thus, TISDP is the first initiative to supports the right to education for everyone as declared by UN; after well over thirty years of conflict and volatility, where teachers have become used to working without ambition and/or desire for development (Bahous & Nabhani, 2008). Consequently, for TISDP

to be affectively executed, teachers in Lebanon need to accept and implement fundamental changes in their professional field because they are the agent of achieving the vision.

School reframing

Program developers need to devise an action framework plan to remove barriers of the implementation process. The need is to redesign and reshape it to fit the current reality in education (European Commission, 2005, as cited in Karagiorgi et al., 2008). Therefore, to change the current situation for better, TISDP plans to implement inclusive practices, which reflect the Federal Law guidelines. The goal is to implement system change strategies that are contextually sensitive to the selected schools of the Lebanese settings.

Research demonstrated that teachers drive changes in the field of inclusive education when they have positive attitudes towards students with SEND as Porter (2005) believes that attitudes in general towards children with special needs should be improved, with dialogue being "the key to bringing about positive change" (Seitsinger & Zera, 2002, p. 27). Consequently, the plan needs to expand the realm of the possible by following these stages:

1. Planning stage: meeting of principal with staff and coordinators for vision setting, develop school inclusion plans of how to become more inclusive, awareness raising achievements, strategizing for instructional design, decision making regarding assessments (frequency, quality and results), homework policy, the procedure for information sharing.

2. "Implementation" stage: Teachers need to draw on the support of school internal and external resources. Very little has been written on the 'inner' development of teachers and the support they may need (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005).

   Richards (2011) states that the starting point in educational reform is the growth of teachers which is reflected in their students.

The preparation of teachers is clearly recognized in the literature as an important factor in the improvement of students with special needs (Bauer, Johnson & Sapona, 2004). Shulman (2005) stresses the importance of the 'mind', the 'heart' and the 'hand' in PD and several researchers have studied how burnout and stress may prevent professional growth (Platsidou & Agaliotis, 2008; Kremer-Hayon, Faraj & Wubbels, 2002; and Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Thus, PD is needed so they will not become negatively affected personally and directly by the continuous challenges in the classroom, including expressions of resistance to learning common among students with special needs (Brookfield, 1995). Also, examining teachers' practices within naturalistic environments was always an important step towards understanding what constitutes high-quality inclusive practice, how to achieve it and more importantly how to implement it competently (Erten and Savage 2012). This 'real- world' understanding of day-to day practices in the classroom, builds upon the theme 'working with others' (Forlin et al. 2013) by considering students' experiences in the classroom.

3. School self-assessment stage: It consists of school-wide meetings to enlist and check for the progress towards vision. School principals need to let go of their authoritarian role and focus on the importance of teacher personal responsibility (Kiersch, 2006) by giving them more space to state their opinions and express their thoughts. In her article, Ghamrawi (2010) adds that principals and school leaders should provide a non-threatening system of evaluating teachers to "encourage them to sustain their efforts in building their collaborative leadership skills" (p. 319).

2.6 TISDP: PERCEPTIONS OVERVIEW

The TISDP, launched in 2018, was made to promote the implementation of inclusive education in 30 Lebanese public schools to ensure quality education for all children. The aim of the TISDP

was to: build the capacity of the public school system by equipping teachers, principals, and other paraprofessionals with needed knowledge to cater for the needs of students with SEND. It also aimed to raise awareness on inclusive education at parents and community levels. In addition, the program's goal was to inform the development of the inclusive education policy of Lebanon. It is worth noting that Stakeholders' perceptions need to be included because they measure 'what we value' rather than 'valuing what we can measure'. Perceptions can change due to a change in teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes upon the acquisition of new concepts, new skills and new processes intrinsic to teaching (Desimone 2009; Guskey 2009).

The Index for Inclusion

The Index for Inclusion is the fruit of a collaboration between teachers, parents, governors, researchers and representatives of disability groups. The Index was first published in 2000 by the Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education (CSIE) in Bristol (UK). The Index for Inclusion framework can be used by educationalists as a comprehensive guide to assist them to work together in developing plans that are most convenient, appropriate, and applicable to Lebanese circumstances. It was used, in this research, as a tool to examine the implemented TISDP in response to school dimensions - culture, policy and practice (see Appendix 1.3). It will measure the perceptions of stakeholders on their thinking, practice and attitudes. Specifically, the indicators of the index will check the development, implementation and evaluation cycle carried by TISDP on its journey to develop more inclusive schools. In UK schools, the index went through piloting and action research before it was formally recognised and adopted by the government. In reality, a free copy of the first edition was provided to all primary, secondary, special schools and local education authorities in England.

The Index has been utilised in the UK and translated in over 30 languages. It it has been employed in many school systems around the world including Europe, Australia, Hong Kong (Carrington & Robinson 2004; Corbett 2001; Forlin 2004; Hong Kong Education and Manpower Bureau 2004; Nes 2009).

Thus, engagement with data collected through the index, in this research, can have leverage in regards to fostering the status quo of schools in regards to two main concepts: (a) in putting TISDP inclusive values into action and considering many processes such as environmental sustainability, health promotion, non-violence and global citizenship into a single systematic school plan, (b) pinpointing and removing barriers to learning and participation via mobilising resources. According to Booth and Ainscow (2011), barriers such as buildings and physical arrangement, school organisation, relationships amongst children and adults, attitudes of teachers and approaches to teaching and learning need to be tackled as part of a coherent school development plan.

The 'Index' is divided into a set of indicators that includes different ways for developing each school dimension that are considered barriers to learning and participation. School dimensions includes: culture, policy and practice. For each indicator, a set of questions are listed that explains the meaning of the indicator and the challenges that users are encouraged to investigate.

Feedback from studies about the use of the Index in England (Norwich et al. 2011) criticized the 'Index' for being too theoretical and so overwhelming for practical implementation. It was perceived as being 'too English' linguistically challenging of its material. To many practitioners, it can be intimidating on issues of the complexity of the indicators (Booth & Black-Hawkins 2001, p. 31). In particular, a reflection by one observer of the harsh reality in Middle eastern societies stated that, "teachers are not used to reading, books or other documents,

and the supposition that the Index will automatically be taken up is a mistake" (Williams 2003, p. 5).

Therefore, the Arabic Language Index was issued with adaptations based on a research project by UNESCO 'Developing an Index for the South' and other research undergone in the Arab region (Williams 2003). In Lebanon, some resources were beyond the reach due to the cultural nuances, economic situation and values. Accordingly, translation of it into Arabic should take into consideration different countries contexts.

To conclude, the strength of the Index is its flexibility. It allows the opportunity for this research to adaptat its material to the contexts of Lebanese language, culture and educational standards. Thus, the indicators were utilised as well as the associated questions as guidelines to investigate the implemented practices in the three public primary schools on their journey towards inclusivity.

It is worth mentioning that, unless there are changes in the behaviours of adults, then moving into a more inclusive environment is less likely to happen because positive attitudes are considered a driver for inclusivity. The three core groups of prerequisite skills for good competent inclusive teachers are positive attitudes, knowledge and skills. Positive attitudes as being equally important, if not more important than, knowledge and skills (Forlin etal. 2007). Therefore, stakeholders' perceptions play a major role in transforming their current thinking, practices and promoting inclusivity, effectively.

2.6.1 ADMINISTRATION

According to Kozleski et al. (2014), the journey to inclusion is context specific and complex. This task is difficult to achieve because many factors such as perceptions and negative attitudes impede the change of cultural norms within an education system. So schools, therefore, need to

be in the position of adopting inclusive principles while also interrogating barriers, that impede inclusion (Forlin 2013).

The vision of having the 'culture of inclusion' in teaching and learning needs to be achieved. Research studies confirmed that effective leadership skills are needed to promote inclusion in education (Riehl 2000). The role of leaders involves being committed to induce system change by providing quality services to all students, as well as believing in collaboration (Ainscow et al. 2020).

TISDP aims to implement an efficient school development plan. Effective leaders need to work collaboratively with and learn from world class national education systems such as Finland; which is the most successful educational country in terms of students' outcomes (Sabel etal. 2011). It is intriguing to examine how TISDP was supported by the three school's principals. Effective leaders, who are contextually sensitive, learn how to apply research based best inclusive practices suitable to the school settings and to leave a profound impact on the inclusive school. Thus, the administrators' role is to remove barriers to inclusion.

2.6.2 TEACHERS

The frontline service providers constitute of multidisciplinary team of teachers, who are working directly with students. These paraprofessionals include: general education teachers as well as special education teachers such as school psychologists, counsellors, speech and language therapist (SLT), social workers, and other specialists as well as subject teachers catering for the needs of all students, including SEND. Hence, the current thesis was concerned with the investigating teachers' attitudes, knowledge and assumptions affecting what they do in action, consciously or unconsciously to achieve effective inclusion. Since understanding what teachers actually do and gathering 'snapshots' of inclusive teacher practices remains an

under examined research area (Simon et al. 2009), it is extremely important to differentiate between teacher negative attitudes stemming from a lack of knowledge on how to implement inclusive practices and lack of competency in teaching (Sadker et al. 2009).

2.6.3 STUDENTS

As educators we have to become active listeners and include "students' voices" as a valuable input. We need to understand what is going on in students' heads, by encouraging them to speak and express themselves. Without involving learners our knowledge of their needs may be practiced incompetently (Windt et al., 2019). Messiou and Ainscow (2015) focused on the value of listening to students' voices in order to respond to learner diversity. A study by Foster-Fishman et al. (2010) argue, that there are few studies that include youth "voices" and their reflections in the data analysis phase need to be so much encouraged. A study by Messiou and Ainscow (2020) shed light on the importance of adopting the inclusive inquiry approach, which is the student-teacher dialogue, as a mean for promoting inclusion.

The current study will include and examine students' voices to improve the meaningful presence and participation of all learners. Thus, views of children themselves, can be helpful in bringing new thinking to the efforts of school development. Engaging students themselves in the process is an added value to develop more inclusive ways of working as it was clear that uncovering what it means to be inclusive lack consensus continually (Forlin et al. 2013).

2.6.4 PARENTS

Parents involvement and support in the learning journey of their children is crucial to success. A recent study by Kerr etal. (2014) concluded that both schools implemented practices and parents exerted efforts need to be aligned. Family involvement is particularly crucial in supporting change to develop inclusion in schools. In some countries, parents and education

authorities already cooperate closely and transparently in developing community-based programs for certain groups of learners, such as those who are excluded because of their gender, social status or impairments. Therefore, a collaborative partnership between schools and student home's will multiply the impact of each other each's effort (Ainscow 2020) to reach inclusion in society. Thus, inclusion in education is an aspect of inclusion in society (Booth and Ainscow 2011).

2.7 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
2.7.1 PROVISIONS OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND SIMILAR STUDIES

The basis to inclusive transformation is the effort exerted by policymakers and practitioners to pinpoint any biases or the taken-for-granted assumptions. In other words, it is essential that educators do not underestimate the abilities and capabilities of all students. In so doing, stigmatization of students is addressed by implementing a high quality improvement program. Studies confirmed that the improvement of SEND is achieved when there are changes in the behaviours of adults (Ainscow 2020). Thus, pushing students to learn from each other and trigger their development. This process is one of the pillars of inclusive education (Gindis 2003). TISDP claims to adopt both Bandura's (1977) "Social learning theory" and Vygotsky's (1978) "Social constructivist paradigm", which sees learning as a social process. Bandura suggests that academic and behavioral education occur through modelling, observation and imitation. Adding that the process of education involves four steps: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. Whilst, Vygotsky (1978) perceives disability as the result of a socio-cultural phenomenon. To him social exclusion is, the consequence of attitudes and irresponsiveness to diversity. He proposes that learning takes place in a social context. Specific

to this research, is the investigation of teaching and learning, particularly, the teacher-student connections that enhance the learning process.

Theories of social justice in education and the 'so called' human rights based approach stresses the importance of providing fair education and equal opportunities for all learners with the aim of achieving a better society. Social justice has no definite definition because of its variance throughout history (Blackmore 2013). In this context, policymakers need to establish an education system that cater to the varying needs of students, regardless of their social status, race, gender, or learning differences. Bahous and Nabhani (2008) advocate sustained teacher development and supervision in order to promote social justice. It developed into the so-called right-based approach for disabilities. The right-based approach is built on the philosophy which says, people with and without disabilities have the same rights in society (Lawson 2005). The core of the human rights perspective states that governmental reforms should take place to protect human rights. Thus, society needs to remove barriers and improve welfare conditions (Galvin 2004) by catering to the needs of SEND students. Consequently, the United Nations has released the convention protocol for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; article 24 ensures that all children with disabilities have the right to education in mainstream schools (United Nations 2017). In developing and developed countries there is still a gap between the implementation of such approach and its policy. To bridge the gap many organizations such as UN and NGOs are exerting huge efforts to provide required resources for reaching intendent purposes (United Nations 2017; Lawson 2005).

Learning is a social process and inclusive educational reform is a process of learning in the social context. Henceforth, the teaching and learning process involves building a class

community that is part of a wider school community (Figure 8) is an illustrated based on the reference of Lawson (2005).
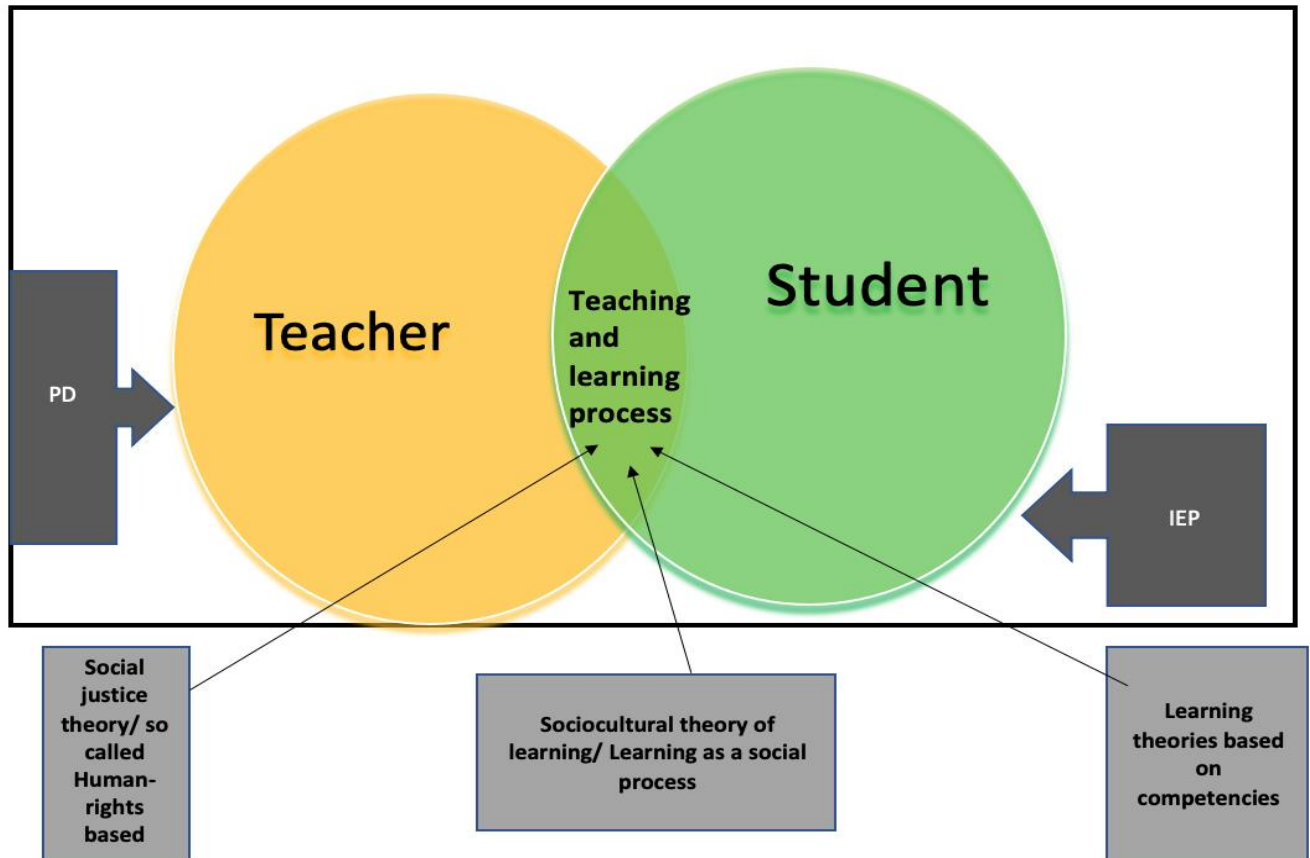
Figure 8 The Teaching and Learning Process *Source*: Illustrated from reflections that are based on Lawson (2005)

The inclusive school ethos drives the process of teaching and learning keeping in mind that SEND students can help us more than we help them, that they are part of our society, and that we are connected to them (Holtzapfel, 1995). Teachers need to employ classroom leadership skills and use the curriculum as a tool for inclusion. Also, they need to support learners' social development, autonomy and interactions. In addition, they need to allow learners to 'take risks'

and even fail in a safe environment. They need to differentiate instruction, process and product by personalizing learning in heterogeneous groups of the class (Tomlinson 2011). It is therefore imperative they employ ICT and adaptive technologies, as well as manage the physical and social environment of the classroom to support learning. The essence is to know that: Academic, social and emotional learning are not equally important for all learners (Agha & ElDaou, 2018).

Starting with teaching, Shulman (1987) explains that teaching "necessarily begins with a teacher's understanding of what is to be learned and how it is to be taught" (p. 7). However, there is no 'recipe' for good teaching (Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006). Teachers with their heads full of theories do not make competent teachers (Wilkinson 1993). What a teacher 'is', is more important than what he/she knows. Palmer's (1998) clarified that good teaching cannot be reduced to technique it comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.

'Learning is defined as the engine of practice' (Lave & Wenger 1991, p.96). It is an internal process controlled by the learner (Knowles 1978) be it an adult or a child. A study by Nasaby (2013) confirmed that, learning is a preparation for life and there are three dimensions of learning:

(1) Thinking, which is concerned with identity and the question of 'who am I'

(2) Feeling, which is about acceptance by answering the 'how does it relate to me'

(3) and Willingness, which is about taking a concrete decision to answer 'what can I do about it?'

Ending with the "teaching and learning" process, that is based more on high expectations. Scharmer (2009) calls this process "open mind, open heart and open will" (p. 40).

It is when teachers connect with students, uncover the curriculum and not cover it; and they learn to understand not only themselves but also the development of their students (Oppeinheimer 1999). The harsh reality is that students change teachers more than teachers do

change them (Kegan 2004). Therefore, as a matter of fact, it is believed that 'students with special needs teach us more than we teach them and teachers do have to learn to deal with them' (Holtzapfel, 1995, p. 10).

A pre-requisite step of knowing your students, is to know yourself first as a teacher. Richards (2011) stated that the inner life of teachers gives the splendid energy, direction, humanity and inspiration organism of the school. It is crucial to know that there is a need to work on the self-development and inner well-being of all teachers (Kelchtermans, 2005; Palmer, 2003) in order for them to be able to understand their students (Palmer 1997). Such holistic development 'will allow teachers to reframe the challenging situation, recognize the positive possibilities embedded in it and see how the future unfold from aspects of the positive present' (Ghaye et al., 2008, p. 366). Korthagen's (2005) explained how teachers reflect on their learning processes and improve holistically their 'thinking', 'feeling' and 'willing'. He portrayed it through the 'layers-of-onion' model. It describes the six levels to deep reflection – It starts from the environment; it goes to behaviour also it moves on to competencies then beliefs next it reaches identity and, finally it ends with the mission. To reflect means to access our 'inner knowing' and allowing it to emerge. Reflection is defined as a special form of thought (Hatton & Smith, 1994). It includes the cognitive, emotional and practical dimensions of one's self-development (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). Reflection is a critical stage of the teaching and learning process because it can break the attitudinal barrier (frame of reference of the old belief) particularly to teachers by tackling and changing these beliefs. Habermas (1973) identifies three types of reflection: namely, (a) 'technical', which concerns achieving certain goals not open to criticism; (b) 'practical', which is reflection on the outcomes, and which recognizes that meanings are not absolute; and (c) 'critical', which relates to reflection involving moral and ethical criteria. Schon (1983) stresses the importance of 'reflection-in-action'. This refers to thinking while

acting and learning by doing in order to deal with challenging situations. Reflection-in-action also includes reflecting on what was done in order to discover what could be done better. Also, Carlo, Hinkhouse and Isbell (2010) added to make the teacher 'a true reflective practitioner' we need to focus on giving teachers a voice through linking their reflection with personal identity and moral issues these are namely called deliberative and personalistic reflection. As a result, teachers may change in two ways; if they engage collaboratively on practices and also if they reflect solely on their own (Bartlett & Burton, 2006; and Angelides, Evangelou & Leich, 2005). To summarise the key issues broached by related studies on inclusive education, it was found that inclusive education focuses on: (a) open learning potential of each student instead of the hierarchy of cognitive skills (b) encourages active participation of learners and not on specialized discipline (c) adapt curriculum instead of stressing on student deficiencies. The aim is to give access to a wider curriculum than is provided in special schools. (d) Differentiates instructions and teaching approaches instead of providing an alternative curriculum for low achievers. (e) remove attitudinal barriers of education personnel and replaces it by high expectations for all students.

2.7.2 SPECIAL & INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, IN LEBANON

Human Rights Watch (2018) conducted an interview with thirty three children 'or' or 'and' their families, who admitted learners are excluded from Lebanese public schools. The report revealed that support services are not effectively implemented. Most families interviewed confessed that students with SEND are excluded from public schools for many reasons such as (a) discriminatory admission policies (b) no reasonable accommodations (c) a shortage of competent staff, (d) the absence of inclusive curricula with the lack of individualized education programs, and (e) discriminatory expenses and fees. Concluding that learners from poor families are, further marginalized.

2.8 SITUATING THE CURRENT STUDY

Understanding the concept of disability, in the Lebanese context, entails tailoring provisions of support services to match the local general rules of the national inclusive plan. Internationally, few studies were found that aim at investigating the transition of international government schools into inclusivity. There is a paucity in research uncovering such process amid critical socio-economic challenges. In the Arab countries, the United Arab Emirates has realized tremendous progress and achievement in the approach it takes in implementing inclusive education.

It is an interesting development from which to learn. For example, the current UAE's legislation requires that provision of supports for students with and without disabilities be determined, managed and provided at the mainstream school level by local multidisciplinary teams. The goal is to reach full inclusion in society thus all students' needs are effectively catered for during their participation in education (KHDA 2017, KHDA 2019). A study by AlBorno (2013) was found conducted in the UAE. It explored the effect of introducing the educational provisions of the 'School for ALL' initiative. The study concluded stating that despite the exerted effort educational inclusion is still in a 'working progress' stage (Alborno 2013). Another study conducted by NFOR (2017) explored the execution of special educational needs policies in Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) in school settings. It evaluated schools and head quarter staff employing their understanding of inclusion as the guiding platform for this policy. Nonetheless, any lesson learnt from other countries to promote equity and inclusion, needs to be replicated with care and adapted because none of them is perfect and applies to the Lebanese context. TISDP is the proposed solution initiated by the country to transform the current practices. It may affect a positive social change in Lebanon because it stresses the role of learners' social interactions and collaboration with teachers and peers. This study attempted to investigate TISDP initiative

journey. Therefore, throughout the in-depth analysis the researcher was very cautious in regards to the implementation process. The current study admits that moving towards inclusion within and across countries arguably varies significantly and continues to be met with challenges (Artiles, Kozleski, and Waitoller 2011; Florian 2014; Loreman, Forlin, and Sharma 2014). A study conducted, in Lebanon, by Mouawad (2013) confirmed that to transform the education system; school principal cannot make a teacher motivated merely because they themselves are motivated. Thus, rather, principals need to allow each individual teacher to develop holistically: to have an open 'mind' to new questions, open 'heart' to deeper levels of existence and human values, and open 'will' to improved decisions for a better future. The value of this mixed method study lies in its uniqueness since none of the Arab world studies investigated the journey of inclusive educationin Lebanese public primary schools while the new TISDP is being implemented.

CHAPTER THREE (METHODOLOGY)

3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

The previous chapter has explored several international studies including studies related to the Arab world on special and inclusive education(SIE). The current research investigated: (a) how the development process (b) with its corresponding implementation procedure were executed then (c) an evaluation of the stakeholders' perceptions, (formed) of the program at three public schools three years following initiation of the program, were examined.

The implemented pedagogical practices were examined in both ways via observing the process of teaching and learning. Also, it was explored through the stakeholders' perspectives to reveal their perceptions established on the implemented TISDP provision services to trace the teacher-student connection as well as to detect the relationship between students with disabilities and their peers. The study disclosed how parents' lifestyle was affected to know whether or not TISDP goals were achieved (Akyeampong et al., 2013). Adopting the mixed methods design enriched the research by gaining access to multiple perspectives and subjective meanings of stakeholders' own experiences which is critical to the success of all stages and phases (Hattie & Timperley 2007). Table 1 is a summary of the chapter three. It includes RQ's, the corresponding sample (check table 3.1b & table 3.2), instrument (check 3.3.6), approach and the data analysis method.

Table 1A summary of chapter three

Mixed Methods	Exploratory Sequential	Pragmatism	Phase one: Inductive	Phase two: Deductive	Phase three: Inductive	RQ's
Qualitative (Document analysis of related documents/policies/handbooks). Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders (level one, two and three). Quantitative data collection from questionnaires	Three phases -Initially, started with inductive - Then, deductive and ended with inductive.	A philosophy which understands some part of reality and construct knowledge to bring change in that part of reality	Thematic Analysis	Descriptive Analysis - Inferential Analysis	Content Analysis	-RQ (1) What are the aspects of the development of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) for public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon? -RQ (2) How the 'Towards Inclusive

		56				Schools Developmen t Program' (TISDP) is implemented at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon? -RQ (3) What are stakeholders ' perceptions of the development and implementat ion of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Developmen t Program (TISDP) at public

					primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH & DESIGN

The three major educational research paradigms (approaches) are: the qualitative, quantitative and the mixed research. The research continuum has the mixed research in the center of the continuum with the qualitative research falling on the left side as well as the quantitative research falling on the right side. The current research adopts the mixed methods design (see Appendix 1.4), which provides both quantitative as well as qualitative data, with an emphasis on qualitative, to fill the research gap. First, the study adopted the qualitative (inductive) thematical approach. Initially, this phase is considered rich because the collected data from the focus group was inductively analysed to extract themes based on the whole-system approach framework (see Appendix 2) formulated by Ainscow (2020). The framework of thinking was formulated by Ainscow to support educators on how to promote inclusion and equity within education system on the journey towards inclusivity. The inductive method is theory-generating; it is the exploration of stakeholders' experiences to reach broader generalizations and theorizations, starting with reflection, followed by the exploring of more general themes and patterns.

Then, the nonexperimental quantitative (deductive) thematical analysis was adopted. Then the researcher used a questionnaire via adopting the deductive approach to begin with a general theory on, or a question about what the researcher needed to know about TISDP; that it is a theory testing and justification. It is safer for the researcher to extract data from statistics when paving the way for other researchers. The deductive approach is narrower and focuses on

numbers in literature (Nowell et al. 2017). The research ended with the qualitative (inductive) phase. The data from stakeholders' perception of each school has been recorded in a context-situated format. It was followed by individualized analysis that allowed for the overall understanding of the nature of inclusive education in the three government primary schools, following the implementation of TISDP initiative. Results were focused on transforming the lives of marginalized learners by implementing the TISDP plans to reach inclusive goals and answer the research questions. The researcher's decision to choose mixed methods was the result of careful planning.

The study adheres to the philosophy of pragmatism, which is a paradigm that claims to bridge the gap between the scientific method, the structuralist orientation of older approaches and the naturalist methods and freewheeling orientations of newer approaches (Creswell 2013; Creswell & Clark 2011). The pragmatist scholar and social reformer Dewey (1931,1938), declared that inquiry is an investigation to understand some part of reality and to construct knowledge to bring change in that part of reality. Pragmatist philosophy is based on the belief that human actions cannot be separated from the past experiences and from the beliefs that have originated from those experiences. Accordingly, pragmatism rejects the concept that reality can be accessed solely by social science inquiry, which adopts a single scientific method (Maxcy 2003).

In this study, pragmatism is selected to be the most suitable approach for answering the RQ's because what matters and is justified or "valid" is what solves our Lebanon's exclusion problem and what works in this particular situation in practice. Pragmatism is focused on the ends and the purpose that we value; it means the focus is on finding practical approaches and solutions customized to the current setting. Hence, what matters become what works in practice, as opposed to being ideal in theory. In this study, we infer that the investigation of TISDP's

development, implementation and perceptions will reflect what is needed to be measured by the researcher in practice keeping in mind to 'measure what we value' locally to the Lebanese context, rather than what is often the case 'valuing what we can measure' internationally. The researcher investigated the strategic plans developed by Level 1 participants on how plans translated to action for all participants and whether or not the agents for driving change and achieving goals were up to par in their implementation procedure according to stakeholder perceptions. The study adopted what works in particular contexts and situations with an exploratory sequential mixed methods advanced design that fits the Lebanese culture and settings. The rationale of the selection involves four reasons for the emphases of its characteristics, as such:

First, in regards to the scientific method the mixed research strategically combine both the quantitative (confirmatory) and qualitative (exploratory) complementary strengths. The chosen approach not only explains the nature of truth and reality of the implementation process (TISDP) subjectively from the stakeholders' perspectives but it also provides information by relying on statistical analysis objectively.

Second, for the epistemology, which is theory of knowledge, a dialectical pragmatism was chosen because it was driven by what works for the specific Lebanese community needs and context. Thus, obtaining in-depth and detailed information to investigate the reality of inclusive system that was so crucial. The reality of inclusive practices was complex and varied. It constantly changed relative to the three selected schools' context and it involved social actors such as administrators, teachers, students and parents.

Third, to understand the multiple perspectives of stakeholders and how it was influenced by the unique complex school cultural environment and system. This research sought to study how

various participants understand and practice the implementation each from their own viewpoints. The researcher adopted both the ontological belief and objectivism: (a) ontology denotes that on the ground inclusive practice is complex and constantly changing in the light of its context and the unique actors involved in the process, (b) objectivism stating that social actors are independent from the existence of a social phenomenon. Investing on the strength of combining both provides a stronger evidence and a fuller explanation as well as a deeper understanding of the TISDP implementation process.

Fourth, the current study used a multi-lens focused approach to investigate multiple perspectives of stakeholders operating together and collect data from their multiple viewpoints via numbers and narratives. Thus, the group as a whole become more than just the sum of its parts by adding insights that might be missed when only a single lens is used.

Data collection methods employed: (a) focus groups, semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 4), participatory and non-participatory observations, and in-depth analysis of documentation and artefacts related as well as (b) Questionnaires. The convenient sampling was used as the whole population is not accessible, researchers select a subgroup representing the population for them to study (Creswell 2015). The sample used in the current research study was chosen for a convenient purpose – namely, "to acquire information from those who are in a position to give it" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 115). Rather than purposeful sampling, which is " a strategy in which particular settings, persons or events are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide that cannot be gotten as well from other choices" (Maxwell, 2007, p. 235). Convenience sampling is a method to collect data from a conveniently available pool of stakeholders. In this research, testing the 30 participating schools was not doable because they are not easy to reach due to the socio-economic situation in Lebanon.

Hence, MEHE representative supported in the selection process of the three chosen schools to gain information from participants who are 'convenient' for the researcher to access.

The sample of schools is convenient due to the current Lebanese context of the socio-economic status of the country. Therefore, schools were conveniently located around a location accessible to the researcher due to the gas and fuel shortage crisis that hit Beirut in which made reaching schools outside Beirut not doable. Also, participants were selected on three different levels-Level 1: first level stakeholders are the program initiators' policy makers, principals, and the directors of the MEHE, zone coordinator and UNICEF representative; those who are concerned with educational leadership, in particular those who lead school development and inspire teachers to see underachieving students in a new light. They nurture the understanding of inclusive culture among second level stakeholders. While, Level 2: are program implementers (school principals, paraprofessionals & teachers) and Level 3: are Beneficiaries -including students & parents who receive the provision services.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION PLAN
3.3.1 RESEARCH METHOD
The exploratory sequential mixed method design was adopted in this research to examine what TISDP goals were and how the school development and implementation process where actioned to make inclusive education a reality in the three public schools in Beirut, Lebanon.

First in regards to time orientation, the qualitative and quantitative parts were conducted sequentially. Second in regards to the research approach, the study was qualitatively driven in design. A greater emphasis and more weight was given to the qualitative approach: (Qual-quan-Qual). The reason was that investigation of the daily real-life classroom activities, teaching and learning, assessments support were needed to gain some insights of the implementation process (Stake 1995). Observation was the tool to triangulate resulting accounts of interviews; in other words, it helped to confirm whether or not participants implemented the educational provisions

they claimed in the interviews. It was a conducted phenomenological study to understand social actors experience of the TISDP's development and implementation as a phenomenon from each person's own perspective. Therefore, the aim was to enter the participants' inner world and understand their viewpoints, holistically.

The first step encompassed collecting some qualitative data to get at the research participants' perspectives and meanings . Data were collected through focus groups, observations and document analysis. On the basis of the in-depth understanding of the current literature review of this study a structured questionnaire was adopted and adapted to be administered for measuring the perceptions of stakeholders (see Appendix 1.5).

Results of step one supported the development of the questionnaires. The questionnaire utilised a scale where research participants indicated their predetermined response for each close ended question. The goal was to obtain information about their perceptions with statements measuring their knowledge, skills and attitudes on the TISDP school inclusive dimensions of culture, policy and practice. The last step, was exploratory in nature to interview stakeholders and find out how their lives have changed after the TISDP provision support. Particularly, what changes they have made in the relationships with their children after the involvement in the TISDP. Thus, addressing parents' inner worlds via phone calls to know their thought-out opinions in their own words. This phase reflected parents' natural and honest answers of what they think of the TISDP. Also, the quantitative approach of closed-ended questions provided parents with the opportunity to rate the TISDP program using rating scales. Combining both the interviews and questionnaires provided a complete way to learn authentically about the TISDP and the data was then analysed.

Hence, a mixed methods approach was adopted to enrich the data by offering the reader a comprehensive account. While the quantitative data (questionnaire) gave us some numbers and

figures about the perceptions, the qualitative data, such as the observations and interviews gave us the answers on why are things as they are to explain phenomenon.

3.3.2 RESEARCH SCOPE
The scope of the study (Figure 9) depicts the current situation with respect to the various provision services available for students with disabilities in Lebanon. It also clarifies that this study was limited to primary public schools that are currently implementing TISDP.

The government schools in a developing country, like Lebanon, lack funds and resources due to ongoing political conflicts and the enduring effects of a fifteen-year civil war (Mouawad 2013). The MEHE as shown in the figure 9 does not provide any funding allocations for SEND students and Ministry of Social affairs (MSA) outsources provision services to special institutions for these students. A significant proportion of the annual state budget have been allocated to defence and security matters, rather than to social and economic development, thereby often resulting in cuts in resources for education (Four et al., 2007).
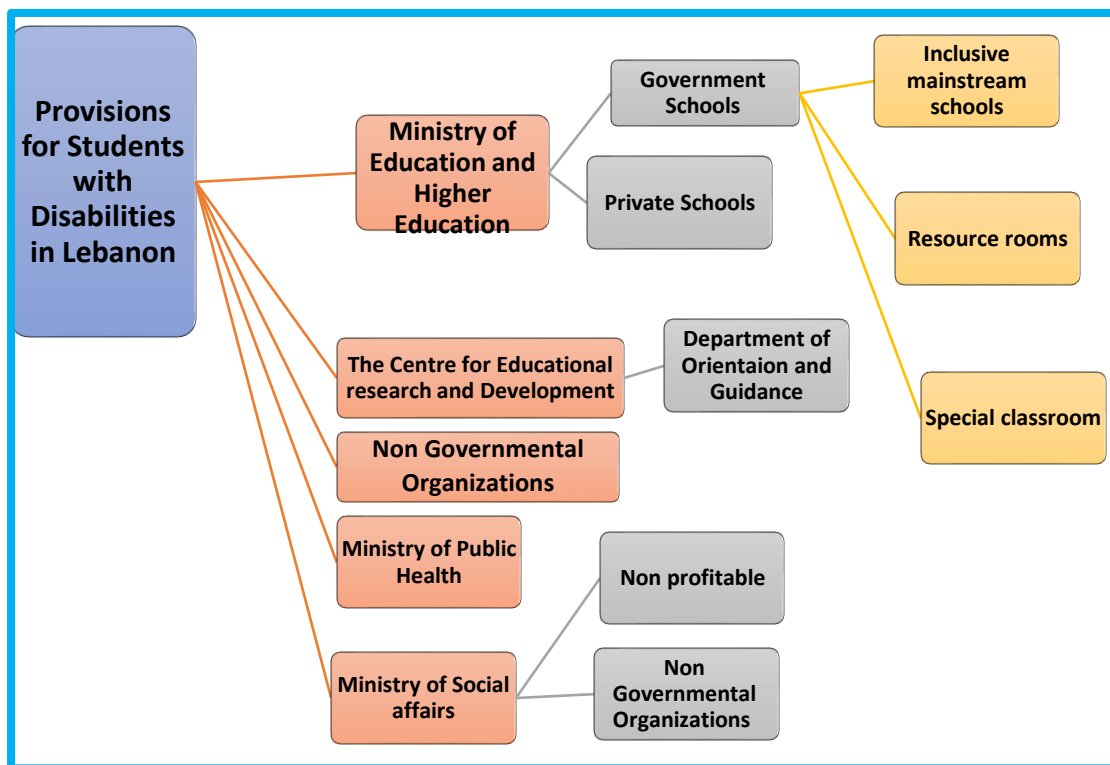
Figure 9 Scope of study

3.3.3 SITE SELECTION

TISDP was launched in 30 public schools all over Lebanon. The original plan of this study was to investigate the journey into inclusive education running on a large scale survey of all the 30 schools. However, the decision was made to use a representative sample of three schools instead. Only one gouvernante (Beirut) out of the six gouvernantes of TISDP was chosen.

A representation of all socio-economic backgrounds from the population were selected in order to control the variable of home support and resources provided by parents. The sample consists of schools whose students represent all social classes attending public schools in Lebanon. The selection criteria setting for this research is based on the following reasons:

(1) School with at least of five SEND students with a wide range of disability types, as well as students of both genders.This criterion provided the holistic overview of the educational provisions implemented to cater for the needs of students with different types of disabilities.

(2) School leaders willingness to provide support, when needed, because they either form barriers to answering the RQ's or facilitate it.

(3) Teachers' experience of a minimum of two years in teaching SEND students (Berliner 1986). Also, ones who attended the professional development training provided prior to commencement

of the program.

The three participating schools varied in number of students (Table 3.1)

TABLE 3.1B: THE STUDENT DISTRIBUTION IN THE SELECTED SCHOOLS.

	School A	School B	School C
Number of students	271	600	----
Number of students with disabilities	40	82	54

3.3.4 POPULATION

The goal of this study was to answer the research questions and the study population consisted of three school's sites, the selection was made from the thirty participating schools in TISDP. Participants were selected from the three schools that have been implementing the TISDP for three years. Each school was examined relative to TISDP development as well as its own implementation process and stakeholders' perceptions relative to its context-situated entity. The focus of the study was limited to select schools recommended by MEHE. Representatives from the ministry guaranteed that the chosen schools offer provision services and have a strategic plan to implement the TISDP development stage, namely: (a) their staff got the training offered

by NGO's, (b) school's that implement the inclusive plans in regards to students' accommodations and modifications of the learning environment, differentiated instructions, materials, placement teaching methods and assessment (c) the support services such as speech therapy and physiotherapy are available, (d) assistive technology are given great attention and (e) schools that are involved in conducting community awareness sessions on inclusivity. The three schools were named school A, B and C respectively. In each selected school of the A, B and C's the following elements were considered:

1. Equal gender distribution of learners:

    -The sample consisted of schools with a mixed-gender population in order to neutralize the effect of gender on the measured outcomes.

    - MEHE-DOPS 2018-2019 Progress Report does not include statistics on the gender distribution of all students enrolled in the 30 public schools of the TISDP; however, the Labor Force and Household Living Conditions Survey 2018-2019 (Central Administration of Statistics CAS, et al., 2020) showed that overall enrollment rates in all schools (public and private) of Lebanon were slightly higher for females than for males across all levels of the educational cycle (see Appendix 1.6) and small differences were noted between male and female learners when comparing enrollment rates in the public versus the private sector (see Appendix 1.6) so, data demonstrated that gender distribution in all Lebanese schools was balanced between males and females.

    -The MEHE-DOPS 2020-2021 Progress Report showed that there was a total number of 913 male in contrast with a total number of 634 female learners with disabilities in all 30 schools of the TISDP. Such difference between male and female learners with disabilities was justified by literature on learning disabilities like ADHD cases demonstrating higher prevalence rate among boys than girls in Lebanon (Richa et al.,

2014). Also, another fact stating that disabilities in reading, writing and mathematics are more demonstrated in boys than in girls (Rutter et al., 2004; Liederman, Kantrowitz & Flannery, 2005; WHO, 2017; Yin et al., 2020).

2. The age factor: The sample of the 3 schools target learners from the Kindergarten (KG) and Elementary classes. The MEHE-DOPS 2018-2019 Report on TISDP reveals that all participating 30 schools serve those cycle of the age groups.

3. Diversity of governorates : Lebanon is divided into eight governorates; that are sub-divided into districts. In this study, the sample represented one governorate of the six governates adopting TISDP. Selections were based on MEHE's suggestion to choose schools with the higher number of disability cases. Such distribution of schools did not ensure a fair representation of the diversity of the geographic and socio-economic fabric pertaining to each governorate.

4. Number of learners enrolled at school : It is crucial to control the variable of the overall enrollment rate of the three selected schools; which reflects the diversity of enrollment figures across all 30 schools involved in the TISDP. In case this variable was not controlled it affects the overall analysis of the results because of its direct impact on the quality of inclusive teaching and provisions, particularly with large observed classes. Not only the number of students enrolled in school affect the results but also the size of the classroom with corresponding students does. A small class size might supposedly achieve better learning outcomes for learners with disabilities versus a large class size; which is often described as a barrier to the quality implementation of inclusive education (Grimes, Stevens & Kumar 2015), on the other hand other studies report different results, stating that small class size in the absence of competent teachers with systematic

training and professional development do not produce effective results (Zarghami & Schnellert 2004).

5. Quality of available human and material resources: The sample schools were chosen with varying proportions of the quantity and quality of human and material resources; which facilitate the inclusive education process. It made a valid comparison of data in regards to the quality of the delivery of inclusive education services between schools with different proportions of current resources and to pinpoint the areas, which need of more focus in the future.

6. School vision concerning inclusive education: With the help of the MEHE representative who were familiar with each of the 30 schools involved in TISDP, three different school visions were selected. The vision affected school's staff who are responsible for removing barriers to inclusion in order to implement effective inclusive principles. Their perceptions either facilitate or limit successful inclusion (Miyauchi 2020). The differences in schools' vision allowed the researcher to measure the impact of each school's mindset regarding inclusion on the attitudes of its beneficiaries .

7. Types of learning disabilities: The sample included schools targeting all types of LD and special needs included in the TISDP. According to the MEHE-DOPS 2018-2019 Progress Report, (Inclusive Table, p. 16), all schools included hearing, visual, motor, intellectual and learning disabilities, as well as behavior disorders (see Appendix 1.7).

8. Quality of online teaching/interventions: The selected schools were with a varied range of facilities regarding the implementation of distance learning and the online intervention services provided to students with LD. These included the availability of technical resources and infrastructure (electricity and internet) facilities in the school as well as technical readiness of teachers and financial capabilities of the parents.

3.3.5 SAMPLES AND PARTICIPANTS

Three schools were selected to acquire information from participants, who are in a position to give it (Cohen etal, 2007). Convenient sampling was used to select three public schools (10 percent of the total number of 30 schools participating in the initiative) due to their model of inclusion and because they are considered as three separate entities that would provide the researcher with a wider opportunity to learn with variety and balance (Stake 1995). Unlike the purposeful sampling, which is "a strategy in which particular settings, persons or events are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide that cannot be gotten as well from other choices" (Maxwell, 2007, p. 235). SEND students, who were scientifically assessed and their cases were identified in every student's IEP were selected.

In order to determine the perceptions of stakeholders of the quality of delivery services the researcher surveyed participants via a questionnaire to know about their attitudes towards teaching and learning, in particular. From the perspectives of stakeholders, the following were investigated:

1. TISDP: The vision, mission, goals and development stage.

2. Implemented practices of educational provisions to cater for the needs of students with disabilities and the barriers to their successful inclusion.

3. Stakeholders' perceptions on the development and implemented stage of TISDP.

4. Future development plans for enhancing the quality support services offered by TISDP, if any.

Table (2) includes details about the participants.

Table 2 Profile of the participants in the sample

RQ 1	School A	School B	School C	Total
Level 1	Academic advisor=1	Academic advisor=1	Academic advisor=1	6
	General coordinator for special education unit at MEHE=1	General coordinator for special education unit at MEHE=1	General coordinator for special education unit at MEHE=1	
	Focal Point: HOD of Special educators=1	Focal Point: HOD of Special educators=1 NGO=1	Focal Point: HOD of Special educators=1	
	NGO=1 CERD =1	CERD representative=1	NGO=1 CERD representative=1	
	representative=1 UNICEF	UNICEF representative= 1	UNICEF representative= 1	
Level 2	Principal=1 Subject Teachers=3 Paraprofessionals=1	Principal=1 Subject Teachers=2	Principal=1 Subject Teachers=0	11

		Paraprofessionals =1	Paraprofessionals = 1	
Level 3	Students= 6 - 1in grade 6 during English - 2in grade 5 during Arabic - 3 in grade 4 in Arabic (3 sessions) Parents= 2	Students= 3 -3 observed students from Grade 3 (2 diagnosed and 1 undiagnosed) (2 sessions English & Religion) Parents=8	Students= 0 Parents=0	19

In this study participants were selected based on three different levels as shown in Table 3.2.

Level 1: Policy level: involves senior staff at national and district level: policy-makers, service providers in other sectors (e.g., health, child protection and social services); civic groups in the community, national teacher trainers. Decision-making at level one was affected by perceptions of these leaders and of what needs to be achieved to make inclusion a reality. Subsequently, policymakers' values and ways of thinking enabled them to provide a vision and shape a culture

of inclusion. Consequently, it caused a significant changes among schools and within classrooms. Program initiators are composed of three representatives in total from: the MEHE- the head of the inclusion program, the education zone officers or coordinator and a UNICEF project manager. The starting point was to contact both UNICEF project manager and policy-makers of the Head of Special Education Department. In effect they facilitated initiating a contact with education zone officers and was followed by the selection of case schools. A total number of six participants from level one were interviewed and observed (see Appendix 1.16) .

Level 2: Implementation level: Involved school level staff: composed of teachers and other education professionals, school-level administrators and managers and practitioners. They were supported by level 1 leaders to increase their sense of accountability for bringing about inclusivity change.

Program implementers: included school principals, paraprofessionals and teachers.

In total: 11 participants were selected from the schools. In particular, three classes were selected and three subject teachers from school A, one class and one teacher from school B, and no teachers but rather a paraprofessional from school C. Each class was chosen provided that its teacher attended the training conducted by TISDP and also had at least two years of experience within the inclusive system at the school.

Level 3: Beneficiaries or recipient/end user level: including parents/caregivers and their children, who are members of minority groups that are at risk of exclusion. It was critical to involve the wider community of level 3 participant because what was done by stakeholders during their day-to-day work influenced their evaluation of TISDP. As a result, there was a total of 16 participants at this level who were service receivers at the three selected schools.

Parents' perceptions and responses were gathered to examine their satisfaction rate and the changes in their lifestyles since the implementation of TISDP. Individual interviews were conducted with Parents/guardians of named student with SEND. Approval was granted by MEHE (see Appendix 1.8) and the researcher then proceeded with collecting data.

3.3.6 Instruments

This research study adopted the following data collection methods: focus groups, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, observations and questionnaire. Multiple school visits for over a period of five months were conducted. The data collection process started with signing consent forms (see Appendix 1.9) and handing in official letters from the British University in Dubai to the schools. Instruments design was guided by the research questions, many international guides (Bhroin & King 2020; Booth & Ainscow 2011) and research-based studies on special and inclusive education (Florian 2019; Florian & Linklater 2010). All the instruments were designed and mapped to the standards and indicators of the index for inclusion (Booth & Ainscow 2011). Professor Eman Gaad and two more inclusion experts were contacted several times to make sure that the chosen indicators and standards of the index were tailored to fit Lebanese context and settings.

The table 3 below illustrates the TISDP aspects and instruments were used to answer the RQ's

Table 3 TISDP Aspects of development

"Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program" Aspects				
TISD Program Goals	**Planning & development Stage (MEHE/ UNICEF)**	**Staff Training & professional development by MERCY CORPS "Jordan"**	**Community In put Support services (local schools and entities)**	**Resources such as Technology**
To build the capacity of the public school system environments	Inclusive Education school Plan	Screening: Skills evaluation process	IEP, Accommodation and adaptation	Classroom inclusion kit
To provide essential knowledge and skills needed to foster inclusive education	Job description & role of paraprofessionals	Screening Scale	Meeting minutes	Resource room tools (visuals)
To increase awareness at the community levels to inform the development of the inclusive education of Lebanon.	Learners Tracking sheets	Continuous Assistance form	Collaboration and coordination among team members	Assistive Technology

The educational provisions implemented by TISDP were identified through school dimensions of culture, policy, or practice accordingly. This process guaranteed the correspondence between the research questions and the data collected to answer them.

3.3.6.1 QUALITATIVE INSTRUMENTS
3.3.6.1.1 FOCUS GROUPS
One focus group meeting of sixty minutes was held at the beginning of the data collection phase with level 2 participants i.e., paraprofessionals (school psychologists, counsellors, speech and language therapists, social workers, and other specialists) at the pilot school. The focus group was chosen because it is a technique that allowed the participants to discuss freely certain issues

as members of a group. During the focus group, the researcher discussed various issues with the participants including: if they had time to sit with each SEND student after school to talk about the IEP's, differentiated instruction, challenges faced, bullying and its effect on the SEND students, curriculum adaptation, COVID 19 measures, and assessment. The group members responded to the researcher's questions, in a spontaneous, informal way which allowed for a richer understanding of not only what they said but also how they said it.

3.3.6.1.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Interviews are the tool used for gathering person's perspective. The main purpose of conducting the interviews was to find out what was "in and on someone else's mind" (Merriam 2009, p.88). The perceptions of stakeholders on four fronts namely: administrators, teachers, students and parents were explored, probed (when needed) and analysed. As Bell (2005) mentioned, a skillful interviewer probes responses, investigates feelings, and can follow up ideas that a questionnaire fails to show. The semi-structured interview type was selected to permit flexible responses from interviewees. The objective of the study was to examine the implemented practices with a great attention paid to the behaviour of connection between the teacher and the student. Therefore, data of the views of level (one, two and three) participants were recorded and a verbatim transcription was conducted using both deductive and inductive procedures for evidence.

Research confirmed that the researcher might become "lost in the sea of divergent viewpoints and seemingly unconnected pieces of information" (Merriam, 2009, p.91). To deal with this, multiple checks were carried out on the data to extract the true findings. A total of 35 interviews were conducted (Table 4).

Table 4 The number of interviews with participants

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
A total of 6 participants were interviewed	A total of 11 participants were interviewed	A total of 19 participants were interviewed
Academic advisor =1 General coordinator for special education unit at MEHE =1 Focal Point: HOD of Special educators =1 Representative of NGO =1 Representative of CERD =1 Representative of UNICEF =1	Principal =3 Subject Teachers = 5 Paraprofessionals = 3	Students = 9 Parents = 10

Data from each single interview were considered in light of other interviews. Semi-structured interviews were carried out according to the participants' schedule and their preferred time. Participants were always assured about the confidentiality of the results. They were also reminded that they voluntary chose to participate and they were given the freedom to pull out information at any time of their choice. To give a comfortable setting for either Arabic or English native speakers, the interviews were conducted in English or Arabic to allow participants the chance to elaborate on their answers. Interview questions were matched to the theoretical framework of the study to avoid any discrepancies and chosen from the standards of the index for inclusion. The interview guides were designed to address the needs of

investigating how the provision services were offered at the schools so, the questions were structured into different categories, accordingly.

3.3.6.1.3 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The researcher collected four types of documents with respect to the education of SEND students: (1) International documents relevant to Lebanese context e.g. UNESCO (2020) policy raising awareness on the transition into inclusive education, (2) Lebanese governmental documents such as ministerial guidelines, frameworks and websites, (3) local newspaper articles and international scholarly published articles, and (4) school related documentation; they encompassed five main aspects:

- The Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy of the school in regards to enrolment, entrance reports and initial assessment required for student acceptance

- Students' progress reports to support the evaluation of the learning outcomes, wherever needed.

- IEPs for SEND students used as a road map for individualizing their teaching and learning.

- Parental involvement and communications that document parental involvement.

The aim was to collect primary and secondary data about the implementation process of TISDP. Several types of artifacts were used: Individualized Educational Plans (IEP's), lesson plans, personal documents, and teachers' anecdotal notes (see Appendix 1.10). Document analysis were carried to provide needed facts and gain in-depth understanding on how provisions at the case schools were manged.

This study was informed by the Lebanese national action plan (NAP), which defines the framework for inclusive education of students with disabilities (SWD) in public and private schools. NAP is developed by CERD as guidelines and general rules for the provision of Special

Education Program and Services. In addition, other valuable sources of information such as the collection of many other relevant government legislations of the MSA were examined, accordingly.

The aim was to examine whether the implemented educational provisions of TISDP match the policies and legislations of national educational plans concerning education of SEND students. Also, to evaluate whether articles of the constitution and the law provide for a meaningful content to unlock every student's learning potential, meet their needs and reach effective access to education. For example, all teachers' training sessions and workshops documents were checked to gain insights into the training methods, strategies and styles provided to teachers.

Added to this, the researcher discussed with teachers their reflections on the training received prior to their involvement in the TISDP. A digital template was designed in advance for a preliminary documentary analysis of school visits. It was used in tandem with reading related documents so that all the details to each heading were recorded thematically on the template.

3.3.6.1.4 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS

Participatory and non-participatory observations were another supplementary method of data collection.The main goal of the observations conducted was to triangulate emerging findings; that is, they were used 'in conjunction with interviewing and document analysis to substantiate the findings', as established by Merriam (2009, p.119). Another aim was to provide an understanding of: (1) the kind of interaction between teachers and students with SEND, (2) the interaction between students with SEND and their peers, (3) the culture of the learning environment in the schools, working conditions administrative support and type of collaboration, (4) and the coping mechanism of students with SEND. Observations are more reliable than what stakeholders claim they implement of educational provisions during interviews. Nonetheless, Steiner (1994) explains that, though observation seems to be simple,

it is though often linked to our impressions, and to our likes and dislikes, as well as to our own existence. Hence, it relates to us and our perceptions as observers. Van Houten (1999) suggested that it is not only 'a new thinking' that is important in learning and change, but also 'a new feeling' and 'a new willing' that makes the real difference to the observed context.

Triangulation of observations and semi-structured interviews were used to confirm resulting accounts (see Appendix 1.11). The saving and rewriting of results from observations were carried out straightway on the same day to minimize distortion and loss of data (Foster 1996). The researcher acted as an explorer committing extensive time in case schools seeking to uncover, comprehend, critically analyse and document observations while TISDP was implemented. The observation styles were varied according to context and needs. For example, during lesson delivery, the observer translated some English terms to Arabic, wherever needed.

A total of five observation sessions were done. The observation guides were designed in two sections: (a) the general notes to note down any exploration of the possible embedding of professional knowledge, practice and beliefs (Anderson 2005) gained from the trainings conducted by level 1 participants, and how teachers were implementing and making sense of their learning during in action of practices for inclusion in their school contexts, (b) a guide to in-class observation of inclusive teachers (see Appendix 1.12) was adopted from Finkelstein et al.(2018) as well as a list of items which indicate the implementation of inclusive practices as to the school dimensions of policies, cultures, and practices following the indicators of the 'Index for Inclusion' by Booth and Ainscow (2011).

3.3.6.2 QUANTITATIVE INSTRUMENTS
3.3.6.2.1 QUESTIONNAIRE
The current study, adopted a developed questionnaire (see Appendix 1.3) taken from the 'index for inclusion' developed by Booth and Ainscow (2011) and matched with UNESCO's (2017) Guide for Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education due to the following reasons: (1) it is a

validated tool which measured the perceptions of stakeholders on school culture, policy and practice relative to Lebanese context and (2) it allowed the researcher to obtain information about the perceptions of NGO's on the barriers of the TISDP to learning in Beirut.

This study corroborated the latest up to date UNESCO's (2017) standards with the Index's flexible indicators for investigating the aforementioned perceptions of stakeholders. To examine TISDP's (1) development (2) implementation and (3) stakeholders' perceptions each of which has its comprehensive set of indicators (see Appendix1.5).

Participants were asked to fill the questionnaire out in order to investigate their perceptions of the knowledge (understanding), attitudes and skills in relation to the implementation characteristics of the gained experience from TISDP. To answer the research questions of this study, three themes were covered:

Firstly, the development of TISDP was examined: Questions regarding the development stage uncovered the TISDP's policies and plans as concepts. It started with discovering policies and plans, so, initial questions began to address the demographics as well as to collect data on "Inclusion and equity" in order to:

a) Ensure that the school system respond effectively to all learners to strengthen concepts and policies.

b) Check whether curriculum and assessment systems were robust and flexible. Also to investigate if they were reviewed and improved to suit all learners.

c) Certify whether awareness sessions were raised to improve understanding of policy aspirations. Verify if curriculum was planned to promote inclusivity and be suitable for all learners.

d) Attest whether there is effective systems to monitor the presence, participation and achievement of all learners within the education system.

e) Stakeholders were trained regarding their responsibilities for enhancing inclusion and removing barriers. Confirm that a clear and sustainable leadership on inclusion and equity in education was practiced.

f) Articulate whether consistent policy aspirations for the development of inclusivity was applied.

g) Identify, challenge and address non-inclusive, discriminatory and inequitable practices by removing these barriers, if any.

Secondly, regarding the TISDP culture at the three schools the 'Structures and Systems' were examined for the quality of support provided for all vulnerable learners.

1. Education providers, learners and their families have a shared understanding of the importance of working effectively together in coordinating inclusive and equitable educational policies and practices. Therefore, collaborative practices were examined to find the strategy of how it was carried in different ways.

2. Human and financial resources; identify if they were effectively distributed to benefit vulnerable learners.

3. Investigate school leaders' strategy to maintain a strong relationship with other special provision education institutions such as centers of learning (e.g., pre-school provision; special schools) to share the expertise of ideas and practices made available in their special settings with mainstream school teachers.

Lastly, in regards to practices the following indicators were assessed (UNESCO 2017)

1. Actions taken to ensure that high quality and effective pedagogical strategies were implemented to cater to learner differences

2. Effective procedures taken to ensure that students' views (their learning aspirations) were included to cater to their needs competently in the inclusive education system.

3. Collaboration and working closely with families was supporting the inclusive policy aspirations for promoting inclusion.

4. Systems monitoring the presence, participation and achievement of all learners within the education system

5. Identify whether teacher PD programs were effectively implemented and the trainings were carried to ensure the development of positive attitudes towards student diversity.

6. Check whether PD opportunities were made available for teachers to attend in-service courses that focus on sustainable development goals (SDGs).

7. Know the major forces acting as barriers to promoting inclusion progress and supporting it.

The contents of the questionnaires were designed according to the indicators set forth by Booth and Ainscow (2002) in the Index for Inclusion.

- In the present case study, one questionnaire was constructed as per the different types of participants: (1) class teachers, special educators & paraprofessionals, (2) school principals, and (3) parents.

- Open ended questions included:

   - Give your own views on the development of TISDP in regards to school culture, policy and   practice.

   - To what extent do you think the inclusive education implementation process of TISDP is   effective   and   generalizable?

   - Are there any types of disabilities that are excluded and not targeted in TISDP?

It is worth mentioning that the open-ended questions, in the questionnaire, are considered to be under the qualitative tools. The open-ended questions were designed to be embedded in the questionnaire and included under the analysis of the qualitative data.

3.4 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was implemented on one inclusive government primary school to refine different instruments of data collection on both fronts its content as well as the procedure to be followed Yin (2009). The aim was to get a solid first-hand understanding of how TISDP was implemented in government schools and to use the experience learnt from such valuable exercise in adjusting the data collection instruments; thus, reaching greater clarity and efficiency. A consent letter was approved by the MEHE to conduct an initial pilot study of one case school (see Appendix 1.9). The pilot study included conducting semi-structured interviews (with level1 general coordinator for special education unit at MEHE, school principal, subject teacher and special education teacher and observations (students with SEND in mainstream classrooms). Also, the questionnaire was administered on 10 participants and checked out to provide an opportunity to review it for adjustments whenever necessary. The procedure of recording sessions, field notes taking, transcribing data, and translating into English by a certified translator, when needed, supported the piloting in not missing any valuable questions to be asked or any important variable to be measured. Participants' opinions and suggestions provided additional information that would add value to the study. Their insights of adjustments added value to clarify the intended meaning.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is an on-going process and this part focused on how the data were analyzed. Firstly, all available data were obtained from: (a) National action plan and the general rules for the provisions of special education programs and services in Lebanon (CERD) (b) articles explaining the law 220/2000 about the provisions and services to be implemented for the

education of students with disabilities (c) newspaper and published articles concerning the special and inclusive education in primary public Lebanese schools (d) interviews and focus group discussions with participants implementing TISDP. In addition, the resulting quantitative data from questionnaires illustrated stakeholders' perspectives on the provisions implemented by TISDP with respect to three school dimensions of culture, policy and practice. The aim was to reach a valid evaluation of the school system characteristics from stakeholders' viewpoints in order to answer the RQ's.

On one hand, quantitative data were analysed thoroughly by employing, Version 23, of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Statistical measures were used such as: Descriptive statistics Averages, Anova, standard deviation, Spearman's correlation, Chi-Square tests and correlational studies. On the other hand, qualitative data content was analysed thematically by constructing patterns and relationships to categories findings.

Secondly, the second phase involved examining the implementation stage of TISDP. Thus, the transition process of the three public schools' movement into inclusive education was examined through the implemented provisions by policy implementers of TISDP. A structured analysis covered the delivery of the services performed through cooperation and collaboration to guarantee data reduction (Miles & Huberman 1994). In addition, visual data displays were used to organise information into concise, compact and accessible form. Therefore, the researcher used graphs, charts, networks and matrices for simplicity purposes of mapping between research and interview questions, observation indicator and collected documents.

3.6 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND DELIMITATIONS

Regardless of all the challenges that the researcher faced and despite the limited time frame allocated for the implementation stage of the research amid such a catastrophic situation in Lebanon, the most valuable experience was that the researcher enjoyed the learning process of

such complex topic. The researcher passed through hard times yet maintained a positive attitude.

Hence, the researcher encountered the following limitations: First, TISDP was launched in 30 public schools all over Lebanon. The original plan of this study was to investigate the journey into inclusive education on a large-scale survey of all the 30 schools. However, a backup plan (plan B) was made to use a representative sample of three schools instead. Hence, the results cannot provide a representation of all the governates of Lebanon consequently cannot be generalized to other gouvernantes and private schools because only one gouvernante (Beirut) out of the six gouvernantes chosen by the MEHE was targeted due to the following reasons: (a) gas and fuel shortage crisis that hit Lebanon in general and Beirut in particular which made reaching schools outside Beirut not doable, (b) safety and security issues that arose due to the political and economic uncertainties existing at the time causing the researcher fear of losing valuables or even her own life in pursue of data, and (c) COVID-19 pandemic that caused dramatic delay in data collection due to the several months of strict lockdown measures; which forced public school closure for long periods of time. Second, during interviews a challenge was to keep on probing participants for more specific and needed details during the prevailing sense of despair among stakeholders due to intense frustrations as they were not paid their salaries. Also, teachers were too busy in schools and were reluctant to schedule these interviews during the last month of a one of the busiest school years. Substituting the face-to-face interviews of parents with questionnaires sent via WhatsApp was not a straight forward process as they were unable to be connected to the internet due to the electricity shortage. It triggered including a section inquiring about the role of technology and how it supported the online management in all teaching and interventions. A total of five observation sessions were done; two of them were participatory and the other three were not participatory. At the beginning of

the research, the plan of the researcher was to do a non-participatory observation, in order to be objective explorer. However, as the work developed and given the circumstances in Lebanon; the participant collogues started to complain and wing and whine about the current situation so the role of the researcher changed by force into adopting the participatory observation in some sessions. Hereafter, to keep the research flow consistent the current Lebanese context forced the researcher to offer the much-needed psychological support of hope for observants. If so was not done, otherwise the researcher would not gain access to the fruitful material that added a value to the current study. Fourth, executing the TISDP inclusive system is a very recent move that is at its preliminary-immature stage. As a result, many problems and challenges occurred due to continuous changes and amendments to guidelines especially that the law has not been changed for twenty-one years ago. Fifth, the observations were not done by the researcher herself but by a hired special and inclusive expert. Hence, substituting the researcher field visits with observation by a representative due to the researcher's inability to travel from Dubai to Beirut at the time of data collection stage because of the COVID 19 quarantine was not easy to manage.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The current study adopted the British University in Dubai's (BUiD) ethical code of conduct. It is derived from the British Educational Research Association (2011) – BERA. Accordingly, guidelines and ethical considerations were categorized into the following three groups:

(a) responsibilities to participants

(b) the role and responsibilities of the researcher

(c) responsibilities to the community of educational researchers, policymakers and general public.

The researcher admits that information enclosed in the herein research is accurate to the best of

belief and knowledge because ethical concerns need to be considered in every aspect of a research design (Maxwell, 2007). Threfore, all risks that may arise related to the study are identified and also obligations are acknowledge as a researcher and rights of participants. Condition laid down by the BUiD Ethics committee and Faculty of Education Ethical Guidelines were followed by the researcher who took full responsibility of fitting the study conduct accordingly. Particularly, the researcher had to submit and sign the Research Ethics Form approved by the Research Ethics committee. In the ethics form, the level of risk, was mentioned in the current study, it was a "low-risk research," and the study's main ethical considerations, were presented too. This form commits the researcher to abide to all the British University in Dubai Research Policy (see Appendix 1.13).

After the acceptance of the current study proposal, an application was submitted to BUiD Review Board. Then, the researcher gained an ethical approval from BUiD to allow the commencement of dada collection stage before conducting and involving human subjects. A consent letter was issued from the British University in Dubai and the MEHE to conduct the study in the assigned public schools (see Appendix 1.13). Once approval was granted then school principals were contacted and a detailed plan was sent including the study objectives, confidentiality issues, interview procedures and requests for needed research requirements. All participants were informed that confidentiality, ethical procedures and anonymity were ensured where pseudo names of the school site and participants were used. Also, a prior consent approval from parents was secured by the school. Any consent form shared was signed by all participants prior to observation and they were given freedom to withdraw from the study at any time. They were also informed that their participation would not have a negative impact nor would it affect their job-related evaluations.

3.7.1 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

This study aimed to explore what the TISDP initiative development is about and how it was implemented in practice, in the three public schools to move towards inclusion. Evaluation of TISDP was explored from the perspectives of stakeholders. It was critical to uncover both the lens through which the researcher was looking at the implementation procedure and the lens of stakeholders with respect practices while they responded to RQ's. The researcher's role was crystal clear; she was a learner who came to investigate the TISDP and explore the research participants' perspectives. This was bluntly articulated to the participants; the researcher was neither an expert consultant nor an authority or messenger sent from the MEHE. Her role entailed establishing trust and rapport with stakeholders to serve in receiving authentic high-quality data. Moreover, personal biases were left at the school's doors to guarantee being an objective explorer and to stay away from any personal views that may influence the process of data collection as well as data analysis and results.

As mentioned above, the role of the researcher sometimes changed according to the circumstances of the research due to the political and economic uncertainties existing at the country. The aim was to be resilient to keep the research flow and gain access to the needed data.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE DATA

To ensure for the trustworthiness and authenticity of the inferred data in this study several measures were adopted for credibility. Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) defined 'Trustworthiness' as the criteria that guide researchers inorder to produce acceptable findings and be persuasive and credible to others. The researcher's bias was minimised by using different protocols to maintain trustworthiness and credibility such as:

(a) triangulation as stated by Plano (2016) is one strategy of ensuring trustworthiness. There are four types of triangulations namely: Theory,

methodological, data and researcher. This mixed methods study adopts

methodological and data triangulation (Denzin 2010).

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┌─────────────────────┐                      ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Qual data           │◄────────────────────►│ Quan          data  │
│ Collection:         │                      │ Collection:         │
│ Interview  and      │                      │ Questionnaire       │
│ Observation         │                      │                     │
└─────────────────────┘                      └─────────────────────┘
              ┌─────────────────────┐
              │ Results    of   each│
              │ approach        are │
              │ compared,           │
              │ interrelated, integrated │
              │ and interpreted     │
              └─────────────────────┘
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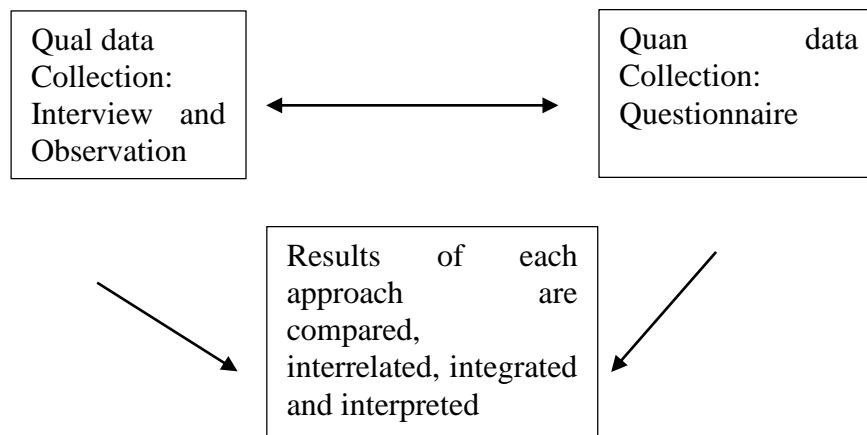
Figure 10 The Triangulation Model. *Source:* **The triangulation model illustrated above, is adapted from Denzin (2010)**

(b) member checking- careful selection of RQs and asking a group of experts in the field of

special and inclusive education to review and evaluate them to make sure that the questions

were clear (Johnson & Christensen 2019). Also, a 'member check' was followed, where the

researcher submitted interviews and reflections for checking by participants. It allowed them to

discuss findings and check if the researcher understandings were credible (Merriam, 1995).

This strategy decreased misinterpretation namely referred to as "respondent validation"

Maxwell (2007). (c) transferability indicates that what applies to the study sample applies to

the whole population (Plano Clark & Ivankova 2016).

3.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY
The study goals justify the validity of any research. There are three types of goals; personal,

practical and intellectual goals (Maxwell 2007). Table 5 illustrates the parameters to interpret

the research data.

Table 5 Parameters of research data

Personal	Practical	Intellectual
Investigate the TISDP Learning about the detailed process of the journey into inclusive education	Improve the status quo of inclusive education Help in improving awareness of the way of how inclusive education is implemented by schools in Lebanon Find empirical evidence on how the inclusive education model is operationalized to inform the development of the INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONpolicy	Contribute to allowing all children in Lebanon to have equal access to quality education in public schools Develop guidelines as a frame of reference for the best practices in implementing inclusive education in Lebanon

To ensure validity; the development, implementation and stakeholders' perceptions were viewed from different perspectives through the use of multiple methods. The use of multiple sources of data collection methods (interviews, observations, questionnaires and document analysis) reflected the essence of triangulation. It means utilising multiple methods in data collection through convergence and corroboration of findings to conclude. Triangulation as Miles and Huberman (1994) said, "supports a finding by showing that [independent measures]

of it agree with it or, at least, [do not contradict it]" (p. 266). This approach helped shape valid information from several sources and it avoided any bias Merriam (2009).

Maxwell (2007) stated that researchers need to understand their own bias and use it productively. Therefore, it means to know that one school setting may lead to different conclusions so the findings may, to a certain degree, still be reliable because reality is multilayered.

Cohen etal. (2007) shed light on how easy it is to slip into invalidity. Hence, as a researcher, making judgments, generalizations and inferences were avoided. Also, participant's statements that were contradicting or confusing were ignored.

The questionnaire was checked by three experts for validity and reliability purposes. They were consulted to evaluate whether the items matched the standards and indicators of the Index for Inclusion and whether or not the items measured the intended construct. The questionnaire was also piloted by asking selected participants to fill it out and provide their feedback on its appropriateness. The reliability and validity of the instruments used, in the current study, were secured because they were adopted from evidence based scholarly resources. The researcher did not reinvent the wheel, question items were peer reviewed from scopious indexed articles to decrease bias and ensure improved validation. Specifically, the developed questionnaire was tested through a reliability check for a confirmatory factor analysis by using Cronbach's alpha coefficients test. It was a validated tool which measured the perceptions of stakeholders on school culture, policy and process relative to Lebanese context via adopting the index for inclusion (Ainscow & Booth 2011); developed by Ainscow & Booth who are considered to be among the most prominent advocate for inclusive education. Also, the Index for inclusion was adopted globally by many scholars and schools (Carrington & Robinson (2004); Corbett, 2001; Forlin, 2004; Hong Kong Education and Manpower Bureau 2004; Nes, 2009).

CHAPTER FOUR (RESULTS AND FINDINGS)
4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

This study investigated the development, implementation and perceptions of the TISDP at three government primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon. Specifically, it aimed towards finding ways to support the development of inclusive schools in their implementation of effective inclusive education. It was not about assessing any school's or stakeholders' competence. Findings were considered as a collaborative self-review process considering each piece of information to draw on the experiences of everyone so that the full picture of the puzzle becomes clearer for all parties connected to the school. The narrative accounts of the details of the development and implementation were reflected via the voices of the policy makers at the Ministry level (Director of Special Education and zone coordinators) and policy implementers (principals, teachers and parents) at the school level.

Chapter four is organised into three sections to address the RQ's accordingly; the first describes the aspects of the development of TISDP to the three schools by MEHE. The last two sections, present the data from each school to answer RQ (2) and RQ (3) respectively. Lastly, the quantitative results are presented towards the end of the findings in chapter 4.

4.2 QUALITATIVE DATA: "TISDP" A DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT
4.2.1 THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: (RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION ONE)

To answer the RQ (1); What are the aspects of the development of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) for public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

It is worth mentioning a descriptive account of the TISDP briefly; which claims to ensure accessible and quality education for all learners in Lebanon. Then, to answer RQ (1) findings are presented in five different categories; describing the common characteristics of the school's development process. Data were collected from different stakeholders through interviews, focus

groups, questionnaires, observation and document analysis. Lastly, a triangulation procedure was presented to capture the real phases of the TISDP.

4.2.1.1 THE JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION INTO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION OF SCHOOLS (A, B & C)

Aspects of the development are presented in five categories relative to the study framework (Figure 2.1) Accordingly, the three schools' development journey involved five themes: (1) TISDP goals (2) Planning and development stage (3) Staff training and professional development (4) Resources of human capital and technology (5) Community input support services.

1. TISDP goals: On May 22, 2018 TISDP was launched, to promote the development of inclusive education in 30 Lebanese public schools, across six Lebanese governorates. The aim is to build the capacity of the public school system by providing essential knowledge and skills needed to foster inclusive education environments and increase awareness at the community levels to inform the development of the inclusive education of Lebanon. This study was conducted from a representative sample of three schools selected from the 30 public schools that were included in the TISDP. The MEHE's role was essential in planning, monitoring, implementing and evaluating the impact of the inclusive school policy on reaching TISDP goals. A case study research by Hagazian (2021) recommended that MEHE to adopt several steps so that the road to inclusivity will be well paved for to establish a national inclusive education policy. The road map is to be implemented at the national level in all public schools in Lebanon to guarantee promoting effective inclusion.

When level 1 participants were interviewed there was a consensus that all the goals of the TISDP were shared with level 2 stakeholders. As reported, one of the program goals was to ensure that proper screening was done to all students upon their admission. Also, a file was

prepared that included the details of how accepted students with SEND were to join the school upon admission. The journey from each student's acceptance to sitting in the selected classroom sessions starts with assuring that the following are done a) diagnostic tests, developmental checklists, classroom and home observations and b) formative assessment. Then, an informed decision needs to be made grounded on the policy plan for referral per tier.

As level 1 stakeholders shared, the MTSS is the adopted system of support. It integrates both assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system. The instructions of varying intensities are called tiers, it includes three levels of intensity, which are called: Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3. In Tier 1: it aims to provide quality education that targets 80 percent of students; who responds to such high academic, social and behavioral instruction. However, Tier 2 targets 15 percent for at risk students and provide a tailored support services to students who fail to make progress in Tier 1. The remaining 5 percent for high-risk students who struggle to reach the academic and/ or behaviour goals get one-on-one intensive instruction in Tier 3.
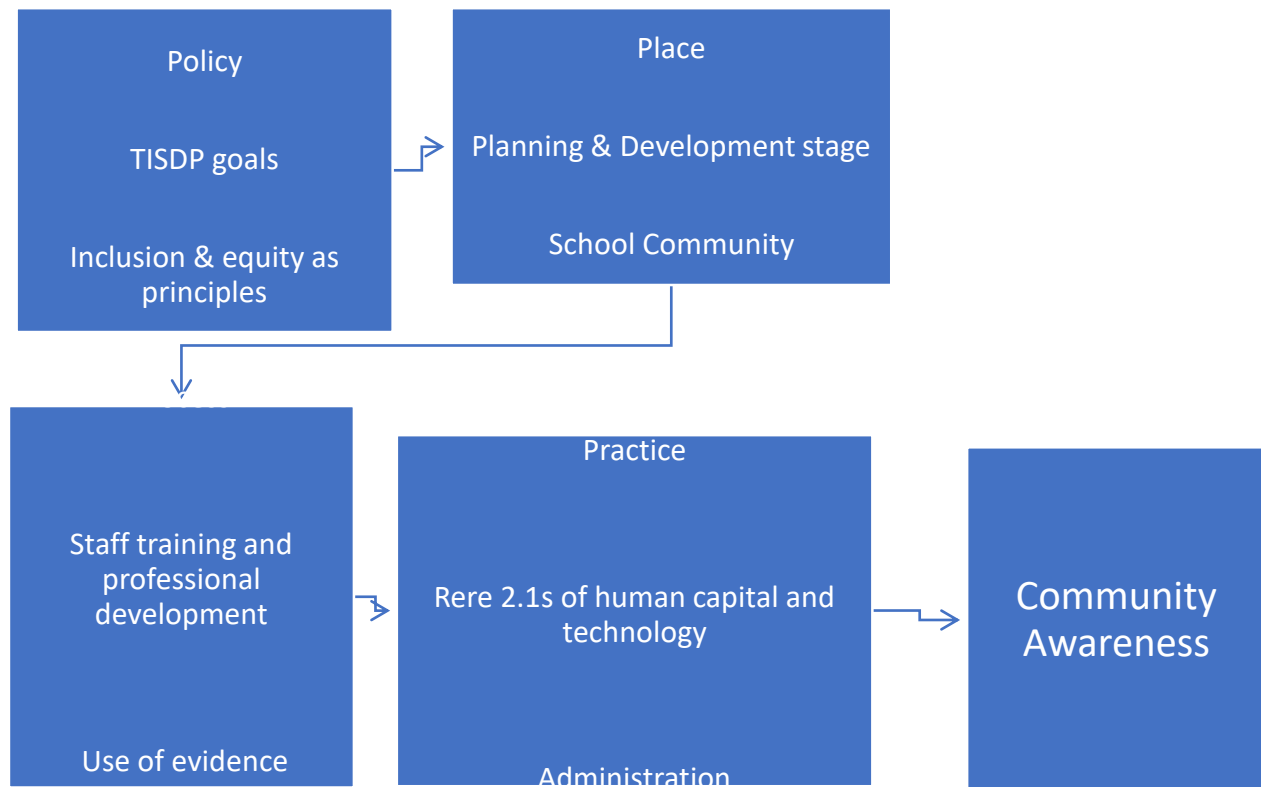
Figure 11 TISDP Development Stage

It was reported by all level one stakeholders that there was a pressing and dire need to establish clear-cut inclusive policies in the planning phase of the TISDP so that the implementation stage be executed more effectively. Policies do not include mechanisms on how it will be enforced to support all learners. As discovered, the precise policy manuals need to include specific step-by step details of who does what, when and how on the following: diagnosis procedures, performance monitoring, support in terms of provision of material, resources as well as training, and parental inclusion.

For example, school B principal (see Appendix 1.14) conveyed that the performance monitoring policies applied in school follow a 'top down' approach imposed on all participating schools from the MEHE. Schools follow a certain procedure upon registration: After meeting the

parents and discussing their child's case; the student's school registration form is photocopied into multiple copies. This way, each school entitled member would have his or her copy of the special needs students' files and the original copy be kept in a file in the principals' offices as a reference. Then, each dedicated team member, who contributes to the student's case, needs to study each student's difficulties multiple times, before attending the classes, when needed. This allow for an effective input to support the student particular need. After that, classroom observations are to be made accordingly so each case would be studied cooperatively and differently as required from different perspectives. Then an IEP plan would be devised and the selected paraprofessional would work with each student along with the coordination of each teacher, as needed.

All level one participants reported that there were a lot of associations who wanted to donate materials and resources to public schools in Lebanon. In addition, training was so much needed at schools for knowing how to provide support in terms of provision of material, resources as well as training. Therefore, the decision was taken that diagnostic experts, such as speech and language therapists, sensorimotor therapists and/or psychologists are to be on site at least twice a week.

Concerning parental inclusion, it is claimed by all level one participants that parents need to be involved in the TISDP journey. Principals are required to have regular meetings with the teachers and the parents during which they follow up on the TISDP process and check for students' progress. The TISDP consisted of four aspects:

1. Planning and development stage: It is stated by stakeholders (policy makers and implementers, service providers, researchers, NGOs and donors) that, currently, to make informed policy choices and conduct effective planning for documentation; a unified

data bank on inclusive education is missing and needs to be urgently shared among them.

Interviews with school principals, and UNICEF's representatives as well as paraprofessionals and teachers revealed that a unified definition of inclusive education is highly needed. All stakeholders came into a conclusive understanding that inclusion is not just about making schools supportive. They asked for a clear manual for procedures to be used in the design and assessment of services for learners with disabilities. It needs to identify the learner's "requirements" in terms of accommodation and adaptation that would reach students' full potentials in the academic and social support of inclusive education. For example, one teacher stated," using the word *appropriate,* when denoting the services to cater for the needs of students, is vague and details need to be given on what "appropriate" is and how is to be applied in practice.

2. Staff training and professional development: A report by (Haigazian, 2021) revealed that an effective inclusive school policy is associated with the development of a well-informed and trained human resource cadre. Additionally, this would ensure the necessary skills and expertise are present for delivering quality inclusive education services. Thus, MEHE invested in teacher training via delivering a series of workshops in collaboration with different organisms such as MERCY CORPS and local NGO's (Lebanese Union for People with Physical Disabilities, Friends of the Disabled Association, Lebanese Association for Self-Advocacy, Youth Association for the Blind, First Step Together Association, National Rehabilitation and Development Center). These parties provided the know-how and offered different manuals on inclusive education. It included on-going in-service trainings for teachers on a unified goal to reform and systemise inclusive education.

The researcher had a meeting with an NGO representative who confirmed the submission of the manual to the MEHE and all the trials to get a copy of it went in vain. The special educator in school C confirmed that they were given basic knowledge and the training lacked practical real-life examples and hands-on skills for the classroom teachers and paraprofessionals to apply in their classrooms. The NGO representative added that all the manuals were kept in drawers. Workshops of the training, increased stakeholders' awareness knowledge, yet fell short of building practical skills and competency. Thus, trainees were left with no tangible sense of accomplishment.

Both school principals A & B were informed about MEHE's plan, which is providing service providers (paraprofessionals, special educators, subject coordinators and SEN coaches) the needed training on how to implement MTSS methodology, Universal Design of Learning, differentiated instruction, referral, screening procedures and the 6 models of Training of Trainers (ToT). The aim of PD was to ensure sustainability and make schools more inclusive thus making MEHE promises valid. To principal A, this great news as she explained was of great help as she stated that, "The problem was convincing the teachers. You first try to prepare them mentally. The teachers first refused the idea because they thought they are the ones who will be handling the inclusion from A to Z. They got convinced when they learned that they are going to have a team who will help them. They simply can't achieve the objectives alone, so they need support." One teacher in school A confirmed that the PD and trainings supported her by offering multiple modes of engagement to empower learners to take responsibility of how they learn.

The psychologist at school A, confirmed that CERD provided the professional development training and classroom teachers followed the given recommendations of literature based on the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model. It consists of three tiers across 2 dimensions

to be applied simultaneously: The behavioural dimension which follows the Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and the academic dimension is based on the Response to Intervention (RTI) support framework (Figure 2.2).

It is planned in a way that teachers apply strategies in line with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in Tier 1 level of MTSS. She added, that both models emphasize prevention and evidence-based interventions. Yet, when the special educator resigned it became so frustrating for the classroom teachers to implement them.

The interview with the principals of all the three schools revealed that MEHE's vision is to promote the independence and autonomy of learners with disabilities. When principal B was interviewed, she stated that, "We are trying to work on to instil the qualities of a leader. I meet with the dedicated team to follow up with their achievements, monitor the exams' results and stay in touch with the parents. If a kid is feeling depressed, he wouldn't be able to produce." Besides, during the classroom observation, one classroom teacher pinpointed that the observed students were independent and they danced on their wheelchairs on the International Day of Disabilities which demonstrates how resilient and independent are they. The principal added that the goal is to have individual student, who stands up and claims voice, not allowing others to underestimate his or her capabilities, define him or her or to determine possibilities. So, students need to have a role to play in their learning experience. Yet, she did not share any pictures of that event to include in the dissertation.

The good intention, hope and the positivity was so much felt during the interview at both schools A & B. Despite, what they confirmed that the past three years have been exceptionally difficult and stressful for Lebanon in general, and for the Lebanese educational system in particular due to the national economic collapse, the socio-economic crisis, the imposed application of strict lockdown measures of the unprecedented times of the COVID-19

pandemic, the strikes and road closures all of which led to a full closure of schools. The impact of such school closure on the teaching and intervention services was negative, leaving a great percentage of students with LD to regress due to the online learning which caused them not to benefit from such services.

The stated above circumstances caused schools to shift out of the blue to online learning modalities. One special educator of school C said during the interview, "crisis-management plan has been in place yet its drastic failure to achieve the intendent results caused all paraprofessionals including me to resign because we thought TISDP has reached its endpoint." Thus, all principals confirmed that TISDP aspired to empower SEND leaners as this would pave the way for an economically productive future. Yet, this aim was not smoothly achieved on ground due to the intervening variables, which is the school closures, acting as a barrier to reaching inclusive goals. Therefore, as principal B stated when everything was lost the contagious hope was the mean to reaching the targets. On purpose the principal took the researcher to show her what she displayed the 'wisdom of ages' she learnt specific to Lebanese society after passing through many years of wars. The principal claimed that the sentence states, "A strong will is the secret behind success", which was displayed on the school entrance door, is a wisdom that shines with positivity and produces healthy inclusive environments. Hence, despite all the challenges that the country is facing the staff knows that we will be able to succeed no matter what we face as long as we in still its value.

3. Resources of human capital and technology: It starts with empowering school principals with reasonable freedom to practice their authority and respond efficiently and promptly to their schools' needs. It was required from each school principal, that in case a staff member is absent or if the position becomes vacant, to take the lead and find a replacement as soon as possible, wherever possible.

School principals were also informed that technological devices and tools facilitate the inclusive practice and support services for learners within schools. Thus, holding them as principals accountable for achieving inclusive education goals by leading the way of unifying, sharing and disseminating data via the effective use of technology.

Currently, due to the high turnover rate where level 2 participants are resigning; the human resources at schools are being negatively affected. The principal at school A stated, "We weren't able to do precise assessments to determine all cases because we taught only for few days before the diagnosis expert left. None of the teachers can adapt the exams' questions because the existing class teachers cannot make up for the shortage on their own." Yet, the principal of school B said, "When I got entrusted by this position, I am the one who is responsible and would make the effort to succeed… It comes from the sense of responsibility as a principal of a school… I meet with the dedicated team to follow up with their achievements, monitor the exams' results and stay in touch with the parents… each challenge has its own way of overcoming it… I always rush to solve any problem we face. For example; the schools are on a strike thing are harder this year than last year. The electricity keeps going off...I already secured the electricity subscription, so I have no problem with that anymore…We are currently communicating through WhatsApp groups. My secret is that I try to avoid failure". Therefore, perseverance she stated is here key to success and she instilled that in her human capital of staff members. On the other hand, she mentioned that many families were living below poverty line which is a sad reality. These parents could not even afford generator subscription. Can our contracted teachers go online and teach their students? Of course not!! The principal of School B said, "So, it shows that we are all living a harsh reality that we can't control" we cannot overcome these issues even though we are investing in resources such as technology and human capital yet we are not exploiting the return on our investment because it is 'destined' believe it

or not we cannot surpass those limits because we are humans, we can't do anything more than what we are trying to do at the moment.

Principal of school A said, "The situation in Lebanon does not allow us to reach a situation that gives radical solutions. Two of my specialized team left because they are not getting paid by the ministry… and I can't guarantee to replace them how am I supposed to work with the children? The strike helped us regardless of its disadvantages, the children have no one to embrace them at school. The classroom teachers do not have time (to cater for the needs of all)." During the interview one of the teachers confessed that she did not even have internet connection at home. Moreover, they all claimed that they are doing all what the situation allows them to do.

4. Community input support services: Many ongoing awareness raising campaigns were running as mentioned by stakeholders. They were grounded on evidence-based research studies and done by joining forces with NGOs to share their expertise on how to promote the benefits of inclusive education all learners with and without disabilities and to have an inclusive society. As the NGO representative revealed, to have an inclusive society this mission was accomplished only by highlighting the benefits of having effective inclusive initiatives on school level. It all started by shedding light on success stories achieved around the world and locally by the determination of students with SEND and the support granted to them. She mentioned the "Contact Theory" as it concluded that this awareness raising of encouraging the presence and participation of students with SEND reduces the stigma and prejudice against people with disabilities. During the interview with school principals A & B as well as with many psychologists, all agreed upon one concept that contact with SEND students is associated with more positive attitudes in school's cultures. During the classroom observations it was clear that

familiarity breeds liking between typically developed students and students with disabilities. Thus, the intergroup contact in school reduced prejudice between diverse students.

Also, as the special educator in school C confirmed the key success factor for implanting the value of inclusion in society was to disseminate research findings to the public. She stated that such knowledge empowered her and caused many replications to be stimulated through a variety of media channels so that inclusion became a reality.

4.2.2 THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES: (RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION TWO)

RQ (2) How the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) is implemented at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

To answer research question (2) the index of inclusion was used as a powerful tool to support investigating how the development of TISDP planning stage was executed on ground in classrooms as well as in school and community. Thus, the actions of all stakeholders involved in the implementation of the school inclusive education were discovered. The index of inclusion was used to check the process of the created inclusive cultures, the produced inclusive policies and the evolved inclusive practices.

4.3.1 INVESTIGATING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRACTICES OF TISDP AT SCHOOLS (A, B & C)
4.3.1.1 INCLUSIVE CULTURE

As the UNICEF representative revealed, TISDP goal is to provide equal opportunities and quality education for all students. The examined schools were working towards promoting inclusive culture and removing any intentional and/or unintended attitudinal, social and environmental barriers in order to prevent students' failures. Consequently, examining each school's inclusive culture uncovers the nature of the ongoing day-to-day implemented

practices; which leads to producing better inclusive policies, in future and consequently more inclusive practices.

She added stating that, to break down the barriers to inclusion classroom teachers and school administrators were responsible for implementing inclusive principles. Their daily evidence-based practices, attitudes and perceptions either facilitate or limit successful inclusion (Miyauchi 2020) as she kept on insisting on this point. The school principals confirmed that in schools and in the community, the principal's role was to promote inclusive education by reinforcing an inclusive culture. They stated they are responsible and an advocate for inclusion which was influencing school staff's motivation toward valuing difference and accepting it.

The principal in school B stated that, "A relaxed atmosphere encourages cooperation in a supportive inclusive culture. I treat the school staff the way I love to be treated…with humility. I don't treat them with superiority but with compassion while using kind words like "Sweet hearts", good manners and discussions. I give each person his worth. You treat them as if they are at their second home and not in a workplace. However, I don't let a mistake pass by. A principal still has her prestige among the others. When I am angry, they all know not to stay close…We both are employees authorized by the government to work at this school. Even if someone insulted the genitor, it'll feel like I was the one who got insulted."

All interviewed school principals assured how they became advocates for inclusion and they confessed that they invested a lot of time and energy in implanting inclusive values in every person within their school doors (such as security guy, janitor, cleaner, classroom collogues and teachers).

Instilling inclusive values was not only done within the schools but where any opportunity arose and it was deemed necessary to promote inclusion within other areas of Lebanese society.

Principal at school A said, 'Having a good school inclusive culture encourages better performance." During the interview with the special educator in school C pictures were provided of the display boards demonstrating students' work in the school. Yet, during in class observations of school B, the class was so agitated and the teacher tried to be firm through shouting in order to maintain discipline. Also, at the end of the lesson, the teacher approached the observer apologizing for the students' behavioral problems justifying it by saying that her class was after recess.

From the perspective of parents, they stated that in spite of all the challenges the country was going through, the concept of inclusive culture was well ingrained in all the examined schools. A parent described school A's culture as embracing inclusion and highlighted the effective role of a team culture; he added that such collaborative practices help in making parents role and expectation clearer as well as let the learner feel the sense of shared accountability and responsibility in achieving his child's success. One parent in school B confessed that the systematic planning by MEHE as well as the determination of all stakeholders to do their best and be dedicated to reach the vision helped her son to improve and become the best version of himself. Another parent stated that a shortage of accessible transportation systems and uneven roads prevented his son to independently and safely reach schools. Also, due to the financial barriers he does not possess the means of having fuel to make the journey to send his son to school.

4.3.1.2 INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

The special educator in School B stated that inclusive practices included all the practiced prevention and intervention techniques used to attain student success. Interviews with UNICEF's representative revealed that preventive measures include requisite actions taken by

MEHE to guarantee implementing quality education. Therefore, major measures were taken before applying effective inclusive practices. She added for example, an in-depth level of training was executed by the ministry to target stakeholders' (those who will be involved in the day-to-day implementation of inclusive education) attitudes and perceptions. She added, staff members were trained to adopt MTSS. It was employed of 3 tiers across two dimensions. Tier 1: as it was explained to all policy implementers it aims to providing a high-quality preventive and proactive differentiated instructions. It constituted of applying adopted universal core instruction to target 80 percent of students who responds to such high academic as well as social and behavioral instruction. However, Tier 2 targeting 15 percent for at risk students and providing a tailored evidence-based academic as well as behavioral intervention. Tier 3 targeting the remaining 5 percent for high-risk students who need intensive individualized academic and behavioral intervention.

One school principal said, "We were a regular school that turned into an inclusive school all of a sudden. As school principals, the ministry continued arranging us training courses on inclusive education. That's when we started taking in new students. For three years, I only accepted students with LD. One day, the ministry suggested that I take in few students with disabilities, and of course I agreed. We have shortage in the number of permanent workers. It is a great challenge that I overcame since the ministry isn't replacing workers who are leaving." According to school principals, success stories at schools A & B indicated that competent teachers, irrespective of the learner's disability type or its severity, had the potential to transform their learning capacity under one condition; when the teaching and learning process was viewed by the team members as a shared responsibility between the teacher and learners. The principal in school B stated that teachers who believe in the power of inclusion lead students in a way to make them feel and experience inclusive education practices as a natural

process on a day-to-day basis. The special educator at school C said paraprofessionals need not to be emotional with all cases. Sometimes depending on the cases and its severity they have to show them an emotionless face. The researcher probed more to ascertain how helping a child with special needs gets to the stage of being emotionless. The special educator claimed that supporting a child with ADHD means meeting his needs as a special case. It means no two cases are the same. She elaborated using the example of Adam, who is a student with ADHD, needs compassion and empathy. While Sara, who is also a student with ADHD, needs a tailored firm approach. Henceforth, the special educator elaborated that each informed strategy was adapted and adopted in the IEP to fit Adam's and Sara's needs respectively. In the end, differentiating instructions tailored to their needs helped them both succeed at their own pace. She explained each case was treated differently although both students were with ADHD. School principal A stated that competent teachers needed to implement pedagogical inclusive practices and the key was to combine three apprenticeships: affective, social and intellectual. She added that establishing a strong bond with the learner (affective) was crucial and going the extra mile to improve attitudes and beliefs in order to change the current patterns was essential because learning did not depend only on intellectual ability, but also on emotional adaptation. School principal A said, "When I come to school either frustrated or irritated, my mood changes, and I feel cheerful when I hear the girls' (on wheelchairs) kind words when they see me. I would start laughing from the bottom of my heart. I thank God, that I have a completely healthy body. I would sometimes feel stupid for getting upset over small things and not taking things easily. These students give us hope and joy...It means the world to me when I see them in the morning". Therefore, the bond is a two-way street the mutual benefit is gained and we empower learners with the 21st century skillsets to support them in their social life. Finally, not only the cognitive knowledge of the learner is so much needed nowadays in a challenging and

competitive world but also emotional intelligence skills are required in addition to practical and technical ones to help the child develop holistically.

During the observation of an English classroom in school B; even though the class was given in English, students communicated with each other and the teacher in colloquial Arabic. The classroom teacher has weak English language skills in terms of speaking and spelling (see Appendix 1.10). She did not provide a warm up activity for the lesson and did not have any form of assessment. The lesson was didactic and traditional. Also, the learning objectives were not written on the whiteboard; only the black marker was used with no technological resources such as smart board projector, laptop, and slides were adopted. Differentiation was not implemented at all and no printed material was used. Behavioural wise, the class was so agitated and the teacher tried to be firm through shouting in order to maintain discipline. (At the end of the lesson, the teacher approached the observer apologizing for the students' behavioural problem justifying it by saying that her class was after recess). The teacher spotted that the SEND student, who was observed, seemed to have learning disabilities but she was not diagnosed. The teacher added that she was not allowed to access information around this student's disabilities. Similarly, an interviewed parent highlighted his frustration resulting from discriminatory practices and the need for more competent instructional services to cater for SEND.

The principals in school A & B stated that they were accountable for leading the way of unifying, sharing and disseminating data of the implemented practices. Principal in school A said, "If a professional surgeon was doing an operation and the electricity went off, the operation would fail in case a technician didn't rush to fix the electricity. That would mean that the doctor failed. This shows that many careers complete each other. We are all like a puzzle; we can't work properly without the other. Even if I am well-experienced, if I don't have a team

who would help, I can't achieve everything alone. Teamwork is important". The head of SEN unit confirmed that when it came to providing the intervention services in Tier 2 positive learning improvements were observed in students with SEND when these students were provided with structured curriculum intervention by paraprofessionals; who planned and worked collaboratively with classroom teachers to provide the small group instruction, be it a pull out or a push in sessions. Though a study by Webster & De Boer (2019) confirmed what the psychologist claimed yet it warned against the "unintended consequences" of the presence of learning support assistant in mainstream settings. Students with SEND need to be independent. If so is not done, then their dependence on other paraprofessionals caus interaction reduction between them as students with difficulties and subject teachers and peers. The result would be students with SEND dependence on adult support.

The special educators at schools A & B elaborated that in Tier 2 & 3 for the targeted group an evidence-based and intensive individual one-on-one support were given to cater for the needs of at risk and high-risk students respectively; the psychologist explained that, IEP was developed through a collaborative process involving teachers, parents, students themselves and outside professionals as needed. IEP, as they aforementioned, was used to individualize learning for students, ensure access to the general curriculum, facilitates meaningful participation and reflect commitment to achieving higher students' learning outcomes. They added that effective inclusive practices are applied when teachers willingly plan differentiated lessons and instructions to cater for all learners. In addition, they emphasized the importance of the role of subject teachers, who need to work in collaboration with (a) multidisciplinary team members as well as (b) parents. Besides, subject teachers need to communicate, when needed, with everyone to maintain the development and sustainability of effective practices for inclusion of students with individualized intensive support plans; which is critical to how IEP

unfolds in practice. Throughout the observation sessions; school A only, to some extent, demonstrated abidance to such framework yet school B & C were working towards that.

4.3.1.3 INCLUSIVE POLICY

As it was revealed from interviews with level one participants, they established general inclusive policies. However, the researcher discovered that there were set of policies formed by the observed schools. Each school planned their policies differently yet the common goal among them was to provide equal learning opportunities and quality education in order to reach TISDP goals. All principals confirmed that they believed in inclusion policies and worked competently to action them. However, it was discovered via observations that not all stakeholders' clearly understood school inclusive policies and progress was not shown in the observed classes. The strategy adopted was teach and reteach, which was the only form of assessment used to teach all the students. In one class differentiated instructions to content, process and product was not applied at all.

The interviews and observations revealed the critical need to have a clear-cut inclusive national policy to be implemented at the national level in all public schools in Lebanon. Based on the data obtained from TISDP set of policies implemented by all the three selected schools it was discovered that day-to-day operations were not unified to help every learner thrive and be successful. For example, principals in schools A & B complained about one common challenge where the MEHE did not replace the permanent workers who quit. The school principals faced a desperate problem where some staff members resigned and there was no strict clear-cut policy stating when to replace them with competent staff. This challenge was caused by an external action that was not seriously prioritized by the ministry but was critically affecting the implementation procedure.

One special educator stated that the holistic development of students depended on three factors (1) the school development inclusive policies implemented within school doors as well as (2)

the impact of external processes adopted by other policy environments on the school; so it is between the school itself and the effect of other schools and also (3) what happens beyond school limits of a whole range of exerted forces such as community groups which support the efforts of schools work or deny it.

The interview with the principal of school B was very fruitful and her words filled the space with hope and positivity. Inclusive policies the principal stated are effectively implemented. She said, "We as a public schools work more humanely than most private schools. Most private schools only work for the purpose of making profit. What are we gaining of it? Trust me, we aren't gaining profit out of it. Our true gain is what you take in your life. I am not waiting to gain any profit out of it. Her (parent) prayers for me worth more than millions of dollars."

During the observation sessions it was noticed that the "open door policy" in schools A & B worked well. Both principals are very cooperative and active listeners. Principal A stated, "I informed the coordinator to keep my office's door open despite the cold weather and corona. Whoever wants to meet up with me is welcome to after informing me first and making sure that I am not busy" and principal B said, "I simply can lock myself away from the parents and speak to no one, but I don't... I wish for a relaxing environment not only for the students and teachers, but for the parents too because parents are a basic factor for success. As someone who works at a school, you give your time to the parents as well and listen to their needs".

The MEHE recruitment policy needed to be revised as both principals claimed because the delay in hiring a new staff member causes a negative impact on students' achievements. The principal in school B added, "Two of my specialized team left and I can't guarantee to replace them how am I supposed to work with the children?"

4.2.3 THE PERCEPTIONS OVERVIEW: (RESPONSES TO RESEARCH QUESTION THREE)

RQ (3) What are stakeholders' perceptions of the development and implementation of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program (TISDP) at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

Research question three assessed knowledge, attitudes and stakeholders' practices of TISDP. Questionnaire items were adopted from the index for inclusion to draw on three dimensions of inclusive: culture, policies and practices. Thus, perceptions of stakeholders who were involved in the school inclusive education process were measured accordingly. The aim was to check the extent of how much TISDP helped shift their perceptions of disability toward these inclusive dimensions. Data were collected from stakeholders on their views of their evaluation of TISDP via interviews and questionnaires, and from observed classes at schools.

As the UNICEF representative said, inclusive education is a philosophical change requiring "a culture of inclusion that permeates the education system" (UNESCO, 2020, p.25). Driving this change requires stakeholders' shared commitment; so, it is so crucial and critical to have a clear investigation of stakeholders' knowledge, attitudes and perceptional changes towards inclusive education after the implementation of TISDP. Likewise, it is important to take parental appraisal into consideration in evaluating any inclusive educational program (Gasteiger-Klicpera et al., 2013). To holistically understand the needs of SEND, in a fuller way, it was important to include the perspectives and voices of all stakeholders involved in the process. Listening to the voices of parents and self-advocates about their personal experiences of their child's journey, is essential. Also, the students' reflections and voices allow them to fight for themselves. This highlights the importance of understanding the experiences of marginalized and socially excluded students in school environments by respectfully listening to them.

4.2.3.1 THE POWER OF STAKEHOLDERS' SUPPORT TO PROMOTE INCLUSION AT SCHOOLS (A, B & C)

It is discovered that parents played an important role in school support at the selected schools. Both principals in schools A & B agreed that parents were currently more involved in advocating for inclusive education at the schools and community levels. Both principals stated that their inclusive mindset had a positive impact on reaching effective inclusive culture at the schools. The special educator stated that inclusive culture affected the attitudes of parents of all learners with and without disabilities and made them become more supportive and in some cases advocates for inclusion. As, school A principal devised a systematic plan for fostering parents' involvement. As one parent confirmed he was regularly invited to school meetings, and there was always an incentive for participation as parents got educated about many concepts through awareness raising sessions conducted by the school with fixed agendas for action, and another parent stated that a close coordination with the school principal was going on to support his daughter at school A.

On the other hand, the school principal A stated, "This year we have 360 students, last year they were 484. Under present conditions, we closed the school a lot. Some parents want their children to be safe, so a lot of them left... the economic and logistical situations in Lebanon hinders the progress and development of the project. We faced a problem in transportation. Some students left school because their parents can't afford to pay for transportation… Because of that, some parents are registering their kids in schools close to their homes even though the school isn't a special one." The principal added that parents were so cooperative and well educated and aware of the benefit of inclusion and they did accept the idea that their children have special cases. She elaborated on the idea that they always had gatherings with the teachers and the parents to hear them complains. However, there were many forces and challenges that

happened beyond school limits which affected the efforts of the schools' inclusive work as she affirmed. This school principal had 44 years of working experience in schools. She informed the coordinator to keep her office's door open despite the cold weather and Corona virus pandemic. It was also observed that whoever wanted to meet up with this principal was welcomed to after informing her first and making sure that she was not busy. She stated, "It calms down the parents when they enter my office". Her experience was well reflected with the vast majority of real-life examples given during the interview, where the researcher had to lead the conversation of going back on track and to focus on getting answers for RQ (3). She added, "When parents tell me that they have a problem I tell them that I need to hear first to both parties to avoid any kind of oppression and to solve this in a civilized manner… our problems aren't really complicated. They are simple problems…There are levels of the intensity of a problem… We don't have such problems at our school." She informed the researcher that having knowledge on what inclusion is and what it is not helped her to achieve TISDP inclusive goals at a faster pace.

The school principal B said, "Parents are a basic factor for success. As someone who works at a school, you give your time to the parents and listen to their needs." She explained how each student's case was different and no two cases are the same. In her views, it depended on each effective principal and how competently he/she dealt with the parents to change a specific mindset and find a unique way of solving it. She stated, "I simply can lock myself away from the parents and speak to no one, but I don't. I sometimes get asked about what I want. I would reply that I wish for a relaxing environment not only for the students and teachers, but for the parents too". She mentioned the case of one kindergarten (KG) student who chocked another student at school, so they sent after his parents. They discovered that his father abused him and wanted to throw him out of a window when he was only two years old. Also, his mother used

to aggressively hit her child because she was physically abused by his father. Then she got divorced and became a single mom who lived with her parents who verbally abused her too through bullying. All of these factors negatively affected the kid which led him to be so hyperactive and still wore diapers. At school the student received psychological support. That was when the school's principal sent after her dedicated multidisciplinary team who conducted therapy sessions with the mother and informed her about how she needed to treat her son. Meanwhile, the principal asked the mother whether she wanted to cooperate with the school to help surpass those challenges. The principal stated our inclusive team work collaboratively so they would change things for the better. This collaboration turned the pattern around and the decision was to ask the mother to come to school with her son. This actually affected to boost the mother's mood and well-being. She became less stressed which lead her to avoid self-hatred and became less aggressive towards her son. In the end, the principal said when you have the right inclusive knowledge and apply the pedagogical inclusive practices this in return would positively affect the student.

The principal in school B said, "My main goal isn't helping the mother. My main goal is helping the son who is affected by his mother's depression. You need to think smart, work hard, analyse things, and use your experience to solve problems." Yet, this principal confessed that she was quite aware that most parents in this public school were either illiterate or they could not enrol their kids in school because of either economic or social issues. These issues would eventually be a factor which lead children to have learning difficulties. She ended her speech positively by being proud of the welcoming inclusive culture and practices executed at school B and said, "Many parents are pleased with what we are providing their kids with that our good reputation is causing these parents to be removing their kids from private schools and registering them in our schools. It doesn't seem that they plan of removing their kids from our school at all."

All parents agreed that they felt their involvement in meetings and participation of awareness raising sessions were part of the success of TISDP; which was directly linked to making the school more inclusive and their children more successful. Another parent elaborated that the more he knew about catering for the needs of his daughter the better she became. He elaborated stating that paraprofessionals and teachers were mainly focused on intervention and teaching effects, respectively and parents were so much attentive to the holistic development of their children.

4.3 QUANTITATIVE DATA: "TISDP" SUMMARY OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Table 6 Descriptive statistics

Table 6	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	36	1	5	2.08	1.131
How long in this position	36	2	5	4.03	.971
Special Need Category	36	13	13	13.00	.000
Professional Training	36	1	2	1.06	.232
Training Received	36	1	3	1.19	.467
Likely to Recommend_ TISDP	36	5	5	5.00	.000
Rate TISDP_ Beirut	36	5	5	5.00	.000
Important Factor Leads to Inclusion	36	1	4	2.92	.439
How Helpful Implemented Provision	36	4	5	4.97	.167
How Engaged they were	36	5	5	5.00	.000
How Impactful it was	36	2	5	4.61	.803
The Most Important Choice	36	1	8	5.50	2.035
To What Extent _Socio _Econ	36	2	5	4.11	.820
Do YOU Think	36	3	5	4.89	.398

Do You Agree with this Statement	36	3	5	4.64	.639
Valid N (listwise)	36				

Table 6 shows the mean, minimum, maximum and std deviation for each of the questionnaire items including the demographic data. Thus, results of section 1 and 2 in the questionnaire, as determined by the nature of data about the demographics. The participants of this study were divided into three levels. Level 1: policy makers and Level 2: policy implementers and Level 3: beneficiaries.

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), Version 23 was used.

Table 7 shows that the majority of the participants were female constituting 58.3 % of the participants while male participants comprised 41.7%.

Table 7 Gender

Table 7		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	15	41.7	41.7	41.7
	female	21	58.3	58.3	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 8 shows that the majority of the participants' responses came from level 3 beneficiaries' group; parents were indicating 27% of the participants and their children held 25% of the total answers.

Table 8 Participants' responses

TABLE 8		Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Academic advisor	2.8	2.8	2.8
	General coordinator at MEHE	2.8	2.8	5.6
	HOD of Special education	2.8	2.8	8.3
	NGO	2.8	2.8	11.1
	UNICEF representative	2.8	2.8	13.9
	CERD representative	2.8	2.8	16.7
	School principal	8.3	8.3	25.0
	paraprofessional	8.3	8.3	33.3
	Subject teachers	13.9	13.9	47.2
	Student	25.0	25.0	72.2
	Parent	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	

Data in table 9, revealed that all 'special need categories' were found in the three school students except for students with autism, who were on the autism spectrum disorder. F in the table is a symbol that represents students with autism.

Table 9 Special Need Category

Table 9	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid all of the above except f	36	100.0	100.0	100.0

Results in table 10, showed that 94.4% of participants confirmed that they received their PD training while the minority of 5.6% did not receive the PD training.

Table 10 Professional Training

Table 10		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	34	94.4	94.4	94.4
	No	2	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 11 disclosed;100% of participants confirmed that they would recommend TISDP to a parent or a friend who has a learner with a disability or any learning difficulty.

Table 11 Likely to Recommend _ TISDP

Table 11	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Extremely likely	36	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 12, unveiled that 88.9% of participants agreed that "Teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion" is the most attitude which shape the provision type of support for SEND students.

Table 12 Important Factor that Leads to Inclusion

Table 12		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Being well aware and familiar with the goals of the TISDP inclusive education policy of the school	1	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Providing equal opportunities admission to SEND students into public schools in Beirut	2	5.6	5.6	8.3
	Teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion	32	88.9	88.9	97.2
	Parental positive attitudes towards inclusion	1	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 13 demonstrates that the majority of participants with 97.2% considered that the implemented provisions in the TISDP are extremely helpful to students and only 2.8% declared that it is somewhat helpful.

Table 13 How Helpful the Implemented Provision are?

Table 13		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat helpful	1	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Extremely helpful	35	97.2	97.2	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 14 showed that 100% of participants declared that they are extremely engaged in improving the quality of inclusive education of TISDP at their school.

Table 14 How Engaged participants are?

Table 14		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extremely Engaged	36	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 15 reveals 75% of participants said that the availability of resources to meet the needs of SEND in the classroom at their school was a great deal impactful.

Table 15 How Impactful TISDP is?

Table 15		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A little	2	5.6	5.6	5.6
	A moderate amount	1	2.8	2.8	8.3
	A lot	6	16.7	16.7	25.0
	A great deal	27	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 16 confirmed that 'Collaboration and coordination among stakeholders including parents, monitoring and tracking" was chosen with a percentage of 97.2 % as the most important choice among many other list of aspects of support services provided to SEND students.

Table 16 The Most Important Choice

Table 16		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Commitment of school leadership to the vision of the philosophy of inclusion	3	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Identification and diagnosis of students	2	5.6	5.6	13.9
	Understanding barriers and challenges facing individual cases of SEND	2	5.6	5.6	19.4
	Recruitment of competent staff	1	2.8	2.8	22.2
	Curriculum modification and support	5	13.9	13.9	36.1

Using IEP and differentiated instructions strategies with different cases	6	16.7	16.7	52.8
Collaboration and coordination among stakeholders including parents, monitoring, tracking	16	44.4	44.4	97.2
8	1	2.8	2.8	100.0
Total	36	100.0	100.0	

Table 17demonstrated that 63.9% of the participants believed that TISDP provision was doing well moderately amid the current socio-economic conditions in their public schools in Beirut.

Table 17 Most important choice

TABLE 17		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not doing well	1	2.8
	Neutral	7	19.4
	Doing well moderately	15	41.7
	Doing so well	13	36.1
	Total	36	100.0

Table 18 ensures that 72.2% of the participants strongly agree that 'the availability of a continuum of high-quality support services including competent human and technological resources (ICT) and their efficient use impact the quality of teaching and learning of SEND'

Table 18 Impact on quality of teaching and learning

TABLE 18		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Neutral	3	8.3
	Agree	7	19.4
	Strongly Agree	26	72.2
	Total	36	100.0

4.14 CUSTOM TABLES

Since questions two and four are both measuring the perception, the researcher decided to add them up and call the new variable 'Perception Overview'.

Table 19 shows that there is no significant difference between the role of the participants in terms of their perception (p=.994 >.05). This means that the role of the stakeholders doesn't have an impact on their perceptions.

ANOVA

Table 19 Perception Overview

Table 19	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.018	10	.002	.201	.994
Within Groups	.225	25	.009		
Total	.243	35			

Table 20 shows that excluding level 3 beneficiaries participants (parents and students) the majority of stakeholders agreed that high quality support services and their efficient use have great impact on the quality of the teaching and learning process. The selected questions are: Q

3 (section 1) – Q 10 (section1). Q3: What describes your stakeholders' role? And Q10: Do you agree with this statement: "the availability of a continuum of high-quality support services including competent human and technological resources (ICT) and their efficient use impact the quality of teaching and learning of SEND"

Table 20 Q3 and Q 10

TABLE 20		Ten _Do You Agree with this Statement Mean
Three _Stakeholders _Role	Academic advisor	5
	General coordinator at MEHE	4
	HOD of Special education	5
	NGO	5
	UNICEF representative	5
	CERD representative	5
	School principal	4
	paraprofessional	4
	Subject teachers	5
	Student	.
	Parent	.

Table 21 aimed to find out if there was a detected difference between the different categories in terms of the level of agreement towards the statement in Q10 as the significance level=.837 which is greater than .05. This means that the difference in means between the different groups is not statistically significant (students and parents are excluded).

Table 21 Do You Agree with this Statement?

Table 21	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.651	8	.331	.485	.837
Within Groups	5.467	8	.683		
Total	8.118	16			

In table 22 the aim was to find out if there was a detected difference between the different categories of all participants including students and parents (They were excluded in B2) in terms of the level of agreement towards the statement in Q10 as the significance level=.805 which is greater than .05. This means that the difference in means between all the different groups is not statistically significant

Table 22 All categories: Do You Agree with this Statement

Table 22 All categories	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.739	10	.274	.592	.805
Within Groups	11.567	25	.463		
Total	14.306	35			

Table 23 confirmed that "Identification and diagnosis of students" got the responses as being the least important choice with a mean of 2 from this list of aspects of support services provided to SEND students. Two questions were selected Question 6 and 7 of section 2.

Table 23 QUESTION 6 AND QUESTION 7 (SECTION 2)

Table 23	TABLE 23							
	Commitment of school leadership to the vision of the philosophy of inclusion	Identification and diagnosis of students	Understanding barriers and challenges facing individual cases of SEND	Recruitment of competent staff	Curriculum modification and support	Using IEP and differentiated instructions strategies with different cases	Collaboration and coordination among stakeholders including parents, monitoring, tracking	8
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Six _How Impactful	4	2	5	5	5	5	5	5

As shown above in table 24 the researcher decided to run Chi-Square to find if there is any statistical relation between the choice of the most important factor which leads to inclusion and the role of the different stakeholder. As shown in the table above, there was no significant difference between the role and the choice of the factor that leads to successful inclusion (Pearson Chi-Square=11.759 and p=.999 which is >.05). The selected questions are: Question 3_seection 2: What are the most important factor that leads to a successful provision of Inclusion? As well as Question 3_section 1: What describes your stakeholders' role?

Table 24 Chi-Square Tests

Table 24	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.850[a]	30	.999
Likelihood Ratio	10.555	30	1.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.024	1	.878
N of Valid Cases	36		

a. 42 cells (95.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

CHAPTER FIVE (DISCUSSION)

5.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings related to the three research questions of this study.

(1) What are the aspects of the development of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) for public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

(2) How the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) is implemented at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

(3) What are stakeholders' perceptions of the development and implementation of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program (TISDP) at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?

This chapter is divided into three parts. Part one, covers discussing the development stage of TISDP and how SEND students, regardless of their special needs, were planned to be included in the inclusive school as their same-age peers to meet their needs with appropriate learning goals.

Part two, includes the researcher's discussion on how the implementation procedure and the delivery of provisions were executed to unveil the education journey of students with SEND.

Part three, includes discussion of stakeholders' perceptions and evaluation on the development and implementation of the TISDP.

PART I

5.2 ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA: ISSUES RELATED TO THE WHOLE-SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

In particular to Lebanese context and setting, five pillars are investigated to capture a sufficient insight about what was done to bring the initiative into the implementation stage: (1) goals and principles of the TISDP policy (2) planning and community services of the TISDP place (3) staff training and development of the TISDP process (4) human capital and technology of the TISDP practice (5) TISDP awareness programmes. These five pillars guided the discussion to uncover the breadth of the whole policy plans of the development process.

5.2.1 TISDP POLICY (GOALS AND PRINCIPLES)

To start with the first pillar, the requisite principles for effective inclusive environments involve accommodation in the physical and human elements such as: physical accessibility, positive attitudes toward children with disabilities by teachers and peers, curriculum accommodations, differentiated instruction, and teaching and assessment methods. It was noticed that Lebanon has no unified national policy to ensure consistency in implementing TISDP plans on common ground among concerned parties. Currently, specific school related inclusive policies are in place and accompanied by fair implementation to cater for students' needs, however, there is a need for the establishment of a national inclusive educationpolicy framework; which provides extensive guidance of how is it to be implemented at the national level in all public schools in Lebanon. Thus, for consistency purposes, a unified definition of inclusive education used by UNICEF (2017a and UNICEF, 2017b) needs to be implemented too for avoiding any misconceptions among all stakeholders involved in the execution.

It is worth noting that since the launch of TISDP many socio-economic incidents caused several school closures as confirmed by all interviewees. So far, few changes of what have been planned by level one participants was implemented in practice. In other words, the initial policy plan specific to TISDP did not meet its effective application. Thus, further investigation is to be done to know more about the intervening variables acting as a barrier to such enactment. TISDP inclusive policy goal was planned to achieve equity by adapting the available services to cater for the needs of students with disabilities and reach a fair outcome. In practice, as observed, support services were given to two students in a way that was not about achieving equality; which is treating all students the same way. The goal was to reach fairness in providing the provision services, that was not about sameness. Inclusive practices catered for the needs of everyone, individually, as the case entails so needs are effectively met

It is worth noting that even though the Lebanese inclusive education national policy framework (LIENPF) is needed it would never be enough as a stand-alone document. It needs to be accompanied with a detailed manual, which include a detailed road map of how each category of cases whether it is mild, moderate or severe is to be served from A to Z. Thus, using general description is rejected. For example, the term provide "appropriate service" to cater to the needs of students with Autism need not to be mentioned in the LIENPF. It is a vague term and it does not describe the type of adequate services to be given. LIENPF needs to include detailed standards with specific indicators tailored to fit only the Lebanese context and setting with a comprehensive parental inclusion policy. The policy also needs to specify monitoring procedure in terms of provision of PD training and resources.

Law 220 (2000); which was based on efforts by Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD) along with UNESCO and other international organizations aims to

reinforce rights for all people with disabilities on social, educational and health levels. As it stands, TISDP focuses on individuals with mild to moderate cases of disabilities, also it is not covering other types of special needs including gifted children, dropouts, street and mentally disabled children (The Centre for Educational Research and Development, 2019). Consequently, "exclusion in inclusion" is currently practiced.

The interview with school B principal claimed that a mother who has a child with autism doesn't want to take her son out of school. The principal added that the child refused to sit in classroom. The mother had to take him out of the school because he needed a shadow teacher, and school B don't offer such services. The same result was detected during the interview with the special educator in school C; she stated that students with Autism are excluded and no cases of students with autism were accepted at the school. Principal B confirmed that, "for 3 years, I only took in students with learning difficulties" which demonstrates how inclusion was not effectively implemented in TISDP when full inclusion is expected to happen.

5.2.2 TISDP PLACE (PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES)

In regards to the second pillar, what was worth aiming for was investigating the planning of appropriate community services within the TISDP in order to place students with SEND in the appropriate inclusive environment; taking into consideration what caters for each students' development to thrive. Transparent partnerships among key stakeholders who drive the process of change was not less important than producing inclusive policies. In other words, a prerequisite step is to have a clear-cut inclusive policy preparing the stage for the effective implementation of inclusive practices that is as important in its contribution to the students' achievement as having inclusive policy and inclusive culture is.

The researcher's investigation of the current culture and teaching revealed effective ongoing practices relative to the current status of the country. Such examination was related to presence, participation and achievement of all students (Ainscow & Messiou 2017); which revealed

implemented practices that suits Lebanese settings and case. Thus, paraprofessionals support was provided from outside as recommended in literature Fairbanks et al. (2007) Mitchell (2015) in addition to NGO's know-how and expertise to raise the quality of education and fill in the gap of the resigning staff amid the current context.

5.2.3 TISDP PROCESS (STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT)
In regards to the third pillar, TISDP goal is to target educators by providing quality professional development to reach competency. Data (through triangulation) revealed that there is an essential need for a clear-cut manual to focus on how to effectively implement practices on a case-by-case basis as to different categories of disabilities and tailored to their individualized needs. During the PD sessions an integral part of its success involve providing a clear unified definition of what the terms "Inclusion" and "Equity" means to clarify it because it is discovered through interview that vagueness is currently pervading. Since 2010, until this moment, it was discovered that there is still no centralized system for professional development (Nabhani & Bahous, 2010) in Lebanon. If so is to be done, then such centralized system could be an essential part of the continuous development and progress of TISDP.

5.2.4 TISDP PRACTICE (HUMAN CAPITAL & TECHNOLOGY)
The fourth pillar of the TISDP practice is the human capital and technology. The MEHE with CERD have yet to issue clear guidelines for the LIENPF that includes details on how the training of staff members would be done competently so they become qualified to deal with students with disabilities as Baydoun (2019) recommends. A study by Mouawad (2013) confirmed that educating children with disabilities is still regarded as a 'care' service, being 'social' rather than 'therapeutic' and 'educational' in definition. Therefore, competency need to be strictly considered as an international teaching licence needs to be in place that guarantees the regular up-to-date knowledge, attitudes and skills needed for effective inclusivity.

5.2.5 TISDP AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

Lastly, the fifth pillar entails the importance of investing more time and energy in raising awareness on inclusive education in Lebanon. TISDP aimed to increase the awareness of families, caregivers, decision-makers and community leaders about inclusive educationrights, opportunities, and the importance of school-family collaboration to reach quality education targets. In addition to enrolling children in school, efforts to keep them in school in this socio-economic downturn were just as important. It was realised that TISDP awareness campaign strategy supported in providing a stable student population, who needed assistance. Yet, it could not increase awareness about how to support the well-being of their parents as well as in raising their standards and values of living. This is supported in literature with a study by Alobeidli (2017), it concluded that the families of children with intellectual disabilities or autism spectrum disorder (ASD) face community challenges and their kids are stigmatized by society more than the families of children with developmental delay without diagnosis under disability categories. Hence, an aligned classification system for disabilities is suggested to be established by the Ministry and CERD as well as to be adopted in schools so as to ensure a shift from the medicalized approach toward a so-called human rights-based approach. Based on the analysed data, the researcher detected a gap where many Lebanese families of people with disabilities do segregate their children from full community participation as a result of stigma. Yet if so, is still done. There would be many consequences to it which leads to (a) reducing awareness about disability and increasing the knowledge gap on it (b) increasing negative expectations and apprehension individuals have about the behaviour of students with disabilities (c) considering that being in contact with students with disabilities implies embarrassment, undesirability and unacceptability (d) reinforcing the concept of catering for the needs of students with disabilities means we are doing them a favour or providing them a mere gift and they are a welfare recipients. This research confirms that disability is still stigmatized in the Lebanese society as

revealed by data. Specifically, recent research by Merhej (2020) confirmed that too. Also, UNCRPD law confirms that persons with disabilities are right-holders and de-prioritization of the rights need not to be emphasized. Then, awareness raising campaigns in Lebanon need to run as soon as possible. Therefore, they are so much needed in such a unique Lebanese context to embed the concept that vulnerable students can help us way more than we help them because they are part of our society, and that we are connected with them (Holtzapfel, 1995) so we are serving ourself in the first place to become better together in a such miserable state before serving them.

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (WHO, 2001) will serve the mean of closing stigmatization gap. ICF is a multidimensional, context-sensitive and functional tool; which ensures that different data collection instruments used by level 1 and 2 participants adopt the same criteria and guidelines, thus establishing integrated national data base for SEND disability unified statistics in line with international frameworks and standards. This step pinpoints the extent to which students with SEND may benefit from the provision services by TISDP and remove any barrier to inclusion.

PART II

5.3 ISSUES RELATED TO TISDP IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Discussing findings of the second research question provides the depth of how the implemented procedure reflects both what was executed as a prevention measure and what was practiced as an intervention provision services towards achieving the inclusive school dimensions of culture, policy and practice to best ensure TISDP's success (Akyeampong et al. 2013).

This section is divided into two parts. The first covers what was done by level 1 and 2 in the preparedness phase before proceeding to implement inclusive practices.

The second phase entails what was done in action by stakeholders post the implementation process to reach better inclusive goals tailored to the current status, in Lebanon. The aim was to gather 'snapshots' to discuss the executed inclusive practices which remain an under examined research area (Simon et al. 2019) to know more about the teaching and learning process.

5.3.1 PRE-IMPLEMENTATION PREPAREDNESS PHASE: ACTIONS PERFORMED BEFORE AND DURING EXECUTION

Firstly, as mentioned in the findings (chapter four) level two participants got their PD training by NGO's with the goal of empowering teachers with skills to become competent in order to establish an inclusive pedagogical learning environment, which develops students' competencies. Data revealed that the strength of TISDP was the close collaboration carried among all levels of stakeholders. The strong base of cooperation started with level one varying organisms such as (MEHE, CERD and NGO's) to share their experiences, know-how and competencies on how to implement effective inclusion for students with disabilities in schools of Lebanon. A unified database on inclusive education was distributed for making informed decisions on school levels. Thus, after a deep analysis of varying viewpoints among stakeholders it is discovered that not all what was planned for were implemented in action due to intervening variables beyond stakeholders' control. In particular, during the interview one of the teachers confessed that she did not have internet connection at home. It implies that she may have missed out on the PD training delivered online or disseminated via video applications. It was expected to happen but it was not an indicator that PD was not helpful to everyone else. Thus, analysing findings was so delicate and critical to day-to-day changes and to the researcher interpretation. The truth was revealed everyone did their best to contribute for the success of TISDP. Yet, it was God's will that changed things for better especially in a country like Lebanon, which is of continuous instability. Consequently, Lebanese people learnt a great

lesson that PD was easier said than practiced as a task due to the socio-economic conditions, the outdated and inflexible education system as well as teaching methods and approaches. Therefore, they were left with no choice but to become the best versions of themselves amid such circumstances. Therefore, it was deduced by the researcher that a careful supervision and detailed follow-up was crucial in order to check whether TISDP goal plans are effectively implemented to drive a radical change.

It was determined, that one of the reasons that made the PD training ineffectual and a loss to TISDP was that many paraprofessionals resigned due to the socio-economic status of the country as they were unable to provide their teaching services when they were not paid by the government. The turnover rate became high as revealed by all principals confirming that they had a shortage of competent staff that made the investment in PD to some extent, useless. A fact demonstrated, the World Bank estimated that, since 2020, at least 10,000 teachers have found jobs abroad because their salaries became almost worthless after the Lebanese lira lost 95 percent and more of its value against the dollar. According to a recent survey commissioned by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, a German think-tank; the socio-economic challenging situation is exacerbated with statistics stating that about 40 per cent of the population of almost 7m is considering emigrating (Financial Times, 2022). Subsequently, a new exodus of its brightest and best-educated citizens as one teacher said, "I got accepted in Qatar the Lebanese minister of education signed a collaboration with Qatar to make the process easier for us to leave. It is a better lifestyle, income and education for my children" another educator said," I lost hope as politicians in Lebanon are corrupt and little was done to save the sinking economy". According to the, Corruption Perceptions Index, of the transparency international leading global indicator of public sector corruption, Lebanon is the 154/180; which means the 154 least corrupted nation out of a total of 180 countries. The situation is getting worse with the hyperinflation, shortages

and power cuts. Thus, these factors affected the implementation process negatively despite the fact that level 2 participants had positive attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Despite the unique Lebanese settings, data revealed that attention was paid by participants of level 2 & 3 to implement the plans provided by policy makers, wherever possible. Yet, due to the resignation of special educators it was observed that (see Appendix 1.10) that intramural support was not given in class because collaborative approaches such as co-teaching model was not available to cater for the needs of students with SEND. The lack of such support service automatically eliminated the side effect of the learner's dependence on adult support. A study by Webster & De Boer (2019) warns against the "unintended consequences" of the presence of Teacher Assistant (TA) in mainstream settings, namely interaction reduction between learners with difficulties and teachers and peers. Also, the use of a multitiered framework for positive behavior interventions was used by some teachers; to improve students' behavior, create a positive school culture and improve the learning environment; it goes hand in hand with what Scott et al. (2019) strongly recommended. Yet, in many observed classes it was obvious that when discipline was not achieved learning could not take place. Some teachers were as they explained suffering in silence due to their economic status of not being able to receive their salaries. Accordingly, it was obvious as some subject teachers explained they were doing their best yet successful reduction of problem behaviours in classrooms depends on their proactive monitoring of students' behaviours which was hard to perform alone without the help coming from learning support assistance. The implementation of behavioural component of MTSS was not used as a reinforcement management system to measure students' behavioural outcomes as students were not behaving well at all due to the resignation of special educators and paraprofessionals.

The teacher interpreted stating that "the class is directly after the recess"; which was the reason behind their misbehaviour and "one hand alone cannot clap". Therefore, what was observed did not go hand in hand with what the school principal confirmed during the interview that all teachers proactively use MTSS as they are left alone without assistance to guide them. On the other hand, principals were really accountable for the proper application of MTSS and they managed developing supportive school's environment by holding regular meetings with the team as the research by Forman & Crystal (2015) confirmed. They did too what they could afford doing amid such situation to support implementing MTSS. However, discussing level 2 participants' reflections and updates, via another focus group meeting, on their teaching and learning process got out of control due to the Lebanese context.

The observation verified that the inclusive culture stems from a deeply-rooted commitment from class room teachers and paraprofessionals to individualize the learning experience for students with SEND. Yet, as mentioned earlier, what they could perform during such unique circumstances and challenges of the country was limited and different from what they planned. In all the examined schools, stakeholders were critically contributing to the school culture by implanting the notion that differences between learners are resources to support learning rather than it was seen as problems to be overcomed; this idea is supported by research as Booth & Ainscow (2002) stated. However, due to financial issues the psychologist and psychometrist visit the selected schools twice a week while the occupational therapist visits the school once a week. Though data revealed the minimum amount of time spent by the outsourced paraprofessionals need to be increased. In other words, a serious action is to be taken to increase the number of their visits to the schools. Consequently, this decision needs to be taken seriously into consideration as what was practiced earlier was never enough as claimed by a subject teacher in school A during an interview. She said,' Does the government have money to take

care of inclusion?' She added that in reality, investing money on inclusion might pay off amid such circumstances and it might be worth it. Yet, corruption is the norm amid the current situation.

Currently at all the examined schools, despite all the socio-economic challenges stakeholders were facing, it was noticed from data that all parties involved tried their best competently to deliver the services yet many intervening variables such as cultural factors were barriers to reaching intendent goals.

The researcher interpreted from the data that catering to the basic physiological needs became a top priority as a result education was not a priority. To them education was the last on the list to be considered amid such situation. It was supported in literature by Cassady (2011), that teachers' apprehensions affect their efficacy, whether their fear is due to incompetency or be it an overall skepticism of the success of the idea of inclusion. In the Lebanese context, anxiety was clearly observed due to the lack of financial monetary resources to invest in the inclusion process. Stakeholders in level 2 were left with no salaries as well as parents had no money to pay for the diagnosis expenses. For example, the grade 3 English teacher in school B pointed out a case in class who requires an intensive help or intervention but she was not diagnosed yet though her case was critical. She added that subject teachers were not allowed by the school to know the cases of the students. Therefore, the schools are working towards applying what they know yet they are unable to do so effectively as the root cause of the problem stems from the lack of proper management on ground of critical cases that need not only competency but also firm creative way.

It was noticed through observations (see Appendix 1.10) that instructions were not differentiated and children-centred ways were not adopted to engage students with SEND. The researcher deduced that subject teachers could not handle all the cases without they themselves

being supported by paraprofessionals. Consequently, the inclusive policy needs to include a detailed framework clearly stating how to support students with SEND through a manual tailored in a step-by-step process of the job to be carried by level 2 participants in charge of the case at hand. A teacher in school B admitted that paraprofessionals completed the preliminary screening of students with SEND by December 2021. She still expects to receive the needed training from the inclusion team (see Appendix 1.10). Hence, due to delay circumstances of school closures and inability of parents to pay for the diagnosis expenses; teachers were left with some cases to manage their own business. Therefore, it was noticed that there was a need for subject teachers to be more supported in developing inclusive practices. A suggestion was provided by the researcher which places emphasis on whole school approaches to drive holistic change and that effective inclusive thrives on hope. In spite of the situation the TISDP will succeed through individual unique contributions.

5.3.2 POST-IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: ACTIONS PERFORMED AFTER THE EXECUTION PROCEDURE

Secondly, data disclosed that self-reflection and openness to receiving feedback was positively practiced by level 2 and 3 participants; this is a great factor that was so critical for the development of stakeholders and schools. In particular, this accomplishment fine-tuned stakeholders' contribution to the inclusive education. Self-reflection was important for improving teacher PD training and clarifying stakeholders' vision of inclusion; it was used critically whenever possible when stakeholders used to deviate from applying the TISDP plans and achieving inclusive goals. According to Pülschen and Pülschen (2015) being self-reflective enables teachers to identify areas of strengths and improvement required for their personal growth in order to promote their skill development and competency. Data from the observation and interviews confirmed that regular meetings were held; which were considered a factor to achieve collaborative competence and all students' success.

Data revealed that challenging issues arose within schools while implementing inclusive practices; such as anxiety, socio-economic status leaving the whole country with no money, electricity, water supplies, fuel and exacerbated with the Covid-19 pandemic. The researcher explored that, in reality, when everything was gone in Lebanon the great collaborative practices and strong relationships of connections were left. Hence, the selected schools not only built strong relationship with families and local communities but also, they knew that "people with their heads full of theories do not make good teachers" (Wilkinson, 1993, p. 78). The essence is stated as such: What a teacher 'is', is more important than what he/she knows. Accordingly, in times of crises and reaching the rock bottom of state; to ensure children's optimal development the importance of continuous collaboration between family and school was so much valued. Focus on what matters the most and the well-being of everyone involved in the process was worth the attention. All parents approved that the journey into inclusive education their children school had been affected by the underlying current socio-economic settings and what matters for them was the well-being of their children. Those students with SEND who were on borderline of depression would have become worse and instead of progressing they would have been regressing. One parent stated that he had no option but to accept the situation and be supportive to avoid the deterioration of his child's case. He bluntly stated that he himself is taking a good care of his well-being because he wants to stay alive and prevent the category type of special needs of his soon to become more severe.

The adopted strategy by policy implementers was supported in literature by Piaget's constructive cognitive theory (1973), according to him learning is an active process of assimilating and acquiring new information, with cognitive abilities moving through stages of development. Therefore, in order to learn, learners have to change their cognitive processes. Thus, through PD teachers were taught that learning becomes meaningful only when based on

an emotional connection to the outside world (Caffarella & Merriam, 2000; and Taylor, 1996, as cited in Dirkx, 2001). Also, Dirkx (2001) stated that, "emotions are motivators to learning and teaching". Data revealed that the most important factor that drove effective implementation was positive teachers' attitudes towards inclusion; rooted in their willingness to collaborate with others and establish strong bond with students. Hence, the interviewed participants concluded that the path of their own knowledge about how to apply effective inclusive practices started with questioning their self-identity of 'who am I'? Then, knowing themselves supported them to include their feelings by answering 'how does that relate to me? Yet, they realised that emotions could become barriers to learning (Gray & Dirkx, 2000, as cited in Dirkx, 2001). Subsequently, they removed emotional barriers and told the researcher that they took the informed decision of responding to 'what can I do about it? Policy implementers found ways to work collaboratively with parents to remove inclusive barriers. Furthermore, a two-way communication channel was established between service receivers (parents and students) and the service providers (level 1 & 2 participants) build on trust. Consequently, the bonding of school-family collaboration was used as a means between them. It was the glue that bonded parental involvement and engagement in school meetings on one hand and on gaining sufficient knowledge about their children's case on the other hand. Hence, informed decisions were formed in deciding on what matters to advocate for their children to increase their presence, participation and achievement in the school and society in order to reach the common inclusive purposes.

Part III

5.3.3 ISSUES RELATED TO STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS
This part discusses stakeholders' perceptions on the development and implementation of TISDP with respect to the inclusive school dimensions of the index for inclusion by developed Ainscow (2011).

5.3.4 THE POWER OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN DRIVING INCLUSION AT SCHOOLS (A, B & C)
Inclusive Culture

The systematic planning done by Level 1 policy makers lead policy implementers to create an inclusive culture regardless of the challenges faced by Lebanon. In this study inclusive culture was crucial to examine from the viewpoints of stakeholders in order to uncover the ongoing inclusive practices to produce better inclusive policies (Ainscow et al. 2006). To create inclusive culture, level one policy makers dictated that, it starts with making connections with families in order to raise awareness on inclusion. Subsequently, awareness sessions were held aiming to (1) Develop an awareness of stakeholders' own attitudes and concerns about inclusion and make necessary adjustments when needed (2) Demonstrate increased knowledge and gain effective strategies for working with their children (3) Identify the needed kind of supports and pinpoint how to acquire them (4) Formulate strategic plans and technique for catering the needs of their children (5) Develop an inclusive environment that is effective for child's needs. (6) Develop collaborative partnership with the school that is student-centred and support child's effective learning. These goals were crucial to achieve as a study on the challenges of inclusive education in Lebanon, by Wehbi (2006) called for an urgent need to raise awareness on disability issues and the way to reach inclusive culture. Another study claimed that in Lebanon many people assume that a person with a disability does not have abilities (Wehbi & El-Lahib,

2007). This study confirmed that, via quantitative and qualitative data, stakeholders' positive perception towards the concept of inclusive culture was evidently shown by many indices. Thus, schools are moving towards creating effective inclusive culture.

Inclusive Practice

Secondly, stakeholders' positive perceptions of the implemented inclusive practices was reflected through their dedication to go above and beyond to support students' achievements. It is confirmed with a research by Ghaith and Yaghi (1997) suggest that "teachers' willingness to implement new instructional practices is a key factor influencing educational improvement" (p. 451). Parents explained their perspectives towards the transition process. They were aware that the journey into inclusivity was not an event to reach but rather it was a complicated process to which everyone's role was critical and each individual contribution was so much valued. Consequently, each personal effort was seen as a piece of puzzle and each person's input was valuable to make the full picture of inclusion complete. The father of a child in School A stated that he felt that it was necessary for teachers to work with a desire for self-development especially with the current state of Lebanon. He expressed his tolerance and wondered how will these paraprofessionals be able to implement the TISDP practices and drive societal change if they themselves are with no ambition after more than forty years of volatility and conflict in Lebanon!?

Thus, this father said transparency and collaboration with schools were the only mean towards reaching effective inclusivity. He said," I didn't know what was wrong with my child! My child seemed a little lost soul, I had to know what to do. To him as a parent, collaboration is the starting point for moving towards inclusivity where teachers need to be approachable and

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parents need to be involved for feedback, whenever needed. He added, "The key is to know what to do in order to be able to transform a learner from a child who gets in trouble due to his bad behaviour, which spirals down in more trouble, to a real joy having him the classroom". He concluded by stating that professionals should neither interpret parent's emotion and passion as unsympathetic nor consider parents' silence as indifference. The desire of parents is to see their children achieve their maximum potential, be included in society and to have a life of value and worth. Despite the fact that, in the selected public schools, inclusive practices have not as yet been implemented as planned due to the financial difficulties and lack of competent staff; who are resigning because they are not get paid by government. The good news is that challenges faced did not prevent these schools from meeting the diverse needs of students with special needs. Stakeholders' positive perceptions turned the pattern around and changed the outcomes of children for better.

On the other hand, one parent said, "the current situation is miserable we need to know where are we going with our children with SEND in order to expect when to reach the intendent destination! We know nothing". Many parents agreed that promoting inclusion in TISDP was not only about the introduction of new school arrangements with specific techniques but it was also about the processes of social learning within the current status of the Lebanese contexts. In other words, inclusion was not only about reaching inclusivity because inclusion is not a place to get but rather promoting inclusion means enjoying the process itself as a mother stated that they were doing great with unity, amid such situation. She added that they need to tackle taken-for-granted assumptions students with ADHD. Such positive attitudes by parents were well interpreted by the principals in schools A&B. So not only parents are appreciative of the effort exerted by level 1 & 2 stakeholders but also everyone involved do embrace collaboration with parents and focus on the utilization of family-centred practices. Such positive environment

and effective practices helped teachers to understand family priorities in the current Lebanese context which led to better students' results as claimed by stakeholders.

Another parent of a child from school A was so grateful and praised the great role the psychologist played to support his daughter. He was appreciative of how impactful the paraprofessionals contribution was for his involvement with the school amid the current Lebanese status.

Inclusive Policy

Lastly, such positive perceptions towards inclusive culture and practices caused policy makers of level one participants to run adjustments in current policies for further sustainability and development. Data indicated that despite policy maker's intention to provide the planned PD sessions; the selected schools did not exhibit a unified inclusion approach. Also, all case schools lacked a cohesive structure connecting them as one entity to cater for the needs of students with SEND. The three schools are applying a variety of methods with no clear strategic planning and understanding for the expected future of Lebanon amid such context. The current research suggests that a unified policy plans are needed to be adopted by all schools. Currently, school B managed to develop appropriate infrastructure for students to access distance learning without significant interruption. It also accommodated students on wheelchairs. While school A was not able to accept these categories of students and that was the harsh reality. Facilities are not fully prepared to accommodate students on wheelchairs as the environmental place is not adapted with ramps. Hence, whilst inclusion was stated on paper it was not the exact reality of what actually happened at the school.

Stakeholders' positive perceptions towards the establishment of a national inclusive education policy, executed across all public schools in Lebanon at the national level, seems to be well planned for and the road is paved for it. According to MEHE, successful results of the 30

selected schools at the pilot of the TISDP drove MEHE to start a full-scale implementation to a new set of 30 more schools. Yet, whether their action was a wise choice or not needs further investigation; which is beyond this study purposes and boundaries. However, this study intended to ask the research question and get answers from the adopted questionnaires yet responses were directed to what was important during time of crises. This was a fact because this was, is and always will be a cultural factor in a country with historical and current complexities. According to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs humanistic theory, basic security needs like physiological and safety as well as psychological needs have to be met as a prerequisite before reaching self-fulfilment needs. Maslow, places a special emphasis on basic needs to be met before reaching self-actualization.

However, data revealed that Lebanese people do not lose hope despite their insecure and unstable situation thus this theory is not entirely materialised in the Lebanese context. In the Lebanese context, not only people who have met their physiological and safety needs search for love and belongingness as stated in Maslow's theory. Currently, the Lebanese people are experiencing volatility, however some of them display great will and strive to achieve self-actualisation. Both basic physiological needs of life and education became on the top priority list for all stakeholders. Stakeholders' positive perceptions towards inclusive education even during the times of crises reflected determination of self-actualization; which serves the evolution of mankind and Earth (van Houten, 2004).

5.4 SUMMARY OF THE QUALITATIVE RESULTS
Summary of qualitative results were divided into what happened to stakeholders on three fronts: policy makers, policy implementers and beneficiaries.

Level one policy makers: acknowledged that raising awareness on inclusion starts with making connections with families to reach the demanded inclusive culture. Collaboration among school

and parents was seen at the core of having effective inclusive education for all students. The aim was to prepare stakeholders to implement inclusive practices for the development of all students and inclusivity. A careful supervision and detailed follow-up was practiced in order to check whether TISDP goal plans were effectively implemented to drive a radical change.

Level 2 participants: Due to the current Lebanese context, the prevailing sense of despair was prevailing among level 2 participants, who are considered the cornerstone of inclusive education, this is so because in spite of not being paid their salaries, they still performed their duties. Moreover, teachers required continuous motivation; there was a need to work on the self-development and inner well-being of all staff. It was given to them through PD training so they embraced their mission of meeting the needs of students with SEND. PD also led to the intrinsic transformation of teachers where they developed holistically evidenced by their ability to be more open minded and open hearted. This transformation drove changes in the teaching and learning process and lead to better learning outcomes for SEND students. Teachers were also supported by the caring nature of their principals who drove the transformation of the TISDP. Despite their miserable state and what they were going through; their self-reflection and openness to receiving feedback was positively practiced.

In such critical state, the lack of proper management on ground was seen due to the intense frustrations. Therefore, to cater for critical cases the cadre tried their best competently to deliver the services yet many intervening variables such as cultural factors were barriers to reaching intendent goals so creativity is so much needed. The goal is to implement system change inclusive strategies that are contextually sensitive to the Lebanese settings.

Level 3 participants: Data revealed that inclusive education development was an evolutionary process and it was everybody's business who contributed to its success, including parents and

students themselves. It was not considered a revolutionary process. The fact that level 2 participants had positive attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities was not enough as many factors interrupted the inclusion process such as corruption, hyperinflation, shortages and power cuts; all of which affected having effective implementation. The conclusive result was that success of TISDP was only achieved through diversity when Lebanese people learnt how to live together, with each other and value each other amid such circumstances.

5.5 ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

Unintentional unified results were formed when the researcher wanted to put forward variations of stakeholders' perceptions to evaluate TISDP. The researcher deduced from data that tolerance, connection and bonding was left when everything else was gone in Beirut, Lebanon. Hence, stakeholders' perceptions captured a realistic view by revealing that their power and effect to drive change. Positive attitudes and collaborations did not only contribute to reach TISDP's goals but it also achieved the government vision towards promoting inclusivity at society level. All stakeholders came into a conclusive understanding that inclusion was not just about making schools supportive; it was also about building inclusive communities which encourage and celebrate the school's achievements (Booth & Ainscow 2002). Hence, according to the views of stakeholders the development and implementation of TISDP was not a luxury nor was it a burden; it only needed added avenues of motivation to maintain faith and hope for a better future.

5.6 SUMMARY OF THE QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

The participants of this study were divided into three levels. Level 1: policy makers and Level 2: policy implementers and Level 3: beneficiaries. The Statistical Package for Social Science

(SPSS), Version 23 was used. Visual data (such as graphs, charts, networks and matrices display) were adopted for simplicity purposes to organise information into accessible form. Accordingly, mapping between research and interview questions as well as observation indicators and collected documents were performed. Briefly, all 'special need categories' were found in the three school students except for students with autism. Most participants confirmed that they received their PD training conducted by NGO's and they claimed that they would recommend TISDP to a parent or a friend who has a learner with a disability or any learning difficulty. All participants agreed that teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion, was the most important factor of support for SEND students. They all agreed too that the current implemented provisions of the TISDP were extremely helpful to all students. Also, they declared that they are extremely engaged in improving the quality of inclusive education at their schools. The "Collaboration and coordination among stakeholders including parents" was chosen as the most important aspect of provision services provided to students with SEND.

5.7 TRIANGULATION OF DIFFERENT DATA:

The current research adopted a concurrent triangulation design to answer the three research questions (Figure 3.2). The triangulation method was included to cross-validate, confirm or corroborate the findings. Four main data collection methods are used: interviews, observations, questionnaires and document analysis. Triangulation was used as a strategy, that provided the researcher with both objective and subjective data. It strengthened the study by exploiting both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches; when both are collected and given equal emphasis it enables to capitalize on the strengths of each form of data (Mertler & Charles 20018).

CHAPTER SIX (CONCLUSION)

6.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, the conclusion is presented based on displaying the different stakeholders'

perceptions and the various phases of the TISDP initiative.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

TISDP's initiative was driven by the government vision to transform all public schools and

make them inclusive and also to promote inclusive education in the Lebanese society. This

research aimed to provide decision and policy makers with data on TISDP to better

understand its development, implementation and stakeholders' perceptions. It was a much

needed 'hopeful vision' to investigate, especially, after the Beirut port explosion and the

current Lebanese context. TISDP journey was considered a challenging process due to the

complex political, educational, social and cultural factors impacting its development,

implementation and perceptions of stakeholders. For example, the unpaid professionals'

working in schools affected their motivation, execution and perspectives. That may have an

impact on the service delivery and the implementation of such project.

This research study investigated the TISDP development aspects, implementation procedure

and parents' perceptions with its aim to reach high quality standards in special education.

The research questions were addressed in relation to three inclusive school dimensions:

culture, policy and practice.

6.3 KEY FINDINGS

Findings revealed that TISDP had some positive impact on all students and their families. Thus,

stakeholders' positive perceptions about the journey into inclusive education caused effective

changes in the society. It was positive due to their knowledge, skills and attitudes gained from

the intensive awareness sessions held by NGO's. Also, school principals let go of their

authoritarian role and focused on giving stakeholders more space to state their opinions and

express their thoughts on TISDP development and implementation stage. Parents were seen as the true change agent to drive change. Parents mentioned that one of the outcomes of the TISDP has been greater visibility of persons with disabilities in mainstream education along with the rise of success stories their children with disabilities achieved. TISDP aim was building inclusive government schools in Lebanon and to advocate for rather than hinder inclusive education. This strategy may have empowered the majority of stakeholders at all fronts and gave them a voice, that allowed to link their reflections with inclusive issues.

Unfortunately, the fact was that socio-economic status impacted the implemented practices. Whilst inclusion was stated on paper it was not the exact reality of what actually happened at the school. Thus, examination allowed the researcher to understand how the TISDP school development and implementation journey tried to help every learner succeed, while moving in the directional change to inclusivity amid those challenges. The main emphasis was to shed light on the collaborative community that were considered the 'glue' that held stakeholders together at the selected schools. In reality, when everything was gone in Lebanon the great collaborative practices and strong relationships of connections between participants, of TISDP, were left. Hence, all stakeholders' perceptions went hand in hand and their cooperation produced reflective practices and effective transformation all of which triggered quality teaching that nurtured the inclusive culture. In return, stakeholders' informed decisions and actions spoke loud stating that TISDP was not a luxury nor was it a burden. It only needed added avenues of motivation to maintain faith and hope, that suited the country, for a better future.

IMPLICATIONS

The implications of this study are not limited to academia. This research affects other domains as it may trigger the inclusion of students with disabilities in society. Therefore, effective inclusion starts at school level to pave the way for inclusivity in the Middle eastern society and region. Thus, it shall encourage future academic researchers to investigate any initiative similar to the TISDP in the filed of inclusive and special education that encourages stakeholders for seeking fully inclusive schools. Consequently, it calls for updates of educational regulations and policies on inclusion. With an advocacy lens, this study shed light on many challenges that marginalized students with disabilities struggle with at school that may not strictly be related to education such as bullying with the aim to enhance the education of these categories of students. The perceptions of stakeholders were investigated so their voices were heard, thus tailored strategies for Lebanon are formulated to enhance TISDP inclusive practices through involving stakeholders on four fronts: Level one (Policy makers), level two (administrators and teachers) and level three (students and parents). This, study highlighted the power of neurodiversity and its effect on the schools and communities. The win-win situation for all stakeholders entails them to cooperate with each other in order to benefit from the marginalized students and ensure their wellbeing and positive impact on society. In the end, this study targets to attract other researchers to proceed in investigating the the journey of TISDP with the aim of advocating for the needs of students with disabilities locally and internationally.

6.5 SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDIES

A case study on the inclusive education of TISDP in Lebanese public schools was submitted by Haigazian university and published in June 2021 included many indices for the readiness of the MEHE into a full-scale implementation of the inclusive education in schools. The present study confirms that their recommendation was fruitful and 30 more public schools adopted inclusive education so that the total number was raised to 60. Thus, recommendations were provided in

this study as guidelines to inform not only stakeholders on three fronts: macro level-policy makers, micro levels- policy implementers and miso level- all beneficiaries in Lebanon, but also to support the 30 new schools adopting TISDP into their journey into inclusivity. Currently, based on the data revealed from this study, the below recommendations highlight what needs to be considered:

- In spite of all the challenges Lebanon was going through, stakeholders' positive perceptions of the concept of inclusion is well ingrained in the three examined schools due to the contribution made by the systematic planning of MEHE and the grit of all stakeholders to collaborate in making inclusive education a reality. This study recommends raising more awareness sessions on the learnt experiences of model schools through their journey into inclusion. The shared inclusive practices could support the 30 new schools joining for the upscaling of TISDP to support community members become themselves advocates for inclusion. The 30 new schools need to learn attentively about what worked best with precedents schools and what could be done in a better way by them for further improvements of the TISDP. For example, not only parents of students with and without disabilities need to be more involved in the TISDP as power of parents being a potential support resources need not to be underestimated but also other stakeholders need to be trained to work collaboratively and promote full inclusion in society. For example, the power of parents, of students with and without disabilities, is a potential support resource. It cannot be underestimated and parents need to be more involved in the TISDP. Thus, stakeholders need to be trained to work collaboratively to promote full inclusion in society.

- Lebanon needs to establish a national inclusive education policy that adopts a unified definition of inclusive education. The aim is to reflect all the three dimensions of culture,

policy and practice of school life. Therefore, public schools at all national levels need to use the agreed-upon definition of inclusive education. This solution will prevent misconceptions among all stakeholders (UNICEF, 2017a and UNICEF, 2017b).

- Adherence to the ICF is suggested to guarantee using the same adopted and adapted international frameworks to enable a cohesive national data base for disability statistics moving in parallel with the CRPD's principles.

- Further investment in teacher training is recommended to reach both equitable and excellent inclusive schools. Therefore, they understand their responsibility as agents and drivers of change to promote inclusion within the community. Thus, it is commended that future research be conducted to understand the process of how competent teachers at TISDP are practically trained to differentiate content, process and product based on fixed mechanism to monitor the implementation of such practices across all schools. For so to be done effectively, MEHE needs to unify a fixed technical guideline for offering research-based practices across all participating schools catering for the needs of students with SEND concerning not only their baseline assessment but also their progress assessment as well as their end of year assessment report.

- It is suggested that an international teaching license program to be urgently applied in collaboration with universities; to grant all teachers in Lebanon a teaching license. It guarantees the continuous development of skills for teaching in inclusive education environments; which involves a fast degree of change due to research-based updates in teaching practices. It is crucial that this license be regularly checked for its expiration to ensure that future inclusive policy implementers cohorts have the essential updated skills to combat barriers to inclusion. The reflections submitted to the university in charge of such program could guarantee regular check-ups for self-monitoring system

for teachers. It could hold them accountable for any improvement to be made to track whether or not students' full potentials are reached on a termly basis.

- MEHE needs to recruit competent level 2 participants for schools with staff shortage and ensure that they are all paid their salaries to undertake their functions.

- MEHE needs to systematise and digitalize its intra-school reporting, monitoring and documenting practices such as meetings. For example, MEHE needs to establish a fixed schedule, that requires attendance and deliverables; which includes the detailed responsibilities and status of all participants by including a piece of evidence about the minutes of the meeting via using standardized forms for outcome reporting. Documenting data digitally could enhance the MEHE's point of reference system to save needed development data for each student with SEND since the joining date until the graduation date into young adulthood on their social status, diagnostic history, adopted IEP and their performance monitoring at different levels of interventions. Such valuable data could serve the vocational or employment placement to keep track of what went on with the student's case from child hood to adolescence into labour market.

6.6 CONCLUDING NOTE

In times of crises, TISDP had an effective role; which made stakeholders focus on what matters the most, that was the development of humanistic values: having a network of love built on trust and collaborative communities amongst schools and families. It caused them to accept their challenges and sustain improvement as well as to prioritize their well-being in moving towards inclusive society. It was concluded that well-being needs were more important than educational needs. As, school A had the slogan written on the school walls, "A strong will is the secret behind success". Data revealed that all stakeholders believed in inclusion and their mission was much bigger than disseminating knowledge. Their positive attitudes allow them to

internalise what Lebanon's circumstance requires. They pinpointed students' needs and took effective inclusive actions as well as they reflected on their implementation, which allowed their inner knowledge to emerge. Informed decisions where then taken based on what was happening in Lebanon. Hope of inclusive schools may have provided stakeholders to let go of some of the luxurious provisions and gave space for new aspects to be initiated in the TISDP.

In particular, the current socio-economic status in Lebanon affected some stakeholders due to the lack of knowledge, disorganized education system and the no availability of enough technological and support services to meet students' needs. For example, parents did not have enough money for conducting the proper diagnosis for their children. In addition, some level 2 stakeholders did not feel a deep commitment to their work and they are resigning because they were not receiving their salaries.

Above all, despite the fact that a crisis-management plan has been in place, data demonstrated that school closure had a negative impact on the teaching and learning process, specifically many students with learning difficulties did not benefit from the intervention services. Thus, it raised further questions on how the coordination and teamwork ran across schools. Data revealed that each school followed its own regulations with no unified coordination mechanism between schools. Although efforts are exerted by NGO's yet manuals are taken as passive information that were not implemented in practice. However, documents were left in the drawers at school offices of policy implementers; who have already migrated for the Gulf or the west, either permanently or temporarily.

Data revealed that, the impact of the brain drain was already felt in the education sector. Therefore, the political and financial issues need to be quickly rectified, if so is not done then the education situation will be in danger. Specifically, among the three selected schools one

special educator is left, in school C, who was not attending school because of her maternity leave and another special educator in inclusive education department, in school A, had gone abroad while another paraprofessional left to work at a private school because the priority became to find food and basic needs. Thus, the current research study warns of the long-term impact of the mass emigration of the competent teachers and its effect on not allowing students to reach actualization needs. Consequently, the quality of education will inevitably be declining by the departure of skilled and specialized teachers; no human capital was left to replace them as a result student might regress.

Data about stakeholders' perception, for example, the UNICEF's representative revealed that partnership relationship was practiced to take informed decisions to reach TISDP success. Consequently, educational policies and practices in Lebanon were taken to suit the current insecure and unstable situation specific to the context of Lebanon and to what was applicable to policy implementers status and context. Yet, it does not mean that the decision is the best.

Policymakers needs to publish, urgently, a detailed practical plan for the implementation process of national inclusive education policy. E.g., the MEHE needs to equip schools with competent teachers in place of those who resigned. Data from the present study revealed that the decision taken of scaling up TISDP by adding a new set of 30 more schools was to be investigated to know if all public schools in Lebanon focus on implementing a unified coordination mechanism of the national inclusive education policy.

Lastly, all stakeholders agreed that successful TISDP entails the development of students who possess human values such as being more enthusiastic, resilient, innovative, responsible, diligent, care, tolerant and respect of one another rather than blindly following instructions in this fast-changing world in the 21st century. Thus, students need to be given a voice to improve

their meaningful presence and participation via adopting the inclusive inquiry approach. The current research investigated students' perceptions and valued the student-researcher dialogue, as a mean for understanding the views of children themselves. It was very helpful in bringing new thinking to the efforts of school development. Engaging students themselves in the process was an added value, to this study, to develop more inclusive ways of working.

What is needed now more than ever before , is a change in the financial difficulties faced by parents who cannot afford therapeutic services for their children. Despite the current situation which affected all stakeholders' level of stress they all confirmed that; to win and have inclusive schools the hope was to never give up of becoming an educated citizens in order to reach great students' achievements; who will turn the pattern around for the future of Lebanon.

In conclusion, to answer the overarching question, how are Lebanese public primary schools in Beirut moving towards inclusive education, by the implementation of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program'? This study aimed to achieve the following aims: examine the aspects of TISDP and investigate the implementation procedure of promoting inclusivity in the three selected public schools in Beirut as well as inspect the perceptions of participants on four Fronts-Administrators, teachers, students and parents on TISDP implementation. Subsequently, recommendations were provided to fill the research gap and inform policy inform policy as well as support decision makers. It has used a mixed methods approach to support the reader's understanding of the collected data and to increase validity and trustworthiness. It is aimed that at the end of the study, the information offered would inform policy and support decision makers to the betterment of the implemented program in Lebanese schools. The passion and tireless efforts exerted by the researcher is to ensure that school culture is as inclusive as possible, from the way the school recruits to how they cater for the needs of individuals with disabilities. In future, my goal is to raise awareness on the following enquires: How can the

society further break down barriers to ensure that it includes learners from all backgrounds? And how can stakeholders broaden their competency to ensure that societal inclusivity remains fit for the future?

It is also aimed that the study would be used in cross cultural studies to support similar projects that seek to support inclusive education in difficult political and cultural situations. Despite all the challenges encountered during the conduct of the research due to political crisis and less than ideal situation, the study did manage to answer the research questions and is aiming to pave the way for more researchers to investigate relevant matters. On a personal note, the teacher in me learned so much from teachers interviewed, the parent in me had an in-depth insight into the inner world of inclusivity in my native land, and the researcher in me thrived on finding information about my own native country that I would have never dreamed of finding if I did not do such study! I am grateful for the experience and I look forward to invest more time and effort in investigating inclusive education in the region.

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APPENDICES

TISD Program Goals	Planning & development Stage (MEHE/ UNICEF)	Staff Training & professional development by MERCY CORPS "Jordan"	Community In put Support services (local schools and entities)	Resources such as Technology
What is the agenda for change and insights on development ? Introduce a radical change in the education system of 30 public schools by making education more inclusive	Inclusive Education school Plan	Screening: Skills evaluation process	IEP, Accommodation and adaptation	Classroom inclusion kit
How such changes might be brought about? providing equal access & quality learning opportunities to reach out to all students who are excluded at the moment and	Job description & role of paraprofessionals	Screening Scale	Meeting minutes	Resource room tools (visuals)
So what? Responding positively to student diversity means to celebrate individual differences. Not to see them as problems to be fixed, but rather as opportunities for enriching learning.	Learners Tracking sheets	Continuous Assistance form	Collaboration and coordination among team members	

APPENDIX1.1 ASPECTS OF TISDP

APPENDIX 1.2- FIGURE 1 REVIEW FRAMEWORK
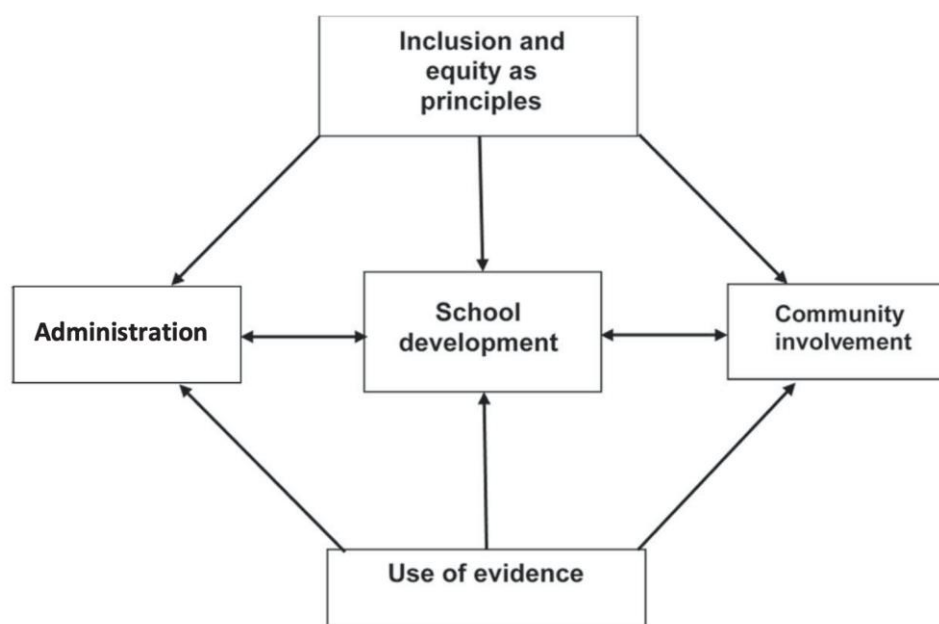
Figure 1 depicts that school development is seen as the center of attention in moving towards

an inclusive direction.

In particular, it encompasses four interacting forces involving:

(a) inclusion and equity as principles,

(b) administration,

(c) community involvement

(d) use of evidence.

It shows that during the implementation process these four forces act as contextual influence,

which may become barriers and obstacles to inclusion progress or be the support and

encouragement of it.

APPENDIX 1.3 INDEX FOR INCLUSION INDICATORS (BOOTH & AINSCOW 2011)

QUESTIONNAIRE 1: INDICATORS

Please tick the boxes for the the groups below which describe your involvement with the school:

☐ teacher ☐ teaching assistant ☐ other member of staff ☐ parent/carer

☐ child or young person ☐ governor ☐ other (please specify) _____

Please tick the box that best reflects your opinion ▶

			Agree	Agree and disagree	Disagree	Need more information
Dimension A – Creating inclusive cultures						
A1: Building community	1	Everyone is welcomed.				
	2	Staff co-operate.				
	3	Children help each other.				
	4	Staff and children respect one another.				
	5	Staff and parents/carers collaborate.				
	6	Staff and governors work well together.				
	7	The school is a model of democratic citizenship.				
	8	The school encourages an understanding of the interconnections between people around the world.				
	9	Adults and children are responsive to a variety of ways of being a gender.				
	10	The school and local communities develop each other.				
	11	Staff link what happens in school to children's lives at home.				
A2: Establishing inclusive values	1	The school develops shared inclusive values.				
	2	The school encourages respect for all human rights.				
	3	The school encourages respect for the integrity of planet earth.				
	4	Inclusion is viewed as increasing participation for all.				
	5	Expectations are high for all children.				
	6	Children are valued equally.				
	7	The school counters all forms of discrimination.				
	8	The school promotes non-violent interactions and resolutions to disputes.				
	9	The school encourages children and adults to feel good about themselves.				
	10	The school contributes to the health of children and adults.				
Dimension B – Producing inclusive policies						
B1: Developing the school for all	1	The school has a participatory development process.				
	2	The school has an inclusive approach to leadership.				
	3	Appointments and promotions are fair.				
	4	Staff expertise is known and used.				
	5	All new staff are helped to settle into the school.				
	6	The school seeks to admit all children from its locality.				
	7	All new children are helped to settle into the school.				
	8	Teaching and learning groups are arranged fairly to support all children's learning.				
	9	Children are well prepared for moving on to other settings.				
	10	The school makes its buildings physically accessible to all people.				
	11	The buildings and grounds are developed to support participation of all.				
	12	The school reduces its carbon footprint and use of water.				
	13	The school contributes to the reduction of waste.				

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		Please tick the box that best reflects your opinion ▶	Agree	Agree and disagree	Disagree	Need more information
B2: Organising support for diversity	1	All forms of support are co-ordinated.				
	2	Professional development activities help staff to respond to diversity.				
	3	English as an additional language support is a resource for the whole school.				
	4	The school supports continuity in the education of children in public care.				
	5	The school ensures that policies about 'special educational needs' support inclusion.				
	6	The behaviour policy is linked to learning and curriculum development.				
	7	Pressures for disciplinary exclusion are decreased.				
	8	Barriers to attendance are reduced.				
	9	Bullying is minimised.				
Dimension C – Evolving inclusive practices						
C1: Constructing curricula for all	1	Children explore cycles of food production and consumption.				
	2	Children investigate the importance of water.				
	3	Children study clothing and decoration of the body.				
	4	Children find out about housing and the built environment.				
	5	Children consider how and why people move around their locality and the world.				
	6	Children learn about health and relationships.				
	7	Children investigate the earth, the solar system and the universe.				
	8	Children study life on earth.				
	9	Children investigate sources of energy.				
	10	Children learn about communication and communication technology.				
	11	Children engage with, and create, literature arts and music.				
	12	Children learn about work and link it to the development of their interests.				
	13	Children learn about ethics, power and government.				
C2: Orchestrating learning	1	Learning activities are planned with all children in mind.				
	2	Learning activities encourage the participation of all children.				
	3	Children are encouraged to be confident critical thinkers.				
	4	Children are actively involved in their own learning.				
	5	Children learn from each other.				
	6	Lessons develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between people.				
	7	Assessments encourage the achievements of all children.				
	8	Discipline is based on mutual respect.				
	9	Staff plan, teach and review together.				
	10	Staff develop shared resources to support learning.				
	11	Teaching assistants support the learning and participation of all children.				
	12	Homework is set so that it contributes to every child's learning.				
	13	Activities outside formal lessons are made available for all children.				
	14	Resources in the locality of the school are known and used.				

Three things I like best about this school:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Three things I would most like to change:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

APPENDIX 1.4 -FIGURE 2 MIXED METHOD VISUAL PLAN

Mixed Method Approach

Research Approach and Design

Expolratory Sequentia Mixed Method Designl → Pragmatism phenomenological paradigm → Inductive / Deductive

Qual Data Collection → Quan Data Collection → Qual Data Collection

Results Integrated analysis of Quan & Qual Data
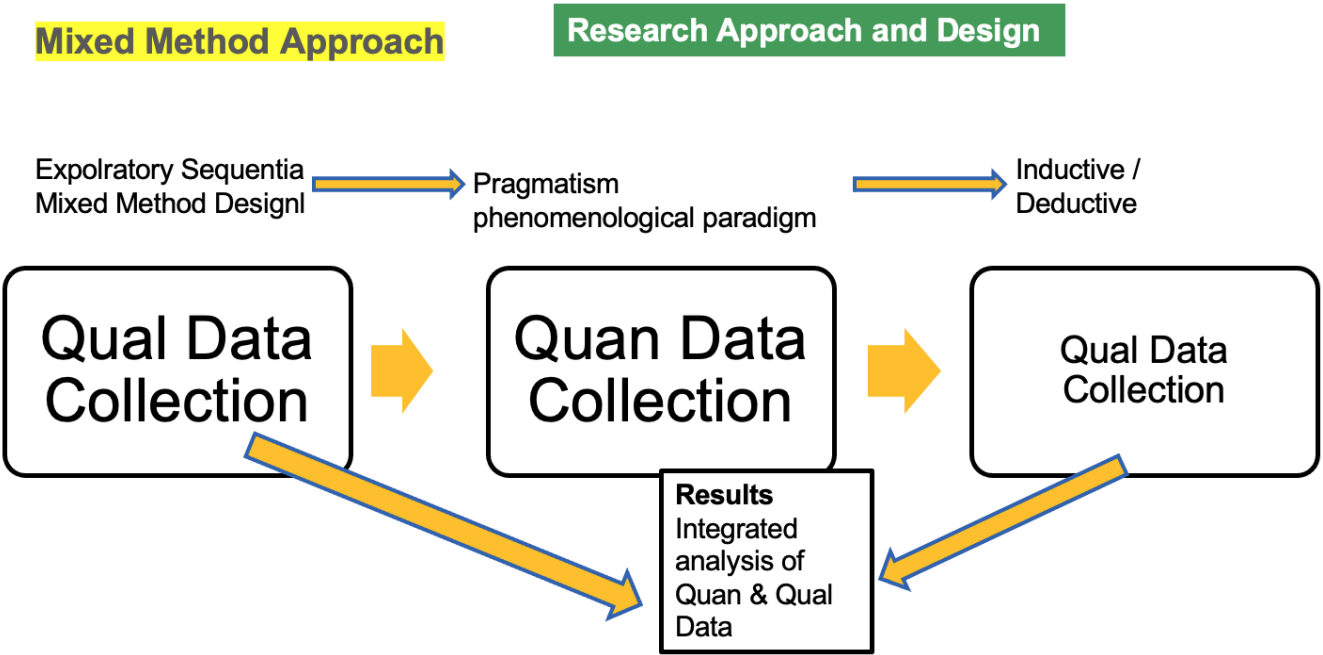
APPENDIX 1.5-QUESTIONNAIRE

		Indicators		Y/N	Evidence	Comments
		RQ1: What are the aspects of the **development** of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) for public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?				
	Index	UNESCO 2017 A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education	Question item			
	Culture					
Concepts and Policies	A.2.1	Strengthen concepts and policies by ensuring that the national curriculum and assessment systems respond effectively to all learners.	Do staff avoid viewing students as having a fixed ability based on their current achievements? A.2.6 Do staff see disability as created when people with impairments encounter negative attitudes and institutional barriers? A.2.6 Is the exclusion of students with severe impairments understood to reflect limitations of attitude			

			and policy more than practice difficulties?			
			C.2.3 Are appropriately adapted curriculum materials, for example, in large print, audiotape or Braille, available for students with impairments?			
	A.2.2	Addressing the misconceptions in the community on the belief that the national curriculum and assessment systems are not suitable for all learners. Increasing awareness to improve understanding of national policy aspirations. Thus curriculum is planned to promote inclusivity and to be suitable for all learners	Is there a shared understanding that inclusion is about increasing participation in, as well as access to, the school? B.2.3 Is support seen as an entitlement for those students who need it rather than as			

			a special addition to their education?			
			Do all members of the school take responsibility for making the school more inclusive?			
	A.2.5	Identify, challenge and address non-inclusive, discriminatory and inequitable practices by removing these barriers.	Is the teaching and learning environment understood to include student and staff relationships, buildings, cultures, policies, curricula and teaching approaches?			
	Policy					
	B.2.1	Articulate consistent policy aspirations for the development of inclusivity	Is there an overall inclusive support policy which is clear to all within the school?			

	B.2.3	Addressing the misconceptions in the community on the belief that the national curriculum and assessment systems are not suitable for all learners. Increasing awareness to improve understanding of national policy aspirations. Thus curriculum is planned to promote inclusivity and to be suitable for all learners	Where possible, is support provided without recourse to formal assessment procedures? Are 'special needs' policies aimed at increasing learning and participation and minimising exclusion?			
	B.2.6	The national curriculum and assessment systems are robust and flexible. They are reviewed and improved to suit all learners				
Practice						
	C.1.1	Establishing effective systems to monitor the presence, participation and achievement of all learners within the education system	Are support policies guided by what is best for students rather than the maintenance of professional territories? B.2.6 Does the school attempt to raise the feelings of self-worth of those			

			with low self-esteem? B.2.6 Do pastoral and behaviour support policies address the well-being of students who are quietly troubled?			
	C.1.2	The national curriculum and assessment systems are robust and flexible. They are reviewed and improved to suit all learners	B.2.4 Are Individual Education Plans about providing access to, and supporting participation within, a common curriculum?			
	C.1.8	Provide clear and sustainable leadership on inclusion and equity in education (trained regarding their responsibilities for enhancing inclusion and removing barriers)	B.2.1 Is the co-ordination of support given high status in the school and led by a senior member of staff?			

		How the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) is **implemented** at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon?				
	A.1.1	Systems monitoring the presence, participation and achievement of all learners within the education system	C.1.1 Can different subjects be learnt in different ways? C.1.1 Is there a variety of activities involving, for example, oral presentation and discussion, listening, reading, writing, drawing, problem solving, use of library, audio/visual materials, practical tasks and computers?			

			C.1.6 Is there monitoring of the achievements of different groups of students so that any difficulties can be detected and addressed?			
	A.1.3 A.1.6	Professional development opportunities are made available for teachers to attend in-service courses that focus on Sustainable development goals (SDGs). It includes the opportunity to see one another working on the ground to share expertise	A.1.5 Are all parents/carers well informed about school policies and practices? C.2.4 Are parents/carers and other community members used as a source of support in classrooms? C.2.2 Are staff encouraged to			

			develop their knowledge and skills?			
	A.1.4	Collaboration of working closely with families to support the national policy aspirations and promote inclusion and equity in education	Are there a variety of opportunities for parents/carers to become involved in the school?			
	B.2.2	Professional development programs for teachers are effective trainings carried to ensure the development of positive attitudes towards student diversity. The aim is to reach Sustainable development goals (SDG4 2015), which is the school commitment to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all students	Do staff development activities support staff in working effectively together in classrooms? Do staff receive training in devising and managing collaborative learning activities? Do staff and governors take responsibility for assessing their own learning needs?			

	B.2.9	Effective procedures have been taken to ensure that students' views (their learning aspirations) are included to cater to their needs competently in the inclusive educationsystem	A.1.4 Are the opinions of students sought about how the school might be improved? Do lessons provide opportunities for paired and group activities as well as individual and whole classwork? Do the views of students make a difference to what happens in school? B.1.6 Where there are option choices, are all students allowed to make real choices?			

	B.2.3	Addressing the major forces acting as barriers to promoting inclusion progress and supporting it	C.1.1 Does planning reflect on and attempt to minimise barriers to learning and participation for particular students?			
	C.1.1 C.1.4	Actions taken to ensure that high quality and effective pedagogical strategies are implemented to cater to learner differences	Are lessons adapted, if necessary, so students with physical or sensory impairments can develop skills and knowledge through physical education or practical science or the physics of light and sound?			
	What are stakeholders' **perceptions** of the development and implementation of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program (TISDP) at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon					
	A.1.5	Education providers, learners and their families have a shared understanding of the importance of working effectively together in	Are all parents/carers well informed about school policies and practices? Are parents/carers aware of the			

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		coordinating inclusive and equitable educational policies and practices. Leaders find ways to consider how this can be improved.	priorities in the school development plan?			
	A.1.7	Policy is implemented in practice to ensure high quality support for all vulnerable learners	Is there a positive view of the school within the local communities? C.2.1 Are the barriers to learning and participation of some students, for example in gaining physical access to a part of a building or to an aspect of the curriculum, used as problem solving tasks or projects?			
	C.2.1, C.2.2 C.2.5	Human and financial resources are effectively distributed	Is everyone, irrespective of attainment or impairment, seen to			

		to benefit vulnerable learners. Staff expertise is fully utilized	make an important contribution to teaching and learning? Do students with more knowledge or skill in an area sometimes tutor those with less? Are staff encouraged to draw on and share all their skills and knowledge to support learning? C.2.3 Is the Internet used efficiently by students to help with school work and homework? C.2.4 Are the resources available to some homes, such as reference material, drawn on to support all students? C.2.5 Are staff aware of the resources delegated to the school to support			

			students categorized as 'having special educational needs'? Are resources, delegated to meet 'special educational needs', used to increase the capacity of the school to respond to diversity?			
	C.2.4	School leaders establish and maintain a strong relationship with other special provision education institutions such as centres of learning (e.g. pre-school provision; special schools) to share the expertise of ideas and practices made available in their	B.2.1 Is there a clear plan for the way external support services that can contribute to the inclusive development of cultures, policies and practices? C.2.2 Are local special school staff invited to share their expertise with mainstream staff?			

		special settings with mainstream school teachers.	B.2.4 Do external support services contribute to the planning of teaching and learning to reduce barriers to learning and participation?			

Power Standards of Questionnaires

Index for inclusion School Dimensions	Culture	Policy	Practice
Power Standard 1	Building community "Everyone is made to feel welcome"	Developing the school for all "Staff appointments and promotions are fair"	Orchestrating learning "Teaching is planned with the learning of all students in mind"
Power Standard 2	Establishing inclusive values "High expectations for all students"	Organising support for diversity "All forms of support are co-ordinated"	Mobilizing resources "Student difference is used as a resource for teaching and learning"
	- How likely is it that you would recommend TISDP to other parent	-How helpful is the content provided in the awareness session	- How engaged are you in improving the quality of special

	who has a learner with a disability or a learning difficulty? - -To what extent do you think school vision shape	about the inclusion Policy? - Parental attitudes towards familiarity with the policy of inclusion in Lebanon?	education at your school? -To what extent do you think that TISDP provision is working well in public schools in Lebanon?

This questionnaire is part of a PhD research being conducted by Zeinab Al Agha, a student at the British University in Dubai. (BUiD). The research is titled "Investigating Development, Implementation and Perception of 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' at three government Primary Schools in Lebanon". The researcher is interested in knowing the journey into inclusive educationdevelopment, implementation, perceptions and recommendations related to the inclusive educationof TISDP.

Rest assured that responses will be 'anonymous,' meaning participants personal information will be kept confidential. Answers will be used for research purposes only. The questions will not take more than 10-15 minutes to complete. A gentle reminder that you can always opt out of the questionnaire at any time.

In case you have any inquiries, please feel free to contact the researcher or the Director of Research respectively through 20192706@buid.student.ac.ae, Prof Eman Gaad through eman.gaad@buid.ac.ae

Section 1

1. Choose your gender

 Male

Female

2. Choose the option that includes your age

a) Less than 24

b) 25 - 34

c) 35 - 44

d) 45 -54

e) 55 and above

3. What describes your stakeholders' role ? ("tick all that apply") *

a) Academic advisor

b) General coordinator at MEHE

c) HOD of Special education

d) NGO

e) UNICEF representative

f) CERD representative

g) School principal

h) paraprofessional

i) Subject teachers

j) Student..

k) Parent..

4. How long have you been in this position?

 a) Less than one year

b)1-5 years
c) 6-10 years
d) 11-15 years
e) More than 15 years
f) No answer

5. What special need categories are mainly found in your school? ("tick all that apply")

a) Intellectual disability

b) Specific learning disorders

c) Multiple disabilities

d) Developmental delay

e) Communication disorder

f) Autism Spectrum Disorder

g) Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

h) Psych-emotional disorders

i) Sensory impairment

j) Deaf-blind disability

k) Physical disability

l) Other

m) all of the above except f

6. Does your school organize professional training to promote inclusive educationpractices?

a) Yes

b) No

7. Have you received any training or participated in any awareness session about TISDP?

 a) Yes

 b) No

c) Currently pursuing

Question 1:

How likely is it that you would recommend TISDP to a parent or a friend who has a learner with a disability or a learning difficulty?

   a) Extremely likely
   b) Somewhat likely
   c) Neural
   d) Somewhat unlikely
   e) Extremely Unlikely

Question 2: How would you rate TISDP in Beirut?

a) Excellent
b) Very Good
c) Good
d) Fair
e) Poor

Question 3: What are the most important factor that leads to a successful provision of Inclusion?

a) Being well aware and familiar with the goals of the TISDP INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONpolicy of the school
b) Providing equal opportunities admission to SEND students into public schools in Beirut
c) Teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion
d) Parental positive attitudes towards inclusion

Question 4: How helpful are the implemented provisions in the TISDP to students?

a) Extremely helpful

b) Somewhat helpful

c) Neutral

d) Unhelpful

d) Extremely unhelpful

Question 5: How engaged are you in improving the quality of INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONof TISDP at your school?

a) Extremely Engaged
b) Somewhat Engaged
c) Neutral
d) Disengaged
e) Extremely disengaged

Question 6: How impactful is the availability of resources to meet the needs of SEND in the classroom at your school?

a) A great deal
b) A lot
c) A moderate amount
d) A little
e) Not at all

Question 7: Choose the most important choice from this list of the following aspects of support services provided to SEND students.

1. Commitment of school leadership to the vision of the philosophy of inclusion
2. Identification and diagnosis of students
3. Understanding barriers and challenges facing individual cases of SEND
4. Recruitment of competent staff
5. Curriculum modification and support
6. Using IEP and differentiated instructions strategies with different cases
7. Collaboration and coordination among stakeholders including parents, monitoring, tracking

Question 8: To what extent do you believe that TISDP provision is doing well amid such socio-economic conditions in your public school in Beirut?

a) Doing so well
b) Doing well moderately
c) Neutral
d) Not doing well
e) Not doing well at all

Question 9: Do you think that TISDP inclusive education policy can include all SEND cases (mild, moderate, or severe) in the mainstream class?

a) Definitely yes
b) Probably yes
c) Might or might not
d) Probably not
e) Definitely not

Question 10: Do you agree with this statement: " the availability of a continuum of high-quality support services including competent human and technological resources (ICT) and their efficient use impact the quality of teaching and learning of SEND"

a) Extremely Agree
b) Somewhat Agree
c) Neutral
d) Disagree
e) Strongly disagree

APPENDIX 1.6 SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATES PER GENDER, LEBANON 2020

Table 7

School enrollment rates of learners per gender and educational level (adapted from CAS et al., 2020, Table 2.1, p.35)

Educational level	Age group (years)	Males	Females
KG	3 to 4	61.2	61.7
Elementary	5 to 9	92.4	92.9
Intermediate	10 to 14	90.7	94.1
Secondary	15 to 19	65.9	77.1
University	20 to 24	31.5	38.8

Table 8

Comparison of school enrollment rates per gender between the public and private sector across all levels of the educational cycle (adapted from CAS et al., 2020, Figure 2.7, p.45)

Gender (all levels of educational cycle)	Public sector	Private sector
Male learners	44.0	49.9
Female learners	49.1	45.8

APPENDIX 1.7 NUMBER OF TARGETED LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES LEBANON, 2021

Table 5

Number of targeted learners across all levels of the educational cycle in 30 public schools per gender and disability category (adapted from MEHE-DOPS 2018-2019 Progress Report, Inclusive Table, p. 16, and MEHE-DOPS Annual Report 2020-2021, Annex 3, p.45)

Disability Category	2018-2019			2019-2020		
	Males	Females	**Total**	Males	**Females**	**Total**
Auditory Impairment	1	4	5	3	6	9
Visual Impairment	3	7	10	4	9	13
Motor Impairment	12	9	21	8	10	18
Intellectual disability	45	33	78	36	31	67
Learning difficulties	485	402	887	675	481	1156
Behavioral difficulties	112	34	146	177	95	272
Autism Spectrum Disorders	---	---	---	10	2	12
Total	**658**	**489**	**1147**	**913**	**634**	**1547**

APPENDIX 1.8 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION (MEHE) APPROVAL

٢/١٥/٢٩

ـ جانب مديرية التعليم الابتدائي

مع الموافقة على تقييد دخول
السيدة مُنيب الأعنا الى
المدارس التي تقدم اللغة الانكليزية
طا بيروت (عمر محمد الابتدائية ـ
الأميركية أرسلان ـ الشيخ
جابر الأحمد الصباح) للعام
الدراسي ٢٠٢١/٢٠٢٢ على ان
يتم ذلك بالتنسيق مع ادارات
هذه المدارس وان يترافق مع ذلك
على حسن سير العمل فيها
لا يلزم مع اجراء اللازم
وفق ايجار طول القانوني
بالاضافة الى التنسيق مع
الارشاد والتقييم

ـ تبلغ نسخة الى الارشاد والتقييم

ـ تبلغ نسخة الى صباحية العلاقة

٢/٤/٢٠٢١

المدير العام للتربية

شادي يرق

صادر COMPUTER
٨ كانون الأول ٢٠٢١

رقم الصادر: ٣/١٥١٦٩
بيروت في ٢٠٢٠/١٠/٢٨

جـــانب ـ مديرية التعليم الابتدائي
ـ الإرشاد والتوجيه

الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة طالبة جامعية.

المرجـــع: كتاب للطالبة زينب آغا تاريخ ٢٠٢٠/١٠/٢٢.

إشارة إلى الموضوع والمرجع المبينين أعلاه،

للتفضل بالاطلاع مع الموافقة على السماح للطالبة الجامعية **زينب آغا** بدخول مدرسة شكيب ارسـلان الرسمية، مدرسـة زقـاق البـلاط الرسمية ومدرسـة البسطة الأولى الرسمية للعام الدراسي ٢٠٢٠/٢٠٢١ لإجراء مقابلات مع التلاميذ في هذه المدارس لإعداد بحث جامعي، على أن يصار إلى التنسيق مع المنطقة التربوية لبيروت وضواحيها ومع الإرشاد والتوجيه ومع إدارات هذه المدارس بغية تنفيذ المطلوب، لإجراء اللازم ./.

ـ **تبلغ نسخة عن الموافقة إلى الطالبة الجامعية زينب آغا.**

المدير العام للتربية

فادي يـرق

APPENDIX 1.9 SCHOOL CONSENT LETTERS

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a student at the British university in Dubai (BUiD) and registered in the doctorate of education program; my research interest is special and inclusive educationfor children with disabilities. My research study aims to investigate the journey of three Lebanese public schools into inclusive education.

The purpose of this study is to examine the aspects of TISDP "Towards Inclusive School Development Program" and the perceptions of its social actors on four Fronts-Administrators, teachers, students and parents. Subsequently, recommendations will be provided that can fill the research gap and inform not only school policy and practice but also Ministry levels.

I hope your permission is granted as I am promising you of complete confidentiality of any information revealed. Also, I admit anonymity of the selected school and stakeholders' names, which is in line with the British University in Dubai (BUiD) ethical code of conduct. Please find attached: the questionnaire, interview protocol as well as a letter from BUiD.

Your approval for conducting my current research study at your selected school will be highly appreciated. Please below are both listed the requirements for conducting my study at your school and the planned interview protocol.

Requirements for the study:

I need to conduct interviews with: administrators, school principle, Special Education teacher and three inclusive classroom teachers catering for the needs of children with disabilities.

In addition, I need to observe: three classes while the participants' teachers are delivering lessons, chosen students during individualized one-on-one support services time and three classes during activity time.

I will need to distribute a questionnaire. Lastly, the responsibility is granted for the school to obtain teachers' consents.

Interview Protocol:

I will make sure that, when needed, my requests for appointments will be settled in a professional manner and participants will be confirmed earlier than the interview time via email or through having convenient phone calls. The study purpose, objectives and goals will be shared with all participants to explain the following key listed items:

1. Participants contribution to the study guarantees their anonymity (names will not be). The interviewees negative or positive responses will not be shared with anyone. They are also assured their freedom to withdraw at any time of their choice without any resulted consequences.

2. At the beginning of every interview, a permission for recording it will be demanded.

3. It is worth sharing that notes will be jot down during the interviews.

4. Data collected will be shared with selected candidates as an opportunity for validation, cross-checking and authentication.

5. Collected data will be confidentially kept until study publication. Not only secretly shared hard copies will be shredded but also soft copies of sensitive data will be deleted.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Zainab Al Agha

Mob 050-4244793

Email zainabagha05@gmail.com

If accepted, please sign below

Name:

Position:

Date

APPENDIX 1.10 ANECDOTAL NOTES

			Student Interaction	
23	Mutual respect between students	Y		
24	Students seem to get along	Y		
24	Students encouraged to collaborate and share	Y	students acted one by one but all to participate	
25	Peer tutoring or buddies are facilitated	Y	Ahmad isolated sitting alone.	
26	Variety of student grouping to aid social skills and relations	N	Students in pairs but he is alone	
			Teacher–student Interaction	
27	Teacher uses motivational techniques to encourage participation	Y	Teacher reexplained the task only.	
28	Teacher encourages students to express their opinions	N	No opportunity for opinions	
29	Teacher maintains encouraging eye contact	Y	Teacher listened for a while only.	
30	Teacher interested in student's ideas	Y	Teacher didn't block anyone.	
31	Teacher values students equally	Y		
32	Extra adult support available if needed	N	Just the teacher	
33	The extra adult is qualified and familiar with student	N		
			Learning Assessment	
34	Appropriate and differentiated learning outcomes are defined	N	Same objective for all	
35	Alternative assessment techniques available	N	Same instructions/exercise	
36	Extra time during assessment is facilitated	Y		
37	Students understand assessment instructions is ensured	N	Teacher didn't check if task performed	

* Lesson: Arabic Grammar: Feminine to Masculine sentences conversion.
* The teacher used her mobile to copy on the board the lesson exercise and other material.
* The Arabic teacher told the observer when she wanted to enter the classroom: the teacher gave him time to resolve the time because he didn't complete it, yet he didn't do the task

"Does the government have money to take care of inclusion?" Then she complained by stating that she's overwhelmed by the tuition fees of her children and by not being paid herself.

* During the lesson the objectives were not written on the board / No title
* Lesson was interrupted when another teacher came in to speak about an increase in schools fees for next year. The Arabic teacher said that (they want to increase fees from salaries teachers are not receiving) All students heard the conversation. ↳ sarcasm.
* All students with disabilities were sitting alone and isolated unlike the other ones in pairs.
* The teacher used only black marker.
* The students were copying from the board the instructions and exercise to solve.
* They had to convert sentence from masculine to feminine and vi'a versa
* Some students were chosen at random to give their answers of the task.
* students then had to copy correct answers on their copybooks. (no other resources)
* Bags with books were beside students but no books were used.
* No group work was involved. The teacher remained in the front next to the task or behind it.
* No technology / No printed material.
* Ahmad was pulling his hair and moving his legs most of the lesson.
* when he got confused after trying to solve the exercise, he laid his head on his desk. His eyes were closed. The teacher didn't wake him up.
- He didn't cause any problem during lesson. The class was disciplined and teacher seemed to be friendly with students. No differentiation / No deep thinking / Didactic lesson - traditional teaching.

JABER SABBAH SCHOOL

Grade: 4
Student: Ahmad
Date: 05/04/2022
(The observer was sitting in the back next to the window)
Time: 9:15 → 9:50
Duration: 45 minutes
Total number of students: 19 students + 1 absent.
Number of students with disabilities: 3 students (1 absent)
Types of disabilities: ADHD - stopped medication due to its cost now with the economic crisis.
Levels of disabilities: Moderate - (Independent)
Class Map: sitting in pairs - except students with disabilities who are alone.
What is on the walls: English Grammar rules prepared by the teacher.

Class room observation guide

	Indicators	Y/N	Evidence	Comments
	Inclusive Learning Environment			
1	Student can see & hear teacher clearly • Background noise/ Lighting	Y		
2	Student can see & hear resources used • Visual/ sound aides	Y		
3	Is there any Stigma/ hostility/ isolation attached to seating	Y	Wall door side front alone	
4	Adequate space to maneuver independently	Y	place to move around	
5	Suitable furniture (adjustable chair or desk)	No Need		
6	Resources position is accessible • Laptop/ Learning tools	Y	copy book / white board / No technology	
7	Resources to aid independent learning such: • Wall charts/ posters/ memory cards	N	Nothing used for him specifically	
8	Resources labeled clearly to aid independent use.	N	Same as his classmates	
9	Seating allows adult/peer support	Y	Space free around him	
10	Risk points in class are addressed (Safety) • Edges/ Steps/ Electrical points	N	Safe	
11	Adequate accommodations available and properly used depending on disability: 1. Magnifying glasses 2. Braille 3. Computer aided reading, writing, 4. Wheel chair/ special table 5. Special pen etc 6. Seating arrangement 7. Extra time during assessment	N	Student in the front in the corner alone	
	Teaching approach and strategy			
12	Teacher has prepared differentiated work sheets/ home works/ exams	N		
13	Teacher follows differentiated learning objectives for the student	N	No objectives on the board	
14	Teacher follows differentiated / alternative learning style for the student	N	Treated as any student.	
15	Teacher provides sufficient and adequate instructions for student to work independently	Y	scaffolds reading / learning.	
16	Teacher uses effective prompts depending on disability and age group	Y	Teacher called several times but gave up	
17	Teacher accommodates varying attention spans	Y	Teacher called his name to check his focus but gave up.	
18	Teacher facilitates participation in discussion	N	when he slept	
19	Teacher allows sufficient practice	N	one problem only / Not enough	
20	Teacher checks for understanding instructions	Y	He didn't get instructions	
21	Teacher follows positive methods to deal with behavioral problems	N		
22	Teacher gives motivating, sincere and positive feedback	Y	She praised him but then ignored him. Teacher seemed tired.	

Eventhough he slept, she didn't ask him to wake up and gave up on him.

Teacher asked to solve an exercise but no room for discussion.

Appendix 5 - Observation Guides

OMAR HAMAD SCHOOL

Grade: 3
Date: 30/3/2022
Time: 11:00 → 11:30
Duration: 30 minutes
Total number of students: 24 students

Student: Zeinab.
(The observer was sitting in the back next to the window)

Number of students with disabilities: 3 students
Types of disabilities: Not revealed by the school - Paralysis - Genetic - Sister disorder with by birth the same disability
Levels of disabilities: Moderate (Wheelchair - Eyeglasses - Independent)
Class Map: Seating is is pairs Independent
What is on the walls: Love letters to the teachers / Arabic grammar rules of students' work.

Class room observation guide

|	Indicators	Y/N	Evidence	Comments
	Inclusive Learning Environment			
1	Student can see & hear teacher clearly • Background noise/ Lighting	Y		
2	Student can see & hear resources used • Visual/ sound aides	Y		
3	Is there any Stigma/ hostility/ isolation attached to seating	N	sitting in the front next to her sister	
4	Adequate space to maneuver independently	Y		
5	Suitable furniture (adjustable chair or desk)	No need (provided by parents)		
6	Resources position is accessible • Laptop/ Learning tools	Y	Books/copybooks/ white board/No technology	
7	Resources to aid independent learning such: • Wall charts/ posters/ memory cards	N		
8	Resources labeled clearly to aid independent use.	N		
9	Seating allows adult/peer support	Y		
10	Risk points in class are addressed (Safety) • Edges/ Steps/ Electrical points	N	Broken chairs around Broken desks around	
11	Adequate accommodations available and properly used depending on disability: 1. Magnifying glasses 2. Braille 3. Computer aided reading, writing, 4. Wheel chair/ special table 5. Special pen etc 6. Seating arrangement 7. Extra time during assessment	Y	Wheelchair provided by parents / sitting in pair next to her sister in the front / No need for more accommodation	school has elevator.
	Teaching approach and strategy			
12	Teacher has prepared differentiated work sheets/ home works/ exams	N		
13	Teacher follows differentiated learning objectives for the student	N	-	
14	Teacher follows differentiated / alternative learning style for the student	N		
15	Teacher provides sufficient and adequate instructions for student to work independently	Y	Teacher scaffolds learning / teaching	
16	Teacher uses effective prompts depending on disability and age group	Y	She calls name of student one by one	
17	Teacher accommodates varying attention spans	No need		
18	Teacher facilitates participation in discussion	Y	Disciplined participation	
19	Teacher allows sufficient practice	N		
20	Teacher checks for understanding instructions	Y	students' work is checked by teacher / students well disciplined	
21	Teacher follows positive methods to deal with behavioral problems	No Need		
22	Teacher gives motivating, sincere and positive feedback	Y	student is shy and doesn't participate.	

		Student Interaction		
23		Mutual respect between students	Y	
24		Students seem to get along	N	Isolated next to her sister.
24		Students encouraged to collaborate and share	N	
25		Peer tutoring or buddies are facilitated	Y	Seating next to sister
26		Variety of student grouping to aid social skills and relations	N	
		Teacher–student Interaction		
27		Teacher uses motivational techniques to encourage participation	N	No interaction/No attention paid to her
28		Teacher encourages students to express their opinions	N	No participation questions
29		Teacher maintains encouraging eye contact	N	Confusion between her and sister
30		Teacher interested in student's ideas	N	Muted student
31		Teacher values students equally	N	Her sister is only taken care of.
32		Extra adult support available if needed	Y	Just the teacher
33		The extra adult is qualified and familiar with student	Y	Just she
		Learning Assessment		
34		Appropriate and differentiated learning outcomes are defined	N	
35		Alternative assessment techniques available	N	
36		Extra time during assessment is facilitated	N	
37		Students understand assessment instructions is ensured	N	

Lesson: English/ part 1 : Extinct Animals
Science

English/ Part 2: Adjectives as a Part of Speech.
Grammar

* No objectives written on the walls - No use of books during lesson.
* Zeinab is with her sister in the same class though she's one year older.
She has the same disability as her sister but is weaker than her sister.
* Students are copying from the board. They are taking their time.
* Teacher is checking if the students are copying from the board
* Class is agitated → Teacher apologized to the observer and gave excuses for students' behavior: " The class is directly after the recess ".
* During an English lesson, students speak in Arabic
* The teacher is weak in English. The observer copied from the board:

[Ex: Extinct animals. The animals that are no Longer exist.
  ex: ~~dinasous~~ dinasoucs   (poor sentence structure)]

   6 Zeinab and her sister copied these sentences as they are.
* The teacher told the observer that she's not allowed to know the cases of the students.
* She pointed out a case in class who requires intensive help or intervention but she's not yet diagnosed though she's ~~very~~ really weak.
* Observer checked her work (on another check list).
* This is Zeinab's first year in a public school.
* ~~No assessment during lesson~~ just copy from board and that's it.
* The lesson was traditional - Didactic - No deep thinking questions. No differentiation

APPENDIX 1.11 TRIANGULATION DESIGN CRESSWELL & PLANO (2007)
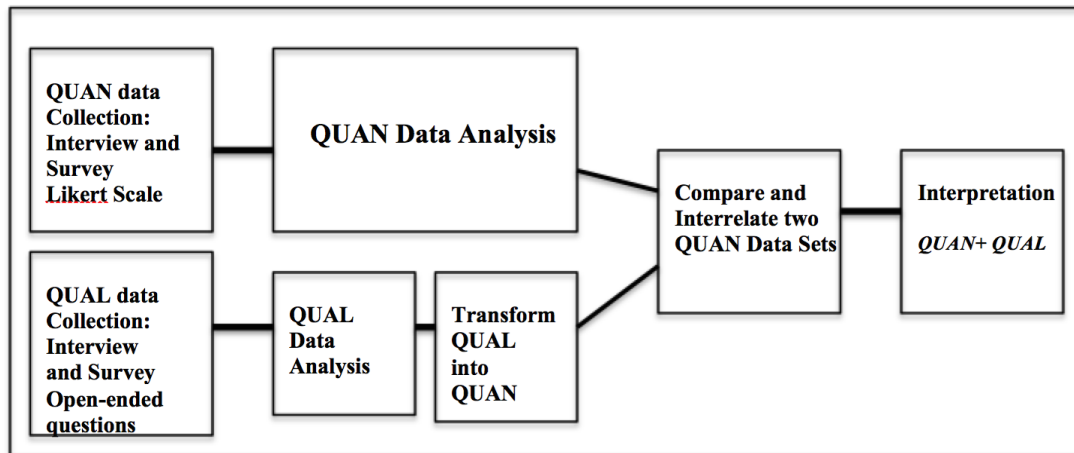
APPENDIX 1.12 OBSERVATION GUIDES

Role of observer:

Grade:

Date:

Time:

Duration:

Total number of students:

Number of students with disabilities:

Types of disabilities:

Levels of disabilities:

Class Map:

What is on the walls:

Class room observation guide

	Indicators	Y/N	Evidence	Comments
Inclusive Learning Environment				
1	Student can see & hear teacher clearly • Background noise/ Lighting			
2	Student can see & hear resources used • Visual/ sound aides			
3	Is there any Stigma/ hostility/ isolation attached to seating			
4	Adequate space to maneuver independently			
5	Suitable furniture (adjustable chair or desk)			
6	Resources position is accessible			

	• Laptop/ Learning tools			
7	Resources to aid independent learning such: • Wall charts/ posters/ memory cards			
8	Resources labeled clearly to aid independent use.			
9	Seating allows adult/peer support			
10	Risk points in class are addressed (Safety) • Edges/ Steps/ Electrical points			
11	Adequate accommodations available and properly used depending on disability: 1. Magnifying glasses 2. Braille 3. Computer aided reading, writing, 4. Wheel chair/ special table 5. Special pen etc 6. Seating arrangement 7. Extra time during assessment			
<td colspan="5" style="background:yellow">Teaching approach and strategy</td>
12	Teacher has prepared differentiated work sheets/ home works/ exams			
13	Teacher follows differentiated learning objectives for the student			
14	Teacher follows differentiated / alternative learning style for the student			
15	Teacher provides sufficient and adequate instructions for student to work independently			

16	Teacher uses effective prompts depending on disability and age group			
17	Teacher accommodates varying attention spans			
18	Teacher facilitates participation in discussion			
19	Teacher allows sufficient practice			
20	Teacher checks for understanding instructions			
21	Teacher follows positive methods to deal with behavioral problems			
22	Teacher gives motivating, sincere and positive feedback			
Student Interaction				
23	Mutual respect between students			
24	Students seem to get along			
24	Students encouraged to collaborate and share			
25	Peer tutoring or buddies are facilitated			
26	Variety of student grouping to aid social skills and relations			
Teacher–student Interaction				
27	Teacher uses motivational techniques to encourage participation			
28	Teacher encourages students to express their opinions			
29	Teacher maintains encouraging eye contact			
30	Teacher interested in student's ideas			
31	Teacher values students equally			
32	Extra adult support available if needed			
33	The extra adult is qualified and familiar with student			
Learning Assessment				

34	Appropriate and differentiated learning outcomes are defined			
35	Alternative assessment techniques available			
36	Extra time during assessment is facilitated			
37	Students understand assessment instructions is ensured			

APPENDIX 1.13 ETHICS FORM

Research ethics form self-assessment

Application for approval of research activity involving human subjects, personal data, or confidential material

This application form is to be used by researchers seeking approval from the Research Ethics Committee.

Research that involves human subjects, personal data, or confidential material, and is associated with The British University in Dubai, cannot begin until ethical approval has been obtained.

Section I is a general research identification table.

Section II is for the details of the ethical matters your research might involve and the necessary steps you are planning to take to address them.

Section III is an ethics checklist that will help you identify your research risk level. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the high risk statements, then your research is High Risk. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the medium risk statements, and 'No' to all high risk statements, then your research is Medium Risk. If you answer 'No' to all high risk and medium risk statements, then your research is Low Risk.

If you have documents related to the ethical considerations of the research such as, for example, a consent letter, evidence of external approval, questionnaire samples or interview questions, you can enclose them with this form before submission.

I. Research identification

Name	Zeinab Al Agha
Faculty/Programme	Education/EdD-Inclusive and Special Education
Contact number	050-4244793
Email	zainabagha05@gmail.com
Research type	□ Research project * Doctoral/Masters research □ Module assignment
Research title	Investigating Development, Implementation and Perceptions of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' at three government Primary Schools in Beirut, Lebanon
Date	16-9-2021
Submitted to (name)	* Faculty nominated member (research projects): * Director of Studies (doctoral research): □ Dissertation supervisor (Masters research): □ Module coordinator (module assignment):

II. Research ethics details

Background and rationale for study (this should be sufficient to justify the proposed research). Aims and objectives of the research (or the research question/s) and potential benefits of proposed research: 500 words max)
Purpose The main purpose of this research study is to investigate the development, implementation and stakeholders' perceptions of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon. **Research Questions** What are the aspects of the development of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) for public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon? How the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' (TISDP) is implemented at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon? What are stakeholders' perceptions of the development and implementation of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program (TISDP) at public primary schools in Beirut, Lebanon
Main ethical consideration(s) of the research (the ethical matters your research may involve)
An ethical approach guided by BUiD's ethical code of conduct will be adopted. A thorough detailed plan will submitted to the Head of department (HOD) stating: (a) all the project objectives, (b) the confidentiality issues, (c) the interview procedures and (d) requests for needed research requirements (interviews, observations, documents).
Methods of data collection (outline in detail how data will be collected and attach a copy of any questionnaires, interview schedules or observation guidelines to be used: 400 words max)

Multiple methods such as: Interviews, observations and document analysis are to be used to avoid any biases.

Recruitment of participants
(outline the number and type of participants involved; give details of how potential participants will be identified and invited to take part in the study; and how informed consent will be obtained: 300 words max)

The HOD will given the consent paper to sign and to circulate it to other teachers who will be involved in the study to sign it too. Participants will be informed of the voluntary nature of their participation, the fact that they could refuse or withdraw at any time without any repercussions.

The consent needs to be signed by participants and handed in the next day. All verbal and written consent letters assures participants that confidentiality and ethical procedures will be adhered to. The goal of this research study is not only to obtain the needed information but also to secure the privacy of the participants. So, all participants' identities will be kept confidential.

Profile of the participants in the sample

RQ 1	School 1	School 2	School 3	Total
Level 1	5 Academic advisor , General coordinator for special education unit at MEHE, Focal Point: HOD of Special educators , Medical Psychiatrist , Technical coordinator.	5 Academic advisor , General coordinator for special education unit at MEHE, Focal Point: HOD of Special educators , Medical Psychiatrist , Technical coordinator.	5 Academic advisor , General coordinator for special education unit at MEHE, Focal Point: HOD of Special educators , Medical Psychiatrist , Technical coordinator.	15
Level 2	Principal=1 Teachers= 7 Inclusive= 4	Principal=1 Teachers= 7 Inclusive= 4	Principal=1 Teachers= 7 Inclusive= 4	Principals=3 Subject Teachers= 21 Inclusive= 12
Level 3	Students= 10 SEND=5 Typically developed=5 Parents= 10	Students= 10 SEND=5 Typically developed=5 Parents= 10	Students= 10 SEND=5 Typically developed=5 Parents= 10	Students= 30 SEND=15 Typically developed=15 Parents=30

Please attach a copy of your information sheet(s), draft materials such as interview questions etc. and consent form as well as indication of planned time of issue/use. If you are not using a consent form, please explain why.

 * Attached

Potential adverse effects on participants and steps to deal with them

(outline if you anticipate any potential harm or negative consequences including psychological stress, anxiety or upset which may be induced by the study, and the steps to be taken to address them)

This study will not cause any potential harm to participants. They are reassured that participation would not incur any hurt, especially to their job security or position at school. The researcher believes action have consequences and avoiding any problem is better than addressing it as it occurs.

Steps to be taken to ensure confidentiality of data
(outline steps to ensure confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of data during collection, storage and publication. Specifically identify any confidential or personal information, and/or any other party's protected intellectual property which you need to use and safeguard)

Anonymity is also ensured where pseudo names of the school and participants are to be used.

- Member checking is the best way to establish credibility within the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher will allow participants to attain member checking, when needed. This strategy will be used as a tool to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations. Participants will be advised to read the transcripts and the summary of the preliminary findings, wherever possible.

Steps to be taken to ensure financial and commercial propriety
(specifically identify any external funding or significant third-party financial involvement with the research)

No external financial and commercial propriety.

Other plans to address a particular ethical matter not mentioned above

The law 220 was issued, in 2000, and has not been updated up until this moment. Thus, there is no up-to-date set law in place that governs how students with additional needs are specifically supported or the types of services they need to receive in particular, it is important to highlight the provision services offered by the three schools in question.

III. Research ethics checklist

If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the high risk statements, then your research is High Risk. If you answer 'Yes' to any one of the medium risk statements, and 'No' to all high risk statements, then your research is Medium Risk. If you answer 'No' to all high risk and medium risk statements, then your research is Low Risk.

High Risk		
Will consent be coerced out of participants by those who would likely benefit from the research?	□Yes	*No
Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time?	□Yes	*No
Will the study involve some form of invasion of privacy?	□Yes	*No
Is discomfort or harmful impact to participants likely to result from the study?	□Yes	*No
Is there a possibility that the safety of the researcher may be in question?	□Yes	*No
Will the research require the researcher to be deceptive or dishonest with the participants?	□Yes	*No
Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	□Yes	*No
Will the research have negative intrusive physical or psychological effects on the participants?	□Yes	*No
Will the names of the participants or the institution appear in the research?	□Yes	*No
Does the research involve the condition of destroying recorded data after it is used?	□Yes	*No
Medium Risk		
Will the research involve governmental institutions or participants such as, for example, the military or the judiciary?	□Yes	*No
Will the study involve discussion of sensitive or potentially sensitive topics and issues?	□Yes	*No
Does the research involve potentially vulnerable participants (for example children, prisoners, or people with disabilities)? Personally, I am assuring the school of a complete confidentiality of any information conveyed about the observed online sessions of how support services are given by the teacher to cater for the needs of the 'gifted and talented' students (chosen by the head of department). Hence, I am confidently affirming that anonymity of school and	*Yes	□No

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participants' names will be adopted, which is in line with the British University in Dubai (BUiD) ethical code of conduct. Also, these category of learners will be professionally treated in line with the stated above ethics. Data collected during the study about the 'gifted and talented' will be safely kept until the end of the research. Subsequently, all electronic files and the online sessions recordings will be deleted. The Study Requirements: -Observations of classes while the selected participant teacher is delivering the teaching and learning classroom session. -Observation of selected students during the individual support time. -Interview with the teacher -Interview with Special Education teacher -Interview with head of department (HoD)	
Does the research involve participants that are unable to give consent?	□Yes *No
Will the research involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use?	□Yes *No
Will research involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given?	□Yes *No

Risk level identified	* Low	□ Medium	□ High

The researcher undertakes not to deviate from the original consent granted by the University's Research Ethics Committee. The researcher bears full and sole responsibility for any deviation from this consent and all consequences arising from such deviation. The researcher waives all right of appeal in the event of any penalties applied by the University arising from such deviation.

Declaration by the Researcher:

Having read the University's Research Policy I declare that the information contained herein is to the best of my knowledge and belief accurate.
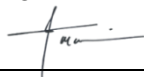
I am satisfied that I have attempted to identify all risks that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations as researcher and the rights of participants. I am satisfied that all researchers (including myself) working on the project have the appropriate qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached document and that I, as the lead researcher, take full responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research in accordance

with subject-specific and University Ethical Guidelines (Policies and Procedures Manual), as well as any other condition laid down by the Research Ethics Committee. I am fully aware of the timelines and content for participants' information and consent.

Name: Zeinab Al Agha Kassbah

Signature: Zeinab Agha   Date: 16-9-2021

Staff
Chair of Ethics Committee Name: Dr. Khalid Al Marri

✓ Approved ☐Not approved	
Signature:	Date: 7/12/2021

Students
Dean of Faculty Name: Professor Eman Gaad

✓ Approved ☐Not approved	
Signature:	Date: 7/12/2021

Authorisation for conducting research (only if approval is obtained):

The Committee has confirmed that this project fits within the University's Policies for Research and I authorise the low risk research proposal on behalf of BUiD's Research Ethics Committee.

Print name: _____ Dr. Khalid Al Marri _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____7/12/2021_____
(Chair of the Research Ethics Committee)

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MEDIUM RISK RESEARCH

Staff and Students
Endorsement by the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee member after electronic referral to all Research Ethics Committee members Name:

□ Approved □ Not approved	
Signature:	Date:

Authorisation for conducting research (only if approval is obtained):

The Committee has confirmed that this project fits within the University's Policies for Research and I authorise the medium risk proposal on behalf of BUiD's Research Ethics Committee.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Chair of the Research Ethics Committee)

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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
HIGH RISK RESEARCH

</div>

Staff and Students
Endorsement by the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee member after meeting of Research Ethics Committee members Name:
□ Approved □ Not approved

Signature:	Date:

Authorisation for conducting research (only if approval is obtained):

The Committee has confirmed that this project fits within the University's Policies for Research and I authorise the high risk proposal on behalf of BUiD's Research Ethics Committee.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Chair of the Research Ethics Committee)

www.buid.ac.ae

8 December 2021

To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that Mr. Zainab Yehya Aghawith Student ID number 20192706 is a registered student on the Doctor of Education programme at The British University in Dubai since September 2019.

Mr. Zainab has successfully completed the taught stage of the programme. She is currently working on her research titled "Investigating Development, Implementation and Perceptions of the 'Towards Inclusive Schools Development Program' at three government Primary Schools in Beirut, Lebanon". She is required to conduct the interviews, gather data through surveys and use school's information.

Your permission for her to conduct her research in your organisation is hereby requested. Any support provided to her in this regard will be highly appreciated.

This letter is issued at Mr. Zainab's request

Yours sincerely,

Dr.   Amer   Alaya
Head of Student Administration

APPENDIX 1.14 INTERVIEW GUIDES
Interview with principal of school A

I've been in the education field for 44 years.
I was an educational guide who is convinced of inclusion and is with the elimination of differences due to difficulties, physical disabilities, colour, nationalities, or sectarianism. What if I were a boy who could accomplish something in the future even if he has a disability. History has proven a lot. I mean, Bach and Einstein had attention deficit disorder. The situation in Lebanon does not allow us to reach a situation that gives radical solutions. Two of my specialized team left and I can't guarantee to replace them how am I supposed to work with the children? The strike helped us regardless its disadvantages, the children have no one to embrace them at school. The teachers do not have time. First of all, we have a large number of students, and secondly, they need special care.
This year we have 360 students, last year they were 484. Under present conditions, we closed the school a lot. The parents want their children to be safe, so a lot of them left. The special cases I have are over 36. We weren't able to do precise assessments to determine all cases because we taught only for few days before the diagnosis expert left. None of the teachers can adapt the exams' questions because the existing class teachers cannot make up for the shortage on their own. This year, I don't have a diagnostic expert who discovers the case and decides whether a speech therapy, sensorimotor therapy or psychological support is needed and transfers them to the specialized therapists and the rest of them come only twice a week. They gave us a course; I was an educational guide in the ministry and had a lot of courses. I worked with the ministry for many years about harassment and all the problems that the student encounters.
What did you learn?
I believe in this program. We don't want to lie about our situation, we are still working and the results are not yet tangible.
First of all, we have an environmental logistical shortage. If a student comes in a wheelchair, I cannot make him move from one place to another from the first floor to the second. The situation of the revolution and the coronavirus disease limited work and the economic situation made teachers to look for jobs in private schools or travel abroad. The speech therapist went to Dubai and the assessment expert went to work in a private school. Here, they rarely get paid and they do after a year. The situation is very difficult.
The reality we are living shows us that we are required to improve ourselves, and that we are very late. We still need a lot of time to reach the level of a strong start. We have a weak start and I hope we work a lot because when I see a child with a disability, I do not like to use the word disability, I prefer to use a condition or problem. A child with a missing leg, a hearing impairment or a sight problem can innovate in societies, why can't our children do the same? To me, I challenge everyone, the hour of sports is more important than the hour of mathematics and of physics, because the child's success with educational materials is not a condition for his success in life. My educational goal is to see for the long run, not just the immediate goal. The immediate goal must be achieved and worked on, and the most important is the long term. I used to train my students on it, where do I stand, where do I want to reach, and what are the difficulties, challenges and obstacles that I want to overcome.

I don't let the child learn it by teaching but by activities. That's why the physical education period is very important to me, and there are people who laugh at my keen interest in it, because the first thing in sport is to teach the child how to score a goal. As you know, in the World Cup all the people are watching how the goal is scored. The whole world is busy watching this small ball because scoring is important, so is how can to reach the goal, what steps to take to achieve the goal, the value of working with a team, and what loss and winning mean. You don't teach these from books. Once the student's personality is nurtured, the book becomes nothing. The computer teaches you everything, you can search for any topic and get what you want.

To build the personality of the leader, we must give them skills and strengthen them in these skills, and the most important thing is self-confidence and teach the child to trust himself. As a society, we destroy our children. We unconsciously destroy them. "What do you do with sports? Why?" Caracalla raised the name of Lebanon, Fayrouz sang. Why not? If someone has abilities, we have to develop them and give him confidence. I meet the theater professor more than the mathematics professor because a boy's success in playing a role means that he succeeds in life and can take positions and decisions and adapt to circumstances and change and cry and laugh. In education, it's not only about success in the class. When I learn a specific language, an additional skill has been developed to add to the CV. when applying for a job. If I volunteer or enter Scouts or training courses in leadership, the development of all of this for the child helps the child to reach competence and skills of the century. Studying becomes easy for him and the most important thing is Self-confidence if he doesn't have any. We as a society have mistaken. For example, as a mother, I may be very busy. I will tell you about an incident. My son came to me asking about my opinion and I told him yes, it is very beautiful without even looking at it, he replied sadly and said, "You did not look at it, how could you say it is beautiful." Even in the way we act, how we were raised in a way that I am busy now and I do not have time to spend with you. It is very important to look into the eyes of the child, and this is evidence of my appreciation for him and my respect as well, that is, I look at you and I listen well to you, and not everything I do is right; I might not be right in it even though I am an adult or because I am older than you. Sometimes, we learn from mistakes and we learn from children.

For instance, I don't know in technology or how to use phones. My kids, on the other side, are experts. I learn from my kids how to use technology. It's not something to be shy about. You don't need to act with arrogance. Being snobbish when a kid tries to teach you something will lower the kid's self-esteem. Don't criticize the kid for sitting all day using the laptop. It is considered now as a necessity. Instead, try guiding the child into using the technology in something beneficial. You start by asking your child about what he is browsing online then ask him to search for a recipe that you want. I believe that a fundamental value is time. To me, losing money is less stressful to me than losing time. Losing one minute of my time bothers me. It's because I could have been planning on doing something at a certain period of time and wouldn't get another chance of achieving it. I give special attention to that. Even the staff eventually got convinced of this idea. I have certain fundaments that I follow, time and organization. I always want things to be organized. I worked on that in myself because of my life's circumstances. These situations taught me to be organized in my life but not to stress about things.

However, if I wasn't well-organized, I wouldn't be able to continue. For example, when I usually return home from work, lunch would be ready since the day before.

During vacations, I might not be able to think of what to cook. Why? During a vacation, I might plan on doing something then end up being distracted by something else like the phone and procrastinate. However, when you plan things through, you usually reach what you want. I care about the kids joining the scouts. I really support the scouts because it teaches the kids how to organize their lives. I am used to offering help now. After Beirut's seaport explosion, I hurried to offer my help with the scouts. My students and I help cleaning Hamra Street multiple times. When I picked up the trash, my students and the teachers were really moved and started copying me. After each meeting, I return the chair that I was sitting on. At first, the meeting room is left in a total mess, but now, the teachers copy what I do and each teacher tidies up the place he was seated in. We benefit from our time by reorganizing the place.

Working on the development of certain skills and educating the kids at certain points more beneficial that learning certain things. You teach them manners. If you go to a professional doctor who is ill-mannered, you will despise him and never go back there. No matter what happens to you, you will most likely never go back to him. If I pass by the cleaners, I refuse to call them servants. This is their job. I focus on educating. Ethics and cultural citizenship weren't present here and a lot worked on that at the school. We are responsible of what happens in Lebanon. I am not saying that the government isn't doing anything. What I am saying that as citizens, we stop at the traffic lights. That's how we become role models to our children and to others. If I want to cook something, there is no need to watch cook shows like Chef Antwan. Our ancestors used to mix things up on their own like eggs and garlic, and they would turn out great.

There are many different ways for learning other than through books: from mistakes, experience, knowledge, development of creativity, and the dare to express yourself.

After 44 years in the educational field, I still work with enthusiasm even though I facing some health issues.

I was raised this way, and I love it. My father was a school principal, and he was so conscientious. I was his only daughter. During his last days, he got really sick. When I used to visit him in the intensive care unit, he used to ask me how come I am there with him and not at my work.

He didn't allow me to stay next to him, even though he loved me dearly and we were so close. He would tell me," I don't want you to stay next to me and leave your work." He was 90 years old back then. Sometimes, I lose my temper and think of leaving work. But it doesn't work. I would return to my work after I collect myself. Early childhood care and education is vital. The effort you give to improve yourself is something of big importance and basic for educating as well.

How did the economy affect you?

We are working really hard honestly, and we would be able to achieve 100% success. When we first started the online classes, we didn't really know our way around it. The first challenge that I faced is the refusal of the teachers to give the students their mobile phone number to stay in touch on WhatsApp.

We taught the kids how to use it. Even if the students weren't attending at school, but at least they are still learning through what some call "virtual reality". I had high expectations for the program, but we couldn't achieve everything we planned from the inclusive classrooms as we hoped for because of the economic crisis.

Being convinced with integrated teaching
I was distraught upon losing the special educator in our school. These rooms are for simple and slow cases. I was also disappointed by the loss of our rooms for inclusive teaching (dyslexia, ADHD, autism). The first year went by decently, and we encouraged her. She used to work correctly up until the beginning of the economic crisis and the corona pandemic together in the following year ,then the schools were closed the third year. Technology: We use them and benefit from them depending on the capabilities.

The economic and logistical situations in Lebanon hinders the progress and development of the project. We faced a problem in transportation. Some students left school because their parents can't afford to pay for transportation. We are talking about different challenges in a collapsing country. Because of that, some parents are registering their kids in schools close to their homes even though the school isn't a special one. We are facing a lot of complications, but we need to move on.

Whether in inclusive learning or not, educating students is either effective or ineffective. First, the teachers were convinced with the idea of inclusion learning which was an obstacle. Before being an educational guide, I was a career guide. I have a wide background in this. In our society, if a kid didn't succeed at a certain age during middle school, some people will immediately call him a failure. But he is not. This kid could become a professional mobile telephone technician, a professional artist or an actor. Not every vocational training and education focused on synthesis skills. Not all professions need a college degree. For example, there is a technician who works afternoon. He couldn't continue at school, so he registered in an institution and graduated from there. He loves computers. When I first saw him, I said, "You will have a bright future." And I really saw passion in him wanting to work and to improve himself. I would ask him to help me out with something, but he would give me more than what I've asked for even though I didn't ask him to. Even though he only has a year of experience, he was sent to the ministry audit unit. I was so happy when they chose him among multiple technicians that came from a thousand schools. He isn't someone to take for granted, and he is truly ambitious. And he is young, around 25 or 26 years old. He has a bright future; I can see it. You can sense when a person is only working based on his capabilities to survive till the end of the month, or when the person is working to achieve success in his life. Many of us are people who demotivate our kids without knowing it. In Germany, no one can continue with technical education without a conciliator. Many people become more successful in their lives than people who were number one academically.

What is the number of students who improved? How did they start? And where are they now?

Because of previously mentioned reasons, a lot has been missed for the typically developed students at school. SWD were affected way more than typically developed students. Some studies proved that many A students don't prevail at work as C students. Some C students actually hire A students to work for them.
Biggest daily challenge?

As long as you are convinced with what you are doing, things will go easily. Or else, you will usually find it hard. For example, if your husband wants to take you to a place that you aren't convinced with like Farayya or really fancy hotel, you won't be happy. These are convictions.

The problem was convincing the teachers. You first try to prepare them mentally. The teachers first refused the idea because they thought they are the ones who will be handling the inclusion from A to Z. They got convinced when they learned that they are going to have a team who will help them. They simply can't achieve the objectives alone, so they need support. When we notice something in the kid, we immediately call after his or her parents. A really important factor is that the parents are really cooperative. Years ago, many parents didn't accept the idea that their kid has a special case, but as parents became more educated over the years, more people came to accept that. When I used to receive complaints that a teacher isn't cooperative, I would to summon this teacher and change their mindset into something I trust. I don't plan on expelling anyone, for they all have a role in this school.

During a career counselling, I told my students that if a professional surgeon was doing an operation and the electricity went off, the operation would fail in case a technician didn't rush to fix the electricity. That would mean that the doctor failed. This shows that many careers complete each other. We can merge career counselling with educational counselling and teaching with administration. My personality was affected by my father. When I am with my students, you simply wouldn't differentiate whether I was the principal, a student or a teacher. I treat them just like I would want to be treated. Same goes with the teachers. I didn't cause any differentiation or a gap between us. We are all like a puzzle; we can't work properly without the other. Even if I am well-experienced, if I don't have a team who would help, I can't achieve everything alone. Teamwork is important. That's why, I give special attention for the sports session as it is a chance for the kids to let out energy especially for the ones who don't have a space for that at home.

Monitoring the staff

We always have gathering with the teachers and the parents. We couldn't do our observations for two years. I am a person who speaks frankly. I informed the coordinator to keep my office's door open despite the cold weather and corona. Whoever wants to meet up with me is welcome to after informing me first and making sure that I am not busy. It calms down the parents when they enter my office.

When parents tell me that they have a problem, I tell them that I need to hear first to both parties to avoid any kind of oppression and to solve this in a civilized manner. No one has a problem with that. Anyways, our problems aren't really complicated. They are simple problems. One example is marriage issues. There are specific ways to solve specific problems. There are tiny problems in our lives like differences in opinions. Just like how someone would fight over closing the door or giving their opinions about the taste of a certain food whether it tastes good or not. There are bigger problems like lying, greediness, or gambling. There are levels of the intensity of a problem. We don't have such problems at our school.

I don't procrastinate. I work on solving a problem the minute I encounter it. For example, when a boy complains that he was hit, I work on solving the problem without any complications.

On the educational level, we haven't achieved much because of certain events that are completely out of our control. There wasn't any continuity at work. Schools got closed since the beginning of the December. This kind of situation is tough. Will I delude myself and others into believing that we are best? No. We aren't optimal. We have been staying at home for over a month. How can I keep the kids immersed in the school's atmosphere?

Interview with principal in school B

Meeting with Principal B
19 January 2022 at 9:30 am
Part One

I became the school's principal in 2016.I was a supervisor there in 2003 back when it first opened. I know the school's strengths and weaknesses as well as its basic needs.

After becoming school principal, I worked on the school's point of weaknesses like adding a library to encourage reading. I also worked on adding a laboratory to the school where students can learn through application instead of reading books only.

The Ministry of Education wanted to offer us scholarships after undergoing certain training courses for they believed that as a school principal you need to attend certain training courses, and you need to use the scholarship for improving the school. When I took the scholarship, I wondered how I would improve things at school. I worked on all of the school's needs. I am quite aware that most parents in this public school are either illiterate or they couldn't enrol their kids in school because of either economic or social issues. These issues would eventually lead to learning difficulties.

We started by resolving the learning difficulties through opening special divisions for students with learning difficulties. We arranged clinic-like offices for the team. I had plans of hiring a dedicated team depending on the school's financial capabilities. That's when I was informed that I was elected with other 30 schools across Lebanon as a candidate for the ministry's educational program that started in 2016 or 2017. During one of the ministry's meetings, we were told about the ministry's wish of applying the program in 30 different schools which were selected according to the principals' efficiency and competence. They made things much easier instead of taking time to look for a dedicated team myself and spending school money. It's really a huge step that the ministry took after doing a lot myself.

We kept attending multiple meetings held by the ministry, but we had already prepared the rooms up ahead. What was left was the crew which I was provided with from the ministry. A year later, the ministry sent us a special educator who cooperated with us for a whole year before sending the dedicated team who undergone a lot of training. Eventually, 30 schools had a dedicated team working for them. The ministry first sent psychologists then sent speech therapists. I postponed the support services one year because I was busy. As school principals, the ministry continued arranging us training courses. That's when we started taking in new students. For 3 years, I only took in students with learning difficulties. One day, the ministry suggested that I take in few students with disabilities, and of course I agreed. The school's doors and ramps are suitable for students on wheelchairs which make it easier for them to manoeuvre around the school. We started with three students with disabilities last year, and their parents were so pleased. It is because the school is well-equipped for that, and we all work together harmoniously including the teachers who are always cooperative and ready to help. Because at the end, we are all working for the sake of the students.

We were able to prove our success and capabilities to the public. When the ministry held a celebration this year, it chose us together with another school as a model of success out of the 30 schools that underwent the same educational program. Actually, all of the schools have thrived, but the ministry chose our school, Our school, for the most hard working and most successful school out of the 30 schools. Sara, who is the actual founder of this program, attended the celebration together with Adam. Of course, we also invited the general director and the minister because as I have mentioned earlier, the inclusion of special needs students into schools was a priority to all members of the ministry. All of the attendants left the celebration pleased with our achievements. Hopefully, we achieve more and more in the future.

And by the way, I registered two more students with disabilities this year which makes it 5 students with disabilities enrolled in our school. I am taking in students with either learning difficulties or physical disabilities. Many parents are pleased with what we are providing their kids that they are removing their kids from private schools and registering their kids in our schools. It doesn't seem that they plan of removing their kids from our school.

Impact of political, economic and social conditions:

We did our best to work against these conditions last year, but we did end up teaching online depending on the capabilities of the special needs students' parents. Some parents who moved their kids from private schools to our school kept them with us because of the school's good reputation. However, there are other schools like X and Y, whose principal is Z, where parents would register their kids in incase our school was too far from where they live. Both schools are also well-known for their good reputation.

What are some of your achievements so far?

Having a good school inclusive culture encourages better performance. So as long as I secured all of the school's needs including a dedicated team with their own offices and everything they need, they can come to school and give their best. Of course, they would give their best as they don't have anything missing at all including specialized resources.

Keep in mind that the school kept closing because of strikes and vacations since the beginning of the year. The staff isn't rushing things. The crew can't rush things if they want to go with the educational plan. These things need time and patience. There are approximately 90 students with learning or physical difficulties. If they do rush things, it means that we would end up with a chaos which is of course unacceptable. The students are divided according to the type of difficulties that they have-whether learning or physical- between the crew depending on each member's specialization. For example, a student with both physical and speech difficulties is handle (d) by two dedicated team members to study his or her cases.

What does the dedicated team do when we register a new student? The student's school registration form gets photocopied into multiple copies and kept in a file in their offices as a reference. Each dedicated team member would study each student's difficulties without referring back to the file present in the school's archive. This way, each member would have his or her copy of the special needs students' files and I would have mine with me. The team would then study each student's case before attending the classes multiple times. After that, they would look forward to working with each student along with the coordination of each teacher because it's the teachers who spend time with students in class daily. Now, we aren't

allowing any online classes because the Ministry didn't ask for online classes. The schools are on a strike now and we haven't done anything yet. Things aren't like last year; things are harder this year. The electricity keeps going off a lot this year unlike last year. Now, we barely get any electricity.

Many families are living below poverty line which is a sad reality. These parents can't even afford generator subscription. Can our contracted teachers go online? Of course not!! Thus, it shows that we are all living a harsh reality that we can't control.

Things would've been easier for us to make our observations and analysis in case we were all attending. But now, the school is still closed because of the strike. The plan was to open after a week, but we postponed that for another week. We aren't sure when we would reopen the school at the moment.

Just like last year, we need to give the students everything they missed during the school closures. We are currently communicating through groups, and in case the parents needed any help, our team would give them a hand even during strikes. There are WhatsApp groups for each group of students, for the ones with special needs and the other students. There is even personal communication. There was once a kindergarten student who chocked another student at school, so we sent after his parents.

Does he have any psychological problems?

He was only two years old when he was abused by his parents. His father wanted to throw him out of a window. The kid was hyperactive and still wears diapers. All of these factors affect the kid which led him the need to undergo psychological treatment which we provide. Let me just tell you how we solved this kid's problems. We contacted the mother who used to aggressively hit her child. She was a single mom who lived with her parents who abused her. One thing lead to another. That's when I sent after our dedicated team who conducted therapy sessions with the mother who would later tell them how to treat her son. As the school's principle, I advised her to come to school with her son after learning that she was herself abused verbally by her parents. You know, this actually affected her and changed her to the better. She became less aggressive towards her son. You try to help as much as you can. A lot nowadays undergo a lot of stress which leads to self-hatred. Exactly like this mom who was abusing her son who is already hyper active. She told me that she hits her son, so I asked her whether she wants to cooperate with us to know the reason behind her aggressiveness. I told her that if she wants to help, she would allow me to cooperate with her.

She agreed, so I told her that I preferred if she kept undergoing therapy sessions with our specialist and that she come with her son to school because her son still wear diapers. This really helped boost her mood. You know, you try your best to help.

How did the teachers undergo training? And how was it?

After a year of launching this project in CERD, the centre kept organizing training courses for the teacher. So technically, they were always attending training courses. But because of Corona, they stopped attending these courses. And because of the high cost of living and the economic crisis in our country, they even stopped the online courses. No matter how much they know, they need to be in constant training which isn't wrong. And I am with constant training because no matter how much we know, we need to constantly update (professional

development) and gain more knowledge no matter how much we know. That's why, constant training is extremely important.

As school principals, the Ministry kept conducting meetings for us from time to time. They would explain to us how to train our staff and the way of treatment (. Teachers were constantly undergoing training sessions during the first and second semesters. However, because of all the sudden circumstances that we all are going through in this country, the teachers aren't able to attend these training courses even online for the past two years which affected us this year.

What did you learn from this?

They want to change all public schools to inclusive schools for both children with special needs and the ones without. And the reason behind that is clear. When the Ministry works on applying such project (inclusive schools) to all public schools in Lebanon, it shows that you are doing something humane. There are a lot of poor families. Most poor families register their kids in public schools because at the end, we are a virtually free school. And as you know, parents with special needs children already pay to send their kids to therapy sessions. That's why, when the Ministry encourages inclusive schools, this kind of project is considered as a good step. Honestly, I am proud that I am a public-school principal. I swear to God that I am proud of that. We as a public-school work more humanely than most private schools. Most private schools only work for the purpose of making profit. What are we gain of it? Trust me, we aren't gaining profit out of it. Our true gain is what you take in your life. When a mother registered her kids in our school, I asked her who told you about our school? She told me that she found our school page on Facebook, and it caught her attention. That's when she came over to our school. She kept looking for a school to accept her kids for 3 years. No other school took her kids in, even private schools for special needs.

As you know, there is a school at C Street for special needs. If they live F, then she would register her kids in that school. However, they didn't take her kids in. And of course, she can't place them in J, the one in K, because it's very expensive. This school happens to be also for special needs and learning difficulties.

Back when she told me that no school took her kids in, I knew nothing about the family or it's background, but they broke my heart upon hearing their story. That's when I told her to hand me their papers and to consider them already registered.
What I am trying to tell you is that I am not waiting to gain any profit out of it. Her prayers for me worth more than millions of dollars. If you wish, ask the girls about how happy they are in this school.

I swear to God that sometimes when I come to school either frustrated or irritated, my mood changes, and I feel cheerful when I hear the girls' kind words when they see me. I would start laughing from the bottom of my heart. I thank God that I have a completely healthy body. I would sometimes feel stupid for getting upset over small things and not taking things easily. These students give us hope and joy. I actually really miss them. It means the world to me when I see them in the morning.

What is your perception of all of this?

It's that you don't lose hope. Things usually don't come easily. You just don't sit there and hope for things to work out without actually working on it or aiming to succeed instead of failing. The first proverb that I hang outside was "A strong will is the secret behind success". This is something based on my own life experiences and what I have went through until I reach this success. You just need a strong will to reach your goals despite the challenges you face in life. One doesn't usually get what he or she wants without working on it because of course we all face challenges in our lives. Whoever tells you that he or she didn't find difficulties throughout his or her life would probably be not telling you the truth. You need to work hard to reach your goals. You need to sometimes fight to fulfil them. Stay hopeful and confident that you can be successful in your life. Even if hopeless and depressed people try to drag you down, keep being hopeful. When the minister visited our school two years ago, he loved the proverb. He wouldn't have visited us if not for our good reputation.

Part Two

What about the Ministry and its financial and informational support?

The training courses done for school principals were of a great big help. If it wasn't for the $7,000, I wouldn't have started the school project. This money was probably from The World Bank for all the school principals who underwent the training courses in 2016. I can't really remember how many we were. I think we were about 7, 8 or even 10 schools who participated. Of course, we did our researches and worked on the project.

How did the scholarships help improve the resources rooms?

I call them the "Special Needs Division". They are still registered in the ministry as "special needs children". I don't usually feel demotivated when my hard work doesn't get acknowledged. I remain patient. I am not the type of person that seeks attention.

Follow up of the strong will

What is the difference between a person who has a strong will and a person who doesn't? What is the strong will when you face challenges or a crisis? We all have a will, but the strong will that I am talking about is based on the challenges that I faced throughout my life. I faced a lot of challenges, but I didn't give up. First, I noticed that the school had a lot of needs.

There were around 8000 books stacked in boxes. Okay, don't these books need to be sent to a library? There are days when a teacher is absent. Instead of having the students lose their time over fighting or jumping around, it's better to have him benefit out of this time through reading in libraries. It would fill up his time with something beneficial. It was because of the school's suffering that had me working. I know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and I worked hard on the weaknesses. For instance, a teacher can't assign someone else to replace her in class when she is absent. If there is a classroom with no teacher, what would you do? We have shortage in the number of permanent workers and in the number of people working in the division of school supervision, so what would you do? I'll send the supervisor to the class. Permanent workers are the ones who are authorized by the government as full-time employees.

As a school principal, I have a small number of supervisors. The Ministry isn't replacing the permanent workers who are leaving, so that is a problem. This is a challenge that I overcame.

A follow up to the story of the mother

Now, we have a problem here. The mother said that I was the one who got her out of her house's tense atmosphere. When she says that she hated the house's tense atmosphere and that she doesn't have another option from living with her parents because she is divorced, how would you solve this? I want to help boost her mood and get out of the tense atmosphere. If she works in the afternoon, things would've been probably different. She was herself was abused by her parents, and they were constantly nagging about certain things. She even told me that they don't love her. I worked on changing her mood because in the end, it is affecting her kid. My main goal isn't helping the mother. My main goal is helping the son who is affected by his mother's depression. You need to need think smart, work hard, analyse things, and use your experience to solve problems.

My aim isn't mainly the mother, but it is the kid. Therefore, how would I help him? It's not the teacher who would get the kid to stop wearing diapers.

That's why, we need to help the mother so her son would eventually stop wearing diapers and stop peeing himself. If he is going through depression because of his mother's abuse and not showing love, he'll probably never stop using the diapers. You know what I mean?

A relaxed atmosphere encourages cooperation in a supportive environment. A basic thing is how you treat others? I treat others the way I love to be treated. I wouldn't love someone to order me around like I am a slave. I don't agree with that. And that isn't because I am someone (who is) selfish. On the contrary, I love treating others with modesty during work. You treat them as if they are at their second home and not in a workplace. And I am not only saying that. This is how I really am. I treat the school staff with humility. However, I don't let a mistake pass by, and they know that. I want them to know how much I care when it comes to work.

When there's improper performance by one of the staff members, I usually address this issue but without yelling. In such situation, you would probably won't get what you want through yelling. They already know how much I am serious about the school work and that it's a red-line. They know that well because I am not a new principal. They know that I don't treat them with superiority but with compassion while using words like "Sweet hearts" and so on. I don't force them to come to school to help me; however, I have them feel like the school is there second home. I don't even force them to do something they don't want to do as long as I am convinced by it, so it's more of communication between us. This way, they would feel that they are worthy as teachers who are educated and graduates. They don't get treated less because they are teachers and I am a principal. On the contrary, I give each person his worth, and I don't treat them as a boss. Our work and school are successful, and the teachers are so cooperative when using kind words, good manners, and discussions. I have never in my whole life yelled at one of them. I just don't yell at them just like how I don't want someone to yell at me. We both are employees authorized by the government to work at this school. Even if someone insulted the genitor, it'll feel like I was the one who got insulted. A principal still has her prestige among

the others. When I am angry, they all know not to stay close. Technology: I made sure the teachers have internet access so they can teach online.

What are the biggest obstacles of this program?
The biggest problem is that we are currently not attending school even though we are all so excited and worked a lot on this project. The parents are so cooperative.

Which class did you start with?

We started with kids in the kindergarten and primary classes (classes 1, 2, 3), but I also took some cases from the middle classes as well (classes 4, 5, 6). I have 2 students with special needs in grade 3, but this year we are focusing on all the school classes after the ministry open (ed) classes for all the levels. I have 3 special needs students in grade 3. The ministry focused on them when they registered (were) here.
Age groups: One student (M), two girls in grade 3 have physical disabilities.

When X came from the ministry to attend a small festival at our school, she really enjoyed her time that she videotaped a dance at the party. She really enjoyed the party. She told me that my name is now distinguished in the ministry. What would I say after hearing something like that from her? But listen, don't tell that to the other school principals. Many schools of them get really jealous, unlike me. The difference between me and them is that I don't look at other people's success. I have self-satisfaction. I work on improving myself by myself, and I don't treat people with arrogance. If it wasn't for the ministry who gave me a certification for my work, I wouldn't have talked about my achievements. I am not the type to talk arrogantly about myself.

I already had motivation, and I wasn't waiting for anyone's praising. When they confessed that, I was pleased. I am always ambitious.
It might be said that:
But that doesn't mean that I wasn't motivated when the ministry acknowledged my successful work. I have a lot of ambition and goals to achieve, but things are not easy with the crisis that we are going through. Yet, I don't stand down. There are still a lot of projects I would like to achieve.

What did you learn from the training courses?

The responsibility of changing a regular school to an inclusive school isn't a burden. From my personal experience, things were going smoothly. Things wouldn't have been this easy if it wasn't for the money and the scholarship. It also helped when the ministry chose our school for this program. This is my personal experience. I have a lot of ambition, goals and hopes for this project. I didn't start with this program to stop easily. I wouldn't want to have the resources rooms for display only. The ministry made things much easier. We proved our success, but I wouldn't stand down here. I want to continue this journey. I am not with starting something then leaving it midway. You continue what you have started with. Sometimes, it's harder to continue on the success than achieving the success.
How would you help other schools? I am not against turning all regular schools to inclusive schools. I am with that, and I encourage school principals to work on applying that especially

if it is a school with enough school budget. Since the ministry is already working on this program, there isn't anything that would stop other schools from turning into an inclusive school. The ministry is working on 30 new schools other than the 30 ones they started working on. In the school celebration where our students proved the success of this program, the ministry announced its selection of 30 new schools to add to the program. They took few samples of this program from our school, our school, as a sample for the project's success.

This is an achievement. That's why, when the first 30 schools proved the program's success with specific qualifications, the ministry added another 30 schools which makes them now 60 schools in total. And I am proud of that because my goal is to give people a chance of learning. Inclusion: At first, I found some complications. At the beginning, we were a regular school that turned into an inclusive school all of a sudden. At this point, you need to instruct the students to accept one another. You also convince the parents to accept the idea of placing their kid in a school that has students with many differences. How did I start with that? Well, I had a meeting with the parents at the beginning of the year. As you know, we usually hold a meeting with the parents at the beginning of the year, and we elect some of them to represent the parents' council. This is present in all schools including private schools. We first explain to the parents the students' conditions, and we ask the parents to encourage their kids to accept the other children. The second this we did is gather the special needs students' parents in a separate meeting, and we explained to them how they would cooperate with their kids.

It might be said that:

You start spreading awareness between the parents first. You don't only focus on the students in such matter. Many parents are untaught, so you need to educate them sometimes. Why do you think that some kids have learning difficulties?

It sometimes shows that there is a loophole, so you need to look for the root cause of the problem. Many learning difficulties are either caused by abuse, bad parenting (this is something that often lowers a kid's self-esteem), or mistreatment like between the parents in case the kid saw the father constantly abusing the mother.

All these thing matter. They are the causes of many learning difficulties. When you work hard on a student to help him overcome these difficulties, things won't usually work if the parents aren't cooperating with you. The kids stay at school for 5 to 6 hours daily then leave (go) home where they spend the rest of their time with them. Even if you work at school, it won't help if the kid would return home to get abused again. That's why, you start working on their home's environment. If the parents cooperate with you, it means that you at least achieved two percent of the treatment (holistic). In case they refuse to cooperate, I find other ways to solve this problem just like how I did with the mother. We worked on things our way, and if it wasn't for me who offered to help, things wouldn't have probably changed. Each case has its own way of solving it. It depends on each person how to deal with the parents and how to change a specific mindset. I simply can lock myself away from the parents and speak to no one, but I don't. I sometimes get asked about what I want. I would reply that I wish for a relaxing environment not only for the students and teachers, but for the parents too because parents are a basic factor for success. As someone who works at a school, you give your time to the parents as well and listen to their needs.

Each challenge has its own way of overcoming it. I already secured the electricity subscription, so I have no problem with that. I am only waiting to reopen the school again for the students to

attend. I always rush to solve any problem we face. I already secured the internet last year because we mostly had online classes and the teachers were asked to give their online classes at school. We need money to fix these problems. We always find people who donate stationaries and teaching supplies which we use in classes.

Back when the ministry put the spotlight on our school in the celebration, there were a lot of associations who wanted to donate electrical devices to schools in Lebanon. I was always in contact with the general director in the ministry and in contact with X and Y. They once called me to inform me that our school was the first elected school to receive the new devices because of how special it is. Of course, this motivated me more to work, but the thought my hard work is fruitful enthused me more.

What is the source of this passion?

It comes from the sense of responsibility as a principal of a school. This is my responsibility and the message that I want to deliver. My secret is that I try to avoid failure. Even though occasionally make mistakes and learn from them, I work on avoiding failure which encourages me more to work harder. I am not against learning from my mistakes, but I don't start something where the ending isn't clear or known (unknown). You got the difference?

The head of the educational district asked 30 or more principals of different schools to think of a project that would help improve the schools. I don't wish to talk about the other principals, but I am trying to explain to you my personal experience and why I try to avoid failure. When I plan to work on something, I either find myself compatible to finish it or I simply leave it. Hence, this was the first time I do research and I work hard on it. And as an educated school principal, I didn't want to fail at it or show that I don't know especially that we are to send the research papers to the educational district. I got no help from anyone; I just dedicated my time for this for two weeks. I typed the research then sent it to the district. Unlike some principals who have been school principals for a long time, I was new at this job. This probably only my fifth or sixth year as a principal. Despite that, our school got the spotlight after being its principal for two years only. Some schools like P and the school in O took years to get known. Our school got known only in my fourth year hear because I wasn't in contact with the ministry. However, when parents came to our school and saw all of our achievements, they used to inform the ministry about them.

When I work, I work in a preliminary way after all the planning, sifting and revising. You just don't write randomly. You follow a special form in writing that includes the introduction, the problem, the steps and the solution. Anyways, I typed the research then sent it to the educational district. After two days, the ministry sent after me informing me that I am the only principal who reached success and that they want to have me as the head of a new committee but then came Corona. I actually got appreciated. I was so overwhelmed by that because this was the first time that I worked on something like that, and I excelled in it.

When I got entrusted by this position, I am the one who is responsible and would make the effort to succeed. I succeed in all of the project that I work on.

How do you monitor the school staff?

Every week, I meet with the dedicated team to follow up with their achievements, monitor the exams' results and stay in touch with the parents. If a kid is feeling depressed, he wouldn't be able to produce. We are trying to work on to instil the qualities of a leader. The students get assessed when he enters the school, in addition to the constant follow up of the parents, dedicated team and their teachers.

I can't meet up with all the students daily, but I can monitor their work through the dedicated team when we meet. Once, a mother who has an autistic child told us that she doesn't want to take her son out of our school. Autism is a special case. We have a lot of students sitting in the classroom, but he refuses to sit with them. She took him out of the school because he needs a shadow teacher, and we don't offer such service in public schools. The dedicated team member is responsible of 90 students with special needs, and this autistic child needs special attention, so she can't give him all her attention.

APPENDIX 1.15- KEY PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES
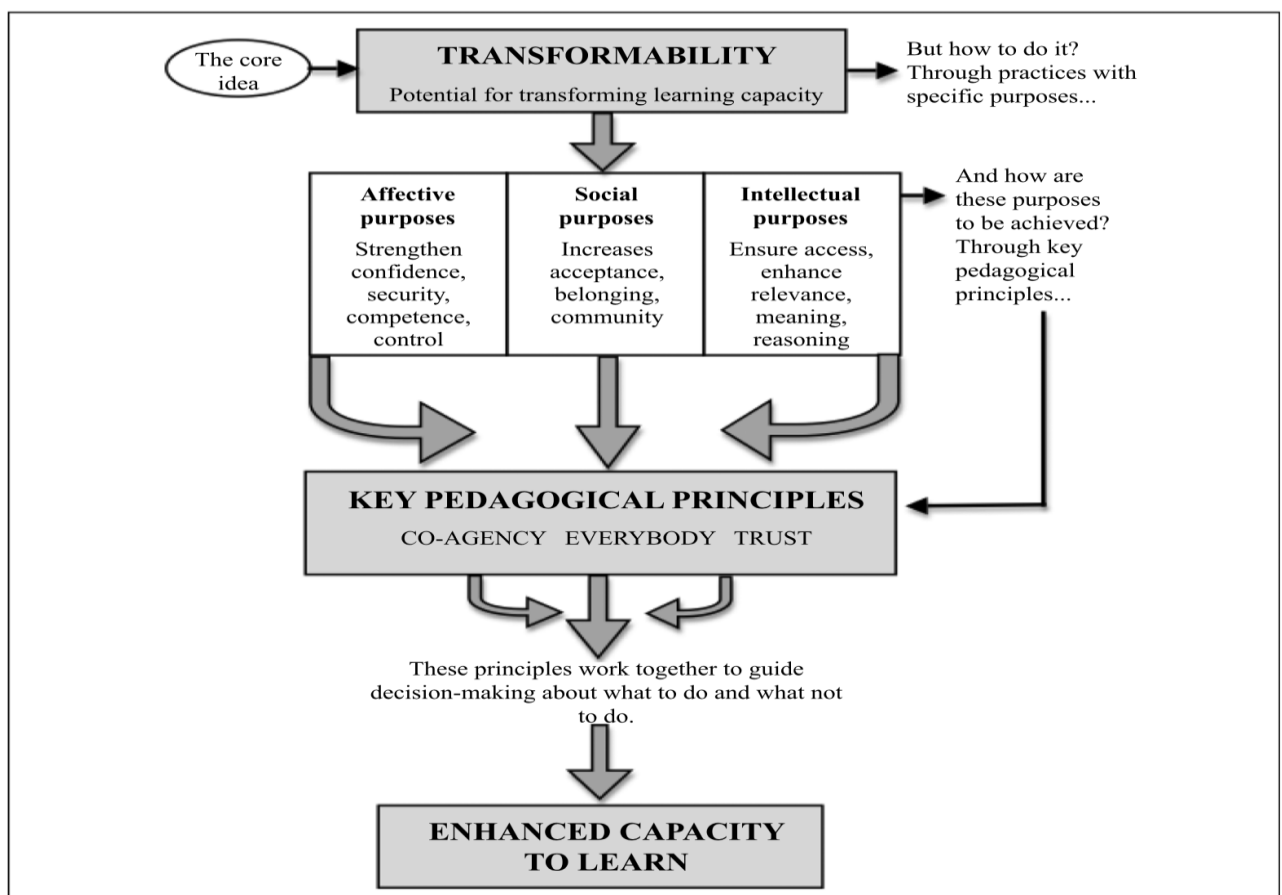
Source: Hart, Dixon Drummond, and McIntyre (2004) *Learning without limits* (Figure 13.3, p. 179). Reproduced with the kind permission of Open University Press. All rights reserved.

Effective INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONentails seeking excellence through catering the needs for all learners (Florian 2019). Teachers have the potential to transform the learning capacity for all learners irrespective of the potential ability or the type of disability or severity. The key is to implement pedagogical inclusive practices to reach three key purposes: affective, social and intellectual.

APPENDIX 1.16 -INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT & THE DIRECTOR OF THE TISDP

Date:

Duration:

Location: Special Education Office in the Ministry of Education

How many schools are adopting the initiative?

What is the number of students in Special Education in the Lebanese Government primary schools?

Can you give me a background information about the Pilot study?

How did the process of the "Pilot study" begin? During this political disturbance how is it going now and what has "towards inclusive schools" accomplished so far?

What is the vision of the ministry, with respect to students catering for the needs of students with disabilities?

How teachers' training is carried?

What did MEHE do in regards to awareness programs for inclusion?

Are you adopting Assistive Technology?

What are the challenges to date that hinders development?

What are your responsibilities in managing your inclusive classroom?

What was the process of the selection of the thirty inclusion schools?

What is the average number of students with special needs each classroom?

What are the support services provided by your Department to teachers, schools and society in order to move towards Inclusive system?

From your view point and personal experience, do you believe that the inclusion of students in mainstream classes in Lebanon will be effective?

What are the main challenges of implementing this initiative in regards to daily practices?

Are there any development plans for the challenges you encounter on daily basis?

How is the implementation stage implemented and monitored?

What has "towards inclusive schools" accomplished so far? Academic achievement? School leadership? Learning and teaching quality? and Social and personal development?

APPENDIX 1.17 - OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Differentiation

Every classroom, world-wide, comes without a manual for teachers to analyse. Routinely, each teacher has to go through a pre-assessment process in order to pinpoint students' needs to aid the planning in supporting them all. Accordingly, educators need to differentiate three components: content, process and products (see Appendix 1.3a) based on students' readiness, interests and learning styles as stated by Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010). Differentiation means changing the pace, level, or kind of instruction teachers provide in response to individual learners' needs, style or interest (Heacox,2002). Student's characteristics need to be considered because learners possess different learning styles; some prefer visuals while others need auditory activities in order to access the content (see Appendix 1.3b)

Accommodation and adaptation

The term "accommodation" is used to describe an alteration of the assessment format, tools or strategies used to allow a learner with SEND gain access to the content and reach the learning objective. Thus, assessments need to be designed to become accessible for each case. Accessible design features used should support all the three stated cases who typically require testing accommodations such as large print, audio support, or extra time.

Modification

It involves modifications of the learning environment, materials, teaching methods and assessment. Assessment modifications include: extended test time, repeated directions, oral testing and testing away from distractions. Historically, low achievements in schools were viewed as a result of students' weaknesses. Nowadays, in inclusive education, the judgment is attributed to social and other factors where the school system itself (culture, policy and practices) contributes to the students' academic failures (Booth and Ainscow 2011; Mitchell 2005). Thus, modification plans for assessments are urgently needed to cater for the needs of each case as Lewis (1996) claims that the modified assessment arrangements may provide the basis for developments in inclusive practice.

Exclusion

That is a consequence of attitudes and responses to diversity in race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and ability (Ainscow 2020)

Inclusive Education

It is a principle that supports and welcomes diversity amongst all learners. However, INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONis still thought of as an approach to serving children with disabilities within mainstream education setting, in some countriess.