The Gap Between the Rhetoric and the Reality of Inclusion Policy: The Theoretical Framework and Challenges of Effective Implementation at one Private American School in Dubai - A Case Study

الفجوة بين التصاريح البلاغية لسياسة الدمج وواقع تطبيقها: الإطار النظري وتحديات التنفيذ الفعال في مدرسة أمريكية خاصة في دبي - دراسة حالة

by

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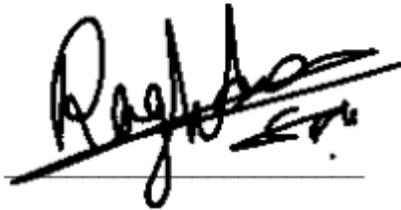
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ABSTRACT

With the slogan 'School for All' the UAE's Ministry of Education (MoE) formally introduced guidelines for the delivery of special advanced education and services in May 2010, enabling equal access to education for all students regardless of their abilities. The UAE has ratified and signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (UN 2008); this initiative is the first concrete step taken by the MoE to implement federal law 29/2006 concerning the rights of individuals with disabilities and equal access to education.

This research aims to study how one private American school in Dubai is implementing the Dubai inclusive framework of policies and guidelines that have been made available through the School for All initiative. More importantly, the study presents a comprehensive and well-contextualised image of the implementation from the viewpoints of the many stakeholders. The study opted for a qualitative research approach and a one-case study methodology (inclusive of team members, principals, and teachers).

Semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and a review of students' work were used to obtain qualitative data. The school data was recorded in a context-situated case study format to gain a better understanding of what the implementation of inclusive education looked like in one private school after the School for All initiative was put into place.

Moreover, to provide a higher level of support for individuals with disabilities, the School for All programme is working to bring about a paradigm change towards inclusive education. This research investigates the methods by which inclusive policies and practices have been developed at the case study school as a direct result of the requirements that have been put into place, and how those requirements have assisted the case study school in moving towards a more inclusive culture.

Additionally, it generates concerns that are relevant to inclusion from the viewpoints of the stakeholders. These viewpoints are critical in gauging the gaps in implementation and the discontent that is generated subsequently. The study does this by drawing on the "Index for Inclusion" that Booth and Ainscow (2011) developed to investigate the obstacles and resources that stand in the way of learning and participation, through focusing on three aspects of a school: cultures, policies, and practices. This index was deliberately selected because it offers a framework

that is both flexible and adaptive and one that can be used for both the development and evaluation of inclusive schools.

الملخص

تحت شعار "المدرسة للجميع"، قدمت وزارة التربية والتعليم في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة رسميًا إرشادات لتقديم التعليم الخاص المتقدم وخدماته في مايو 2010، مما يتيح تحقيق المساواة في الوصول إلى التعليم لجميع الطلاب بغض النظر عن قدراتهم. ولقد صدقت دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة ووقعت على اتفاقية الأمم المتحدة لحقوق الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة (الأمم المتحدة 2008)؛ وتعتبر هذه المبادرة هي الخطوة الأولى الملموسة التي اتخذتها وزارة التربية والتعليم لتنفيذ القانون الاتحادي 2006/29 بشأن حقوق الأفراد ذوي الإعاقة وتحقيق المساواة في الحصول على التعليم.

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة كيفية قيام مدرسة أمريكية خاصة في دبي بتنفيذ سياسات وارشادات الدمج في دبي والتي تم سنها لتتوافق مع مبادرة "المدرسة للجميع". والأهم من ذلك، أن هذه الدراسة تقدم صورة شاملة وواقعية لمدى تنفيذ سياسات الدمج من وجهة نظر العديد من أصحاب المصلحة. ولقد اختارت الدراسة نهج البحث النوعي ومنهجية دراسة الحالة الواحدة (حيث شمل البحث أعضاء فريق الدمج والمديرين والمعلمين).

تم استخدام المقابلات شبه المنظمة وملاحظات المشاركين ومراجعة عمل الطلاب للحصول على البيانات النوعية. تم تسجيل بيانات المدرسة في شكل دراسة حالة من أرض الواقع للحصول على فهم أفضل لما يبدو عليه تنفيذ التعليم الدامج في مدرسة خاصة بعد وضع مبادرة "المدرسة للجميع" في حيز التنفيذ.

علاوة على ذلك، لتوفير مستوى أعلى من الدعم للأفراد ذوي الإعاقة، يعمل برنامج "المدرسة للجميع" على إحداث تغيير جذري في التوجهات نحو التعليم الدامج.

تبحث هذه الدراسة في الأساليب التي تم من خلالها تطوير السياسات والممارسات الدامجة في مدرسة دراسة الحالة والتي تأتي كنتيجة مباشرة لتلبية متطلبات مبادرة "المدرسة للجميع"، وكيف ساعدت هذه المتطلبات المدرسة في التحرك نحو تبني ثقافة الدمج بشكل أوسع. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن هذه الدراسة تعرج الى مصادر القلق الخاصة بالدمج من وجهات نظر أصحاب المصلحة. حيث تعتبر وجهات النظر هذه حاسمة في قياس ثغرات التنفيذ وعدم الرضا الذي قد يتولد لاحقًا.

تسعى هذه الدراسة لتحقيق كل هذه الأهداف من خلال الاعتماد على "مؤشر الدمج" الذي طوره كلا من بوث وأينسكو (2011) والذي توظفه الدراسة للتحقيق في العقبات والموارد التي تقف في طريق التعلم والمشاركة، وذلك من خلال التركيز على ثلاثة جوانب خاصة بالمدرسة الا وهي الثقافات والسياسات، والممارسات. تم اختيار هذا المؤشر عن قصد لأنه يوفر إطارًا مرئًا وقابلًا للتكيف ويمكن استخدامه لتطوير وتقييم المدارس الدامجة.

DEDICATION

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has helped me grow wings and reach out for my goals.

In the eyes of the world, Dr Meenaz Kassam has been a lovely mentor and she and her husband Moe have shown unwavering and encouraged me to achieve my dreams.

Without my late Baba I wouldn't be where I am now.

My beloved Mama fostered in me a passion for compassion from a young age.

My elder sister Ramla is my safety net and rock in every manner.

Ragwa, my youngest sister, is someone I can count on to be there for me.

To my younger siblings, Sondos and Mahmoud, thank you for your continued support – they have always been there when I needed them.

Sheikha Azza Bint Sultan Al Nuaimi, my dearest friend, has always urged me to keep moving forwards and doing the things I enjoy.

Thanks to everyone who has encouraged me to spread my wings and fly towards my dreams.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The world has progressed over time to accommodate people's diversity by removing barriers and allowing everyone the right to be included and supported in society. One of the strategies to remove barriers to people with special needs is 'inclusion', which calls for the structuring of classrooms so that all students can be educated together. School districts are bringing in education specialists who help create a supportive environment clearly defining the requirements from special teaching skills, supportive staff, and parents who work together to educate all students, including those with learning difficulties.

Though a young country, the UAE has prioritised education, and literacy rates for both genders are close to 95%. Moreover, over the last two decades, the UAE has made a strong commitment to its inclusion policy. Federal law requires all educational institutions in the UAE to accept students with special needs. All students should be able to participate in mainstream education, regardless of their learning abilities. UAE's history of inclusivity is a testimony to the government's continued efforts to eliminate barriers to learning and align its educational policy framework with worldwide best practices for inclusive education. As a result, federal law 29/2006 was the first law to defend the rights of students with special needs (MSA 2006). Rather than stigmatising special needs students, the policy was designed to protect and incorporate them into traditional educational settings rather than stigmatise them.

The law was amended by Ministry of Education (MoE) law 14/2009 to The Rights of People with Disabilities (Alborno 2017).

Following the implementation of federal law 29/2006, in 2008, the UAE signed the CRPD. Later, The UAE ratified the CRPD in 2010 by affirming its commitment to the rights of individuals with disabilities in various areas, including education (Alborno 2017).

Inclusive education reform is founded on a social justice ideology that promotes equitable opportunity (Forlin 2013). As a significant step towards social inclusion and engagement of individuals with disabilities in the development process, the UAE government has initiated the 'School for All' initiative (MSA 2006).

In accordance with 'My Community, a City for Everyone' (KHDA 2017) and the vision of His Highness His Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashed Al Maktoum, Dubai aims to become an utterly inclusive city by 2020, accommodating learners with all types of impairments.

Furthermore, Dubai is committed to changing from a medical paradigm to a privileges social model, in which the accomplishment of inclusive education depends on the school community fostering positive attitudes towards the ability of all learners, regardless of ethnicity, aptitude, or cultural background (KHDA 2019). It was asserted that students with a higher risk of acquiring Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) should not be denied an education due to "their disability, as stated by the Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework" (KHDA 2017).

The appropriate educational initiative has become a focal point for all UAE schools. The MoE's recommendations and guidelines are legislated to monitor curriculum and instruction and ensure that all students with SEND are effectively accommodated. Dubai's Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) performs inspections to check the accessibility of equal educational opportunities for all students, including those with SEND. The notion of inclusion, as per government guidelines, seems to be the magic solution, since it guarantees that individuals with disabilities are acknowledged and accepted by their classmates and other community members and given the opportunity to fulfil their academic goals.

Though the spirit and objectives of the inclusion policies are idealistic and noble, their implementation has proved challenging. Moreover, many significant stakeholders in the inclusive education sector express dissatisfaction with the challenges they face (Anati 2013). Given the concerns raised by the development's key stakeholders, it appears that a discrepancy exists between the project's original objectives and its successful execution. Obstacles, including lack of funding, insufficient teacher expertise, a limited curriculum, and unfavourable school conditions could ruin the best intentions. Because of this, special needs pupils may be isolated, and their performance may be hindered because of their inability to receive services. Though special needs students may be included in the classroom, inclusion does not automatically mean that such students will receive the appropriate education to meet their potential.

Inclusion's goals seem admirable: they allow people with special needs to participate in mainstream schooling on an equal footing with their peers. In certain circumstances, though, these objectives are merely rhetorical. Financial assistance, teacher expertise, a well-rounded

curriculum, and a school atmosphere may provide challenges. As a result, special needs students may be neglected, leading to isolation and poor performance. This could be the reality of the inclusion strategy.

1.2 Purpose and Rationale

The primary objective of this study is to assess the effectiveness of policy implemntaion and offer solutions to the issues related to education inclusion in standard schools in the UAE, by focusing on a private school in Dubai. A preliminary review of this policy reveals a significant gap between ideology and practice.

The purpose of this research is to examine the effectiveness of adopting the inclusion policy framework and the difficulties that teachers and administrators confront in the process. For the context of this research, the terms 'School for All' and 'inclusion policy' are used interchangeably.

The School for All initiative aims to promote inclusive education to better serve students with special needs. Nevertheless, some schools are unable to provide these services, provision has been suboptimal, ands stakeholders have reported difficulties with this process. Researchers look forward to learning how well the School for All project has helped the inclusion committees at participating schools create more welcoming school environments by implementing more inclusive policies and procedures. Moreover, the study aims to examine the gaps in the effective implementation of inclusion policies and to recommend collaborative approaches that should be encouraged and supported to fill these critical gaps.

Therefore this research will contribute to the currently sparse body of knowledge on inclusion policy approaches. With this study, we hope to provide guidance on possible future policy frameworks. As a Master of Education student in special needs, I would like to learn more about the barriers that impede special needs students from taking advantage of inclusion policies such as School for All. This prompted me to conduct this research. My research may be seen as an attempt to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the MoE's initial implementation of federal law 29/2006 on the rights of people with disabilities.

Humphrey et al. (2013) state that the importance and educational relevance of this topic has become a major governmental priority in proactively addressing students with SEND. Thus it will be interesting to be a part of this investigation. The question is to ascertain the extent to which educators are putting beneficial practices into action for students with special needs.

My dissertation shall investigate all the experts involved in implementing inclusion policy at a private school in Dubai. I have already done some preliminary research and became aware of problems with some teachers and students involved in the SEND experience. This has inspired me to continue my research to understand the problems and their causes, and to propose solutions.

Alborno and Gaad (2014) alluded to the Booth and Ainscow (2011) "Index for Inclusion" and discussed the difficulties that educational institutions face in the UAE. They pointed out that certain stakeholders still act as "decision-makers" for students with special needs. School for All initiatives emphasise services for students with SEND. Therefore, accepting them should not be a financial risk, but an opportunity to give them the necessary resources. (MoE 2010).

Consequently, learning should not centre around or be imposed on students; rather, they should be equal partners whose "voices" are recognised (Nislin & Pesonen 2018). This researcher observed that SEND students were often ignored in questions asked to the class because the teacher often failed to modify the question to allow all students to comprehend it. As a result, the researcher felt compelled to research the subject and provide recommendations to ameliorate this situation.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

All Dubai's private schools must set up an inclusion department and appoint team members to assist the principal in implementing the educational framework and ensure that all students are provided with an inclusive education (KHDA 2017). Most schools' inclusion committees, however, have difficulty adhering to inclusive policy guidelines and accomplishing their stated goals (Alborno 2017). Team members include an inclusion champion leader, a provision leader for students with special needs, and classroom teachers. As a team, the members of the school work together to achieve an inclusive learning environment for students with special needs (KHDA 2019). However, my preliminary observation suggests that team members often do not have the expected skills and knowledge.

Furthermore, several variables have been identified by Schuelka (2018) that can be used to evaluate the success of inclusive education policy implementation:

- Policies promoting diversity and inclusion in the classroom should be communicated clearly to the entire student body.
- A strong and supportive school administration.
- Committees on inclusive pedology training.
- The inclusion of inclusive education as a component of a broader social effort is one example of this collaboration.

Drawing on Gaad (2017) there are three reasons why inclusion policies in UAE schools are not being successfully implemented:

- Families are not included in the process and are reluctant to accept their children's unique needs and to pay for their care.
- Teachers are under prepared because of the increased workload and impending evaluations.
- The staff at the school cannot support such a policy.

1.4 Research Questions (RQ)

It is anticipated that the results of this study will help policymakers in the education sector better understand the difficulties of putting inclusion policy into practice and encourage them to work on solutions. The purpose of the study will be achieved through answering the overarching reasearch question, which is stated as follow:

RQ: To what extent is the school following the guidelines provided by the KHDA inclusive education policy framework when it comes to implementing the inclusion policy?

To reach a conclusive answer for that research question, the study has sub-questions (SQ) merged from the objectives of the current paper, they are:

SQ1. What is the **admission procedure** followed by the school to admit SEND students?

SQ2. What are the **identification and referral procedures** followed by the school?

SQ3. To what extent are **the inclusion committee members** in a private American curriculum school in Dubai adhering to the **KHDA inclusion education policy framework** in team meetings, **individualized education program (IEP)** development, and curriculum adaptation?

1.5   Significance of Dissertation

There are some publications (Gaad 2007) that shed light on the implementation of inclusive policies in Dubai. However, there is a dearth of research and relevant material on the implementation of the UAE's first law to safeguard the rights of students with special needs; therefore, this study could help fill the current gap in documented studies in this field.

The school where I have already begun preliminary investigation adheres to the concepts of positive education and overall wellness. Hence, the principal has approved my research as a mode of assessing how successfully the school is able to implement inclusion policy. The results of my research will allow the school to recognise the gaps in optimum implementation and allow them to work on filling those gaps. In addition to this, the course content is in line with the UAE's objective to become one of the top educational mainstream countries by the year 2021. (Ministry of Cabinet Affairs & The Future 2020). As a result, the significance of this research cannot be overstated.

1.6 Dissertation Structure

The study's conceptual and theoretical underpinnings are presented in Chapter 2 along with an analytical evaluation of the literature and gaps therein. Chapter 3 describes the approach used as well as the participants, environment, and equipment used to collect data. Chapter 4 presents the results of the data analysis and Chapter 5 closes with a review of the advantages, limits, and possible future research recommendations.

Figure 1: Three approaches to case study methods in education (Yazan 2015)

The Qualitative Report 2015

Five steps of research design:
conducting literature review,
constructing a theoretical
framework, identifying a
research problem, crafting and
sharpening research questions,
and selecting the sample
(purposive sampling).
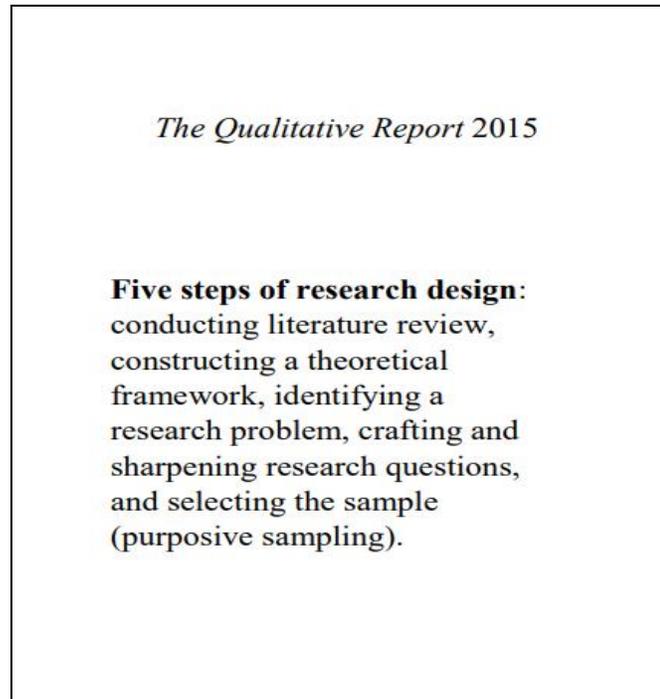
Figure 2. Three approaches to case study methods in education (Yazan 2015, pg. 20)

Designing Case Study — Design refers to "the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions" (p. 20).
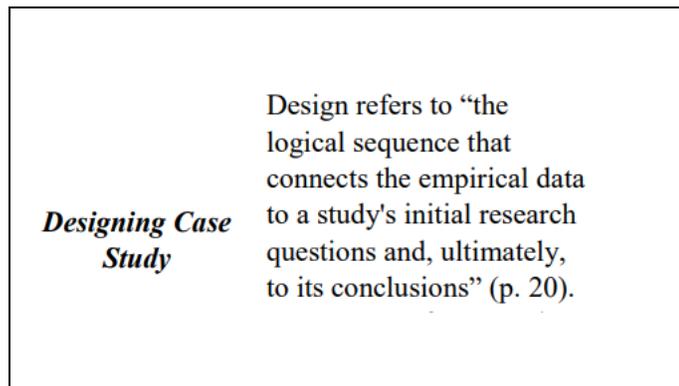
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This section reviews the relevant literature and puts the thesis investigation into context. The concept of the 'social disability approach' (Shakespeare 2006) that underpins this research will be utilised as a framework for investigating concerns about the effectiveness of and obstacles faced in adopting inclusion policies. Hence this study's framework will be based on social disability theory.

The primary sources for the research literature are the British University in Dubai (BUiD) library and Google Scholar; the secondary sources are Elton B. Stephens Company (EBSCO). Fortunately, all locations had many resources and materials that helped with the research dissertation. Furthermore, several aspects related to the topic will be presented in the following sections: Conceptual and Theoretical Framework, Social Disability Approach, Inclusion in Education Global Prospective, Inclusion Policy in UAE, Inclusion Team Members, Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion Education, Parents' Involvement and Attitudes Towards Inclusion, Professional Development and Inclusion, and School Culture Level of Inclusion.

2.1 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Several terminologies are defined in relation to the objectives of the research.

Inclusive Education: described as integrating all students in the same classrooms and school environments, which should be a move towards meaningful educational opportunities for previously disadvantaged learners – not just children with disabilities but also learners of diverse races and dialects (Shyman 2015).

Inclusion: to be "included" in a community or organisation in general. Inclusion and heterogeneity are intricately linked ideas. It is critical to recognise and value others and to treat them with compassion and understanding (Qvortrup & Qvortrup 2018).

Index for Inclusion: In 2000, the Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education in Bristol (UK) created the Index for Inclusion in educators, parents, governors, academics, and officials of accessibility organisations. Schools can use these tools to support their inclusive educational development initiatives and to enhance the educational achievement for all their students and teachers (Booth & Ainscow 2011).

The Dubai Inclusive Educational Policy Framework: the KHDA is a standard that contains a set of rules, regulations, and goals that can be utilised in judgement to promote the establishment of a more comprehensive framework of measures, and to direct the institution's ongoing policy administration. It is known as the "KHDA policy framework".

NVivo: a qualitative data analysis software application developed by QSR International. NVivo enables qualitative researchers to manage, analyse, and identify insights in unprocessed or qualitative data, including interviews, open-ended survey responses, scientific journals, social networking sites, and material online.

CAT4: a series of assessments called the Cognitive Abilities Test Fourth Edition (CAT4) was created to help schools to better identify children's skills and prospective academic success. The CAT4 findings can be used to define goals, evaluate student performance in classes, and improve individual and group instruction.

IXL: at its core, Innovation, Excellence and Leadership a method of directing an individual's curriculum. It provides activities for students that are appropriate for their age and that are arranged in accordance with the subjects and topics they are learning about. It directly supports instruction in a targeted manner by means of analytics and suggestions.

MAP: Assessments for Measuring Academic Progress (MAP) are computer-based customised assessments given in the subjects of arithmetic, literature, and verbal skills at schools. As a summative assessment, the MAP provides information to teachers about the instructional levels of the individual students in their classrooms rather than affecting students' grades. This improves lesson planning and is one of several resources utilise to find children that require additional assistance or challenge.

2.2 Social Disability Approach

Dirth and Branscombe (2018) describe what some authors have called the "social model" of disability, using the "social constructivism model" (or, more literally, a constructionist model); (Cottone 2001) this contrasts the social constructionist approach with the so-called "individual or medical model".

The study is based on Le Barton's approach to social disability (Goodley & Runswick 2010). It is a deviation from the scientific method, which sees disability as a flaw that necessitates specialised instruction. This study is based on British social liberal ideology, which reflects the UAE's current move towards amending inclusion policy, which is considered an effective instrument for equalising the rights of disabled persons. It encourages governments, politicians, teachers, and parents to share responsibility to make 'implementation of the policy more successful (Shakespeare 2006).

Dirth and Branscombe (2018) also argue and shed light on cultural stigma by indicating that "internal" (cognitive and emotional) processes are the leading cause of disability. Moreover, it establishes a taxonomy framework for categorising disabilities, as well as an identification process that leads to the labelling of disabled people. Also, it underestimates the importance of social elements contributing to the development of impairments.

Furthermore, the approch refers to how medical and administrative professionals handle persons with impairments, and it creates enormous, entrenched interests in the medical sector in discovering a "solution" for impairment or avoiding it. Nevertheless, Disability-related professionalism is harsh, and there is a moralism partnership between experts and people with learning disabilities., by imposing on personal rights. It assumes a disability needs medical attention, which is associated with stereotyping, useless hospitalisation, and mental institutions

According to Oliver (1996, p.7), the paradigm is a pragmatic tool for fostering a campaign opposing systemic inequality by connecting people together and generating a sense of belonging, rather than a sociological theory. As a result, because it is built on an ethos of social justice, partnership, and

fairness, the social model of disability is regarded as an acceptable perspective to study the consequences of inclusion policy in one private school in Dubai.

Finally, the United Nations CRPD (UN 2008) strengthened the constitutional support for inclusive classrooms in all educational and social environments. Honouring diversity in culture, race, gender, education, obligations, and talents is an important path in working towards inclusion. Humans may reconceptualise schools as small communities of our expanding equitable society if we adopt a different perspective of inclusiveness.

2.3 Inclusion in Education Global Prospective

In 1994, Spain and UNESCO partnered to organise the first summit meeting on the rights of all children to an education. The Salamanca declaration resulted in the creation of the **Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education**, widely regarded as the most influential worldwide document ever published in the subject of special education. (Ainscow et al. 2019). By doing so, it gave its stamp of approval to the concept of inclusive education, which would go on to have a profound impact in the years to come.

The notion that all individuals should have equal and fair access to academic facilities, and that deployment should be founded on effectiveness and quality (UNESCO 1994).

The adopted social justice and integrity policy is implemented to serve all individual learners in the UAE, conforming to the international norms of inclusivity. The policies and regulations of these systems ensure that all individuals have the right to an education (MSA 2006) Education's power resides in its capacity to accommodate all individuals, no matter how diverse they may be or how difficult they may be to educate.

The phrase "inclusion" is still founded on a deprivation mindset, particularly in the educational setting. Beliefs about disability pose challenges to actual inclusion. Moreover, it is mostly perpetuated in education settings. Understanding of ethnic and social diversity must be incorporated into all curricula, not just special education, to foster inclusive values.

However, an inclusive educational system and its long-term sustainability hinges on shifting the focus away from uniformity towards diversity and inclusion as the primary measures of educational performance (Braunsteiner & Mariano 2014). According to Booth (2011) the inclusive system is all about respecting humanity's different identities, and education reflects these principles. In its most universal sense, inclusiveness is a form of structural democratisation that applies to all of us. Moreover, it allows all learners to learn about and embrace human diversity, and to reduce the marginalisation of disadvantaged individuals, by cultivating a school culture of mutual respect and inclusion. Education must include all students, not just those who are currently enrolled in school but also those who are not currently enrolled.

2.4 Index for Inclusion

According to Booth et al. (2002) the index for inclusion is a developmentally inclusive approach to education. The index is a valuable resource to help schools become more inclusive, in that it is a detailed guide that can assist anybody in determining their own future steps for setting development. The index provides 70 indicators for progress, arranged into three categories: **policies, practices, and cultures**. Moreover, a page of real questions prompts a deep examination of the situation and provides recommendations for every indicator.

Inclusive education is now part of the international agenda: government bodies and their organisations try to develop and execute policies that encourage inclusivity. Both and Ainscow (2011, p.20) suggest that the index is being utilised as a comprehensive tool to assist educators in collaborating on the tactics that are most accessible, appropriate, and adaptable to their circumstances. The index describes a five-phase planning approach for putting the available resources into action:

1. Beginning the index strategy.

2. Gaining knowledge of educational environments.

3. Creating a plan for equal education.

4. Putting the policy into practice.

5. Assessing the indexing system.

An "inclusion process" is characterised as an "interminable cycle", and this periodic procedure represents that perspective (Alborno & Gaad 2017).

Moreover, the UAE society does not generally share this social perspective on disability, in which the disability is seen as stemming from cultural impediments rather than being clinically inherent to the person. A child with an impairment is, nonetheless, more likely to be stigmatised and discriminated against because of cultural attitudes. It is clear from the literature examples mentioned above, especially those that pertain to the Middle East, that the index's principal benefit is its adaptability to the contexts of different languages, cultures, and academic outcomes. This offers an opportunity for this investigation to examine existing practices that have been adopting the new inclusive criteria of School for All, using the indicators and the accompanying questions as guides tailored to the UAE context (Alborno & Gaad 2017).

2.5 Inclusion Policy in UAE

In their research paper on special needs schooling in the UAE, Arif and Gaad (2008) found that inappropriate terminology, such as "retarded", was frequently used by government school employees and recorded in reports provided to families and maintained on a child's file for the rest of their life. Negative adjectives like "struggle", "deprived", "trouble", and "retarded" were frequently used in the press, even in pronouncements of government pronouncements. This is consistent with the scientific understanding of disability. As a result, from the viewpoint of Emirati society, engaging with disability challenges is still seen as charitable instead of a basic dignity.

Moreover, the concept of inclusion has become a global phenomenon and a major global movement. To ensure that all students receive an adequate education, educators must focus on inclusion. Students with varying levels of ability and disability can be included in the general education curriculum, with additional assistance, if their needs are met. This means that all students, regardless of their capabilities or impairments, should be catered for at schools in the same district. Inclusion is founded on the principle of "educational equity", which states that all students have the right to a high-quality education. "All students, regardless of their skills or disabilities, should have access to suitable education," according to international forums (Gaad & Almotairi 2013).

However, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the MoE in the UAE were previously responsible for providing inclusive education for children with special educational needs and disabilities, which is regarded as an obstacle to the inclusive education process. (Gaad 2004)

At the conference held in Spain in 1994, UNESCO and the Spanish government collaborated to announce the first set of education rights for all children. According to the findings and recommendations in their Salamanca Statement, all students should have access to educational opportunities based on the principles of efficacy and superiority (UNESCO 1994; Gaad 2011, p.74). Since the UAE adheres to international human rights accords, its educational system promotes social justice and an ethical framework for all students.

In this system, every child is guaranteed the right to basic education by the relevant policies and laws (MSA 2006).

By adopting federal law 29/2006, the first law to protect the rights of people of determination and incorporate them into ordinary mainstream school environments, the UAE is trying to harmonise its educational legislative framework with international standards and best practices regarding an inclusive education system (Gaad 2011).

2.6 Inclusion Team Members

A crucial element in overcoming obstacles and problems in inclusive education is the amount of involvement of school leadership. Understanding the methods employed, how inclusion policies are evaluated, and how they are put into effect is crucial (Ainscow 2013). Additionally, Gaad (2009) stresses the significance of leadership personnel and educators adhering to the inclusive policy components, as this will help them better understand how to adapt and support SEND students to develop their learning abilities. Moreover, the school gains by acknowledging SEND during the enrollment process to produce a special Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for each SEND. Considering this, SEND students should be able to participate in traditional classroom activities regardless of ability to adhere to consistent academic standards.

The value of teamwork has developed into a fundamental component of educational culture everywhere (Bencsik et al. 2009). It was thought that, to counterbalance the supportive services offered for SEND, it was crucial for team members with various specialties to cooperate and act responsibly (Gaad 2004; Alghazo et al. 2004). Schools are thinking about creating an inclusive atmosphere in which everyone shares the responsibility. An ingrained sense of connection and cooperation is strengthened by the framework in which leadership is formed and dispersed. There is still a lot of controversy about the appropriate ways to implement inclusive policy.

Effective leadership management is essential to assist the inclusion team and lead to the establishment of new roles and an improvement in management and leadership, collaboration, and responsibility, as identified by Attfield and Williams (2003). However, the inclusion team's lack of coherent context for strategy is problematic. To bridge the gap between SEND students and their peers in the classroom, the inclusion policy was developed (Gaad 2011).

Moreover, "**Principals, champion leaders, class teachers, assistant teachers, leaders of provision, SEND,** and **parents**" comprise a steering council for inclusive education systems, according to KHDA (2017) policy framework four, "Support for Inclusive Education". This is crucial if the policy is to be successfully implemented. However, educators' belief in the efficacy of any inclusive strategy is critical to its success (Rajput et al. 2018).

Furthermore, for children who have learning challenges or disabilities, the educational philosophy has altered considerably over the previous two decades. Several countries have taken the lead in adopting policies that encourage the mainstreaming of students with disabilities. The UAE is a proponent and champion of the inclusion policy.

2.7 Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion

Inclusion education: special attention is being given to the role of teachers because, despite their lack of special education background, they play a key part in the inclusion process.

Davide and Webster (2017) describe "attitude" as a mental position, emotion, or feeling towards a fact or state. One way to make sense of attitude is as a set of preferences for certain kinds of behaviour. As a result, a person's attitude or conviction is supposed to influence that person's behaviour, acts, and effectiveness. Moreover, Gaad (2011) stated that the attitudes and ideas that teacher-educators, officials, and other school workers hold regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities and their opportunities to understand may have a significant impact on school settings and the provision of educational opportunity for all children.

A growing number of students, including those with disabilities and those likely to drop out, seek middle school teachers and principals for assistance in implementing inclusive education programmes. As a result of organisational changes, attempts to restructure or change middle schools into inclusive settings might be worsened (Cole & McLesky 1997).

Teachers are at the core of all of this, as they are expected to educate a wide range of academically different students. As an example, in comparison to their elementary school peers, most high school instructors frequently work with more than 125 students on a daily basis in situations in which teaching is often pedagogical, focused on big groups, and restricted by the level of personal contact time with instruction (Zigmond 1990). In addition, most middle school educators are expected to be curriculum experts, and they are not likely to make specific adjustments for learners, such as using alternate curricula, modified scoring/grading, or alternative options. Furthermore, many instructors nowadays design their teaching for and aim it at the student, with evaluations calculated on the basic level of achievement (Schumm & Vaughn 1995).

2.8 Parents Perspective and Attitude Towards Inclusion

Gaad and Khan (2007) argue that focusing on the parents is important because of their enormous influence on the perception and wellbeing of the child. They claim that providing educational or therapeutic assistance to children with verified disabilities, and their families, is known as early childhood intervention. Moreover, reducing disabilities in children, along with helping the children to adapt in community schools alongside their peers, are critical benefits of these interventions.

Gaad (2004) confirms that human actions are dictated by thoughts. Everything we do in response to a problem is heavily influenced by our beliefs and feelings about it, both individually and collectively. Moreover, social values and beliefs have a significant impact on parents' attitudes towards inclusion. Because of such influences, parents of children with disabilities are profoundly impacted emotionally and financially in a negative manner. There is, however, a body of research that illustrates how parents of learners with disabilities report anxiety and depression and feelings of stress, as they are influenced by many environmental and social circumstances, including the child's characteristics, parents' home atmosphere, and the learning system.

According to recent work by Abdat & Gaad (2022), parents voiced their fears about the limited implementation alternatives for their children's education and described their responsibilities as their child's supporters and the guardians of their progress, emphasising the need for external support. They also discovered that parents were offered minimal or no options when it came to their children's new schools. These decisions were largely determined by professionals or other government officials. Moreover, parents scaled up their justifications by saying that their children's age and the form of disability, such as autism, had an impact on the shift of young children into inclusive educational settings. Additionally, according to UNESCO's report in 2017, parents of children with disabilities are frequently constrained to only two choices: either meeting their children's needs in special educational school systems or enrolling their children in the regular mainstream education system to ensure that they receive the very same educational privileges as their peer group.

2.9 The Dubai Inclusive Educational Policy Framework

The Dubai Government organisation for regulating and ensuring the quality of education is the KHDA. It is responsible for supervising Dubai's private education industry, which includes preschools, kindergartens, high schools, and training facilities. The KHDA was established in 2006 by order of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum the ruler of Dubai, tTo bring the education and human resource sectors of the Emirate of Dubai up to world standards and to implement best practices, (KHDA 2017).

The aim of the KHDA is to provide information on the rules and processes needed to strengthen inclusive education services. Moreover, it serves as a guide for appropriate direction, such that: daily, in each classroom, all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, shall learn and achieve in a secure, supporting, stimulating, challenging, universal education system. This type of environment caters to their individual, interpersonal, psychological, and academic requirements to the fullest extent possible. Moreover, Dubai has listed **ten guiding principles** defining the procedures necessary to promote equitable governance and transparency, to enhance and increase the availability of high-quality, inclusive services in the academic system throughout Dubai (KHDA 2017).

The following are the ten guidelines: **1. Recognition and Counseling at an Early Stage; 2. Enrollment, Involvement, and Equality; 3. Management and Responsibility; 4. Support Systems for Inclusive Education; 5. The Use of Special Centers for Inclusive Learning; 6. Collaboration, Coordination, and Collaboration, 7. Creating an Educational Climate that Values all Students; 8. Observation, Assessment,** and **Reporting, 9. Inclusionary Education Funding; and 10. Higher Education and Post-School Career Through Technology, Multidisciplinary Development and Skills.** (KHDA 2017).

To help schools in Dubai implement the School for All project, a guidebook titled "Integrating Inclusive Education in the Classroom" has been created to assist them. The primary goal is to implement structural change to alleviate barriers to academic success, accessibility, and participation. The manual should be used in conjunction with the KHDA for better understanding and much more successful execution (KHDA 2017)

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Inclusive practices are challenging, diverse, and continually changing, contingent on the context of education and the community institutions, students, teachers, and school officials involved in inclusive practices. This evolution is driven by the interplay between the school setting and the participants in inclusive classrooms. It is possible that this does not fit the definition of "objectivism", which maintains that cultural factors exist apart from the individuals who create them. Because of this, the objective must be to monitor and document the steps involved in the process of establishing the realism of inclusive education practices (Glesne 2006, p.7).

After factoring in the qualitative method as the most appropriate for this specific research study, a triangulation of methodologies for data collection was utilised to verify the reliability of its findings. These methods included interviews, direct observation, and documentary analysis, in addition to research into the relevant body of literature regarding the subject matter (Gaad & Almotairi 2013).

Since the ultimate purpose of the research was to investigate and, by extension, describe in naturalistic terms the numerous educational provisions offered by the new initiative (School for All), an interpretive approach rather than a scientific method was used to gain insight into these facts (Kelly & Cordeiro 2020; Creswell 2009, p.182). As a result, the researcher implemented a pragmatist approach to investigating the goals and objectives of administration, as well as educators' methods, strategies, resources, classroom environments, and assessment techniques as they related to students with special needs.

3.1 Research Design

Using a qualitative case study methodology, the purpose of this research project was to analyse the inclusion policy of a private American school in Dubai, with the goal of identifying the obstacles experienced by the many stakeholders in implementing the inclusion policy. Furthermore, the research study was predicated on a constructivist interpretive paradigm, with the notion that included the reality or realities of the execution of inclusion policy for SEND through all the attitudes provided by key players in the inclusion team. These key players included the champion leader, a provision leader for students of determination, and classroom teachers (Creswell 2017, p.37).

According to Yin (1994):

> *The all-encompassing feature of a case study is its intense focus on a single phenomenon within its real-life context. [Case studies are] research situations where the number of variables of interest far outstrips the number of datapoints (Yin 1999, p.1211; Yin 1994, p.13).*

The secular humanism methodology is based on the beliefs, views, aims, and perspectives of individuals in a specific setting; thus, it is called a humanistic approach towards data gathering (Creswell 2017). This humanistic methodology of research was used for the investigation since it has been determined to be the most efficient and because it requires direct interaction with the participants in a setting that is real and authentic. It is essential to gather information from the same participants in the same environment as before. In addition, the qualitative research approach attempts to grasp and analyse the opinions of other people on societal issues (Creswell 2017).

In accordance with the KHDA policy framework, the methodology of the case study was utilised in the investigation of the members of supportive organisations of inclusive policy. Interviews in a semi-structured format were carried out with key players in the inclusion team, and a verification process was developed using semi-structured interviews. During these interviews, key players were asked to evaluate the performance of other key players. For instance, the class teacher and support teacher were asked to evaluate the performance of the inclusion champion. The support teacher and class teacher were also required to evaluate one another's duties (KHDA 2017).

This qualitative study was motivated by the following Table, which is related to the main research objectives stated in the introduction.

Table 1: Yin 2009 Case study research: Design and methods

Case study methodology	Yin (2009, p.18) definition	Research Significance
Design justification	"A case study is an empirical inquiry that: • Investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when • The boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.	**RQ**: To what extent is the school following the guidelines provided by the KHDA inclusive education policy framework in implementing the inclusion policy?
Data-gathering methods	Depends on evidence from a variety of sources, with the data required to align in a triangulation-like approach.	Representatives of the inclusion team, the school management, the teachers, the students, the learning support team, and the parents will all contribute to the data. Data from observations, semi-structured interviews, student reports, and document analysis will help to triangulate the findings (Bryman 2004).
Research-based on a given conceptual framework	When attempting to illustrate a theorised cause-and-effect connection, a conceptual framework is absolutely necessary. The identification of connections between constructs and the direction of data gathering and analysis are both accomplished through the utilisation of arguments.	Advantages "derived from having theories in place to direct data collection and analysis". Using the social model as a theoretical framework, complete a content analysis of the collected data (Matthews (2009)

Creswell (2009) and Glesne (2006) believe that they need to access the participants' varied perspectives and their subjective interpretations of their interactions. This research follows the same rationale in qualitative research.

Finally, The Index for Inclusion, a widely used assessment tool, was developed with input from previous research questions. In the UAE, researchers have previously studied the educational experiences of students with disability (Alghazo & Gaad 2004; Arif & Gaad 2008).

3.2 Site Selection

Convenient sampling was used to select the school – it has been suggested that most qualitative research papers use the convenient sample method (Stratton 2021). The researcher selected the setting that best represented the pedagogical standards under investigation. This method is useful for tackling the representation problem. Keeping in mind the advantages of ease of accessibility (Etikan et al. 2016), the school was chosen because it would cooperate in providing a variety of records in a setting in which relevant inclusive practices were prevalent.

The selected site was a private school in Dubai where this researcher was volunteering. This same researcher had approached the school and informed staff of the nature of the research – to assess the gap between the rhetoric and reality of inclusive practices. Since the school was desirous of evaluating its current system and working towards closing the gap between the rhetoric and the reality of inclusion policy, it welcomed the study and gave the researcher permission to conduct the research. Furthermore, the school agreed to provide the researcher with all the required evidence and student records, so that they could be used as a point of reference. It was decided to hold a meeting with the principal of the primary section, and the researcher obtained preliminary permission to start the meeting. However, the research did not start until an official letter was sent to the school and permission officially received. More importantly, a consent document was required to be signed to conceal the identities of the participants and the school.

The researcher ensured at the outset that the school had many students with special needs and a great spectrum of disability categories, so that it provided a comprehensive overview of the adoption of inclusive policy educational framework requirements for students with various forms

of disability. "Equity and diversity" were assured in the participant screening and application procedures used in school(Yazan 2015)

The sample size is all SEND. School structure and grade distribution are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Site selection in the research study

One Private School			
Nationality			
IEP Reports	Students UAE Citizen	Non-UAE Citizen	Total
Elementary Grades	1	1	
Primary Grades	1	1	6
Middle Grades	1	1	
Principle		3	3
Teachers	None	3	3
Inclusion Team • SNCO • Head of Inclusion	None	2	2
School Psychologist	None	1	1

3.3 Study Participants

The key players were the leader of the champions and the leader of the provision for students of determination, and the classroom teachers. Every member of the team contributed in their own unique way. The target participants in this scenario also included educators working in elementary, primary, and middle schools, including support teachers, shadow teachers and learning support assistants (LSA), as well as those in administrative positions. This diversity of personnel allowed for more and diverse evidence to be provided and for the triangulation of data through interviews with various members of the school community, and this data was compared with students' records (Palinkas et al. 2015).

The selected participants were:

1. School capacity of 2,052 students.
2. 231 SEND students with different impairments.
3. Three teachers, one from each grade 1–8.
4. Six students, who vary between grade 1 to 8. All have mild to moderate impairments and need additional support.
5. Table 1.3 displays the results of interviews with members of the inclusion team, school administration, shadow teachers, and classroom teachers.

3.4 Ethical Consideration

Through its oversight of the online application process, BUiD served as a guide for the ethical policy. After the proposal for the master's dissertation was approved, an application was submitted to the education faculty team via the BUiD system. Subsequently this researcher received approval and permission to begin the research. In the end, after the collection of all of the required permissions and after fulfilling all of the criteria for the dissertation, a consent letter was issued to the participants to obtain their agreement to take part in the study and to assure them that their confidentiality would not be violated in any way

Furthermore, all participants were informed that getting involved would not result in any adverse implications, either in terms of their employment or academic standing. Also, participants in the research were made aware of the fact that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time without facing consequences. In conclusion, the researcher ensured that anonymity would be maintained by employing pseudonyms in place of real identities for all the participants and for the educational institutions studied (Gajjar 2013).

3.5 Data Collection Method Analysis

To evaluate the efficacy of the inclusion policy implementation and the challenges that it presented it was necessary to spend the entire day at school for a period of four weeks. In this period interviews were conducted with each participant, information was gathered, observations were made, and internal meetings were attended. Along with the index for inclusion, the KHDA policy framework was utilised as a measurement instrument for the purpose of collecting and analysing data (Alborno and Gaad 2014).

In addition, recommendations for the instrument were developed based on the research questions and the overall structure of the study. The application of the qualitative method is the most effective tool for reflecting on the applications of the social model theory. All acquired data was recorded by using a personal laptop, and all data was saved in a secured file with a password (Gaad & Thabet 2009; Gaad 2011).

Furthermore, after the proposal for the research project was approved, planning, preparation and pilot testing of the instruments were carried out to increase the reliability of such instruments. As a result, this researcher was able to single out one school that satisfied the criteria of site selection, which enabled the piloting of instrument recommendations and offered direct knowledge of the application of the inclusive standards that were the subject of this research. The identifying knowledge during the pilot research proved to be quite beneficial, since the school provided the chance to participate in teacher training sessions held at the school over and above allowing for all the necessary interviews and observations. As a direct consequence of this, the instrument guidelines were modified so that they now reflected the information gleaned from the participants' own personal experiences and observations.

After the pilot research, data collection began with receiving consent letters from each of the school's administrative staff. The school agreed to receive the participants' agreement, and the goals of this research were clarified before the observation or interview.

The school was visited every day for four weeks of the study period, during which time a total of 25 interviews and 10 observation sessions were completed, as well as school teachers qualification, such as student IEPs, homework assignments, teacher schedules, SEND lesson plans were collected.

Figure 3: Three approaches to case study methods in education (Yazan 2015)

Qualitative case study researchers utilize three data collection techniques conducting **interviews, observing, and analyzing documents**.

3.6 Semi-structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews, as opposed to those that are constrained by a rigid model of questioners, were used to allow for freedom in the answers that were offered with additional prompts, as well as the opportunity to ask follow-up questions to uncover extra details. Instead of being bound by a prescriptive framework of questions, this offered more freedom. (Creswell 2017). See Appendix 1

The purpose of this research was to examine the perspectives and the implementation of the Dubai inclusive framework within the school team members, inclusion team, principals, teachers, as well as the parents of students with disabilities, on the following themes:

- Current inclusive guidelines.
- Constraints to effective implementation of the inclusive guidelines.

Because the primary purpose of the research was to investigate the effective implementation of the inclusive guidelines framework by school team members as well as collaboration between school departments, open- rather than closed-ended questions were selected because closed-ended questions are limited in response to Yes/No. However, open-ended questions required respondents with lived experiences and emotions. This was supported by a wide range of studies pertaining to disability (Geer 1988).

The interview protocols were developed to inquire about the following aspects of the inclusive guideline's implementation in educational offerings:

- Inclusive guidelines training and development.
- Students' accommodation and modification.
- Knowledge about the inclusive best practices.
- Inclusion team support.

The indicators in the Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow 2011) were used as a basis for mapping interview questions to the study's framework (see Appendix 1.1), with each question related to an inclusive policy, training, or philosophy. Proper modelling was required to guarantee that the

information gathered was in line with the questions being asked. Moreover, **NVivo** and thematic analysis were used to analyse the collected data.

3.7 Pilot Study

After the research proposal was accepted, a pilot study was conducted to fine-tune the data collection tool in terms of the element of the findings and the processes to follow (Yin 2009, p.92). Because of this pilot study, the reliability of the data collection tools has been improved.

To verify the feasibility of the study tool, a pilot school was chosen, and a set of interview questions were issued to each participant (Yin 2009, p.93). This allowed the researcher to observe special education and inclusive policy implementation in action, which is central to the research focus.

3.8 Role of Researcher

The researcher is seen as both an instrument and a mirror, using which the data is analysed in qualitative studies (Glesne 2006; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Creswell (2009, p.177) and others have noted that researchers of a certain era tend to have a more continuous and intensive encounter with the participants. As the researcher attempts to find answers to the research questions, the researcher's involvement must be made known to all participants.

Moreover, Glesne's (2006, p.46) definition of a researcher as "a curious educator who emerges to gain knowledge from and alongside the research subjects" reflects how I approached my role as a researcher: I saw myself as an eager student who would take advantage of any and all opportunities to gain insight into how inclusion policy was being implemented in the school. Therefore, I took great pains to make sure that the attendees knew that I was there to understand about inclusion, alongside them. In the end, it was important to me that the members who participated in the research and who took part in the study were comforted and believed me. This allowed them to feel secure enough to offer a substantial quantity of high-quality information.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

In this chapter the most important findings from the qualitative section of the research are reported, and a description of how those findings connect to the primary objectives of the research is provided as well. The descriptive method was used to conduct semi-structured interviews and make observations. Subsequently, the data were collected and analysed thematically with the use of NVivo. The concluding section of this chapter provides the interviewees' most perceptive remarks and views.

Participants were given a total of eight questions to answer to enable data collection for the primary research objective of the study, which centred on RQ "To what extent is the school following the guidelines provided by the KHDA inclusive education policy framework when it comes to implementing the inclusion policy?" Attention was focused on the four most important indicators:

1. Core curriculum
2. Accessibility
3. Evaluation
4. Educator training.

However, the following study sub-questions were addressed to answer the main research question:

> **SQ1.** What is the **admission procedure** followed by the school to admit SEND students?
> **SQ2.** What are the **identification and referral procedures** followed by the school?
> **SQ3.** To what extent are **the inclusion committee members** in a private American curriculum school in Dubai adhering to the **KHDA inclusion education policy framework** in team meetings, IEP development, and curriculum adaptation?

After the interviews were completed, NVivo version 12 was utilised to organise and evaluate the questionnaires. To facilitate the organisation of the data, the files were immediately uploaded into the database. Utilising NVivo helped simplify the process of categorising collected data into frequent themes and subgroups. As part of the procedure for conducting the research, codes were developed.

The research included eight participants, interviewed from different school sections (Elementary, Primary and Middle).

Table 3: Participants interviewed demographic

Position	Gender	Age	Qualification	Nationality
Elementary Principalalle	Female	40–45	Master's degree, pursuing Doctorate in inclusive Education	South African
Primary Principalalle	Female	40–45	Master's in Science	Lebanese
Middle Principalalle	Female	40–45	Master's in Inclusive Education	Canadian
Head of Inclusion	Female	35–40	Master's in Psychology	Lebanese
Support Teacher SEND	Female	25–30	Master's in Inclusive Education	Jordanian
Elementary Teacher	Female	25–30	Bachelor of Education	Egyptian
Primary Teacher	Female	30–35	Master's in Education	Lebanese
Middle Teacher	Male	25–35	Master's in English	Lebanese

Figure 4: NVivo tree coding and sub-coding development Tree

Also, the query tool used to find the most commonly occurring words in the papers that were evaluated produced a graphical representation of those words. The graphic below is a word cloud constructed by NVivo showing the most frequently appearing expressions and subjects in the thoughtful comments.

Figure 5: Often-appearing expressions through NVivo

Table 4: Type of disability for SEND

Student Age	Type of Disability	Sex	Grade
13 yrs	Autistic/social communication disorder	Male	7
9 yrs	Expressive language disorder. Mild intellectual disability	Female	3
7 yrs	Multiple disabilities	Female	1
14 yrs	Mild intellectual disability	Male	8
9 yrs	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) with Mild intellectual disability	Male	3
10 yrs	Dyslexia	Female	4

4.1.1 First Theme: Effectives of Inclusion Policy Implementation

The analysis of the documents showed that the school follows the appropriate KHDA framework requirements in its implementation of the inclusion policy of the MoE. In addition, the curriculum modification and adaptation are developed through collaborative efforts by the inclusion team, and those efforts consider the needs of the children with special educational needs and disabilities who are enrolled in each of the respective classes. They also constantly adapt and accommodate the academic objectives of the classroom to the individuality of the students enrolled. Moreover, the inclusion team department provides teachers with significant assistance, and there are quarterly meetings to check the students' progress and discuss any issues that may have arisen.

According to the **elementary school principal**,

> *each student possesses the intellectual capacity to advance in their studies. The school`s inclusion policy aims to support and assist students who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) by providing those students with intervention programmes and services that are on a par with the standards that are in place in by the KHDA as well as those that are put in place internationally.*

Moreover, the **middle school principal** *stated that,*

> *all of the accessible methods and tools are utilised in order to keep a close eye on the development of the establishment of students who are identified as having special educational needs or disabilities.*

The head of inclusion confirmed the importance of IEP and suggested,

> *it is of the utmost importance to ensure that all students who have special needs receive either an Individualized Educational Plan, which is designed for students with exceptional needs, or an Accelerated Learning Plan, which is designed for gifted and talented students, that is tailored to their specific set of needs and strengths in order to close any academic gaps that they may have and to prepare them to be productive members of society."*

A support teacher SEND emphasised

> *the importance of implementing the right source of international assessments to all students and SEND at the school to keep students' evaluations of the progress and use effective internet resources such as IXL, CAT4 and MAP reports to keep a close eye on each student's progress*.

Moreover, teachers may quickly generate progress reports on their students by using these platforms, and they can use these reports as a basis for creating proper learning targets for their students. The **elementary teacher shares her thoughts**;

> *all students are not the same and each has specific educational needs. Yes they may vary from student to student. However, in the end the change comes from the surroundings, us and the school environment to let all students feel there is no barrier to meet their educational needs.*

The middle school teacher;

> *raises the important issue that policy should not be only theoretical to students. His class follows a system called "buddy team" which means students taking turns to assess SEND and sometime the SEND is in the buddy team; it's like a circle – all are involved.*

In the data analysis by NVivo the below chart shows the percentage of the actual implementation of inclusive policy and other variables mentioned. It was analysed by the thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews.

Figure 6: Actual implementation of inclusive policy generated with sympathetic themes
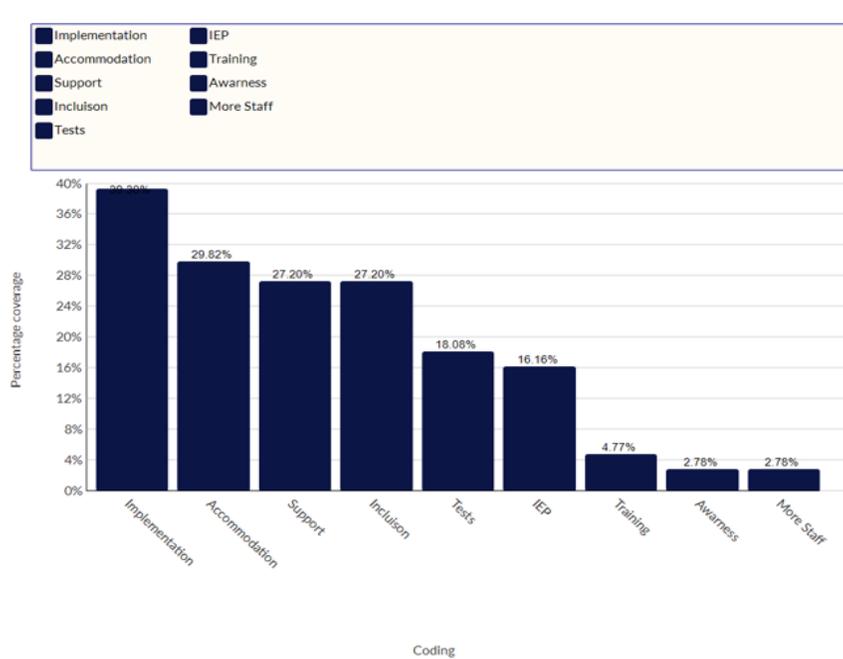
4.1.2 Second Theme: Identifying Students with Special Educational Needs

The school used several procedures for identifying students with special needs, such as placement tests for new students, school assessments, and the psychoeducational reports provided by caregivers. All the procedures used by the school were adapted from the KHDA inclusive framework through the involvement of the principal and head of inclusion at the school. Students have unique educational needs and disabilities, such as those due to learning difficulties, autism, or attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. The school adheres to the standards provided by the KHDA framework throughout the entirety of the enrollment process, to identify the children who have special needs and construct the IEP through the first two weeks after the admission (KHDA 2017).

Second, students who are identified as gifted or talented and who exhibit remarkable abilities in intellectual, creative, social, or physical areas are still not recognized due to school limitations on special required exams.

Support teacher and SENCO both said:

We run multiple assessments such as MAP and CaT4 assessments, formative and summative assessments, and academic performance level. However, [there is] no special instrument to assess students by the inclusion department.

Head of inclusion acknowledged:

So, we follow a strategy we use to identify SEND, and as inclusion department we do an observed session for students in their classroom setting and during the break to make sure the observer, which is mainly the inclusion coordinator, has a full idea about this student's social and educational performance. After that, the inclusion coordinator would have a one-on-one session assessment to determine overall assessments.

Finally, Primary principal confirmed that:

Multiple assessment tests provided by the school follow the KHDA standards and the American curriculum standard base. And as primary school principals, we first conduct the interview, then review the student's report to determine whether they require a curricular or instructional adjustment, and then recommend the student to the school's inclusion office. We administer standardised assessments in English, mathematics, science, and psychology to identify each student's unique needs and tailor our instruction accordingly.

4.1.3 Third Theme: Monitoring and Following Up on SEND Progress

This finding suggests that administrators recognise the importance of their obligation to their students and do their best to fulfil it. In order to encourage students with SEND to reach their full academic ability, instructors, with the support of the department that deals with inclusion, practice the many pedagogical strategies that are advised. As a direct consequence of this, teachers are required to be vigilant with regards to the physical wellbeing and intellectual growth of each student in their charge who has special requirements. The inclusion team and the classroom instructors get together periodically throughout the course of the academic year to evaluate the efficacy of differentiation and to ensure the level of quality of instruction. If evaluations reveal that a student who has SEND is not advancing as expected, the IEP team discuss the kinds of interventions that could be used to assist the student. All principals and department heads agree that the IEP serves as the basis for all assessments. These are then compared with previous report data to determine whether students with SEND are making progress.

Elementary principal:

> *The CAT4, MAP and IXL are al exams serves in different level and dimensions in different aspects to determine where the obstacle is to be able to work on it and add it to the IEP.*

Support teacher SEND:

> *We analyse the exam results and, based on them, the modification and accommodation is performed to track students' progress.*

Primary teacher:

> *These exams are important for us because it gives us insight where we can concentrate and evaluate if the students are making academic improvements.*

4.1.4 Fourth Theme: Curricula Modification

The findings demonstrate that the school followed he recommended procedure for modifying examinations to accommodate the needs of students who had disabilities, and that these students all received versions of the examinations that were suitably scaled to their skill levels. Changes may be made to the IEP or the evaluation criteria for student progress. These can consist of having fewer assignments or using a different grading system. Moreover, the academic requirements are essentially lowered because of the modifications, which change both "what" is learned and "when" it is learned and the content of the curriculum that is grade specific. However, the process by which a student's learning achievements change over time is defined to as adaptation. According to the findings, the teachers at the school and the head of inclusion decided whether the students required curricular modification or adaptation, referring to the information that was included in the student's IEP.

Support teacher, SEND:

> *The SEND team is always aware of the content of the SEND and what is being taught as well as the level of differentiation that they are receiving. Also, we as the inclusion department with all head sections and principals we have access to all the student's assigned work as well as their assessments on the school's online platform. However, lesson plans are typically uploaded by teachers to a shared folder so that members of the SEND team may swiftly and easily access it.*

Middle principal:

> *We face a few challenges, most notably a shortage of support teachers for SEND, as we have only four teachers. With the high numbers of SEND students it's hard to be comprehensive and be able to convene the SEND team for their regularly scheduled meetings in order to carry out an in-depth and methodical analysis of SEND development.*

The research was directed by the inclusion team using the students' IEPs, assessments, and the shared folder. To provide the researcher with a wider range of options, the observation was also carried out in some classes without direct supervision, for more credibility. Everyone working at the school answered the given questions and inquiries in a way that was both sincere and coopertive.

Some required additional training, and the acknowledgement of inclusion team was expressed by all the interview participants. The school was trying its best to follow the inclusive policy criteria; nonetheless, concerns from teachers and employees were shared, to narrow the gap between what was required and what was achieved. In addition, the researcher saw how the school accepted the research topic and was eager to work on bridging the gap between theoretical and actual policy implementation.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The findings of this study conducted to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of inclusion policy in the school environment will now be cross-analysed and synchronised . The goal is to ensure that the primary research questions and the related sub-questions are properly addressed. Moreover, using the qualitive research methods, the researcher was able to collect and triangulate evidence. The main research question required a bridge between the three aspects of core curriculum, accessibility, evaluation; educator training; and the research method of interview questions. This was necessary to ensure that the data collection and analysis procedures were consistent. To provide an answer to research sub-questions, class observation notes and interview questions were also connected to the three components of the Index for Inclusion. **(See Appendix 1)**.

The objective of this research was to investigate the extent to which one private school in Dubai was successful in implementing the inclusive policy and accommodating students with special educational needs in daily education. The qualitative research approach was implemented daily in school premises to collect information from a variety of sources, such as observation and materials relating to school inclusion policies, and compare it with the interview results. Most school staff and teachers were well versed in the inclusion policy and aware of how it ought to be put into practice because of the complete training and toolkit that had been provided by the inclusion department. The researcher saw how the social model approach was translated well into school-staff actions and how students are involved and not labelled in class.

According to Matthews (2009) a good adoption of the social model occurs when students are not categorised or labelled in any way, and they receive the same treatment as the other students in the class regardless of their abilities. It appears that the more time teachers spend in their profession as educators – and the more experiences they gain – the more open they become able to include students with impairments and learn how to deal with them. On the other hand, in general, the community in the UAE does not have this sociological perspective on impairment, which holds that the disability is seen as resulting from barriers in the environment rather as being physically inherent in the individual. It is still the case that progressive development indicates that a child with a disability has a greater chance of being stigmatised and pigeonholed (Alborno & Gaad 2014).

5.1. Discussion of the Main Research Question

RQ: To what extent is the school following the guidelines provided by the KHDA inclusive education policy framework when it comes to implementing the inclusion policy?

This main research question focuses on the assistance that students with special educational needs receive. We find that there is a shortage of qualified special education teachers compared to the number of students who have a requirement for their needs. Thus, the monthly meetings of the inclusion team are ineffective in providing curriculum modification assistance to instructors or to helping them adapt to the curriculum to meet the requirements of their students; preparation for evaluations is also ineffective. One of the challenges is that the school does not have enough teachers who can provide support for inclusion. That leads to startlingly low numbers of push-in sessions and pull-out sessions. Considering the findings, most teachers are familiar with the school's inclusion policy, and they are performing great work in putting it into practice in the classrooms. However, sometimes they face difficulties and challenges in trying to fulfil the requirements of their SEND learners due to the high number of students in each classroom. For example, an elementary and primary teacher with 25 students, three of whom are SEND students, found it difficult to handle the class even with the LSA. Also, in middle schools, LSAs are not available due to student age, though some students have a shadow teacher. Some parents refuse to hire such teachers because of the cost. Moreover, most of shadow teachers are not educated enough to deal with SEND and do not hold a professional certificate.

Alborno & Gaad (2014) debate the fact that there was a broad sensitivity regarding the inclusion of students who had physical and physiological issues and, to a little lesser degree, those who had cognitive disabilities. All the teachers believed that the efficiency of inclusion depended on the nature and degree of the student's condition. While some were sceptical of the new policy, others saw it as an opportunity to improve their school by providing more opportunities for teachers to advance their careers, gain access to additional resources, and learn.

The success of the inclusion policy depends on factors such as the organisation of the school, the expertise of the teaching staff, the level of community awareness, and the flexibility of the curriculum. According to the findings of the researcher, the challenges that the school experienced were related to the insufficient number of qualified teachers and the inadequate amount of teacher training provided. The teachers generally expressed a willingness to acquire additional knowledge regarding the pre-existing situations and asked for additional support teachers, SEND so that they might receive additional assistance. Overall, there was a shortage of specialised teachers, and there were fewer support classes that were pulled out or pushed in for SEND.

Moreover, for the benefit of students who may have difficulties with mobility, the school campuses have been built with amenities such as ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, and accessible transportation. In several of the classrooms, for instance, additional tiling and stair handles facilitate easier and more independent movement within the building.

Nevertheless, the researcher witnessed SEND students making significant contributions to their own learning while we were in the classroom. The lectures were presented in a manner that encouraged active engagement from students by having them engage in debates, scribble on whiteboards, and work in small groups. They were consistently provided with positive reinforcement from their teachers and peers in any circumstance that they were in. On occasion, students were observed to be disengaging from class when they were unable to engage with the curriculum or the lesson that was being taught, because the materials that were used were not adapted to their needs. Often, the modifications to the curriculum were limited to the assessments, tests, and exams, and did not address SEND during the entirety of the class period.

5.2 Discussion of the Sub-research Questions

SQ1. What is the **admission procedure** followed by the school to admit SEND students?

SQ2. What are the **identification and referral procedures** followed by the school?

SQ3. To what extent are **the inclusion committee members** in a private American curriculum school in Dubai adhering to the **KHDA inclusion education policy framework** in team meetings, IEP development, and curriculum adaptation?

The school follows the KHDA inclusion policy of Dubai. It admits SEND students according to their age level and utilises school policy guidelines in accordance with specific inclusion policy to provide appropriate support services. The school policy guarantees the student's right to learn and succeed. Detailed procedures of the policy were organised under four main zones and there was an overview of the support service for students who had special needs. The scope applied to all students who had special needs and there were objectives that guaranteed access to the school for students with special needs with no limitations. To facilitate collaboration between teachers and students in the development of an IEP the inclusion team acted as the communication channel for the policy: they were required to issue recommendations and create the development plan. Also, the policy included the description details for the role of each team member as to how to support SEND students. However, the inclusion team shared the pedagogical objectives with all teachers, ensuring that every student was successful academically, encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning, and measuring students' progress. Moreover all class requirements including assignments were modified in order to make them more accessible to SEND students. The modifications include the use of technology such as iPads and laptops, audio files in which students can record their responses to questions, and hands-on activities.

As a result of the interviews and observations made in the classrooms, it became clear that teachers utilised a wide range of pedagogical approaches, some examples of which include group exercises, peer tutoring, and multimedia presentations. Individualised instruction was not provided to students who were identified as having a disability or a difference in their learning style, with a few notable exceptions. The common idea prevalent was that there was not enough time to support students

with disabilities in the classroom. This was evident in the fact that teachers did not have time to adapt or to accommodate the range of different disabilities in a single class.

Because of this, they needed the assistance of the teachers of special education who were working in the resource room, or the inclusion team, so that the students hands-on learning could be completed.

Although some teachers were not sure about the specific nature of students' impairments, two of the three teachers indicated that it was challenging to assist their students due to a lack of information, ability, and required resources. However, a paradox arises from the fact that one must be aware of the specifics of the inclusion policy as well as the characteristics of a students' disabilities. When this researcher asked the inclusion team about this dilemma, they specified that some of the psychoeducational reports do not include all the information and that some parents refuse to share with the teacher the condition of their child because they do not want their child's name to be on the mailing list that is shared with the KHDA to justify the modification of the curriculum. Without adequate information on the exact nature of student disabilities, without adequate preparation on modification of lessons and assignments geared to student abilities, and without adequate availability of professional expertise and support, it is almost impossible to effectively implement inclusion policy.

In conclusion, the reality of the implementation of inclusion policy is that, despite the procedures and training that are developed by schools to guarantee the effectiveness of inclusion policies, implementation often falls short of the stated goals. To mindlessly follow the inclusion policy procedure without considering the many factors required to be in place for its success invites failure. No amount of money spent on previous methods or research will solve the underlying issue of insufficient teacher preparation and lack of community awareness. All community members should be surveyed by policymakers, the issue raised by educators should be discussed, and practical solutions and best practices should be solicited. Furthermore, having all macro and micro members participate in policymaking increases the number of viable options that can be accepted by the majority.

CHAPTER SIX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

There are a great number of recommendations that may be made to increase the effectiveness of inclusion policy.

In the process of moving towards inclusive education, the guiding principle should not only be to provide access to educational settings, but also to provide appropriate engagement. This can be accomplished by recognising the barriers that exist and the resources that are necessary to create an environment that promotes inclusive cultures, policies, and practices. Following the implementation of the inclusive project known as School for All, this study found a variety of obstacles in addition to resources; hence, the recommendations that follow present ideas that might shape future planning for both the KHDA policymakers and at school level.

- The current mode of training has provided the theoretical basis for inclusive education as well as information about various teaching styles. Yet it is apparent that teachers are still nervous about having students with disabilities in their classrooms. It was noted that instructors' rhetoric has much improved, but, if the training does not provide adequate skills that can be properly implemented, the teachers' firmly held ideas and attitudes regarding inclusion will not change.

- To promote the ideas of integration, teachers must be able to execute various learning styles and needs. The current training has stressed that some students might not need the same kind of teaching style; therefore, teachers are expected to use various strategies to ensure that every student is engaged.

- The primary focus of the training has been on providing information regarding disability awareness as well as general information regarding inclusive education. However, instructors were not confident in using this knowledge. This research suggests that further education must be provided to instructors so that they can implement specific strategies in their classroom environments.

- All members of the school community, including faculty, students, and parents, should be committed to providing an inclusive learning environment. Hence, it is important for schools to maintain ongoing awareness campaigns inside the school. Furthermore, concerns of work overload and inadequacy, family concern about a child's impairment, and fear of social stigma should all be addressed through workshops, school activities, and awareness raising social camping.Moreover, education campaigns should also focus on the advantages of inclusion for children without impairments in an inclusive classroom.
- Campaigns aimed at raising consciousness should also focus on using well-known individuals, such as politicians, athletes, and celebrities, when at work. Schools should also open their doors to the community, especially on public occasions, to exhibit the reality of inclusive education and to promote awareness and shatter the barrier of fear, and the media should emphasise the successes of students with disabilities.

All the above should be done only after getting the approval of the children's parents and the children who have special needs themselves. In addition to raising public awareness, schools can form collaborations with local businesses by soliciting sponsorship for extracurricular activities, new buildings, and instructional resources.

According to Gaad (2004) the greater academic reward is just one of the many outcomes of community student support and different teaching strategies, along with increased awareness, understanding, tolerance, and respect for a wide range of human qualities and characteristics, as well as a greater sense of social responsibility and readiness for adulthood in a diverse and accepting society.

Finally, the chance to learn and be a part of an inclusive environment is everyone's right. However, sometimes, schools have "barriers to inclusion". These barriers include, but are not limited to, the lack of funding and special education teachers, family involvement, and much more. To have full implementation of a successful inclusion policy in any school it is of paramount importance to identify and examine the policies that have been used to support its development. Effective inclusion policy starts at the top with those who are responsible for providing direction and guidance. These are typically administrators and/or school board members who make decisions

about what type of approach to take when dealing with situations involving students with special needs. They also serve as a role model for other staff members in their schools by way of example.

A successful inclusion policy consists of four key elements: an organisational culture that supports inclusive practices, adequate resources, foundational knowledge about children with special needs, and training for educators and community members. These cornerstones of successful inclusion policy should be touted, assessed, and deficiencies worked at.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the inclusive education in one private school in Dubai the implementation of the School for All initiative. This project is the MoE's first practical step towards implementing federal law 19/2006, which establishes the rights of people with disabilities to education, health, and employment. The fact that this research was carried out within a single school provided several benefits, one of which was the opportunity for teachers to share their experiences from their own unique points of view. Unfortunately, due to time restrictions and the fact that only a small number of teachers consented to take part in the study, data collection was only possible at one school. Readers should not extrapolate the findings of this study to teachers working in other contexts or to individuals who have different educational backgrounds. The conclusions of this study are based on an investigation of just one school, and this is a limitation of the study. Moreover, the teacher experience and efficacy were not taken into consideration and these factors could also have impacted the learning process.

A large body of research suggests that, often, teachers lack skills in inclusive education. Future research must give information on teachers' competencies in teaching, and could also look at teacher background and years of experience, which may have an impact on the learning process. Additionally, the teacher's choice of teaching methods could play a role in their effectiveness, especially if they choose to use methods that are overly focused on the students' disabilities. According to the comparison that the researcher made of the students' grades based on their impairment, the overall assessment started to improve with each different type of disability. This pattern, on the other hand, was anticipated. In each study group, there were certain students who had greater academic performance than others. This was because they were assigned fewer challenging tasks and had clear instructions.

To conclude, teachers in inclusive education who maintain a structured learning environment in their classes and who are aware of their students' abilities are better able to provide appropriate student assignments and to customise their teaching tactics so as to benefit the overall performance of their students. In terms of future research, I recommend conducting random sampling or cross-cultural studies in several schools in all emirates to acknowledge the successful implementation of the inclusive education policy framework, and the additional investigations to be obtained from polling, surveys, or interviews to gain more reliable data. Several of the findings drawn from the observations and interviews regarding the current situation are inconsistent.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Index of inclusion

- Develop schools catering for all learners
- Strategy towards supporting schools

Developing inclusive policies

Creating inclusive practices
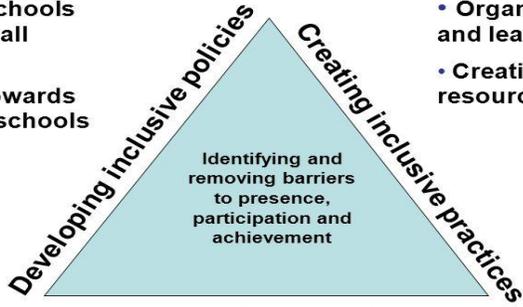
- Organising teaching and learning
- Creative use of resources

Identifying and removing barriers to presence, participation and achievement

Creating inclusive cultures
- Responsibility of regular system to educate all
- Presence, participation and achievement of all learners

Developed from: Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2002) Index for Inclusion.

Appendix 2: Consent Form

<u>**Consent Letter**</u>

Dear participant,

You are invited to take part in a Research Study titled *"The Gap Between the Rhetoric and the Reality of Inclusion Policy: The Theoretical Framework and Challenges of Effective Implementation at one Private American School in Dubai - A Case Study"*. This research is a part of my master's thesis in Education in Special and Inclusive Education.

As a participant, you will participate in an interview about your perspective of the Effective Implementation of Inclusion Policy.

I consent to participate in the research project and the following has been explained to me:

- My participation is completely voluntary.
- My right to withdraw is preserved from the study at any time without any implications to me.
- There is no risk in participating in this project.
- I have a clear idea about my role in the interview.
- I am able to request a copy of the research findings and reports.
- My personal information is secured and confidential.

<u>**In addition, I consent to:**</u>

- Audio-visual recording of any part or all research activities (If applicable)
- Publication of results from this study on the condition that my identification will not be revealed.

Participant name: _____   Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix 3: Interviews Documentation

Q1. What do you know about inclusion in general?

1. **Elementary Principle**
    When we talk about inclusion, we mean that all children, regardless of any illness or impairment that they might have, have the right to get their education in regular classes. On the other hand, this signifies that the learning goals, the materials, and the educational environment all need to be accommodated and adapted in order to suit the varied requirements of students who have special education needs or impairments. In addition, in order to realize the goals and understand the vision of inclusive education, the members of the IEP committee need to work together to establish and implement the individual education plan for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

2. **Primary Principle**
    I do believe that inclusion, in general, that inclusion are criteria where children with special needs requirements are included in the classroom environment or global community as a whole, is something that should be done.

3. **Middle Principle**
    The inclusion policy classifies students' levels based on the level the students are diagnosed and the inclusion team is involved. Also Inclusion indicates that all children have the right to be educated in regular classes, regardless of their condition or impairment. However, this implies that the learning objectives, materials, and educational environment must be modified and altered to meet the unique needs of students with special education needs and/or impairments. In order to realise the objective and vision of inclusive education, IEP committee members must also establish and implement the Individual Education Plan for children with special needs

4. **Head of Inclusion**
    Inclusion is basically including and making sure that oesd students are being teachers based on their needs no matter if they have physical educational or emotional difficulties inclusion in specific in one hour it comes to school target to include the students in the mainstream classes providing them for that comes of available and sometimes we can also ask for the learning support assistant support their conditions for without that extra

5. **Support Teacher SEN**
    Inclusion means that each child has the right to be educated in mainstream classrooms regardless of any condition or disability. they may have. However, it means that the learning objectives, materials, and educational environment must be accommodated and

adapted to meet the diverse needs of students with special education needs or/and disabilities. Additionally, to achieve the mission and vision of inclusive education IEP committee members must collaboratively develop and implement the Individual education plan for SEND students

6. **Elementary Teacher**
   It is about how we may differentiate the educational requirements of different children and accommodate the different abilities of the children.

7. **Primary Teacher**
   Inclusion means that each child has the right to be educated in mainstream classrooms regardless of any condition or disability. they may have. However, it means that the learning objectives, materials, and educational environment must be accommodated and adapted to meet the diverse needs of students with special education needs or/and disability. Additionally, to achieve the mission and vision of inclusive education teachers as fundamental factor and IEP committee members must develop and implement the Individual education plan for SEND students

8. **Middle Teacher**
   I know that inclusion of law means to include all the students regardless of their academic achievement and if there are some students are struggling, we should accommodate their needs.

Q2. What do you know about the Dubai inclusive education policy framework?

1. **Elementary Principle**
   Dubai's Inclusive framework gives clear rules for school leaders and teachers on how to implement inclusive education best practices and provides a clear job description for each member of the IEP committee. a framework also provides clear instructions for how to implement inclusive education best practices.

2. **Primary Principle**
   I do believe that we are handed a Framework from the KHDA and the school circulates it among the staff and teachers because the document has all the requirements of criteria that any student with determination must be available to them. So, in general, I would say it's like guidelines that tells us about what the Expectations for the student in each assessment in regards are and how we follow up on the student's academic achievement

3. **Middle Principle**

A framework gives clear rules for school leaders and teachers on how to implement inclusive education best practices and establishes a straightforward position description for each member of the IEP committee. a framework also provides clear instructions for how to adopt and ensure comprehensive best practices.

4. **Head of Inclusion**
   the KHDA delivers us with a Framework, and that the school then disseminates it to all of its employees and teachers. This is the only document that contains all of the criteria that every child who is determined must have available to them, so it is imperative that the school ensures that its employees and teachers have access to it. In other words, it is a set of guidelines that instructs us on how to monitor the academic development of a student and what to anticipate from them in the many forms of assessment that are given.

5. **Support Teacher SEN**
   A framework gives clear rules for school leaders and teachers on how to implement inclusive education best practices and provides a clear job description for each member of the IEP committee. a framework also provides clear instructions for how to implement inclusive education best techniques.

6. **Elementary Teacher**
   Not familiar with the specifics of the policy framework regarding schooling.

7. **Primary Teacher**
   I am completely clueless regarding the fundamentals of the policy structure of schooling.

8. **Middle Teacher**

   I don't know about it

Q3. What recommendations do you suggest for improving the Implementation of the inclusion policy in your school?

1. **Elementary Principle**
   I believe we need more training and to be involved more even in accepting or interviewing the child or the students in a special need we need more workshops also for the parents to get their involvement because it's very difficult for some parents to make them involved with the child or the student case.

2. **Primary Principle**
   We need to hire more qualified SENCO teachers and well-trained teachers in inclusive education

3. **Middle Principle**
   Wee Teachers need more training to be able to know students where they stand.
   We need precise unit assessments by the end of the semester to make progress and get accurate results.
   Increase inclusion of team members for Elementary and primary school.
   Place moderated SEND with new teachers and sever with the more experience one`s.
   Spread awareness more about the benefits of early intervention among families.

4. **Head of Inclusion**
   n our school we have multiple improvements in complement training to all staff to make sure that there are familiar with the policy guidelines. Also, we need to have more trained staff or at the specified amount because for every like hundred 2016
   So having enough amount of qualified to support the student would a post for the inclusion to support this student sir that we have other than that is to make sure that the inclusion department is provided with enough budgets for them to have special sensitive rooms and special educational kit for some SEND cases.

5. **Support Teacher SEN**
   We need the following:
   - Increase the capacity of support teachers.
   - Identifying the Inclusion support team roles as per the Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework.
   - Provide leader of provision for each section as this role exists.
   - No collaboration between SENCO and support teachers, no sharing of experiences among the team.
   - Encourage teachers' participation in developing and implementing the IEP annual goals

6. **Elementary Teacher**
   I believe we need more training and to be involved more even in accepting or interviewing the students in a special need. we need more workshops also for the parents to get their involvement because it's very difficult for some parents to make them involved with the child or the student case.

7. **Primary Teacher**
   More training on the ground not theoretical and to know more about the existing SEND cases we have at school.

8. **Middle Teacher**

I don't know much about the inclusion policy itself but what I know is that the students we cater for their individual needs according to their performance what I recommend is to hire more inclusive teachers to support the students in the school.

Q4. How are students being assets?

1. **Elementary Principle**
   We follow the fooling procedures:
   - New entry assessments math, English, and abstract.
   - Internal assessments diagnostic assessment for year school level.
   - Cat 4 guidelines for the students and learning styles
   - Diagnostic assessment of the current one-day presentation meeting from teachers of the previous year and compare it to the current year.
   - Baseline cat math paper and pencil
   - psychological test for all

2. **Primary Principle**
   Multiple assessment tests provided by the school follow the KHDA standards and the American curriculum standard based. And as primary school principals, we first conduct the interview, then review the student's report to determine whether or not he requires a curricular or instructional adjustment, and then recommend the student to the school's inclusion office. We administer standardized assessments in English, mathematics, science, and psychology to identify each student's unique needs and tailor our instruction accordingly.

3. **Middle Principle**
   newly enrolled students are being assessed by multiple tests that the school is running such as the cat 4 psychology test math and English for the existing students they are being assessed by their performance and assessment and their current IEP plans transfer students we refer to the psychoeducational reports old school referral reports.

4. **Head of Inclusion**
   So, we follow a plan so that teachers can recognize students who they think or sense they are facing difficulties in class. However, the main plan we observe in students classroom setting and during the break to make sure the observer which is mainly the inclusion coordinator has a full idea about this student's social and educational. After that including coordinator would have a one-on-one session where were set fan assessments when it's comes to education

5. **Support Teacher SEN**

By several tests and assessments such as
- MAP and CaT4 assessments.
- Formative and summative assessments (all assessments are accommodated according to each student
- Academic performance level).
- No special instrument to assess students by the inclusion department.

6. **Elementary Teacher**
Students are being assessed based on the class exams that participate the character for exams and other schools' exams and we do compare them together to know if the student is doing some improvement or he needs extra help after school time some students need to be enrolled in special centers others, they are doing well so the assets the assessments the backbone.

7. **Primary Teacher**

Classwork, behavior, and standardized test scores from other institutions are compared to determine whether or not a student requires supplementary instruction outside of regular school hours. Evaluations are the foundation of determining which students need accommodation or curriculum modification

8. **Middle Teacher**
Students are being assessed based on the class exams that participate the character for exams and other schools' exams and we do compare them together to know if the student is doing some improvement or he needs extra help after school time some students need to be enrolled in special centers others they are doing well so the assets the assessments the backbone.

Q5. Who creates the IEP Plan and when is it reviewed for assessments?

1. **Elementary Principle**
The inclusive team members along with the teachers create the IEP based on the psycho-educational report

2. **Primary Principle**
The committee decides who gets in based on certain criteria, and every quarter along with the end year assessments and we compare it with other international school assessments.

3. **Middle Principle**

   The inclusion team in the school creates the IEP plan along with our supervision and reviewing the student's psychoeducational report and their current academic status or achievement.

4. **Head of Inclusion**

   Inclusion team along with classroom teachers create the plan, is it constructed by the home learning teacher with the support of the coordinator. And the inclusion team decides the support type that student needs push in or pull out.

5. **Support Teacher SEN**

   SEND home teacher class if they are in elementary in middles each teacher responsible according to the subject that needs modification or to accommodate the students in certain situations. Sometimes we set as committee if the case is severe.

6. **Elementary Teacher**

   After the assessment is have been conducted, we sit as an inclusion team and we state the goals and the student's current academic status as a home teacher, I do create the iep plan with the support of the inclusion team if it is needed.

7. **Primary Teacher**

   We create the IEP plan along with inclusion team.

8. **Middle Teacher**

   I always ask the inclusion team to work on the IEP and I do review them according to student performance or academic achievement. students are being assessed based on their exams test homework participation based on that we change the IEP goals.

Q6. How do you support SEND in a class by following the inclusion policy guidelines?

1. **Elementary Principle**

   We don't support in class; however, we make sure that all students are accommodated.

2. **Primary Principle**

During the course of the lesson, we do not offer help; nonetheless, we do our best to ensure that everyone's requirements are satisfied.

3. **Middle Principle**
While we are unable to offer help inside class, we will do our best to see that everyone's requirements are met in/outside of class.

4. **Head of Inclusion**
I accompanied them throughout the exam to ensure that everything had been properly set up and to see if any of them needed additional assistance.

5. **Support Teacher SEN**
I set with them when during the exam to make sure that everything was set up well, and some require extra support.

6. **Elementary Teacher**
I check the individuality of each student and their requirements; some students need curriculum modification some needs only to accommodate some needs so the students in my class I check each one of them what do they need exactly and I do it according to that. some rare cases students' needs to have a whole curriculum modification, of course, we check it with the inclusion team because they know more about the inclusion policy than us and I try to do my best in the favor of the academic achievement of the student.

7. **Primary Teacher**

I take into account how distinctive each child is as well as the requirements that they have; although some students require changes to the curriculum, others simply need to be accommodated. As more than just a result, I evaluate the requirements of each individual student in my classroom and adapt the content of my lessons accordingly.

8. **Middle Teacher**
I support my students in the class by trying to involve them in the class discussion try to modify and make their exams suitable according to their needs always available for my students if they need more support after class hours.

Q7. As an educator and a member of the inclusion committee, Has your role been clearly defined for you?

1. **Elementary Principle**

Sure

2. **Primary Principle**
   Yes

3. **Middle Principle**
   Sure, it's the role I hold on the committee was communicated to me by the inclusion team and it must each school's principal to be part of the committee.

4. **Head of Inclusion**
   I am well aware of the obligations that fall on my shoulders because of my position as a psychologist educator and as a member of the department that is responsible for providing training for teachers and offering support to students who have special educational needs.

5. **Support Teacher SEN**
   Yes, I know my role very well because I am a SENCO teacher and we do conduct the training as SEND department.

6. **Elementary Teacher**
   Not really my role as a teacher is more than inclusion support.

7. **Primary Teacher**
   Yes, but not in details

8. **Middle Teacher**
   yes, I am a member of the inclusion committee when it comes only to the students in my class I tried to give my feedback my observation and check their IEP plan if it is suitable for them overall it's still the inclusion team's responsibility all responsibilities to understand the students who are having difficulties in their academic achievement.

Q.8 As an inclusive educator, how do you implement the inclusion policy?

1. **Elementary Principle**
   I have read about inclusive and general, and I know some students need support more than others sometimes we need to accommodate their needs sometimes we need to do some modification and the tests as a teacher I try my best in the interest of my students.

2. **Primary Principle**
   So as a principal at our school specifically we have the elementary school divided into two phases because of the number of students. We share and issue a clear guideline for all

departments on how we refer students if they were not having psychoeducational report. We also make sure to follow-up students in the classroom and their progress.
my role as a principle is to ensure that if any Red flag was raise from teacher to intervene and to ensure that this happens with every student in the school.

3. **Middle Principle**
   I studied the framework for the Dubai policy, and it states that we should strive to make the atmosphere acceptable for any kid who need support.

4. **Head of Inclusion**
   After going over the policy framework of Dubai, I can say with certainty that we are expected to do everything in our ability to ensure that students with unique requirements are accepted and supported inside the city school. The things that we do in class are followed by the KHDA Framework.

5. **Support Teacher SEN**
   After reviewing the policy framework for Dubai, I found that it instructs us to make every effort to ensure that the environment is supportive of every student who requires assistance. This directive states that we are to make every effort to ensure that the environment is supportive of every student. In addition to this, this is something that we do in the school that we attend.

6. **Elementary Teacher**
   I have reviewed the policy framework for Dubai, and it indicates that we are to make every effort to ensure that the environment is supportive of every student who needs assistance. In addition to this is what we do in our school.

7. **Primary Teacher**

   It is my job as a teacher to look out for my students' best interests. I understand that some students have more needs than others and that we may have to make accommodations on tests to meet those needs.

8. **Middle Teacher**
   The integration of special needs students in normal classes are really challenge for both teacher and students. as far I know they i need to accommodate my students needs sometimes the inclusion team do modification to the curriculum and I go over it to check if it is suitable for the student's academic achievement. However, we do find some difficulties to accommodate some students in the class. we don't know there are special needs until we see their exams and the assessment, and we are suspecting there's something wrong with the student. implementing the inclusion policy itself I believe it is administration level more than teacher level.