A STUDY OF PRIMARY MAINSTREAM TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:

A PERSPECTIVE FROM DUBAI

by

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

One of the main challenges facing primary mainstream teachers in Dubai (UAE) stems from the current educational movement towards inclusion. It is an international phenomenon, a process that emphasizes providing special education services to students with special educational needs within the regular classrooms. The purpose of the study was to identify perceptions about educating students with special educational needs in the mainstream education setting. The researcher examines the issue of inclusive education and the attitudes towards inclusion among the primary mainstream teachers in Dubai in the very large private sector. The study was also designed to identify whether these teachers perceived themselves capable of adapting to what inclusion requires.

The study relied on qualitative methods. Questionnaires were given to primary mainstream teachers working in two private schools in Dubai. Additionally more teachers were interviewed too. All teachers involved in the study are expatriates.

An analysis of data collected indicated that primary mainstream teachers in Dubai in the private sector favour traditional special education service delivery models over full inclusive practices. These teachers felt students with special educational needs lack skills needed to master the mainstream regular classroom course content. The teachers also expressed that the large teaching load in the mainstream classroom makes it hard to meet the needs of students with special educational needs in the private sector. However, results also indicated that teachers perceive additional training, support from administrators and access to related services and resources are necessary in order to meet the needs of their students with special educational needs in the mainstream education setting. The study ended with research based recommendations for future practice.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

There is a movement towards educating students with special educational needs (SEN) in the mainstream classroom and it has generated considerable discussion. While the original principles of the inclusion model originated within the social justice movement (Lipsky & Gartner, 1987), the actual implementation of educating students with SEN in the least restricted environment has received much of the criticism (Lieberman, 1985). Supporters of inclusion have argued that students with SEN can and should be educated in the mainstream education classroom with the provision of supplementary aids and services (Lipsky & Gartner, 1989). The special educator instructing students in separate classrooms to the general educators instructing all students in the mainstream education classroom has occurred. It is generally agreed that in order for inclusion to be effective, the demands of educating students with SEN alongside their non-disabled peers should be met.

This study is of interest on both a personal and professional level. The reasons for choosing the title as the focus for research are threefold. First, as a teacher of 10 years who has worked in the primary section of a private school in Dubai, there has been a continuing concern about meeting the needs of individual students. Secondly, there was concern that statutory requirements were not being met. Thirdly, an interest in inclusion of students with SEN in the mainstream private schools in Dubai (UAE) and the research focus, enables a meeting of an educational issue with the personal beliefs and values of the researcher-as an educator and as an individual human being. The object of the research will take the researcher on a journey of inquiry which will not only raise one's own critical awareness but hopefully will also contribute to the knowledge of colleagues and perhaps even the wider professional community.

1.2 Purpose of the study

Research, as well as practical experience has demonstrated that teacher perception are important in determining the effectiveness of inclusion, as teachers are the school workforce most responsible for implementing inclusive service delivery models. The purpose of the study was to identify teacher perceptions about educating students with SEN in the mainstream classroom. The study only focused on primary private classroom teachers in Dubai (UAE). In addition, this study was designed to identify whether these primary mainstream teachers perceived themselves capable of applying effective inclusive education if students with SEN were to be included in their classrooms. Skills and requirements necessary for implementing effective inclusion such as adopting required curriculum modifications, using strategies for teaching students with SEN, identifying characteristics of students with SEN and using strategies for managing students' behaviour were also examined. A pervious study by Alghazo and Gaad (2004) on general education teachers employed by the Ministry of Education and Youth in the UAE, (now known as the MOE, after a merger with Ministry of Higher Education in 2005) noted that a majority of the teachers had less than encouraging attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities in their classrooms. This finding affirms a need for surveying teachers at the primary school level in the private sector in the UAE. It is hoped that the research-based recommendations offered by this study will help with future practice.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions were the focus of the study.
1. What are the primary classroom teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classroom in the private sector in Dubai?
2. Do mainstream primary classroom teachers in the private sector perceive themselves capable of delivering inclusive education?

1.4 Rational and significance of this study

During the past few years, educators have experienced a steady flow of change in the composition of their classrooms and in the responsibilities required to meet the needs

of their students. The relevance of this study is based on the assumption that local school districts or teacher training institutes can utilize information generated to design effective training programs that are pertinent to the needs of primary school teachers. In addition, such information can be presented to school boards for planning effective in-service training. Alternatively, the questionnaire developed could be used to identify the strengths and weakness of teachers and pinpoint areas of training needs.

According to Moffett (2000), teachers need to be sensitive to the educational needs of students with SEN, and utilize strategies such students need to learn, if they are to be provided with the most appropriate educational services.

Studies pertaining to the evaluation of training programs, Brownell and Pajares (1999) argued that educating special and general classroom teachers is not only effective in helping them improve their teaching strategies but also leads to the development of more positive attitudes towards exceptional children and the concept of inclusion. In particular, these researchers found that teachers who participated in training programs that looked at a general overview of the philosophy of inclusion, information on teaching skills, and strategies for classroom management, time management, and assessment techniques had significantly more positive attitudes towards inclusion at the completion of the program.

Having identified areas that are important to teachers if inclusion of students with SEN is to be practiced the following chapters will provide a discussion of teacher's attitudes towards inclusion and will also examine the impact of a culture that pays a lot of attention to the perfect citizen and where there is no appreciation of diversity. Inclusion of students with SEN is taking place, if it has to be practiced successfully here in Dubai, are the teachers in the mainstream private schools prepared?

1.5   UAE context

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is located at the southern tip of the Arabian Gulf. The neighbouring countries are Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Sultanate of Oman. The total area of the UAE is 83,600 square kilometre. The UAE has a tropical desert climate

with very little or no rainfall. The UAE is governed by a federal system founded on the 2nd of December 1971. The union is formed of seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah. Abu Dhabi city is the capital of UAE (Camerapix, 1998, p.5).

The discovery of crude oil and its commercial production in the United Arab Emirates created a new economic situation that was reflected in the availability of substantial financial resources and the investment of such resources by the government for development. The economy is driven by oil and gas and recently tourism. The country has emerged into the mainstream of modernism over the past 40 years. The population has been directly influenced by the rapid development witnessed by the country in recent years.

Due to the boom in economy and social development corresponding to a structural and productive new beginning, the UAE has welcomed a tremendous number of expatriates from various countries. The Emirates are settled by a diversity of cultural groups. In addition to the UAE nationals, there are various Arab groups, as well as Iranians, Filipinos, Indians and large numbers of Europeans and Americans. The number of Emiratees is much less in comparison to the number of expatriates. With a large number of expatriates, there is a floating population. Students come with their parents and leave the country with a change of parent's jobs. Children of those incoming communities require a corresponding number of schools to accommodate them. It is an unusual situation, which leads to the high number of expatriate teachers and private schools.

1.6 Current situation of education in Dubai

The UAE education system as compared to other countries is relatively new. It is divided into the public and private sector. The government funds the public sector schools. All UAE nationals have access to mainstream public education, which has a strong Islamic and Arabic emphasis. All mainstream public education is conducted in single gender classes. Expatriates are not admitted to public schools.

Many expatriates opened private schools to meet their religious, cultural and education needs. Today both public and private sector schools are operating in almost equal numbers in the UAE. A national newspaper reported that Dubai currently has 298 primary and secondary private schools and 10 new schools opening in September 2005. The same newspaper gave government figures for 2003/4 that showed private schools throughout the UAE accommodated 315,797 students in its 452 schools, and provided work to 22,529 teachers and school staff (The freedom to teach, 7 days, August 2005). In fact, the private sector is growing faster than the public sector as many new schools are opening. This study focuses on the private sector and specifically schools in Dubai.

1.7   Education provisions for expatriate students in Dubai

The Ministry of Education (MoE) issues licenses to private sector schools that follow the curriculum and syllabi of their homeland. The Principal of the school appoints teachers in the private schools and later the application goes to the MoE for approval.

The students with disabilities such as Hearing Impairments, Communication Disorder, Intellectual Challenged and PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) enrol in Special Centres. The students with special educational needs such as learning difficulties (LD) sometimes enrol in mainstream private schools. However, without any training in special needs, teachers often cannot involve them in the class and, hence, such students tend to become demoralised and take extra classes after school as parents are worried about anything that might hold their child back. Nearly all teachers surveyed in the study had not received any pre-service training in supporting students with special needs.

1.8   Organization of the chapters

 This paper is divided into five chapters with two appendices. While this chapter represents the background and the purpose of the study, chapter two outlines the research design, methodology and methodological issues that were raised during the conduct of the study. Chapter three includes a literature review of publications concerning special educational needs and inclusion, and a short summary of

approaches for managing pupils with SEN in general and in this part of the world. The key terms used in the study are defined in this chapter. Chapter four presents some samples and findings from the questionnaires and interviews conducted during the course of the study. Chapter five discusses conclusions and the study ends with research based recommendations for future practice.

CHAPTER II
METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter restates the two principal research questions posed by the researcher, and describes the society to be researched. This is followed by a section presenting the rationale for the research methods used in the study, including a sample of questions from interviews and questionnaires. Sections 2.4 and 2.5 examine methodological issues such as validity and reliability, as well as ethical issues involved in this study. The final section, 2.6, notes the limitations of the data and findings.

The overall research problem investigated in this paper is the attitude of mainstream teachers of students having special educational needs (SEN) within the context of the expatriates in Dubai.

The two main questions were posed, as below:

1. What are primary the classroom teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classroom in the private sector in Dubai?

2. Do mainstream primary classroom teachers in the private sector perceive themselves capable of delivering inclusive education?

2.2 Description of the researched society

The data for the study was obtained from a sample of mainstream classroom teachers, teaching students in grades one to six serving in two different private mainstream schools in Dubai. The teachers are mainly from the sub continent (India and Pakistan) and the majority of them do not have teacher training. In schools in the country of their origin a B.Ed. degree after graduation is a must to be a qualified teacher. All the students in the school are Arab expatriates or from the subcontinent (Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka). The socioeconomic status of the school community is mostly middle class in the UAE context. The average class size is 30 students with one teacher. The mainstream classroom teachers who participated in this study did so voluntary and had five or more years of experience in teaching students in private mainstream classrooms.

2.3   Methods of data collection

The ethnographical research paradigm was selected for the study as it had the potential for helping the researcher to understand social and cultural investigation. This paradigm requires the collection of qualitative data. The school is a natural setting for ethnographic study. In that, students and adults spend time together as a matter of course. Qualitative methods used in the ethnographic approach are very different to quantitative methodologies that may create artificial conditions for experiment and observations.

The intention was not to generalise opinions of the whole expatriate community but to understand the attitudes of a specific group of teachers who influence and determine the outlook towards inclusion of students with SEN. It was a search to raise their awareness of issues involved in teaching students with SEN rather than provide answers and prescribe actions. In finding out the views of mainstream teachers about the inclusion of students with SEN and looking at approaches to understand these views of mainstream teachers, the researcher needed to be aware that other questions may arise and that, at the end of the research, the investigation, the learning would continue.

The ethnographic paradigm was selected because it was the most suitable paradigm and it incorporated the research design, and use of methodology, that a teacher as researcher could most successfully use and would best meet the needs of school-based research. Robson (2002) describes ethnography as providing

> *"A description and interpretation of the culture*
> *and social structure of a social group. It has its routes in anthropology,*
> *involving an immersion in the particular culture of the society being*
> *studied so that life in that community could be described in detail."* (Page 186)

Qualitative methodology allows for self-evaluation and flexibility whilst taking the researcher along a process of discovery. The discovery about learning. In taking qualitative research seriously the researcher has to be prepared to deviate and not have

a rigid approach, if the knowledge gained through research is to be powerful, the researcher needs to be honest and come to terms with their own beliefs and ideologies and be prepared to be open about them. The researcher should give his or her own definition of a particular situation. The researcher needs to believe in the research design that is being followed and understand its underlying philosophy.

One of the weaknesses of the ethnographic paradigm is that the qualitative data is mostly anecdotal. However, if the anecdote is well written, the story true, the real person or persons or event well described, it can answer some of the qualitative researcher's questions. The idea is to accept that part of understanding and interpreting the study relies on the story being truthfully told.

The researcher used three different complementary research methods in order to triangulate data. First, a literature search was undertaken to find out what the available provision for students with SEN in Dubai (UAE) as well as in some other countries. The other two methods were questionnaires and interviews.

2.3.1   Questionnaire

The two-part questionnaire (See appendix A) was written to obtain the participants' attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN. This questionnaire also identified whether the participants perceived themselves capable of adapting instruction to students with exceptional needs and considered themselves knowledgeable of information needed to work in inclusive classrooms. Data pertaining to teacher training in working with students with SEN was also collected. Twenty-five questionnaires were distributed in two private mainstream schools in Dubai and all responses were returned. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire anonymously.

Hopkins (1993) explains that one of the advantages given for using the questionnaire is that it is "highly specific, easy to administer…." and it can provide "specific feed back". However, through experience the contrary was found. It was difficult to keep questions very simple whilst obtaining answers that were of any use. Whilst the administration of questionnaires may be 'easy', analysis of the data may not be. Its

use within the paradigm is that it may help with the triangulation of the data and that as part of a multi–strategy approach it may be useful. The data from the questionnaires was analyzed using a coded table. The coded information from the questionnaires was cross referenced under the research questions.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of 25 statements and questions classified according to three factors. Items under each factor were made to identify information described below:

Factor 1: The first 15 questions and statements were designed to identify the participants' attitudes towards inclusion and students with SEN.

Factor 2: Awareness towards adapting instruction to students with SEN was written in five statements (16-20) designed to identify teachers' insight towards their ability to adapt instruction to students with SEN.

Factor 3: Knowledge of relevant information consisted of five statements (21-25) designed to identify whether the teachers perceived themselves knowledgeable of the following: strategies for teaching students with SEN; characteristics of students with SEN and behavioural management strategies.

The second part consisted of 9 factual questions designed to get information pertaining to gender, subjects taught at the time of this study, length of teaching experience, qualification, type and length of training received in working with students with SEN and the teachers were also asked to identify the students with SEN they have in their classrooms.

In items 1-25, mainstream teachers were asked to tick responses to questions and statements asked and to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with the statements by selecting one of the following three choices.

Disagree   Agree   Maybe

This scale followed each question and statement. This scale was modified from the 5 item Likert-type scale format (disagree, tend to disagree, tend to agree, agree and not applicable). The reason for such modifications is that the participants involved in the pilot study opined that it was difficult to differentiate between what was required in the different columns. They felt the information needed was too similar. Therefore, it

was decided to modify, as this would have no impact on the value of the information obtained.

2.3.2   Interviews

The next stage in the research was to interview. The interview method was considered appropriate as a means of asking individuals about their views on inclusion as Silverman (2001) states that interviews give data, which has authentic insight into people's experiences. For this reason, mainstream teachers were interviewed to get in-depth data on the study that was conducted. Interviews with fifteen teachers working in private mainstream schools in Dubai were conducted. These teachers had five years and above experience in teaching mainstream students in private schools. The main questions revolved around attitudes towards accepting students with SEN in mainstream schools, and reasons of their acceptance of, or opposition to, inclusion.

A pilot study was designed to examine the semi-structured interview questions before interviewing participants from the research community. Interviews were designed for mainstream primary teachers. The participation for the interview was voluntary and anonymity was guaranteed.

Semi-structured interviews were used with this research community because unlike in the case of structured interviewing where one has a basic interview plan that is kept in mind, but have a minimum of control over the informant's responses. The semi-structured interview is characterised by minimum control over the respondent's responses. A structured interview was also avoided because questionnaires were also being used. Questionnaires are close in design to a structure interview where all respond to as nearly identical set of questions. However, interviews with open-ended questions are not an easy option as the researcher may lose the pace of the interview. Hence, the semi-structured method was used when employing an interview strategy as the researcher is able to look for hidden meanings and to look further than the apparent or expected meaning. This approach allows the researcher to gain deeper levels of understanding.

To keep a record, participants were interviewed alone, otherwise, it would be impossible to be certain which of the participants said what, and one participant would influence the thinking of the other. See appendix B for draft transcript sheet. All notes were jotted down during the interview and were written up in full immediately and before the next interview.

2.4 Methodological issues

There are three main indicators to be applied to all research: validity, reliability and whether the findings can be generalised. Validity is defined as being a measure of whether the methods and approaches of the research relate to, or measure, the issue explored. Reliability is a measure of whether, if another researcher carried out the same study, they would obtain with similar results. Generalisation is a measure of to what extent the findings of the research can be applied to other communities or groups. The validity of quality data can be improved by triangulation of methods. In this study, data has been collected using a combination of questionnaire, interview and documentary analysis. The reliability of the data collected was as much as possible upheld. Leading questions in both interviews and questionnaires were avoided.

2.5 Ethical issues

The ethics of social science research were adhered to throughout the study by respecting the rights and dignity of all participants, avoiding harm to participants caused by their involvement and by carrying out the research with honesty. All interview participants were asked if they agreed to take part in the study and were informed of the precise purpose of the data collection. The identity of all respondents was kept anonymous. The researcher ensured all participants confidentiality of all information collected. In reporting the findings, no number, letter or name will be used. Protecting and safeguarding accessibility of the hard data stored in the computer was also assured. The participants were given the option of reading the typed transcripts for comments. The participants were also given a chance to add in comments to the transcripts if they desired.

2.6   Limitations of the study

There are a number of obvious limitations, which may not allow this research to be generalised, such as the small number of subjects and the always-present concern about socially desirable responses with survey-type research. The major limitation of the study was the time frame. The short period for the study meant that only a small number of mainstream teachers could be questioned. This together with the fact that the sample population chosen for the research was only expatriates means that the applications of the findings to a wider population, or indeed to the population of UAE as a whole, needs careful consideration. The expatriate population differs between areas within Dubai and their opinions may differ. It is not suggested by any means that the expatriate community in this study is presented as one group. The expatriate population in Dubai consist of different nationalities with different beliefs, values and cultures.

A second limitation is one common to all research by questionnaire. Social desirability may influence responses. Based on the results of the questionnaire, we really do not know if the teachers were saying what they believe. However, all teachers were urged to produce an honest account and they were assured of confidentiality. They were also informed that there was no benefit to them in participating in the study apart from helping a fellow teacher if the outcomes of the study are to be taken into account. Neither would there be any negative outcome because of their response. Another limitation was that they were unaware of the term 'inclusion' and the whole concept. Inclusion was first explained and the research questions were again asked, sometimes rephrased.

A further unforeseen limitation was that access to relevant document was denied. In the study, interviewing and collecting documents had caused some methodological barriers and issues. One of the school principals did not allow the researcher to conduct the interviews in the school campus. To get the teachers to participate outside the school a lot of follow up had to be done. Student's reports were denied by the school principals to be photocopied. The researcher was only allowed to see a few, if it were given the researcher could have gone through them in detail.

CHAPTER III
LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1   Introduction

This chapter consists of a review of relevant literature concerning development of ideas pertaining to special educational needs and the relationship between SEN and inclusion. After a long search for appropriate literature, a conclusion was drawn that there are very few published articles concerning SEN practices in the UAE. Terms used in the literature on SEN are often used interchangeably and can be confusing, hence, the principles terms in use are defined below for the purpose of the study.

3.2   Definition of terms

3.2.1   Inclusion

The term inclusion is used in education literature in a variety of ways. On one level, the term can mean the process of including children with SEN in mainstream schools (DfEE 1997). However, Booth *et al.* (2002) describe inclusion as a broad process of school reorganization, increasing student participation, reducing exclusion and removal of all barriers to access. Mittler (1995) defines inclusion as: '*Education in an ordinary class, in a neighbourhood school which a child would normally attend, with support as needed by the individual*' (p.105). A world conference held in Salamanca, Spain in 1994, on special needs education, approached the term inclusion from the perspective of children's rights. In a Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO 1994, p.6), subscribed to by 92 governments and 25 international organizations, inclusion was defined as ….

> *Ordinary schools accommodating all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other condition.*

This is the definition adopted in this paper.

3.2.2   Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The term special educational need has no common or one meaning agreeable to all. The definition as currently used by the UK Department of Education, and which is adopted for the purpose of the study, is….

> *Children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special provision to be made for them* (DfES 2001).

The concept of SEN is a global one since the right of education for all is written into The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Salamanca Statement defines SEN as the needs of children with disabilities or learning difficulties (UNESCO 1994, p.6). In the context of this study, the researcher argues that some of the expatriate students in private mainstream schools in Dubai could have SEN and hence the services provided for them are not adequate.

It is likely that in every society and every community all over the world, students with special educational needs will be found. There are many different types of need ranging from mild, to moderate, to severe. Some needs are visible, for example, those with cerebral palsy, whilst others like those with dyslexia are unseen. The basic needs of students with SEN are the same as for all students - food, shelter, love and affection, protection and education (Stubbs 1997).

The latest classification of SEN in the UK adopts a arrangement relating to educational need rather than classification by disability. There are four broad headings under which SEN are defined in the UK: cognitive and learning needs; behaviour, emotional and social needs; communication and interaction needs; and sensory and physical needs.

- Cognitive and learning needs - includes children with specific learning difficulties. For example, those who find reading difficult (dyslexia), pupils who have difficulties in writing (dysgraphia), those who find mathematics difficult (dyscalculia), and children that find it hard to understand and recognise prepositions or nouns (dysorthographia). This group also includes

children with general learning difficulties graded as moderate, severe or profound.

- Behavioural, emotional and social needs - covers a whole spectrum of disorders ranging from children with mild social interaction problems to physically aggressive children.

- Communication and interaction needs - includes children with poor or unintelligible speech, severe stammers, autistic spectrum disorders and language development disorders.

- Sensory and physical needs - groups together visual and hearing impairments with physical disabilities, provided that additional educational provision is being made to help them access the curriculum. Children whose sight is corrected with spectacles are not recorded as being visually impaired, and children with physical handicaps not affecting their access to the curriculum are not recorded as having SEN (Teachernet n.d).

3.2.3 Disablement

A child is disabled if they are excluded or discriminated against by virtue of some handicap or impairment. All disabled children however do not necessarily have SEN. For example, a student in a wheel chair may have no problem at school and so may not be classified as having SEN (Stubbs 1997). Throughout this study, an attempt was made to avoid the use of the term disabled when referring to children with SEN, owing to its association with physical disabilities.

3.3   Special Educational Needs in the context of expatriates

Expatriate students should enjoy the same rights to education as all other children. Their rights, including the right to education, are non-discriminatory, that is, they apply to all children without exception. The researcher insists that non-discriminatory practices in education should be applied in countries where expatriates are in a large number and that inclusion can work in such environments. Moreover, the fact that education is under the control of the government ministry, means that the ministry

should create an opportunity to apply inclusive practices for students with special needs and adopt policies responsive to their needs.

3.4 Dubai expatriates and Special Educational Needs

There are very few published texts concerning education in general, or SEN relating to expatriates in Dubai. The schools within the private sector vary considerably in organizational structure for supporting students with special needs. The Ministry's goal for the private schools system is to be able to indicate the requirements for accepting and supporting students with special needs. The Ministry is also interested in developing awareness and to fostering effective intervention approaches for students with special needs. These efforts are being worked in partnership with the same group who are responsible for special needs services within the public sector.

There are many students enrolled in the private schools who fit into the upper level of special educational needs (mild disabilities, learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD). As most of the private schools do not have proper assessment resources, these students often remain in their schools until it becomes obvious that they have significantly different needs as the gap in their performance levels widens as they advance through the grades.

Students with more severe types of special educational needs that are not accepted into the private education sector are able to attend classes in centres for special needs. These centres enrol students from ages three and a half to twenty two. Students with the wide range of disabilities including Autism, Down's Syndrome, Physical Disability, Intellectual Challenges and Developmental Delays attend the programs in these centres. These centres have full facilities for working with most areas needed to support students with special needs including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language services and some family counselling services. The centre's programs offer adapted academics, behaviour classes, vocational programs, workshops and job placement experiences. However, there is a two-year waiting list due to difficulties obtaining funding and getting experienced staff. This often results in many learners not able to enrol in any of these centres and they are left with no choice but to stay at home.

3.5 Inclusive education round the world

In the UK, inclusive education has been made policy by the government with regard to education provision for children with SEN or disabilities. The aim is to reduce discrimination, increase pupils' attainment and break down barriers to learning. This section focuses upon the special needs education in England, describing its responsibilities and its support system, in the context of the education system in general.

The SEN system in England is in many ways more fully developed and researched than in the UAE. The purpose of this section is not to explore it in detail, but to focus on the key features relevant to provide a background to SEN and inclusive education in England.

Many students will have trouble in learning at some stage in their school life. Whilst it is possible to cater for most of these problems in mainstream schools, some students and young people will need specialist help if they are to take full advantage of their educational opportunities.

It is stated in the Education Act 1996 cited in Gaad (1998) that a child has "special educational needs" if:

> *'He has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him'.*

(Education Act 1996, Part IV, Chapter I, section 312 (1))

According to the Education Act 1996 cited in Gaad (1998) a child has a "learning difficulty" if:

a) *'he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age,*

b) *he has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his age in schools within the area of the local education authority, or*

c) he is under the age of five and is, or would be if special educational provision were not made for him, likely to fall within paragraph (a) or (b) when of or over that age'.

<div align="center">(Education Act 1996, Part IV, Chapter I, section 312 (2))</div>

The basis of the term learning difficulties became known with the publication of the Warnock Report in 1978.

<u>The Warnock Report</u>

The 'Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People' chaired by Dame Mary Warnock, was published in 1978. The report established the theory of learning difficulty, contending that 'assigning children to a category of handicap was not an adequate description of their needs'. Some of the reasons for why Warnock abolished categories were summarised by Farrell 1997 as:

- the natural complexity of pupils difficulties in learning and behaviour
- the introduction of the notion of continuum of special needs as some pupils may have continuum long-life special needs
- categories imply labels being used to describe the categories and raise the issue of negative labelling and its effect
- it was thought that abolishing categories may lead to more integrated educational provision (p.2-3).

The Committee proposed that there should be a continuum of special educational provision, ranging from advice to the class teacher through to full-time education in a special school or class, available to all pupils who require it.

Inclusive education is not confined to developed countries; there are many successful examples of inclusive practice and provision for students with SEN from other countries. Some of the poorest countries in the world like Nepal, has a policy to include children with mild to moderate special educational needs in mainstream primary education (Lynch 1994). Korea, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, China, Nepal, Indonesia and Thailand are a few of the Asian countries to have initiated Individual

Learning Programs in classrooms, which include students with Intellectual Challenges. In addition, in India, the Five-Year Plan, 1991-95, improved the budget for students with moderate learning difficulties by more than five times. India supports a major national development programme for the inclusion of such students into mainstream schools (Gaad, 2004). Hence, it is clear that programmes for inclusion and provision for students with special needs can be implemented in a range of environments.

3.6 Approaches to managing students with SEN in mainstream classrooms

3.6.1 Differentiation

There are different approaches to manage students with SEN. Differentiation is one necessary prerequisite for any successful implementation of inclusion of students with SEN, or indeed for provision for them outside of mainstream classes. It enables students who may learn better in ways different from their peers, for example, learning through reading text, to be taught appropriately. Visser (1993) and Phillips *et al.* (1999) cited in Mittler (2000, p. 118) define differentiation as:

> *The process whereby teachers meet the need for progress through the curriculum by selecting appropriate teaching methods to match an individual child's learning strategies, within a group situation.*

<div align="right">(Visser 1993, in Mittler 2000, p.118)</div>

> *Differentiation is a process whereby planning and delivering the curriculum takes account of individual differences and matches what is taught and how it is taught to individual learning styles and needs. It seeks to provide opportunities for ALL children to participate and make progress in the curriculum by:*
> - *building on past achievement*
> - *presenting challenges for further achievement*
> - *providing opportunities for success.*

<div align="right">(Phillips *et al.* 1999:33, in Mittler 2000, p.118)</div>

This works only where teachers recognise and respect the broad range of learning styles in their classes. Valuing differences involves the acceptance by educators that students may have different learning styles and that not all can learn in the same way (Corbett 2001). It was clear, as a teacher in Dubai, that the system was traditional and intolerant of differences. Such an environment is helpful to neither inclusion nor integration of students with SEN.

3.6.2 Other useful approaches

Traditional methods like collective teaching, static and prescriptive learning are used in some schools. These methods are not adequate for teaching students with SEN. These approaches can be replaced by some useful methods. Given that students learn in different ways, and that inclusion entails integration of students with diverse needs and abilities in the class, a variety of approaches needs to be used in order to create a truly inclusive atmosphere. The approaches used must benefit all the students in the class and not just those labelled SEN. Mittler (2000) states that:

> *Inclusion implies a radical reform of the school in terms of curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and grouping of pupils. It is based on a value system that welcomes and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language of origin, social background, level of social background, level of educational achievement or disability.* Mittler (2000 p.10)

There is no best method of teaching students with SEN; in fact, educationists believe that good and varied teaching practices are beneficial for all levels of ability of learner. Many approaches to dealing with students with SEN in mainstream classrooms have as their theoretical foundation the work of Vygotsky and Piaget (Watson 2000). Vygotsky (1978) stated that children learn best by interaction with their peers and adults around them. Piaget believed that children are not born with intelligence but rather learn through interaction with their environment (Smith *et.al.* 2003). These two theories underlie the importance of providing education for students with SEN in the same environment as their peers, as much as possible.

Social constructive approaches, thinking skills and philosophy for students are suitable for all ages and all ability levels across the whole curriculum. In using all

such approaches, the role of a mediator is very important. A mediator could be any person, such as an adult, teacher or parent who can help the child to observe things around in the world. As a teacher for 10 years, the researcher found that a students mind develops by trying to understand their interaction with the world and in that process this adult, teacher plays a crucial role. Some other useful strategies include child-centred teaching methods, such as Circle Time and the use of stories to develop thinking skills. The principle behind the Thinking Skills approach lets the students think on what they are doing and why and to become self-critical of their own information. Such teaching methods could be easily introduced in the mainstream private schools to increase participation and increase self-esteem for all school children, including those with special needs.

Largely the teaching currently practised in the expatriate schools in Dubai is traditional teaching and dependent on text-based material assessed by end-of-year exams. For sufficient provision to be made for students with SEN and inclusion to become a reality in the mainstream, expatriate private schools, change must be introduced into primary school teacher training.

3.7   Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion

The degree to which mainstream teachers are prepared to work in inclusive settings greatly determines the ultimate success of inclusive programs (Treder *et al.* 2000). Studies investigating mainstream classrooms that are associated with academic and social benefits to exceptional students indicate that the following points influence achievement in mainstream classrooms. The first point is how subject matter content is organized in curricula material and how teachers interact with students. The educational environment they experience, teacher characteristics, and the nature of the classroom influence the academic progress of students with disabilities. Teachers thus, need to be prepared for the implementation of inclusion. Such preparation typically includes SEN awareness program and training teachers in methods that enable them to promote positive interaction (Federico *et al.* 1999).

According to Brownell and Pajeras (1999) teacher effectiveness beliefs for teaching students with special needs influence their perception of success in educating students

in inclusive classrooms. As such, the effective implementation of inclusive programs requires that mainstream teachers know the characteristics of students with SEN and are aware of strategy for teaching and structuring instruction to individual student needs, if they are to successfully educate exceptional students in integrated settings.

Treder *et al.* (2000) state that if integration is to be effective, teachers have to be receptive to the principal and demands of inclusion. These authors note that teachers are more willing to include students with mild disabilities than students with more severe disabilities due to their perceived ability to successfully implement instructional goals for the entire classroom. For inclusive settings to be successful, one needs adequate planning time, administrative support, adequate material and disability-specific teaching skills. A study undertaken by Prom (1999) indicates that teachers do not believe that the academic and social needs of the majority of students with SEN can be best met in mainstream classrooms. He also indicates that mainstream teachers are less tolerant of maladaptive behaviour and learning problems, and have higher standards for acceptable classroom behaviour. As such, given the belief that students with SEN are disruptive to the mainstream classroom, the mainstream teachers are more likely to resist the placement of students with special needs in their classrooms. Furthermore, he indicates that many teachers believe educating students with SEN in mainstream classroom requires additional time, work and attention. The majority of teachers also believe that significant classroom changes need to be made to accommodate inclusion. How well teachers implement inclusive programs also depends on their attitude towards inclusion. Attitudes can be defined as learned beliefs that develop over time. Inclusive mainstream teachers have to believe that all students can be educated in mainstream classroom and that inclusion is a beneficial program if they are expected to accept working with included students.

A study looking at the importance of adapting instruction to the needs of children with disabilities (Federico *et al.* 1999) indicate that teachers need to use a variety of instructional approaches towards meeting individual student needs and learning styles. To be specific, teachers working in inclusive classrooms need to utilise task analysis to break classroom activities into smaller manageable steps, utilise a variety of student response modes, allow for different completion rates and work loads, use computer

assisted instruction and use a variety of teaching strategies such as peer-tutoring, cooperative learning and grouping techniques. When teaching in inclusive classrooms, teachers need to devote a substantial amount of their time to active instruction, break complex skills and concepts into small easy to understand steps and systematically teach in a step-by-step fashion. They should provide immediate feedback to students about the accuracy of their work and conduct much of the instruction in small groups to allow for frequent student teacher interactions. Emphasis should be given to the idea that routines should be aimed at providing reinforcement and encouragement, establishing expectation and involving exceptional students in all class activities have to utilised by teachers when adapting instruction to students educated in inclusive settings (Federico *et al.* 1999).

The significance of ensuring teachers know how to adapt instruction to the needs of students with SEN comes from observation studies of instruction which indicate that mainstream classroom teachers make few, if any adaptations in instruction. The most common area of teacher resistance is related to the judgement among mainstream educators that the instructional and curricula adaptations required for students with SEN are unfeasible in the typical classroom, particularly at the middle and high school level (De Bettencourt, 1999). In addition, Brownell *et al.* (1999) stressed that inclusion is facilitated when school administrators, principals, parents, teachers and students support it.

In short, difficulties in educating students with SEN in the mainstream primary school stem from the fact that teachers are under pressure to cover large amounts of content to meet the demands of the excellence in the education movement. The teachers teach a large number of students daily, which allows them no extra time for support for at-risk students. Teachers also have very limited planning time during the school day and the prevailing culture in many schools is supportive of content-cantered rather than student-cantered direction towards education. To sum up, accommodating the needs of students with SEN is not a priority of teachers and administrators.

Given these realities, a successful inclusive program requires total support from teachers, administrators, parents and students in providing services to students with special needs. In the researcher's view, teachers have to receive proper training and

support if inclusion has to become a success. Hence, it would be helpful to identify the views of teacher's knowledge and attitude towards inclusion if it is to be implemented effectively.

CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The findings of this study are summarized in this chapter. Section 4.3 describes the findings from questionnaires. Information collected from the mainstream teachers in the two private schools in Dubai is described in the following sequence. First, a detailed description of the participant's demographic attributes (part two of the questionnaire) will be presented. Second, a general description of responses provided to the statements and questions (part one of the questionnaire) will be described, followed by a general discussion of the extent to which the participants in the study work with the students with SEN in their classrooms. Section 4.4 summaries the qualitative data derived from fifteen interviews. The chapter will conclude with an account of information pertaining to current support received and identified areas of need.

4.2 General information about the two schools

School 1 has around 3000 students and school 2 has around 1800 students. Both schools provide primary and secondary years of schooling to their students. School 1 has around 150 teachers mainly from India and Pakistan, school 2 has around 70 teachers mostly Indian. The average class size in both schools is 30 students with one teacher. All students and teachers in both the schools are expatriates mainly from the subcontinent but regulated by MOE. The school community is mostly middle class in the UAE context. Both schools are owned and run by expatriates from the subcontinent. The majority of the teachers who were employed 5 years and above do not have a teaching certificate. These teachers have degrees of bachelors and masters in science, commerce or art subjects. The policy of both the schools has changed and the school management currently is only employing teachers who have a qualified teaching degree.

4.3   Findings from questionnaires

Twenty-five questionnaires were distributed to mainstream primary teachers. All questionnaires were returned. All the teachers are employed in private mainstream schools in Dubai.

4.3.1   Respondents Demographic Characteristics

Each participant was asked to provide general demographic information including their gender, subjects the teacher was teaching at the time of this study, total number of years teaching experience and qualification. Teachers were then asked if they had any training on teaching students with SEN and information on the type of training they had received. Lastly they were asked to identify the students with SEN they have in their classrooms.

Table 1

Gender	Number of mainstream teachers
Males	-
Females	25

Table 1 indicates that all teachers in the study were females. The study consisted of all female teachers, as the majority of the teachers were females in both schools.

Table 2 Years of teaching experience

Years of teaching experience	Number of mainstream teachers
1 – 5 years	0
6 – 10 years	7
11 – 15 years	10
16 – 20 years	5
21 – 25 years	3

Table 2 gives information about the number of years teaching experience each respondent had at the time of data collection. Years of experience ranged from 6-25

years, with the majority of respondents indicating that they had 11-15 years of experience. The number of teachers indicating that they had 6-10 years and 16-20 years was close (7 and 5 years respectively). Only 3 teachers had 21-25 years of experience.

Table 3 Subject areas taught

Subject area(s) taught	Number of mainstream teachers
Math	25
Science	25
English	25
Social Studies	25

Data showed that all teachers were teaching all major subjects in their classes and hence were class teachers.

Table 4 Highest degree earned

Highest Degree Earned	Number of mainstream teachers
Bachelors	15
Masters	4
Teacher training	6

The respondents are highly qualified teachers. Majority of the respondents did not have a teacher training degree (19 teachers).

Table 5 Training

Training on working with students with SEN in mainstream classrooms	Number of mainstream teachers
Teachers with training	25
Teachers without training	-
Type of training received	
In-service	25
Workshop	17
University training	-
Other	-
Length of training received	
1 – 2 days	25
1 week	-
Over 5 weeks	-
Topic of training received	
Dyslexia	25

With respect to training, all the participants agreed that they had received some training on working with students with SEN. Interestingly the results indicated that the teachers received their training in school workshops and in-service programs and none of the teachers surveyed had received pre-service or any other training. All the teachers indicated that the length of the training received was for 1-2 days and the topic covered was only dyslexia.

Table 6 Type of students with SEN in the classroom

Type of students with SEN educated in the classroom	Number of mainstream teachers
Learning Difficulties	25
Behavioural Disorders	6
Physical Disability	-
Hearing Impairments	-
Visual Impairments	-
Communication Disorders	-
Health Impairments	1
Intellectual Challenges	-
PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Disability)	-

Table 6 provides information on the type of students with SEN currently being educated in the mainstream classrooms. All the teachers indicated that they have students with learning difficulties in their classrooms. Only 6 teachers said they had students with behavioural disorders in their classroom and 1 teacher pointed out that she had a student with health impairment in her class.

4.3.2 Perceptions towards working with students with SEN in mainstream classroom

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the twenty-five statements categorized under three factors. These three factors consisted of statements designed to determine whether the respondents had

Factor 1: A positive attitude towards inclusion of students with SEN

Factor 2: Perceived themselves capable of adapting instruction to students with SEN

Factor 3: Perceived themselves knowledgeable of relevant information needed for working with students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.

Responses were recorded on a scale of

Disagree   Agree   Maybe

(Please refer to page 10 for why this scale was used)

The following section presents the findings of mainstream teachers who responded to statements and questions under each factor.

4.3.2.1 <u>Attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN</u>

Table 7 summarizes the results for the fifteen statements and questions making up Factor 1. These items were designed to identify the respondent's attitude towards inclusion and towards educating students with SEN in mainstream classrooms (items 1-15 in the questionnaire).

Table 7: Factor 1

Statements and questions regarding attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN	Disagree	Agree	Maybe
Inclusion is a desirable practice	22	-	3
Do you think mainstream education students would benefit?	17	3	5
Do you think a student with severe disability will benefit from inclusion?	23	-	2
Do you think inclusion would overburden or negatively impact mainstream education teachers?	-	23	2
Do you think the curriculum of the mainstream classroom does not match the included student's needs?	-	25	-
Are you concerned regarding the lack of services that the included student would receive?	-	25	-
Are you concerned regarding how the included student would be treated?	-	25	-
Do you believe that the included student would be unable to benefit by surroundings?	-	20	5
Do you believe that a student needs to be around other children with similar SEN?	-	19	6

Statements and questions regarding attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN	Disagree	Agree	Maybe
Are you concerned regarding lack of specially trained personnel available in the mainstream education classroom?	-	25	-
I am willing to make needed instructional adaptations for my students with SEN	-	19	6
Most students with SEN (regardless of their level of their disability) can be educated in the mainstream classroom	20	-	5
Students with SEN lack skills needed to master the mainstream classroom course content	-	22	3
Educating students with SEN in the mainstream classroom is disruptive to other students	-	25	-
Most students with the following SEN can be educated in the mainstream classrooms			
Learning Difficulty	-	25	-
Behavioural Disorders	-	5	4
Physical Disability	-	9	2
Hearing Impairments	25	-	-
Visual Impairments	25	-	-
Communication Disorders	25	-	-
Health Impairments	-	-	5
Intellectual Challenges	15	-	-
PMLD(Profound and Multiple Learning Disability)	10	-	-

The findings reported that all the mainstream teachers surveyed held the opinion that students with SEN were disruptive to other students in the class. Teachers had a positive attitude towards educating students with Learning Difficulties, some of them were of an opinion that students with Behavioural Disorders, Physical Disability and Health Impairments could be included in the mainstream classrooms. However, the teachers had negative attitudes towards inclusion of students with Hearing Impairment, Communication Disorder, Intellectual Challenges and PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities). The majority of mainstream teachers also felt that students with SEN lacked skills needed to master the regular classroom course

content. All teachers in the survey indicated that mainstream teachers would be overburdened by work if students with SEN had to be included. The following section will describe the respondent's perceptions towards their ability to adapt instruction to students with SEN.

4.3.2.2 Perception towards adapting instruction to students with SEN

Table 8: Factor 2

Statements regarding perception towards adapting instruction to students with SEN	Disagree	Agree	Maybe
When students with SEN experience difficulties with an assignment, I am able to adjust it to their level of need	16	-	9
If one of the students with SEN is unable to remember information given in a lesson, I know how to increase his/her retention in the next lesson	6	7	12
I have the skills needed to make instructional adaptations for my students with SEN	-	10	15
I use multi-sensory techniques	7	18	-
I clarify instructions and ensure all children understand before proceeding	13	4	8

Table 8 presents the response data to Factor 2, which consists of five statements designed to identify the respondent's ability to adapt instruction to students with SEN. Under this section, the findings indicate that mainstream teachers are less confident about their ability to facilitate remembering and move on to the next lesson. More than half of the teachers were 'not sure' if they could adapt the lessons and materials for their students with SEN. In addition, the majority of the teachers surveyed also indicated that they could not make adjustments in assignments. Nearly all teachers reported that they did not ensure that all students understood the course content before proceeding to the next chapter. The respondent's knowledge of relevant information needed for working with students with SEN in mainstream classrooms will be discussed in the following section.

4.3.2.3 <u>Knowledge of relevant information needed for working with students with SEN in mainstream classrooms</u>

Table 9 presents the response data to Factor 3, which consists of five statements designed to identify the respondent's knowledge of information needed to work with SEN students. The findings from this study revealed that the mainstream teachers had less knowledge of information pertaining to strategies for teaching students with SEN than for other students. The majority of teachers were not sure if they knew identification characteristics of students with SEN. More than half of the teachers surveyed were not sure if they knew behavioural and collaborative management strategies. Twenty teachers out of twenty-five were not sure if they wanted to be in a class with different types of students. As such, the teacher's responses indicate that they were less confident about working with students with SEN than other students.

Table 9: Factor 3

Statements regarding knowledge of relevant information	Disagree	Agree	Maybe
I know various teaching strategies for helping students with SEN master new concepts	17	3	5
I know characteristics of students with SEN	10	3	12
If any students becomes disruptive in my classroom, I know some techniques to redirect his/her behaviour	-	8	17
I know behaviour management strategies for controlling student's classroom behaviour	3	12	13
I like being in a class with different types of students	-	5	20

4.4   Interviews

The following section will provide samples of direct teacher quotes. The interview consisted of a general definition of inclusion by the researcher followed by the respondent's viewpoint on it and how inclusion of students with SEN is implemented in their schools. The participants were then asked to respond to the two research questions. Finally, the respondents were asked if they had any additional comments about their experiences with inclusion of students with SEN. The results of the interviews are summarized below in relation to the two research questions.

This is a reminder of the two research questions.

3. What are primary classroom teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms in the private sector in Dubai?

4. Do mainstream primary classroom teachers in the private sector perceive themselves capable of delivering inclusive education?

4.5   Interpreting interviews

Generally, all teachers in the study defined the concept of inclusion as '*interesting*'. Some teachers perceived inclusion of students with SEN as '*doable but with lots of effort*'. About the same number of teachers perceived that inclusion involved '*a lot of support from school administrators, parents and fellow teachers*'. Very few teachers also said, *"It is a good philosophy but can it really be achieved?"*

A grade three teacher from school 2 indicated that her school included only students with mild disabilities, as clarified by her statement about the characteristics of the student population at her school.
"We don't have any.....really handicapped students enrolled in our school. We have students who I would say have learning difficulty."

"This (referring to inclusion of students with SEN) *can be implemented in music, art and physical education (P.E) lessons but is not possible in other subjects"*.

The majority of teachers expressed that no special services or resources were provided for them. These teachers explained that most related services were obtained by parents outside the school. In addition, another grade three teacher from school 2 said, *"Well, I guess in our school, we don't have all those resources, so one can't help......".*

All 15 teachers viewed the provision of related services as being beneficial as it would support them in helping the students with SEN. All teachers also perceived that training involved in working with students with SEN in the classroom would be beneficial for them and educationally helpful for their students. The majority of the teachers had received two-day staff development programs at the beginning of the new academic year. Most teachers reported no or very little pre-service training but stated that the little training once in few years they had received was primarily due to in-service given by their school which these teachers insisted was very little.

A grade two teacher from school 1 also stressed that they were not trained enough to teach students with special needs. These teachers feel under qualified to meet these students' 'special needs'. These mainstream teachers feel that they are burdened by having these students in their mainstream classrooms. One may argue that such attitude barriers exist amongst the mainstream teachers because they do not feel prepared to work in an inclusive setting. Their lack of knowledge, training and administrative support is what keeps them from having such attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN.

Teachers from both the schools pointed out that they had classes of 30 students and with no assistance, if they were given students with SEN it was impossible for them to perform their best. Likewise, a teacher who has 8 years of experience in school 1 teaching grade two emphasized that she resented having students with special needs in her large class with no assistance. She said, *"I have no training in special education as the special education teachers do".* She said she was a *"regular classroom teacher".* With the class load, she had and with a very short planning period, she felt unqualified to teach *"these"* students and resented having to do so.

The teachers gave their insight of inclusion of students with SEN in their schools. A grade one teacher with 7 years teaching experience in school 1 perceived that including students with SEN into the classroom was an absolute power of the school's overall philosophy.

"All students as young as 5 years sit for an entrance test before they are selected and enrolled in the school."

This view was also shared by a grade four teacher from the same school who stated:

"If a student was identified as having mild learning difficulty then the parents are asked to sign a form that puts the responsibility of the student on the parent for extra classes outside the school so that the child can come to the level of the class".

Some teachers did believe that some aspects of inclusion were certainly positive, many of them perceived a challenging factor to inclusion of students with SEN that imposed hardship on the teacher and the student, in either managing behaviour or in providing effective instruction. Two teacher's comments from school 1 were:

"It might be the happening thing, but it will be very exhausting. Everyday I would go home drained, but on the other hand it would be rewarding."

"I don't think these students would benefit that much as it is talked about."

In addition some teachers credited their negative attitudes towards educating inclusive students with SEN in terms of delivering the curriculum, providing necessary modifications within the classroom and meeting the needs of all students. A grade four teacher with 9 years experience from school 2 commented:

"It would become very difficult to provide special attention to disabled children in a classroom where you have 30 students, particularly so in the primary school".

The majority of the teacher's beliefs were contributed by the social construction of the expatriate community from the sub continent. There is a conflict between the constructions of a 'normal' student. As revealed by the study these schools are exam oriented education programs and hence all students are required to learn a certain amount of information. So the 'normal' student according to these teachers is a one that retains all the information and delivers in the exam even if he does not understand

what he is learning. Getting a job is very important to the expatriate community involved in the study. This education was more goals oriented in accordance to earning a living. On the other hand, curriculum content must be designed to meet the interests, abilities, experiences, understandings and knowledge of students.

Three teachers of varying grade levels and years of teaching experience discussed the positive aspects of including students with SEN in their classrooms. Their belief was characterized by the rewards of being challenged as a teacher. One grade two teacher with 13 years experience from school 2 commented:
"There's so much reward that's priceless. If you're going to have a child with special needs in your classroom, you would want to help."

A grade five teacher with 11 years experience from school 2 said, *"We as teachers should accept the challenge, think of different ways….. if they have to be included."*

A grade four teacher with 13 years experience from school 2 commented:
"Teaching is just not another profession…..its noble….so we should try."

The majority of teachers shared viewpoints that special education teachers had specialized training that could provide benefits to the students with SEN. Some teacher comments were:
"We can have these children in our classroom but these children would only benefit from a special educator and not just by being in our class."

"I in the mainstream class would go nuts, this child should be with a special educator who could handle him one to one."

"I am not the right person to teach the retarded child, he should be sent to a person who specializes in these things."

Teachers interviewed did not know about individual educational plan (IEP) and reported that students with SEN in their class had no written IEP and furthermore that the teachers themselves were responsible for making study plans for these students.

Some teachers responded with their viewpoints about the role of the parent in educating students with SEN. One teacher with 9 years experience from school 1 commented:

"The parents should not be over ambitious and should only accept what this child can deliver."

Another teacher from the same school commented:

"The parents should take most of the responsibility in supporting the child outside the school and reinforce what the teacher has taught in the day."

These teachers perceived parents as having a critical place in the support system and these teachers believed that successful inclusion was highly dependent upon the supportive role of the parent.

The majority of the teachers revealed a high degree of work satisfaction tempered by frustration over discipline problems in class, lack of parental awareness, frequent turnovers of staff and the small stipend for the job. Despite their minimal training, all the teachers questioned reported having to deal with one student with SEN types, often including students with behaviour and intellectual challenge.

The majority of teachers made comments related to how they perceived their students. Some comments from two teachers from school 1 regarding students indicated that teachers perceived low-self esteem of students with SEN. In some cases, they further commented that the self-esteem could be increasingly damaged and relayed concern as to whether or not their students would continue to experience success at any level throughout their school years.

"These children could have a emotional turmoil ...how come I'm different."

"These students confidence is gone as they won't be able to learn like the rest of the class and would be called names."

Comments were made by all the teachers regarding their views on the key issues facing them if inclusion of students with SEN is implemented. These key issues and concerns included ways of changing the educational system and underlying demands

of these systems in meeting student needs. Some teachers also discussed about the positive attitude of school administration if inclusion had to be implemented. Teachers felt that the educational system placed excessive demands on students as well as teachers. Teachers commented on the changes in the expectations of the educational system that have occurred throughout the years. The majority of the teachers described that the current expectations have become too extensive. One teacher from school 2 with 13 years experience commented:

"We're more concerned with test scores and the learning is cantered on tests. From the age of two children are subjected to competition. The child is estimated by his school marks: if he is good at school he is a good child, if not he is the failure of the family."

Another teacher from school 1 said:

"Our school follows a very exam oriented education programme and hence all students are required to learn a certain amount of information."

Teachers discussed the research questions. They commented on the training they had received and any additional training perceived to be necessary. The teachers expressed their perceptions about the nature of the practice of inclusion. The majority of teachers reported some experience of having a student with SEN. The majority of teachers also reported having some type of in-service training, with majority of them reporting that they had received training through staff development programs. Teachers perceived that training in working with students with SEN was necessary and would be beneficial. All the teachers also stressed that they would like more training in working with students with SEN. However, all teachers predominantly indicated that they don't receive any support in working with students with SEN. In addition to the comments made, teachers indicated that the type of support could be better.

Many teachers held both positive and negative views of inclusion of students with SEN. The teachers who perceived inclusion as positive, their comments reflected a challenging factor to inclusion of students with SEN that forced hardships on the teacher in either managing behaviour or in providing effective instruction. The positive attitude toward inclusion of students with SEN was characterized by the

rewards of being challenged as a teacher and value of observing students with SEN experience success.

Teachers were concerned regarding the low self-esteem that students with SEN will experience as a result of the demands placed on them in the mainstream classroom. Comments that teachers made regarding parental involvement were positive in nature, as most teachers perceived that parents played a critical role as part of the support system.

Teachers' views regarding the key issues if inclusion of students with SEN is implemented were discussed. Some of the points raised included the education system and the underlying demands of these systems in meeting special needs. Concerns related to the excessive demands of the system included changing expectations that have become too extensive. The next section will summarize information pertaining to the teachers' area of needs in working with students with special needs.

4.5.1   Areas of need in working with students with special needs

Teachers identified areas of need in working with students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. Samples of direct teacher quotes are provided to illustrate the findings.

4.5.1.1 Support

Majority of the mainstream teachers indicated that they need support from their administrators and parents, particularly when it comes to understanding what is accepted of their students. Most of these teachers also indicated they need more resources such as tried instructional material and equipment appropriate for students' level and special needs. They also mentioned alternative tests or modified papers and individualized educational programs designed to support the exceptional students need in preparation for being in the mainstream classroom, more resource people (i.e. teacher's aide, special education teachers etc.) in mainstream schools and most important more funds. Many teachers also felt that inclusion of students with SEN can not work without the help from the special educators. To sum up majority of the

teachers reported that necessary services were needed if students with SEN had to be successfully included in mainstream classrooms.

4.5.1.2 <u>Training</u>

Many teachers who participated in the study indicated they would like to receive training in special education, particularly in terms of learning about the characteristics of students with special needs, inclusion and the individualized education program. Most of these teachers also indicated they would like to receive training on strategies on behavioural management, discipline and strategies for adapting instruction and incorporating various instructional methods into a lesson. Some of the teachers also requested training on strategies for teaching a variety of students with special needs, testing and assessing student's progress, adjusting class requirements and communication. Interestingly, this high agreement of teachers could indicate that they are experiencing changes in classroom composition and that their student populations are becoming more diverse, necessitating in-service programs on serving the needs of students in the special needs population. Some teachers also suggested the need to train the school administrators. In general, some teachers commented on specific areas of training that they would like to receive and others made more general statements such as:

"If we are to have inclusion, then more help on how to work with them in mainstream classroom is needed".

"The kind of training where we can be taught specific strategies to use in the classroom".

"What's the best approach to these students…..".

"A list of things like this works with these type of students or that works with those………".

Some of the teachers mentioned needed training that addressed students with dyslexia and specific ways for teaching students with learning difficulties. These teachers mentioned that they had previous in-service training on dyslexia, which was not enough.

4.5.1.3 <u>More time and reduced class size</u>

All teachers in the study reported having 30 students under their class. Nearly all the teachers indicated they would like to have extra time for planning and some shared time to collaborate with their co-teachers. All the teachers noted that they need reduced class loads if they were expected to individualize instruction and meet the needs of students with special needs.

4.5.1.4 <u>Other needs</u>

Some of the teachers indicated motivation and understanding from the school administrators. Quotations provided by some of the teachers emphasized the fact that administrators need to understand the need for teachers to get involved in scheduling in addition to moving away from 'grade level goals' to 'individual goals for all students' if inclusion is to work.

4.6   Summary of results

All teachers in the study were teaching in private schools and had no public school experience. Years of experience ranged from 5 to 23 years with the majority of respondents indicating that they had 11-15 years of experience. All the teachers reported some experience of students with SEN in their teaching experience.

Data collected indicated that majority of the teachers interviewed did not support the philosophy regarding inclusion of students with SEN into the mainstream education classroom without training and resources. Some teachers had a more positive attitude towards inclusion of students with SEN. Teachers were less willing to educate students with Hearing Impairments, Communication Disorder, Intellectual Challenged and PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) in the mainstream

classroom. These teachers also felt students with SEN lack skills needed to master the mainstream classroom course content. Expatriate teachers had this feeling maybe because they are here for a short time however Alghazo and Gaad (2004) study on the Emarati (nationals) mainstream teachers had similar findings.

An analysis of responses collected from teachers also indicates their ability to adapt instruction to students with SEN, especially when it comes to their ability to increase retention or make instructional adaptations for students with SEN. In addition the mainstream teachers expressed concern about the availability of support, resources and appropriate instructional material needed to work with students with SEN. These teachers also may have a negative attitude towards inclusion because of the availability of sufficient time needed to consult with other experienced teachers. Teachers in general felt the large teaching load in the mainstream classroom makes it hard to effectively meet the needs of students with SEN in their classrooms.

An analysis of data pertaining to the type of support received and areas of needs in working with students with SEN indicates a large number of the mainstream teachers need support and training and reduced class loads. In addition, teachers indicated they need a description of responsibilities and motivation.

Overall, the goal of this study was not necessarily to generalize data collected to all primary mainstream expatriate teachers working in mainstream schools in Dubai. Rather the interest was in identifying whether primary mainstream teachers working in mainstream schools have the perception, ability, resources and support needed to work with students with SEN if they were to be included in the mainstream classrooms.

As such, generalizing data collected to all primary mainstream teachers should be done with caution, given some findings may reflect bias, since data analyzed was based on teachers' perceptions. As such, additional research focusing on the attitudes and needs of primary mainstream teachers working in mainstream classrooms needs to be carried out to support the results found in this study, thus, providing a basis for generalizations.

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the conclusions drawn from the study will be discussed, as well as the answers from the two research questions. The research problem addressed in this study focuses on current mainstream teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms and if these teachers perceive themselves capable of delivering inclusive education in the private schools for expatriates in Dubai. The study examined issues that are related to inclusion of students with SEN. Such issues as whether the primary mainstream teachers have skills and resources to promote effective inclusion such as being able to adapt required curriculum modifications, use strategies for teaching students with special needs, identify the characteristics of students with SEN and use strategies for managing students' behaviour.

The review of literature demonstrates that provision of education for students with SEN enabling access to mainstream classrooms and curricula, rather than set them apart from their peers, can be a reality. However, if such SEN provision is to be effective then a number of factors have to be carefully considered. Analysis of the findings of this small, limited study reveals that not much has been achieved in terms of providing for students with SEN in the UAE, and there remains a lot to be done. In order to gain insight on teacher perceptions qualitative methods were used. Participation in the study was voluntary. All teachers involved in the study were sub-continental expatriates teaching in private mainstream classrooms.

Twenty-five teachers were surveyed. The questionnaire contained questions and statements regarding teacher perceptions of participants' attitudes towards inclusion and students with SEN, awareness towards adapting instruction to students with SEN and whether the teachers perceived themselves knowledgeable of the following: strategies for teaching students with SEN; characteristics of students with SEN and behavioural management strategies. Teachers perceptions were assessed from the survey items using a 3-item scale (disagree, agree and maybe). Demographic characteristics including gender, number of years teaching experience, subjects

taught, qualification, information on training on students with SEN and type of students with SEN in their classroom.

Additionally fifteen teachers were interviewed. Participants were first explained the term 'inclusion' as many were not aware. Interviews were transcribed, coded and categorized under themes. The followings are discussion of issues explored by the study in attempt to answer the two research questions followed by research-based recommendations for future practice.

5.2   Research question 1: What are the primary classroom teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classroom in the private sector in Dubai?

5.2.1   Attitude towards inclusion of students with special needs

Majority of the teachers did not support the idea of full inclusion of students with SEN in their mainstream classrooms. Students with Learning Difficulties and dyslexia were accepted. The teachers were less willing to educate students with Hearing Impairments, Communication Disorder, Intellectual Challenged and PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) in the mainstream classroom. These teachers also felt that such students lack skills needed to master the mainstream classroom curriculum. These findings suggest primary mainstream teachers are willing to include students with Learning Difficulties, some of them were of an opinion that students with Behavioural Disorders, Physical Disability and Health Impairments could be included. These findings are in agreement with Liu *et al.* (1999). Teachers tend to be more willing to educate students in their classrooms as long as the students do not have severe special needs. These findings are also in line with the conclusion of the research done by Al Ghazo and Gaad (2004).

The fact that most teachers from both schools have positive attitudes towards inclusion of students with mild special needs may be related to the findings that they had experience of teaching such students and had received short in-service trainings. As such these teachers are more willing to include students with certain special needs, given their awareness of how to work with them. DeBettencourt (1999) support this

position by emphasizing that the number and type of courses taken by mainstream teachers influence their acceptance of inclusion. In short, teachers who have received training tend to be more willing to work with students with special needs.

Some teachers indicated that they could try having students with SEN in their classrooms but believed that special classes should also be provided. Teachers had both positive and negative views. The teachers' perceived inclusion as positive, but their comments reflected a challenging element to inclusion that imposed hardships on the teacher in providing effective instructions. Marshall, Stojanovik and Ralph (2002) investigated PGCE students and found that they had positive attitudes but some of them expressed concern about workload. The positive attitude towards inclusion was characterised by being challenged as a teacher. Many teachers commented on equality of educating students with SEN along with non-disabled peers. Teachers preferred the provision of special classes in situation that required too much time taken by the classroom teacher in order to address the needs involved.

5.2.2   Cultural beliefs and values

As of now, the teachers and schools in Dubai still follow the traditional approach that suggests that students with SEN especially those with obvious or severe special needs should be in centres rather than being included in mainstream classes. Teachers interviewed had views of school education for 'intelligent' and 'vocational' training for the others, instead of education for all. Gaad (2001) undertook a study on students with SEN in the UAE. She found that cultural beliefs and values are behind the assumption by some teachers that the best place for such students is in a Centre for Preparation and Rehabilitation of the Handicapped (this is how centres for special needs are known in the UAE). Culture plays a very important role here, in some cultures students who are 'naughty' are considered active students but in some cultures, these students are labelled as having behavioural problems. Culture, tradition and attitudes play a very important role and effects mainstream teachers judgement and provision. Culture and the whole school approach should be positive in meeting needs of students with special needs.

5.3   Research question 2: Do mainstream primary classroom teachers in the private sector perceive themselves capable of delivering inclusive education?

5.3.1   Abilities towards working with students with SEN in mainstream classrooms

The majority of the teachers who participated in the study were less confident about their ability to facilitate remembering and make instructional adaptations for students with SEN. These findings suggest, in accordance with researchers such as DeBettencourt (1999) and Minke *et al.* (1996) that mainstream teachers make few adaptations in instruction when working with students with SEN. These outcomes emphasize the importance of ensuring teachers know how to adapt instruction to students with SEN. To be specific, researchers such as Hutchinson *et. al.* (1999) and York *et. al.* (1990) stressed that teachers working in inclusive classrooms need to know how to break complex skills and concepts into small, easy to understand steps, provide immediate feedback to students about accuracy of their work, and conduct instruction in small groups to allow for frequent student-teacher interactions. The school system should plan and implement personnel development programs designed to not only help teachers adjust instruction to students with SEN, but also help them identify and implement effective instructional strategies if inclusion is to succeed.

5.3.2   Availability of resources and support needed

The teacher's rejection of inclusion in many cases stemmed from their perceived lack of support and resources. Firstly, the mainstream teachers indicated they lack appropriate instructional material needed for students with SEN. Secondly, the teachers did not have sufficient time to produce instructional material and consult with experienced teachers. Teachers indicated that the large teaching load in the mainstream classroom makes it hard for them to meet the needs of their students with SEN effectively. These results are in line with studies done by O'Shea *et al.* (2000) and Federico *et. al.* (1999) and suggest that mainstream teachers lack sufficient time, resources and support needed to effectively work with students with SEN. Given limited funding and the cost of instructional material and equipment needed for students with SEN, these findings are not surprising. School systems vary in terms of the availability of resources needed to get what they require. More efforts needs to be

put into helping teachers to find innovative ways of making their own instructional material and adapting what they have to suit their needs. This can be achieved through in-service training, possibly in conjunction with teacher training institutions.

5.3.3 Knowledge of relevant information needed for working with students with SEN in mainstream classrooms

All teachers agreed that they had received a short in-service training on dyslexia. However, all teachers responded that additional in-service training in working with students with SEN was desired. Since all the teachers agreed that more in-service training was needed, findings appeared to support previous research in that teachers do not believe that they have adequate training in working with students with SEN (Scott, *et.al.* 1998). Some teacher's perception about the type of training needed included effective strategies that could be applied to common problems that arise in the classrooms. Some other teacher asked for training on understanding characteristics of students with SEN. Emphasis should be placed on training all teachers to work with students of all abilities. General and special education departments at institutions of higher learning must work collaboratively to determine skills or strategies teachers should be taught, if teachers are expected to implement inclusive education successfully.

5.3.4 Types of support currently needed for working with students with SEN

Data collected indicates that school systems and administrators need to provide more help to primary mainstream teachers working in mainstream schools. Researchers such as Brownell *et al.* (1999) and Barnett *et al.* (1998) stressed that successful inclusive effort are associated with administrative support and adequate material and personnel resources. As such, school systems need to involve parents, teachers, students and key community members in planning, if inclusion of students with SEN is to be implemented successfully.

The teachers in the study identified different areas of needs. In particular, these mainstream teachers indicated they need administrative and parental support in understanding what is expected of their students. In addition, these teachers indicated

they need more instructional resources, additional resource people, more funds and assistance in dealing with school administrators. Furthermore, they indicated the need for training on the characteristics of students with special needs, the individualized education program and strategies for adapting instruction, behaviour management and discipline. Other requests consisted of training for school administrators. These findings are in accordance with information provided by Brownell *et al.* (1999) and Barnett *et al.* (1998). These authors indicate that mainstream teachers need training in special education, strategies for teaching and reinforcing students with SEN and strategies for collaboration and behaviour management.

Teachers working in mainstream classrooms are not sure of what is expected of them, do not have a clear picture of how an inclusive program operates, and do not have sufficient expertise for inclusion. Steps need to be taken to ensure teachers have the required training and support needed to implement inclusive programs successfully. Brownell *et al.* (1999) indicate inclusion of students with SEN is facilitated when teachers know their roles and responsibilities.

Teacher training experiences should include enough opportunities to collaborate with colleagues who are implementing strategies of inclusion, visit classrooms where teachers focus on student learning styles. Furthermore, teachers could participate in activities that foster learning styles at workshops and in-service programs.

Information provided in this study, together with comments made by some teachers clearly emphasise the importance of making changes in classroom instructional procedures and the significance of providing mainstream teachers with training, additional instructional and planning time, reduced class sizes, assistant help and adequate instructional and curriculum material (Soodak *et al.* 1998). It could be argued that teachers do not really need to learn some kind of magical instructional strategies to work with students with special needs as some students with SEN are already included in the regular classrooms with no clear identifications or plans. Rather, students can be taught using what teachers already know, as long as their needs are identified.

5.4 Summary of recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that schools along with teacher training institutes should provide primary mainstream teachers working in mainstream classrooms in the private sector in Dubai with:

1. Information sharing workshops and adequate in-service training designed to enhance their knowledge of special education and strategies for teaching students with SEN, adapting and adjusting instruction, adapting and grading tests and classroom management.
2. Time management for planning.
3. Adequate resources, equipment, teaching assistants and teaching material suitable for included students and help teachers to modify current tools to help students with SEN to achieve educational goals.
4. Reduced class sizes.
5. Training needs to be provided for school administrators.

In addition, media should also play a role by running awareness programme, which should help understanding and eliminate misunderstanding about students with SEN.

5.5 Conclusion

Information discussed thus far leads to few conclusions. A few teachers hold a positive attitude towards inclusion of students with SEN (i.e. believe students with SEN should be educated with the mainstream peers to a certain point) but all teachers in particular felt students with SEN lack skills needed to master the mainstream classroom course content. Some students with SEN were more accepted than others. Specifically, the teachers were less willing to educate students with Hearing Impairments, Communication Disorder, Intellectual Challenged and PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties) in the mainstream classroom. All teachers surveyed held the opinion that students with SEN were disruptive to other students in the class. Teachers had a positive attitude towards educating students with Learning Difficulties, some of them were of an opinion that students with Behavioural Disorders, Physical Disability and Health Impairments could be included in the mainstream classrooms. All teachers in the study expressed the need for reduced class

sizes, more resources and support services. Since most teachers did not receive any special education training in their university studies, they feel that they are not qualified to carry through with the inclusion process. Some teachers say that inclusion cannot work without the help from the special educators. By providing successful opportunities for teaching, a positive attitude may be reflected. It is very important to focus on teachers' attitudes in order to implement reform recommendations. It is more important however to examine reasons and factors behind such attitudes if we wish to change them.

Lastly, it is not advisable for school systems to view mainstream classrooms as the least restrictive environments for all students. Rather inclusion of students with SEN should be based on each student's individual needs and adequate in-service training designed to prepare teachers for working with students with SEN. Addressing the areas of needs identified in this study would help mainstream teachers accept and implement inclusive programs successfully. It would be beneficial if university programs and schools address these needs, if they are to help implementing inclusive programs for students with SEN. Failure to do this will only result in placing students with special needs in classroom environments where teachers cannot help them to reach their full potentials.

Inferences drawn from questionnaires and interviews with teachers indicated that students with SEN pose a challenge to teachers. These challenges require changes in thinking and in the practices in the relevant institutions so that they can provide sufficient resources and conditions for successful implementation of inclusive education polices. More than two decades ago, Altman (1981) stressed that if teachers hold a positive attitude towards students with SEN, this allows and encourages the establishments of policies that guaranties the student's right to be educated in regular classrooms. Lieberman (1990) in Al Ghazo & Gaad (2004) stated that if people do not see the need for change, the task of bringing about change becomes more difficult, if not impossible. Inclusion is a process. For it to be successful, existing school, system in provisions of curriculum, teaching methods and leadership roles, will have to change.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please tick under the column that best describes your agreement/disagreement with the following statements.

	Statements and questions regarding attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN	Disagree	Agree	Maybe
1.	Inclusion is a desirable practice.			
2.	Do you think mainstream education students would benefit?			
3.	Do you think a student with severe disability will benefit from inclusion?			
4.	Do you think inclusion would overburden or negatively impact the mainstream education teachers?			
5.	Do you think the curriculum of the mainstream classroom do not match the included student's needs?			
6.	Are you concerned regarding the lack of services that the included child would receive?			
7.	Are you concerned regarding how the included child would be treated?			
8.	Do you believe that the included child would be unable to benefit by surroundings?			
9.	Do you believe that a child needs to be around other children with similar SEN?			
10.	Are you concerned regarding lack of specially trained personnel available in the mainstream education classroom?			
11.	I am willing to make needed instructional adaptations for my students with SEN.			
12.	Most students with SEN (regardless of their level of their disability) can be educated in the mainstream classroom.			

	Statements and questions regarding attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN	Disagree	Agree	Maybe
13.	Students with SEN lack skills needed to master the mainstream classroom course content.			
14.	Educating students with SEN in the mainstream classroom is disruptive to other students.			
15.	Most students with the following SEN can be educated in the mainstream classrooms			
	Learning Difficulties			
	Behavioural Disorders			
	Physical Disability			
	Hearing Impairments			
	Visual Impairments			
	Communication Disorders			
	Health Impairments			
	Intellectual Challenges			
	PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Disability)			

	Statements and questions regarding attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN	Disagree	Agree	Maybe
16.	When students with SEN experience difficulties with an assignment, I am able to adjust it to their level of need			
17.	If one of the students with SEN is unable to remember information given in a lesson, I know how to increase his/her retention in the next lesson			
18.	I have the skills needed to make instructional adaptations for my students with SEN			
19.	Do you use multi-sensory techniques?			
20.	Do you clarify instructions and ensure all children understand before proceeding?			
21.	I know various teaching strategies for helping students with SEN master new concepts			
22.	I know characteristics of students with SEN			
23.	If any students becomes disruptive in my classroom, I know some techniques to redirect his/her behaviour			
24.	I know behaviour management strategies for controlling student's classroom behaviour			
25.	I like being in a class with different types of students			

26. What is your gender? (tick one)   (a) Male _____ (b) Female_____

27. What grade level(s) do you currently teach in? _____

28. What subject area(s) do you currently teach? _____

29. How many years have you been teaching altogether? _____

30. What is your highest degree? (tick one):

   (a) Bachelors ___; (b) Masters ___; (c) Other (specify)

31. Have you had any training on teaching students with SEN in mainstream classroom?   (tick one)

   (a) Yes _____ (b) No _____

32. What type of training did you receive? (tick all that apply)

   (a) In-service training _____

   (b) Workshop _____

   (c) University training _____

   (d) I have no training _____

   (e) Other (specify) _____

33. For how long was the training? _____

34. Please put a tick if you have students with the following SEN in your classroom.

Learning Difficulty
Behavioural Disorders
Physical Disability
Hearing Impairments
Visual Impairments
Communication Disorders
Health Impairments
Intellectual Challenges
PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties)

Appendix B

Transcript sheet

Date:

Time:

Interviewee:

Place:

Subject: Attitudes towards inclusion and students with SEN