

A comparative Case Study amongst 3 Cycle 1 schools in Abu Dhabi with

regards to;

**'Roles of both General Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers
in Implementing Successful Inclusive Practices'**

دراسة حالة لثلاثة مدارس حلقة أولى في إمارة ابوظبي تتعلق بـ:
"الدور المنوط لكل من معلمو الصفوف ومعلمو ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية
الخاصة لتطبيق عملية الدمج بشكل ناجح"

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Abstract

It is generally accepted that inclusive education will be the norm in mainstream schools over the next few years as a result of increasingly straightforward federal laws. To attain an appropriate annual development that suits all students regardless of their different abilities, inclusion must be planned and implemented adequately. Research has proven that a major component of successful and convenient inclusion is the degree of understanding of roles and responsibilities held by different stakeholders, in particular, the clear delineation of responsibilities of general education classroom teachers as well as special education teachers' ones.

The purpose of this case study is to scrutinize the responsibilities of three Cycle 1 schools' regular classroom teachers and special education teachers and also the extent of collaboration between both parties regarding inclusive education in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The study explores the teachers' attitudes, knowledge and skills that affect the progression of inclusive education in UAE. The research was conducted to use a triangulation of data collection methods such as; Surveying teachers, interviews, observations and document analysis.

The findings of the research refer to the fact that both general education teachers and special education teachers have not yet fully understood the roles allocated to them and still they are in a great need to work closely and dedicatedly cooperate with one another.

In conclusion this research will offer some possible implementation strategies and procedures that are predicted to be meaningful in making inclusive education successful in mainstream schools.

ملخص الرسالة

من المعلوم للجميع بأنه في خلال الأعوام القليلة القادمة سوف التعليم الدامج سوف يكون أمر طبيعي في كل المدارس النظامية وذلك بناء على القرارات والقوانين الواضحة التي تنص على وجوب ذلك الأمر. إذا كان شغلنا الشاغل كترابيون هو تحقيق تقدم سنوي في مستويات الطلبة بغض النظر عن قدراتهم المختلفة، فمن الواجب أن يتم التخطيط للتعليم الدامج بشكل صحيح. أثبتت الأبحاث وبشكل لا يقبل الشك بأنه من أجل الحصول على تعليم دامج مناسب ونجاح، فإن هناك عامل رئيسي لتحقيق ذلك ألا وهو درجة فهم الأدوار والمسؤوليات الموكلة لمختلف الأطراف وبخاصة الأدوار والمسؤوليات المنوطة لكل من معلمو الصفوف الدراسية ومعلمو ذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة.

الغرض من تلك الدراسة هو فحص المسؤوليات المنوطة لكل من معلمو ذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة ومعلمو الصفوف الدراسية وكذلك درجة التعاون بين الفريقين وذلك في 3 مدارس حلقة أولى في إمارة أبوظبي، دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. تفحص تلك الرسالة أيضاً إتجاهات ومعارف ومهارات المعلمين والمعلمات والتي من شأنها أن تؤثر على تحقيق تقدم في عملية الدمج في دولة الإمارات. إستخدم الباحث في تلك الرسالة طرق بحث متعددة منها: إستبيان للمعلمين والمعلمات، المقابلات الشخصية، المشاهدات وأخيراً فحص المستندات.

ما توصل إليه الباحث من نتائج أنه حقيقة العمل بين كل من معلمي ذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة ومعلمي الفصول الدراسية لم يصلوا بعد لدرجة تامة من فهم الأدورا والمسؤوليات التي من المفترض أن يقوم بها كل طرف تجاه طلبة ذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة ولم يتحقق بينهما درجة مرضية من التعاون الفعال. في الختام يقدم لنا هذا البحث بعض المقترحات والتوصيات التي من المتوقع أن يكون لها تأثيراً إيجابياً على عملية الدمج في المدارس النظامية

Content Page

ITEMS	Page
Chapter One: Introduction	
1.1 Introduction	7
1.2 Background	8
1.3 Education System in the UAE	8
1.4 Significance of the Study	9
1.5 Research Questions	10
1.6 Organization of Chapters	11
1.7 Definition of Terms	
Chapter Two: Review of Literature	
2.1 Historical Background of Inclusion in the UAE	14
2.2 Debating Inclusive Education	15
2.3 General & Special education Teachers Roles	17
2.4 What Roles do Teachers Play	18
2.5 Collaboration amongst Teachers	19
2.5.1 What is Collaborative Teaching?	20
2.5.2 Planning for Effective Collaboration	20
2.5.3 Teachers' Professional Development	21
2.6 Barriers to Inclusive Education and Negative Attitudes	22
2.6.1 Parents Attitudes	22
2.6.2 Special Education Teachers Attitudes	23
2.7 Factors of Successful Inclusion	23
Chapter Three: Methodology	
3.1 Data Collection Methods	26
3.2 Questionnaire Survey	27
3.2.1 Questionnaire Used in This Research	28
3.2.2 Formation of the Questionnaire	28

3.2.3 Role of the Researcher	28
3.2.4 Stage One: Preliminary Planning	28
3.2.5 Stage Two: Pilot Testing	29
3.2.6 Stage Three: Concluding Design	29
3.2.7 Stage Four: Collecting Data	29
3.2.8 Stage Five: Data Analysis	30
3.3 Ethics & Limitations	30
3.4 Interview	31
3.4.1 Types of Interviews Deployed in this Case Study	32
3.4.2 Role of the researcher	33
3.4.3 Ethics and Limitations	33
3.5 Observation	34
3.5.1 Role of the researcher	34
3.5.2 Ethics and Limitations	34
3.6 Document Analysis	35
3.6.1 Ethics and Limitations	
Chapter Four: Findings	36
4.1 School A	36
4.2 School B	36
4.3 School C	37
4.4 Document Analysis	37
4.4.1 ADEC SEN Policy	38
4.4.1.1 Section One	30
4.4.1.2 Section Two	39
4.4.1.3 Section Three	40
4.4.1.4 Section Four	40
4.4.1.5 Section Five	40
4.5 Findings From Documents Analysis	
4.6 Interviews	41
4.6.1 Structured Interviews	41
4.6.1.1 Findings	41
	42

4.6.2 Unstructured Interviews	42
4.6.2.1 Findings	43
4.7 Questionnaire Survey	46
4.7.1 Sample of Data Analysis	46
Chapter Five: Discussion, Conclusion & Recommendations	50
5.1 Introduction	50
5.2 Research Question One	51
5.3 Research Question Two	51
5.4 Research Question Three	52
5.5 Conclusion	54
5.6 Recommendations	54
5.6.1 Research Question Four	55
5.7 Further Research	56
5.8 Suggestions	
5.9 Summary	
References	58
Appendices	62
Tables	
Table 1.1 Education Systems in the UAE	17
Table 1.2 Participants Data	43
Table 1.3 School 'A' Responses	44
Table 1.4 School 'B' Responses	45
Table 1.5 School 'C' Responses	45
Graphs	
Graph 1.1 Data Analysis Question 1	46
Graph 1.2 Data Analysis Question 5	47
Graph 1.3 Data Analysis Question 8	48
Graph 1.4 Data Analysis Question 11	49

ACRONYM

UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ADEC	Abu Dhabi Education Council
SEN	Special Education Needs
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOSA	Ministry of Social Affairs

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Chapter One

Introduction

Education is the backbone of any nation in the world wishing to be outstanding and competitive. Education is also a right for all children in all countries. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) stated that education should be free and compulsory as well, for each child in the world.

Despite the great importance of education and the fact that any country with literate people is moving forward towards development, there are around 140 million children who are not yet getting the possibility to be educated, most of whom are those with different types of disability (UNESCO, 2005).

Individual with disabilities, also known as individuals with Special Education Needs (SEN) are becoming an area of focus from different World Organizations in order for getting them included and educated in classrooms with their regular education counterparts.

Globally, there have been various legislative acts regarding the education of students with special education needs moving them from exclusion in special education settings into inclusion in regular classrooms with their peers. In the United States as an example, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1990) indulged a large number of students with special education needs to have an access into regular class rooms for either part of the day or even the whole school day.

Mittler (2000) has stated that inclusion is a phenomenon. It has also been declared in the International Declaration of Human Rights that 'Education For All' (EFA) (1990). That education is a right for all, the Salamanca Statement and Framework assured it again in (1994) where many countries around the world demonstrated their commitment of educating children with disabilities.

Inclusion is defined by UNESCO as;

“ a process of a dressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children with the appropriate age range and conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children” (UNESCO, 2005).

Throughout this study, the above mentioned UNESCO definition of inclusion will be adopted.

BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

The United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is one of the Arab countries that lie in the Arabian Peninsula and bordered by other Arab nations forming what is called the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) created in 1981. It consists of seven different emirates named as follows: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ras Al-Khaimah, Sharjah, Umm Al Quwain, Ajman and Fujairah (Gaad et al. 2006). While each of the seven emirates has its own Ruler, a federal system of governance is in place. The 2nd of December, 1971 is their national day when they celebrate the union of the seven emirates as one united country.

The country is striving for excellence in all fields of life; social, economic, culture, education, health and wellness, safety, housing and environment (Gaad et al. 2006). Oil discovery in the UAE has helped to rapidly increase the welfare and standards of life for its people in all aspects (Kapiszewski, 2000).

The population of the UAE has increased 40 per cent in 50 years. As a result of this huge jump in the number of people, the government of the UAE allocated huge funds to improve the public services for its citizens and expatriate workers, particularly improving health and education services (Kapiszewski, 2000, Gaad et al. 2006).

Education System in the UAE

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) considers education as the safeguard for the future, developing and improving the nation in all aspects of life. This vision of a

modernized education system was summarized by the founder of the nation, the late president of the UAE His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, founder of the UAE, by stating that, 'The greatest use that can be made of wealth is to invest it in creating generations of educated and trained people' (Embassy of the UAE, Washington DC, 2012).

The UAE education system has witnessed a worthwhile development in the level of numeracy of all schools and students since 1970s (UAE report of sustainable development, 2002). The leaders of the country consider education as the emerging light towards better life and the safe guard for young people that helps them achieve their greatest potential. It has been pointed out clearly By His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, that oil should not be the only source of economy as it will run out one day, instead, we as a country should look forward to knowledge economy which will remain much longer (UAE report of sustainable development, 2002). The Education system in the UAE consists of two major sectors; the first sector is the governmental public schools and secondly the private education sector (Gaad et al. 2006) both run under the supervision of two authorities which are: the Ministry of Education (MOE) and/or Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC).

Education in the UAE is compulsory and free for UAE nationals at all levels. There are 4 levels of cascading in the governmental system comprised as follows; KG 1,2 , cycle 1 school (Grades 1- 5), cycle 2 (Grades 6-9) and cycle 3 (grades 10 -12) (see table 1.1).

Age	Academic Stage
3-5	Kindergarten stage
6-10	Primary stage –Cycle 1
11-14	Preparatory Stage – Cycle 2
15-17	Secondary stage – Cycle 3

Table 1.1 Education Systems in the UAE

Because of the fact that inclusion is a 'World-wide movement' (Mittler 2000), the UAE has been saving no effort to ensure all students, irrespective of disability have the right to be educated. A number of official decrees have been issued concerning the rights of people with disability; the Federal Law No. 29\2006 which was amended by the Federal Law No. 14\2009, was mainly to order the students with special education needs to be educated in regular classrooms in mainstream schools alongside their peers (Gaad, 2011). As a consequence to the issued federal laws, the responsibility of teaching students with disabilities moved from the supervision of the Ministry of Social affairs (MoSA) represented in special education centres and charity centres, into the supervision of the Ministry of Education (MOE) represented in governmental schools and private schools as well.

The significant of the study

Taking into account that regular education teachers are the most outstanding service providers in teaching students with special education needs in the inclusive classroom, their roles and responsibilities as well as their attitudes and degree of collaboration with special education teachers is a causative aspect in the success or failure of inclusion. This study gains its significance from the lack of research that has been done on teachers' responsibilities and attitudes towards inclusive education in the UAE. The research that has been found regarding these topics are for Gaad (2004), and Gaad & Khan (2007).

The research has proven that teachers who do not readily understand their roles and responsibilities towards students with disabilities and/or are ill-prepared to accept the idea of inclusion are more likely to pass that discontent onto the students. Hence, overt inclusion is not achievable and covert inclusion is there (Gaad, 2014). This covert inclusion will definitely undermine and limit the success and confidence of students with difficulties. On the contrary, teachers who understand their responsibilities and are ready to collaborate with different counterparts to make inclusion work in schools are more likely to inspire students with learning needs and provide them with confidence and positive learning environment.

The status of educating students with special education needs in urban districts such as Abu Dhabi Island might seem more difficult because of the increase in population. Also, the increase in numbers of students diagnosed as having special educational needs proves difficult at first and as pointed out in the literature (Gardner, 2001; Salend et al., 2005) there are top-heavy number of students with special education needs in urban schools, mainly those students who are having Social Emotional Behavioural Difficulties (ESBD) and Intellectual Disability (ID).

Knowing that educators collaboration and roles understanding is a key for successful inclusion to accommodate individuals with special educational needs in regular classrooms, it is important to explore the roles and responsibilities of those educators and how collaboratively they work with one another for the sake of the students.

There is a common agreement among educational experts that full acceptance and /integration of students with special education needs into the mainstream education classrooms is subject to a long-term change in the attitudes (Beattie, Anderson, & Antonak, 1997 cited in Evangeline, 2006).

Research Questions:

Hedrick, Bickman & Rog (1993) cited in Mertens & Mclaughlin (2004) state that the importance of the research questions have a great deal in proving the subjectivity of the research. It has also been clarified that good quality research questions should have some smart qualities such as; achievable, specific, measurable, clear, and relevant.

Four research questions are to be answered by the end of this study:

- 1- What are teachers' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities regarding the implementation of inclusive education in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)?
- 2- What is the current status of collaboration in order to make inclusion successful in schools?
- 3- What strategies are being used by school leadership to encourage teachers to work collaboratively in a positive and supportive environment?
- 4- What could be recommended to improve the current practices?

Organization of Chapters:

This comparative case study has been designed in five different chapters. Each chapter contains sub-headings and subtitles. The first chapter is represented in an introduction that starts with general information about the education system in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with some other subtitles about inclusive education and research background so as to state the purpose of the study. The second chapter is about the review of the literature regarding the attitudes, roles, responsibilities and type and degree of collaborative work of educators in order to make inclusion work in classrooms. Chapter three describes the methodological approach used to conduct this case study; it contains all the tools used by the researcher to conduct this case study. It also presents the ethical issues and limitations confronted by the researcher during data collection. Chapter four is

about the findings of this case study research, it presents begins with a description of ADEC policy and guidelines of special education, followed by three different sections representing the three schools studied by the researcher. Finally, chapter five is about discussions of the findings, conclusion and recommendations. At the end of the research, references and appendices are added.

Definition of Terms:

Terminology used in this research study: In this section the researcher is going to break them down into separate terms so that it would be easier for readers to understand them in the context of the study.

Government Schools: the cluster of schools mainly under the authority of Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. These schools follow what is being called the New School Model (NSM).

Modification: This is related to the curriculum being offered to students with special education needs. It also contains some process such as editing, cutting, target settings, simplifying and adaptation. It is also about changes in the learning outcomes, instructional level and content (ADEC, 2013).

Accommodation: the changes that enable students with special education needs to have an equal opportunity to access the curriculum. It involves some steps such as changing the learning environment and sittings and presentation (ADEC, 2013).

Inclusion: the definition in this study is based on the UNESCO, 2005 perception of inclusion as “a dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as a problem, but as opportunities for enriching learning”.

'Difficulties' or 'learning difficulties': “Both are terms that describe educational problems that should be addressed in the first instance through effective classroom practice. In some cases there may be a genetic or

neurological basis for difficulties demonstrated in one or more areas of learning (as described above). In other cases, problems arise principally from the interaction between a student and their educational context. These difficulties may be behavioural, emotional or related to specific aspects of learning. They may be short or long term, and schools need to address these difficulties through teaching and learning approaches, consistent behaviour management, and in school academic support services via the Learning Support Team” (ADEC, 2013).

Special Education Needs: is a general description of any exceptionality, disability, impairment, disorder, difficulty or nay other additional need that affects students’ performance (ADEC, 2013).

Special Education: refers to any additional provision that is made to meet students need so that they can achieve their full potential in learning (ADEC, 2013).

Inclusive Education: “schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistics or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children.” (The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Education, 1994: para. 3)

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

This comparative case study tends to explore previous research conducted on inclusive education. It is extremely important to review the literature that investigates and examines the developmental process of inclusion, in particular, within the United Arab Emirates (UAE) the country where this case study is conducted and how it connects to the world-wide movement of inclusive education. It has been stated that literature review is a very necessary resource for reporting, planning, conducting and interpreting research in the field of special and inclusive education (Mertens & Mclaughlin, 2004).

This research study is going to explore roles of mainstream class teachers and special education teachers and the degree of collaboration between the two parties in order to make successful inclusion in three- cycle 1 government schools in the UAE.

Generally, collaboration explains the nature/degree of the relationship between people when they work to achieve a specific target. This target might be helping student with special educational need in mainstream schools. In this case collaboration can facilitate inclusion.

Inclusion is not only restricted to physically placing a student with special educational need in a main stream school. It is a mistake to think that by including students physically in regular classrooms, we are achieving Inclusion or that the special services needed for inclusion can be reduced. It is unfair to expect that all children will learn the same way. Regular education teachers cannot be expected to teach children with disability without proper support. Inclusion is best implemented when all children engage in all aspects of school learning (Evangeline, 2006). This engagement can only happen when regular and special

educators are working collaboratively together, in this case accommodation and modification can be developed to meet students' learning needs.

Masterpieri and Scrugg (2004) have defined co-teaching as a combination between general and special education teachers, working cooperatively in order to teach all students equally in their classroom. In this case, the special education teacher and the regular education teacher are assisting all students with or without disability. It is a win-win situation where all students get benefited, educated and assisted equally.

- **Historical Background of Inclusion in the UAE**

Over the past twenty years, tremendous changes have been made with regards to special education (Friend & Bursuk, 2002 cited in Evangeline, 2006). The notion of providing proper and equal opportunities for all children is considered to be a world-wide requirement.

In the UAE, many acts of legislations have been decreed recently, the first of these legislations was the Federal Law No. 29 in the year 2006 amended by the Federal Law No. 14\2009 which organised the rights of people with disabilities and highlighted their equal rights in fields such as; health, education and labour force. These laws have been issued as responsive actions to some global declarations that order the rights of Individual with special needs. Some of these global statements are the Salamanca Statement and Framework, the United Nation Declaration of Individuals with Disabilities etc. The UAE works hard to follow and commit to the world regulations related to disabled people. After issuing the federal law, it becomes obligatory for both the government education system and private education system to accept students with impairment and enrol them in schools and ensure that these students have equal opportunities as their typically developed peers (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2006). Laws and regulations did not change or affect the social perception or how people view disabled people. Still people see disability from the social side of it. It is a social

stigma, for some people, to have children with disability in their families. Some people hide their disabled children at home for fear that these children will be bullied and socially rejected (Alghazo & Gaad 2004; Bradshaw et al. 2004, Gaad 2008; Gaad 2004; Gaad & Khan 2007; Gaad 2011).

Arif and Gaad (2008) highlight that some insensible social and medical terminologies are still being used in some official associations to describe individuals with disabilities such as; 'Mongol', 'retarded', 'problem', 'suffer'...etc.

Alshamsi (2010) and Gaad (2011) confirm that some people still looking at disability on a charity basis approach which rather than looking at it on a right-based approach.

In 1985, efforts and procedures were exerted by the UAE government to raise the awareness of the rights of people with disability (Anati, 2012; Gaad & Thabit, 2009). By that time, special education used to be provided in special centres under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) providing all necessary requirements and equipment. These special centres were isolated in different locations in the country (Anon, 2015).

In 1990, another step forward was taken when special education gradually moved from these segregated centres into special classrooms in governmental schools. These classes were designed to let people with mild disabilities have access to education.

In 2010, the Ministry of Education (MOE), in response to the Federal Laws 2006 and 2009, initiated 'School for All' policy and procedures for students with special education needs. This initiative was considered to be the roadmap for all educational institutions to follow as a guide to understanding the meaning of special education, the different categories of disability, provisions and utilities available, strategies and learning techniques.... etc.

In 2013, Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) issued its policy that is related to special education. This policy aims to pave the way in front of the wind of change. It categorised the disability into nine different categories that are to be enrolled in schools. It also gives a clear image of a four staged approach as is now internationally accepted. The stages move gradually from mild-moderate

disability to severe disability, instructions and services subjected to the type and degree of disability, definitions of terminologies, facilities, roles and responsibilities....etc. the main purpose of ADEC policy is to include all children regardless their different abilities into the regular classroom to feel justice and equity amongst their regular peers. It also ensures that inclusion is not only physical, but social as well (ADEC, 2014).

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is working around the clock to achieve equality for all children. The country saves no effort to provide schools with expertise from all over the world to model best practice in teaching and learning process. Contentious Professional Development (CPD) is conducted in all ADEC schools in order to help students, teachers, leadership, and community implement inclusive education, overcome the barriers and celebrate success.

UAE is still at the beginning of the way to successful inclusion, it might take long time to change the culture and attitudes of people in respect to inclusive education.

- **Debating Inclusive Education**

Including students with special education needs in mainstream schools is a global phenomenon (Mittler, 2000). It has been said that inclusive education is at the top of international agenda. Different educational systems around the world are doing their best to make inclusive policies and regulations work in their different countries (Wright, 2010).

The Salamanca Statement & Framework for Action on Special Needs Education states that:

...schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. ...Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discrimination, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. (UNESCO 2005, p. 14)

Students with disabilities used to be educated in separate educational centres (Fredrickson & Cline, 2002). Historically, disabled children used to be seen as 'different' from others with regard to the deficiency they have. Though, the idea of segregating students with special education needs was formed because they thought that these students need different type of education to meet their needs. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) was the corner stone in addressing the fact that all children have the right to learn for free.

Although inclusion is a debatable issue amongst educators, all researchers and educationalists agreed on the big picture of inclusive education that inclusion achieves the principle of justice and equality as a right for all children, with or without special needs, to be educated (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996; Stainback & Stainback, 1985).

As any new initiative in education, inclusion is both praised and criticized. Some educators and researchers argue that inclusion exposes students with special education needs to be ridiculed, bullied, stigmatised and tormented by their classmates. Those who are against inclusion argue that teachers may not be able to help or serve disabled students and/or classroom environment may not be ready with appropriate services and provisions (Masterpieri & Scruggs 2004; Zions & Callicott 2002; Salend & Duhanry 1999).

Opponents of inclusion claim that mainstream schools may not be the best place, particularly for students with complex disability (Forlin 2004; Forlin et al. 1996; Kauffman et al. 2005; Zigmond 2003).

One more argument against inclusion states that inclusion does not always provide expected results especially when it is not supported by a dramatic change in culture, structure, and system of schools (Anon, 2015). Carrington (1999) cited in Masterpieri & Scruggs 2004 affirms that to make successful inclusion there should be a great degree of acceptance of diversity and cultures.

On the other hand, proponents of inclusion confirm that students with special education needs will benefit more in both social and academic development.

Inclusive education allows children with impairment learn and acquire habits from their typically developed peers throughout assimilation and adaptation. Since schools are small societies, inclusion also makes it possible for disabled children to be part of this society where there is a good opportunity for interaction (Masterpieri & Scruggs 2004).

Researchers have proved that students with mild disabilities demonstrated higher scores in summative assessments, showed better behaviour, better grades, mastery level in their Individualised Educational Plan (IEP) target and finally positive attitudes towards schools and teachers (Hunt et al. 200; Good & Baker 1997 cited in Evangeline, 2006).

- **General and Special Education Teachers' roles**

The core of this research is to look closely at the roles and responsibilities of both general education teachers and special education teachers to see who is supposed to do what. Using document analysis and observations as tools to investigate and explores the duties carried by each teacher regarding special education, the following has been noted down:

According to ADEC policy of Special and Inclusive Education, there are 5 parties who are responsible for implementing the inclusive education policy and procedures in ADEC governmental school in Abu Dhabi;

- 1- Abu Dhabi Education Council
- 2- Regional Office (Abu Dhabi – Al Ain – Western Region)
- 3- Schools
- 4- Students
- 5- Parents

There is no clear part where either general education teachers' or special education teachers' roles have been stated.

The other documents that have been researched to examine the roles of both parties were the job description forms issued by ADEC. In these documents teachers are assigned to some key performance indicators to order their job in

ADEC schools. The findings of this research will state the roles found in both documents.

ADEC's 4 staged approach which is found in the policy and guidelines of special education needs, assigns stage one provision to classroom teachers where they can cater the needs of at least 85 % to 90% of students in their classrooms by using; differentiated activities, various learning styles and teaching techniques, and active learning strategies that tend to ensure the high engagement rate of the students.

- **What roles do teachers play?**

In the cooperative model of teaching the general education classroom teachers and the special education classroom teachers bring all their abilities, skills, training, professional development to the teamwork. All types of available resources are functioned and combined to enable and empower the teaching and learning effectiveness and opportunities. There is a clear vision among teachers in schools, each teacher has some specific skills, expertise and talents in various areas, by bringing this expertise together, teachers definitely work more effectively to meet and cater the needs of individual students regardless of their abilities (Dieker & Barnett, 1996, cited in Survey of Teacher Attitude Regarding Inclusive, 2006).

From one side, the major responsibility of general education classroom teachers is to deploy their skills and abilities in order to help students in their learning and provide them with opportunities to access the curriculum dictated in their school system. On the other side, the major responsibility of special education teachers is to provide opportunities for students to learn by developing and adopting a variety of materials that match the learning styles and the different needs of each individual student. In this case curriculum-based targets are set for each student to match his\her abilities. Both parties, general and special educators, have their own experience and expertise to share. General education teachers have the content experience to share with others. Special education teachers have the

adaptation experience to add. Again both general and special teachers have experiences in learning and teaching own professional development, but the larger goal is that each student in their classroom be assigned tasks and homework that suits his\her skills, each student is challenged appropriately and will engage in the learning process (Dreyer, 2013).

- **Collaboration amongst Teachers**

Historically, teachers got used to working separately in their own classrooms. Each teacher has his or her own lab where students move from one lab to another. With regards to students with disabilities, they used to be taught in isolated classrooms with their special education teachers. Over the last three decades, students with disabilities have gradually moved to the general classroom with their peers of the same age as a requirement for inclusive education. Hence, the term 'mainstreaming' started to be more common in educating disabled children. However, students with special education needs were mainstreamed for parts of the school day in some selected subjects; they were still not looked upon as part of the normal class (Ripley, 2015).

The biggest challenge that educators have to deal with is to share a role that used to be separate and individual: to share classroom instructions, goals, responsibility for students, decisions making, planning, classroom management, problem solving, and assessment of students. Today teachers ought to think of the classroom as 'our' class as opposed to the ego identifying "My class" of old. This would be the new perception of type of collaboration between general classroom teachers and special education teachers (Ripley, 2015).

What is Collaborative Teaching (Co-Teaching)?

Collaborative and\or cooperative teaching was defined the late 1980s as "an educational approach in which general and special educators work in co-active and coordinated fashion to jointly teach heterogeneous groups of students in educationally integrated settings....In cooperative teaching both general and

special educators are simultaneously present in the general classroom, maintaining joint responsibilities for specified educational instruction that is to occur within that setting" (Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989, p. 36 cited in Ripley, 2015). They also state that the all educators should take their responsibilities in making cooperative teaching work. The success or failure of the change lies in the degree of belief in the mindsets of educators.

The most outstanding feature of co-teaching, which distinguishes it from other teaching approaches, is that it helps both general education teachers and special education teachers to work collaboratively in the same classroom almost all the school day.

Teachers should work as an active team in an interactive environment; they should have the feeling that they are equal partners in the processes of teaching, planning and assessment. Working as one team, teachers should have knowledge of all curriculums across subjects to achieve co-teaching. If a teacher does not have sufficient knowledge of the curriculum, he cannot be a co-teacher; instead he will be an assistant (Crutchfield, M. in Ripley, 2015).

Planning for Effective Collaboration

To make successful, meaningful and effective collaborative teamwork, teachers, as well as administrators, should have high degree of commitment to working together. The biggest issue that worries teachers is time. Teachers are loaded with teaching periods, they feel that they do not have sufficient time to co-plan and consequently co-teach. There are some other important factors that guarantee successful collaboration such as; monitoring, resources support and the most important are, persistence and incentives where staff celebrates their success occasionally.

On-site planning helps ensure that resources are available. Such planning will encourage teachers and administrators to be engaged in activities, workshops and seminars on cooperative teaching. Senior leadership team plays an exceptionally

important role in facilitating professional development sessions and in ensuring sustainability. It is advisable that for co-planning to be effective, it should happen at least once per week. It should also be continuous to allow teachers to measure their success on regular basis in order to self reflect, make adjustments and develop new strategies to address their concerns related to issues either in learning or discipline (Dreyer, 2013).

Walther-Thomas and her colleagues (1996) in Ripley, (2015) state that there are five planning characteristics teachers should have. These 5 features were specified by teachers identified to be effective co-teachers and co-planners:

- 1- To have confidences in each others' skills.
- 2- To have a good learning environment that helps teachers and students be active.
- 3- To value each others' contributions
- 4- To have sustainability, routines, and facilitate training.
- 5- Looking at the quality of the final product ensuring that there is continuous improvement in teaching and learning process

Teachers' Professional Development

Collaboration should be a main part of teachers' training and teacher preparation program. There should be common understanding amongst teachers that they will be working with students with special education needs and typically developed students as well. Every teacher (In service teachers and undergraduates) needs training not only on subject-specific topics, but in different areas such as; teaching techniques, disability, skills of collaboration in classrooms, individualization, modification, adaptation and accommodation also (Dreyer, 2013).

It has been found that in schools where collaborative teaching is a school culture, students with special education needs as well as their typical peers demonstrated good progression in their learning and were exposed to more individual

assistance. On the level of students with disabilities, collaborative planning seen in school traditions helps them develop better self-esteem and be familiar with their social and academic strengths. These students manage to make good relationships with their peers. All students acquired better understanding of acceptance of others, of differences and learnt to look at themselves as unique individuals. Generally there were great improvements in all levels in schools where collaboration is practiced, even those students who are considered as low achievers managed to demonstrate improvement in both social and academic skills (Dreyer, 2013).

In conclusion we can say that teachers must have support in their classrooms. Professional development must continue throughout the school year. "Most important, all students win by being challenged by collaborating teachers who believe that they are responsible for all the children in the classroom." (Angle, 1996 cited in Survey of Teacher Attitude Regarding Inclusive, 2006)

- **Barriers to Inclusive Education and negative attitudes**

“the degree to which inclusion can be successful depends majorly on the attitudes exposed towards it” (Gaad, 2004:160). Despite the importance of inclusion in education worldwide, yet there are researchers who do not agree with it, and a number of people with different job titles working in the education field do not favour the concept of inclusion too.

From the limited research being conducted on the attitudes and opinions of educators towards the inclusion of students with impairment, it had been concluded that in the UAE, most of the general education teachers deny the importance of including disabled students in the main stream classroom (Alghazo & Gaad, 2004). Studies also show that special education teachers agree on inclusion being implemented in schools of UAE more than the general education teachers do, who showed negative attitudes and undesirable reaction towards the notion of inclusion (Alahbabi, 2006). A number of teachers had no problem with

inclusion as long as the degree of disability is manageable (Alghazo & Gaad, 2004).

Parents Attitudes

Parents of children with special educational needs demonstrated two opposite attitudes against including their children in the regular classroom.

Some parents of lower ability children find that the process of inclusion greatly accelerates the rate of development and progress with regards to their children, in a number of ways; such as improving their academic achievement, attaining social-communicative skills, boosting their self-esteem and confidence, and many more positives related to their languages and personal independent skills (Palmer et al., 2001; Seery et al., 2000; Hanson et al., 2001 cited in Survey of Teacher Attitude Regarding Inclusive, 2006).

On the contrary, other parents of children with disability think oppositely of inclusion. They continuously expose their worry and concerns of inclusion having a negative effect upon their children, they claim that in including their children, there are possibilities of them being abandoned or stigmatised at times in front of their classmates. Parents also fear that by including their children in main stream classroom, the children might lose their self confidence. Nevertheless, some parents of children with complex disabilities were convinced that inclusion will obstruct their children's progress and will not be of any help for them (Palmer at al. 2000).

Special Education Teachers Attitudes

Almost all research conducted about inclusion, points to the importance of the behaviours and attitudes that special education teachers have towards inclusion. Studies show that inclusion is not a pleasant idea for many teachers either because they do not believe in it, or because they lack the ability to coordinate and supervise the number of tasks they are required to conduct, all at the same time. However, if special education teachers show any uncomfortable reaction or

undesirable responses towards inclusion, these feelings are directly passed on to the other general education teachers working with them; which will create an overall frustrating receptivity of inclusion, not only amongst teachers but possibly amongst students with disability too (Ripley, 2015).

A very clear overview of the characteristics of special education teachers who believe in inclusion was concluded by Cawly et al. (2002) through various studies; which indicates that they are usually cooperative, loyal to the school they work at, well-versed with all the physical, social and emotional aspects that inclusion might need to be implemented appropriately for the welfare of these students.

It has also been agreed by Cook, Semmal, and Gerber (1999) and Fennick & Liddy (2001), that special education teachers need to get a better job title through which they can implement their practices adequately without being looked upon as teachers assistant or aide; which as they complain underestimate their potential of carrying on with their jobs and applying their inclusion strategies as should be

- **Factors Successful Inclusion**

Mitchell (2007) has worked on simplifying inclusion in a mathematical way putting it in a formula to briefly summarize all factors related and influencing it;

Inclusive education = V+ P + 5As + S+ R + L.

V stands for Vision

P stands for Placement

5As stand for (Adapted Curriculum – Adapted Assessment – Adapted Teaching – Acceptance – Access).

S stands for Support

R stands for Resources

L stands for Leadership.

This formula was approved and agreed upon by numerous research as it put together the main elements on which inclusion might be successful or not.

Successful inclusion needs a dramatic change towards attitudes, culture, perceptions Gaad (2014) stated that for change to happen the following integrated and sequenced steps are required;

Vision+ Skills + Incentives + Resources + Action Plan = Change.

The absence of one or more of the above equations is considered to be an obstacle in the wind of change.

Gaad (2014) has also highlighted that successful inclusion needs 5 Ps;

- 1- Policy
- 2- Process
- 3- Placement
- 4- Practice
- 5- Practitioner

When policies are involved in the process of inclusion and practices are conducted at a proper place, then practitioners become ready to lead the journey of inclusion.

Chapter Three Methodology

Introduction

Due to the importance of offering children with special education needs the right to be educated without being abandoned or treated as lower ability groups, much research has been conducted on this subject worldwide; as it had been focused on not only from educators or academic advisors but also from people working in the medical field. This because of its psychological and social influence on these children suffering such disabilities, whether they are mild or severe and the gain\loss that these students might attain being involved in the regular education system of any country (Odom et al. 2005 cited in Survey of Teacher Attitude Regarding Inclusive, 2006).

Throughout this research, the researcher will examine the current status of inclusion in the education process of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which enables the development and progression of inclusive educational system. In this chapter of the research, the methods and steps used to carry on with this study are

analysed. The status of inclusive education in the UAE was studied, examined and investigated based on which this qualitative research was held.

Qualitative research is considered to be a rich resource, giving a clear overview of any educational or social aspects to be studied; and made available for every one as stated by Mertens and Mclaughlin (2004). Moreover qualitative research helps in elaborating a fact or a belief as it uncovers all the factors that affect or rely on it; in addition to all the information obtained after conducting it. However, it contrasts the results with the beliefs of facts after undertaking the researching process relatively (Hill, Le Grange & Newmark, 2003 cited in Survey of Teacher Attitude Regarding Inclusive, 2006). To the researcher point of view, it is more useful to conduct and adopt the qualitative methods; document review, observation, interviews, etc; than handling quantitative methods to obtain information for the case study. Whilst composing the questionnaire survey, the researcher kept in mind to design the questions in such a way that information could be gathered and inferred to provide detailed and structured data.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The researcher gathered detailed information using various qualitative data – collecting techniques. These techniques were considered the most appropriate to use in this case study, because it allowed the researcher to compare and contrast the data obtained from the participants and those extracted from the different techniques used (Hill, Le Grange & Newmark, 2003 cited in Survey of Teacher Attitude Regarding Inclusive, 2006).

The observations, questionnaire and interviews were carried out at the second semester of the academic 2014 – 2015 in which the researcher conducted his research. The main reason behind the researcher handling this case study at this period of the year, from January to April was because it needs the school administration and teachers approximately two or three months to prepare their documents and file their data. The researcher had a look at a number of school activities, projects and targeted programs; to help in supporting this case study on

successful inclusion and how collaboratively did teachers work on it. The interviews gave a broader picture of the perspectives of a number of educators about the importance of inclusive education in schools.

All document obtained from the different data collection methods mentioned above were analysed before writing this case study, to ensure its authenticity. Triangulation of data sources\methods was used to scrutinize the accuracy of the findings concluded from the investigation undertaken to conduct this research (Research Methods Glossary, 2000).

An elaborated explanation of the techniques used to collect data and an illustration of the outcomes obtained will be discussed later in this section.

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Inclusive education does not get as much attention as it should, relative to its importance in the lives of students and the education system in the UAE. Therefore, a questionnaire survey containing different areas was conducted to gather information and details of the degree of collaboration among general and special education teachers in three primary government schools and the different perspectives of the academic team with regards to roles and responsibilities carried out by them.

The survey helps the researcher examine the general and public viewpoints and beliefs exposed by individuals to help in introducing or altering legislations (Robson, 2002). The information and data that the questionnaire survey produces, forms a great aid in interpreting the current status of any phenomenon investigated\ studied as well as providing descriptive and relevant information about the values, beliefs and people's attitudes with regards to the subject matter study.

Tonkiss (1998, as cited in Robson, 2002) highlights the necessity of conducting surveys that helps in attaining various types of data extracted from numerous individuals who are involved in the subject area that is being studied. Surveys are widely used at commercial field for the sake of marketing and improving\increasing the demand on a product or service. Not much is being

carried on regarding aspects related to the academic field and the response of the society towards them.

The researcher spent four months investigating and working on the case study. The surveys contained responses from people with different job titles representing the organizations they worked at. A copy of the survey is translated and added to the appendices.

I. Questionnaire Survey Used in this Research.

It has been stated by Mertens & Mclaughlin (2004) that while designing a questionnaire survey for any research, the questions are set in such a way that they examine the same concept or viewpoint from the participants involved at the same time; which decreases the time utilized to collect data and information needed to complete the research.

Formation of the Questionnaire

To help approach the intended goals and accomplish accuracy in conducting a research, Robson (2002) confirms that the questions set on the questionnaire survey must be very precisely and keenly designed to address all factors of the subject that a research is discussing. The questions are meant to support the information obtained from interviews, observations and data analysis resulting in providing a clear and valid overview of the roles of SEN teachers and general classroom teachers in educational process in the UAE.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher supervised the various tasks that were undertaken and thought to help in conducting the questionnaire survey through planning and modifying relevantly to match the goals and targets of the case study. The researcher went through five stages while designing the questionnaire (According to Robson, 2002);

Stage One: preliminary planning

As a first step, the questionnaire was set to match the subject area to be studied. The main target behind designing the survey was decided. Types of questions used were planned in such a way that answers were direct and to the point. Hence, the data and information obtained were considered to be valuable and descriptive at the same time. The steps used to form the different sections of the survey were carefully planned. There have been four main goals that kept in mind while designing the questions of the survey; gathering any data that might be directly relative to the participants, examining the degree to which collaboration had been practiced among teachers at the 3 schools studied, analysing their feedback in various aspects related to the implementation of successful inclusion in the UAE and eventually the participants' opinions and points of views of how to develop and reinforce the cooperation between teachers effectively in the schools of the UAE. The questions involved in the questionnaire were set to cover the subject area needed to be investigated after configuring them. A number of aspects were avoided in forming the structure of the questions in the survey; biased questions, twisted threatening questions, slang language and insultingly negative questions.

Stage Two: Pilot Testing

An overall idea was aspired from professionals and people qualified and experienced in the areas of research and inclusion. A pilot test was conducted by giving out the questionnaire to three delegates of the targeted respondent group. The dissertation instructor helped in assessing the quality of the questionnaire. Consequently, the researcher took the feedback obtained from different panels into serious consideration, modifying the survey and editing appropriately to refine its quality before distributing it to the respondents.

Stage Three: Concluding Design

The survey was distributed on the participants who worked in three primary government schools after planning and setting it adequately to a final design that had been set for it.

Stage Four: Collecting Data

The participants returned the surveys back which were gathered and checked for completion (the ones uncompleted are discarded).

Stage Five: Data Analysis

Information and data analysis will be reported and illustrated in details later in this research.

Ethics and limitations

- To be certain that the survey is valid and informative enough, attempts were exerted through assessing and piloting before implementing it. Moreover, if the questions seem to be enigmatic or unclear in any means, the operation is considered to be inconsistent (Robson, 2002). Therefore, questions were simplified and made extremely explicit for the participants' understanding.
- Assuring a great deal of relevant participants to the survey tended to be one of the problems faced. To maintain adequate involvements, the questionnaire needs to be perfectly designed or else it will be useless (Robson, 2002). Accordingly, the survey was outlined accurately and then set out bilingual (Arabic\English). The main aim of this was to secure a better participation of the teachers involved as most of them are Arabic speakers. This enabled the participants to demonstrate and expose their point of views and thoughts easily and smoothly without any complications.
- Time is a very important factor in conducting the survey as Robson (2002) confirms. If the questionnaire was to be carried out at an appropriate time, incorrect responses are expected. It is very crucial to pick the best time to distribute the survey to teachers involved, to guarantee a good response. The survey was given out to the respondents at the beginning of the second trimester in the three government schools of Abu Dhabi in which the research was investigated at. In school A, the researcher had the opportunity to meet the participants individually at their free time. In school B, the participants were met with one at a time after finishing their professional development session at the end of the

school day. In school C, the researcher sat with the participant in their break time at the staff room. These timings were especially chosen to get good responses from the respondents before they were overloaded with heavy academic work, to ensure they were in a moderate mood while filling in the survey questionnaire.

- A consent letter was sent to the three schools for the approval of conducting the survey with their staff.
- To ensure the accuracy of the responses obtained from the participants, the researcher followed up with the questionnaire to make sure they were completed and handed in person.
- The three schools chosen for the case study were all government school under this was to ensure that the three schools follow the same rules and regulations which in this case are set by Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC). This guaranteed the authenticity of the feedback from the participants, as all of them worked under the same authority and were up to date with everything concerning the implementation of the inclusion policy in schools.

II. Interview

The researcher used interviews as correspondents to the information gathered from the feedback of the participants that was extracted from the questionnaire survey. Hill, Le Grange & Newmark (2003) affirm that using interviews as a source of data helps in comprehending people's opinions and thoughts only if the questions involved were carefully designed and properly assessed for the answers.

Types of interviews deployed in this case study

Interviews are considered to be very helpful in comparative case studies because they enable the researcher to extract the information required to support the research through formal and/or informal conversations held with the respondents as claimed by Mertens and Mclaughlin (2004). There were two types of interviews that were conducted by the researchers in this case study;

Structured Interviews: the interviewer invited the participants to answer the same questions that were formally designed using the same verbal language and terminologies put in the same order (The Research Methods Glossary, 2000).

Unstructured Interviews: these interviews are informal they are usually conducted in a friendly atmosphere. In this case the interviewer allowed the respondents to express their opinions and general beliefs related to the subject area to be studied (Mertens and Mclaughlin, 2004). An interview can be easily measured and dissected when the questions are more structured as highlighted by Youngman in Bell (2005). Thus, the researcher used the interviews to compliment the information obtained and collected from the surveys in both a formal and an informal ways of interviews.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher had a good review of the methodology steps and literature on research before planning for the interviews and designing the questions which were focusing on the collaboration among general education and special education teachers in order to implement successful inclusive practices.

The feedback obtained from the interviews conducted, were considered as reinforcement and a support to the responses of the participants to the questionnaire survey. The researcher was very keen on putting down the wordings of the questions, while designing the interviews; this was mainly done to ensure that the participants do comprehend the core of the questions asked, hence providing appropriate answers (Robson, 2002).

Moreover, the interviewer helped some of the participants by giving them the definitions of some terminologies used in the interview questions to make it clearer for them based on which they ought to provide relevant responses; such as inclusion, SEN, collaboration, learning difficulties, disability and IEP. The interview was conducted during a professional development session, where special education teachers from the three schools had a meeting altogether

attending a professional development training program under the name of 'TAMKEEN' (the Arabic equivalent for 'Empowering') which is a training authorised by Abu Dhabi Education Council. The researcher got permissions from school principals, administration and teachers before commencing with the interviews, which were not audio-recorded to evade any ethical concerns from arising. Therefore responses from participants were only noted down. These notes were entitled as *a written account of the researcher's sensory and cognitive experiences* according to Bodgan and Biklen (1982:74 as cited in Hill, Le Grange & Newmark, 2003).

The interviews were conducted in a span of time that ranged between 15 to 20 minutes, all spoken out in Arabic for a smooth and easy understanding of the questions asked. Consequently, the answers were in Arabic too, to ensure that the participants do express and illustrate their opinions in the best way that would ensure the authenticity of the feedback obtained from them.

The interviewees were general education teachers, three special education teachers, one psychologist and six social workers from three government primary school.

The researcher used structured interviews with the three special education teachers asking them specified and targeted questions to get relevant responses from them according to their beliefs and experiences in this field.

On the other hand, the researcher conducted the unstructured questions with the rest of the interviewees mentioned above; discussing with them generally and friendly issues like inclusion, barriers/challenges faced, as well as the policies and regulations with regards to implementing inclusive education.

Ethics and Limitations:

- The researcher conducted the interviews in three primary schools as mentioned before. Two schools were boys' schools with mixed gender teachers working in them, while one school was a girl's school with only female teachers working in it.

The researcher faced some problems in conducting interviews in the girls' school due to the customs, traditions and religious practices of the UAE,

which obstructed the researcher from meeting with the female teachers, hence asking the school principal of that school to pass on the questionnaire survey in order to get responses from the targeted participants.

- The researcher ensured confidentiality to the participants, so their names were kept anonymous.
- Before starting with the interviews, the researcher introduced and illustrated clearly the main objective of conducting this case study, being exclusively for academic purposes.
- This case study was conducted at three government schools only, which doesn't really represent the education in the country of UAE as a whole. However, after this research is completed, it can be used in observing the findings and results obtained for the importance and impact of collaborative practices amongst teachers for the sake of successful inclusion in education.

III. OBSERVATION

The researcher used the method of observation to collect data to support this case study. Bell (2005) affirms that observation needs the person conducting it to be highly skilful in monitoring things around to be able to examine, investigate, scrutinize and evaluate them appropriately. Observations are sought to be very important sources of information, as they add up to the data obtained from the questionnaire survey and the interviews conducted to help in analyzing them correctly.

Role of the researcher

The researcher conducted the observation by taking notes. The researcher acted as a non- participant observer in this case study, which is much better than doing it on a participant basis as Mertens & Mclaughlin (2004)

indicate. The researcher used an official form approved by Abu Dhabi Education Council for the observations, as he had been working in the education field for over ten years in the emirate of Abudhabi.

Ethics and limitations

- As observations included attending classes; therefore permission from the school principal, administration and teachers were obtained; they were also informed that the data concluded from the observations will be used in the case study ,which were mostly used indirectly.
- In some cases, teachers observed when asked for permission to audio record, they declined, to avoid any cultural, moral or ethical issues from occurring.
- Observations conducted were limited to few teachers; hence, the researcher focussed on inclusive implementation on behalf of teachers in their classrooms.

IV. Document Analysis

Documents and records provide the researcher with a great deal of information relevant to the subject of the case study, precisely being used for that as declared by Metens & Mclaughlin (2004). The researcher was certain to get permission from all people involved before using the documents.

Document analysis was the fourth methods through which the researcher gathered data related to teachers' collaboration and roles towards successful inclusion in schools which is the main subject in this case study. The researcher here used various kinds of documents which were later evaluated and scrutinised some of these were circular, decrees, minutes, regulations, official letters, policies and guidelines. And because the data supplied from these documents were quite a lot, only useful data and information that were thought to support the case study were selected and carefully analysed.

Ethics and Limitations

- Most of the documents attained were in Arabic language; some were found in English or even bilingual. The researcher being specialized teacher of English to Arabic speaking students for almost 14 years, as well as being involved and literate enough in the implementation of inclusion in the education field, the necessary information were depicted adequately to be used as effectively as possible in the research.
- Not all the documents that were available to the researcher were related to inclusion in particular. Hence, the researcher had to refine the documents to ones that might be useful and others that might be not, before starting with the document analysis.

Chapter 4 Findings

It was planned from the beginning of this comparative case study that three schools were to be selected and consents were approved for their participations. Two schools were Cycle One male schools (school A and B) and the third school (school C) was a Cycle One female school. All three schools were located in Abu Dhabi.

School A

School A accommodates 150 students, 20 teachers; [16 Arabic medium teachers (AMTs) and 4 English Medium Teachers (EMTs), two social workers and two SEN teachers. The school has one principal and two vice principals; as the head of administration of the school, working together effectively for the welfare of education and students. The cooperation amongst teachers of the various sections was very obvious as they clearly share the same target which is doing their best for improving their students' performances in all aspects possible. The social workers were directly involved in the academic progress of the students which helps teachers to get more solutions from the psychological point of view to attain better results with students. There are some students who have learning

disabilities such as dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyper active Disorder (ADHD) and Emotional Social Behavioural Difficulty (ESBD). 10 teachers were selected to complete a survey.

School B

School B accommodates 484 students, 42 teachers (26 Arab medium teachers (AMTs) and 16 English medium teachers (EMTs)], one social worker and 2 SEN teachers. There is one principal and two vice principals in this school. This school is located in the Western Region in Abu Dhabi, UAE. In this school there is a Learning Support Team (LST) of five people; the social worker, the two SEN teachers, the vice principal and the psychologist. The role of LST is the corner stone in helping and supporting students with special education needs. Learning difficulties are found with a number of students. 15 teachers were selected to complete the questionnaire.

School C

School C has fifteen teachers, four of whom are EMTs and the rest of them are Arabic Medium Teachers (AMTs). The principal has been employed in this school for almost six years and is interested in leading the school forward. There is one VP in the school who is on administrative tasks, two Head of Faculties, one social worker and one SEN teacher. There are a number of students who have learning disabilities. These disabilities vary from mild to moderate. They have one child within the autism spectrum who has been integrated from a special centre. Special education teachers and SEN teacher are sometimes working together on co-planning for some teaching strategies.

The findings of the case study are reported in four sections. The first section reconsiders findings from the surveys conducted to thirty teachers in the three selected schools, the second section reviews the findings from structured interview responses conducted with special education teachers in the three schools studied, the third part represents unstructured interview responses conducted with number of educators and specialists such as social workers, psychologists, teachers etc. 10 teachers were selected to complete the survey.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS:

As part of a foremost educational reform, the UAE government established a huge educational association called Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) in 2005, to be the authorized governorate for Education system in Abu Dhabi Emirate. ADEC started implementing and deploying efforts and resources to achieve the UAE vision 2030, which is mainly about knowledge based economy that promotes the importance of education as a source national income.

A great deal of that reform was directed to educating students with special education needs. Hence, in 2013, a fundamental 'Special Education Policy and Procedures Handbook'' was developed to assure high quality procedures are allocated and made available for governmental schools to begin the implementation of that policy. The special education policy was decreed to support the Ministry of Education initiative 'School for All', that aims to provide guidelines for special education services.

One of the research methods used in this study is to document analysis where ADEC policy of special education was explored carefully to measure the impact of it on both general and special education teachers in their roles and responsibilities towards students with disabilities.

To date, there is no specific record of the number of students with SEN in ADEC government schools. The Special Education Needs department in ADEC is working hard to ensure that services and provisions are in place to meet the needs of all students. Educational Consultant from different world class education countries are employed in order to train school staff and administrators on how to compile with best practice.

ADEC SEN Policy

ADEC's Special Education Policy and Procedures Handbook, is a newly developed document which was written in 2012. It contains definitions of main terminologies such as, special education, special education needs etc. The main purpose of the handbook is clearly stated to help all school staff understand how

to help students who are gifted and talented (G&T) and those students who have disability in some areas such as physical, health, social, education etc.

The policy is divided into five different sections:

Section One: is policy definitions: it is about the roles of different partners involved in special education listed as follows; ADEC, Regions, Schools, Students and Parents. The second part is about the categories of disabilities and definition of each of them. ADEC has categorized nine types of impairment to be included in main stream schools listed as follows; Intellectual Disability, Specific Learning Disability, Emotional Behavioral Disorder, Autism Spectrum, Speech and Language Disorder, Physical and Health related disabilities, Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired and Multiple Disabilities.

Section Two: is School Procedures: it contains four parts as follows;

- a- Staged Approach: there are four stages to be followed by school to meet the needs of students with special needs, these stages represent the degree of need that each student has.
 - Stage One is differentiation; where teachers are asked to use different learning styles and different tiered activities through which each student will have his own interest to be engaged in learning. The student should be in the classroom all the time. SEN teachers help with offering teachers advice if necessary.
 - Stage Two is intervention; this stage comes after differentiation stage is not catering the needs of some students. These students needed more help; here comes an intervention plan to be done as early as possible in specific area of the curricula. In this stage the student is to be pulled out into the resources room from one to two hours a day.

- Stage Three, is for specific students who are not showing any progression in stages one and two, there disability is complex so they are in a great need and eligibility for either an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP). The student in this stage taught in the resources room with the SEN teacher almost half time of the school day.
- Stage Four, is when the students are not responding to the three previous stages due to the severe disability he has got. It is advisable for the student's safety not to be enrolled in schools. This case where the disabled students are to be in the special care centers where a medical program is followed.

This part is building a strong Learning Support Team (LST) who would be in charge of following the progression and services of students with special needs in the school. All students with special needs are supposed to be getting help from LST. It has been stated that LST will 'provide leadership, initiate policy development and planning to meet needs, support schools by providing specialist advice in managing students with special education needs, liaise with other organization to support students, develop a range of teaching resources to support effective teaching, monitor and evaluate special needs delivery, promote good inclusive practices and provide ongoing staff development' (ADEC, 2014).

- b- Accommodations and modifications: general guidelines for schools and teachers of how to accommodate the learning environment and modify curriculum to let children with SEN learn in the least restrictive environment.
- c- Assessments and examinations: it is about the exemption of the summative exams for some students who are having moderate to severe disability that affects their progression in school.

Sections Three: provides templates for both IEP and ALP: it is about the eligibility for students with SEN and students who are gifted and talented to have specific targets which will help them learn better.

Section Four: is about the referral process, registration and profiles of students with SEN.

Section Five: Annexes

Findings from document Analysis:

After reviewing the ADEC Policy of Special Education and comparing theory with practice in the three schools studied, the following points have been found;

School A and School C

- Most of the teachers are not aware of their roles and responsibilities which, although these roles are clearly stated in Stage One Approach in the Policy Handout.
- Teachers are not aware of the recommended collaboration between general education teachers and special education teacher with regards to stage two and stage three of the section two in the policy handout, where co planning and co teaching are advisable strategies to improve students with SEN.
- School Leadership Team did not build a good Learning Support team (LST) as a significant step to help Students with SEN.

School B

- The degree of collaboration is noticeable to some extent.
- Teachers are aware of the core of ADEC policy which is inclusion for all students.

- The school leadership is supporting teachers by providing an LST and PD sessions.
- They have commitment to the guidelines of the policy regarding the referral process and the four staged approach.

Interviews:

Structured Interviews

10 questions were directed to three SEN teachers, one from each school. These are the findings from the interviews:

- SEN teachers in the three schools are aware of AEDC policy of inclusion.
- School B, where a Learning Support Team exists and is effective, inclusive education is the norm and more effective than the two other schools.
- The three schools agreed that by diagnostic testing at the beginning of the year, the school decides who is identified to have special education services.
- ADEC guidelines of inclusive education are not followed as they should be.
- The role of the SEN teacher is to provide teachers with the following; strategies for teaching students with specific learning disabilities, pull out sessions for students with SEN and attend with teachers at their classroom to monitor the progress of students.
- Designated time for co planning and collaboration does not have priority in School A and C.
- Referral process is not the same in all schools and does not match ADEC guidelines
- The role of teachers is not very clear for them, they are not aware of the allocated job towards students with SEN.

- If there is a student who has the eligibility for an IEP, in most cases the SEN teacher is in charge of writing it down
- SEN teacher, together with the social worker, is responsible for tracking SEN students' achievement.

Unstructured Interviews

Some unstructured Interviews were conducted with a number of educators, parents, educational advisors,

These unstructured interviews were not immediately written on paper, it was kept in mind of the researcher and jotted down later.

Findings:

- Special education teachers are insisting on keeping the students with SEN in the regular classroom saying that inclusion should be in classroom not in the resources room.
- Some teachers say they need SEN teacher to be with them in the classroom when dealing with moderate disabilities.
- There is a lack of training for leaders and teachers and that leads to a lot of misunderstanding.
- There is a lack of properly qualified special education teachers.
- Lack of provision for students with SEN.
- Special education teachers are not experts in all types of disabilities so, what they can do is sometimes limited.

- There are often misunderstandings with teachers referring to students with learning difficulties as if he\she has a behavioural difficulty.
- Policies are written to be documented for school inspection.
- Parents are not very helpful when the school ask for information about their children with SEN.
- Even when ADEC provides schools with Professional Development training, the trainer is often not specialised in SEN, though they are always supposed to well versed educationally and not simply trainers delivering materials and presenting powerpoints.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire survey was distributed to teachers in the three schools (n=35). As follows;

Participants Form the Three Schools Studied				
	Number of Respondents	Job	Male	Female
School A	10	Teachers	10	0
School B	15	Teachers	5	10
School C	10	Teachers	0	10
Total	35	teachers	15	20

Table 2: Participants Form the Three Schools Studied

11 different questions were the content of the survey conducted for this study. The questions aimed at measuring the degree of Teachers’ understanding of their own roles and responsibilities towards students with SEN and the collaboration between general classroom teachers and special education teachers. Responsibilities of teachers mainly are to educate, protect and provide safe learning atmosphere for students with disabilities by making the learning environment attractive and enthusiastic.

The Scale for the Responses are:

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A= Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

School A Respondents, Number of Respondents = 10

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Q. 1	2	4	4	3	2
Q. 2	2	2	3	3	5
Q. 3	3	3	2	2	4
Q. 4	4	2	4	3	3
Q. 5	3	2	2	2	6
Q. 6	0	3	3	3	6
Q. 7	3	1	3	3	5
Q. 8	3	4	4	3	2
Q. 9	3	2	3	3	2
Q. 10	1	2	4	4	4
Q. 11	0	3	5	3	4

School B Respondents

		Number of Respondents 10						
		Number of Respondents 15						
		SD	D	N	A	SA		
		1	0	3	5	1		
Q. 1	1	1	2	2	4	0	1	
Q. 2	0	4	4	0	1	1		
Q. 3		4	4	2	0	0		
Q. 3	1	2	2	1	4	0	1	
Q. 4	1	4	0	4	1	0	1	
Q. 5	0	4	4	1	1	0	1	
Q. 6		3	3	3	1	0		
Q. 6	0	3	4	1	1	0	1	
Q. 7	1	6	1	0	2			
Q. 8	1	3	6	0	0	0		
Q. 9	3	0	5	2	0			
Q. 10	0	2	2	4	2			
Q. 11	0	0	4	5	1			

Q. 9	1	3	4	1	1
Q. 10	0	1	3	2	4

School C Respondents

The survey questions are divided into four sections;

Section 1: Questions 1 and 2 are about training and professional development.

Section 2: Questions 3, 4, 5 and 9 are about collaboration between general and special education teachers.

Section 3: Questions 6, 7, 8 and 10 are about roles and responsibilities of general education teachers towards inclusive practices

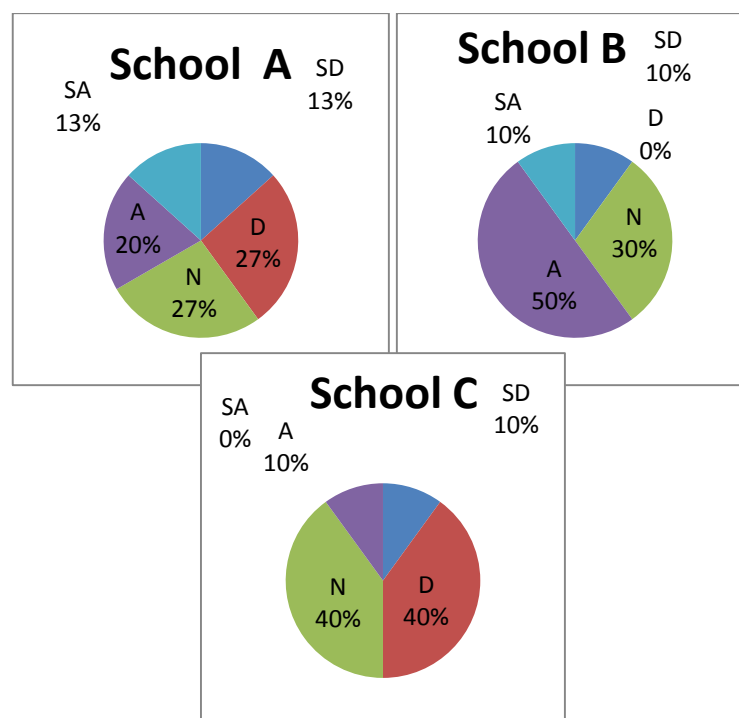
Section 4: Question 11, general attitudes regarding inclusion.

Samples of Data analysis

Here are some samples of the questionnaire analysis and what similarities or differences found amongst the three schools studied.

Survey Question No. 1: My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach students with SEN.

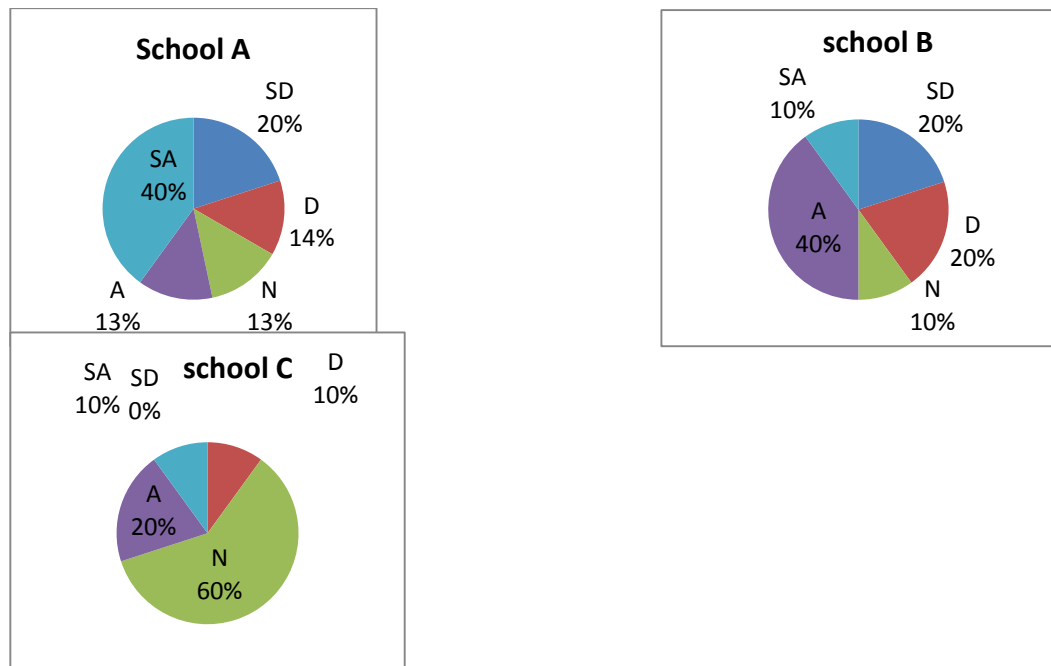
SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A= Agree, SA = Strongly Agree



This question was directed to examine the training needs of teachers to measure their acceptance and willingness for professional development sessions. It can be inferred from the pie chart that interviewees in school A and school C had a neutral attitude towards training. When interviewing some of the teachers in both schools they commented that training is ineffective because they claim the trainer is unspecialised in special education. Whereas in school B; as obvious from the pie chart; 50% of the teachers surveyed had the will to learn and know more about the various means and techniques towards implementing successful inclusion which showed the difference between those teachers having the will to learn and those using excuses to hide their undesirability of implementing inclusion; consequently revealing their unprofessionalism and lack of work ethics.

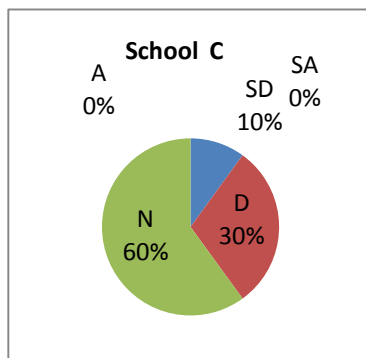
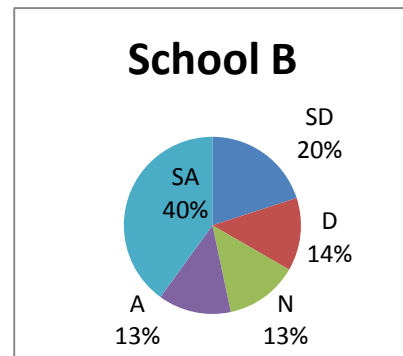
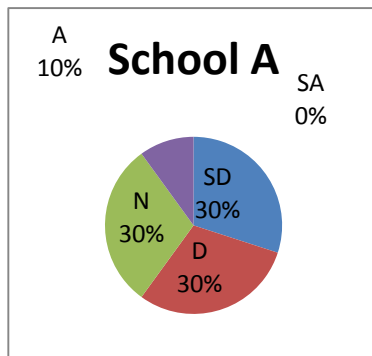
Survey Question No. 5: I feel comfortable in working collaboratively with special education teachers when students with an IEP are in my classroom.

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A= Agree, SA = Strongly Agree



The researcher asked this question to have a clear view of the degree of collaboration amongst teachers and how willingly they are to share their experiences or seek help from each other. The ratio of the negative answers to the positive ones varied from one school to another; but it was also a reflection of the number of teachers in each school who were willing to work collaboratively with their colleagues regarding this issue. One more important fact affecting this matter is the dominant idea put into practice by the school principal and administration regarding inclusion as a whole, and the necessity of collaborative practices between teachers being compulsory and not optional.

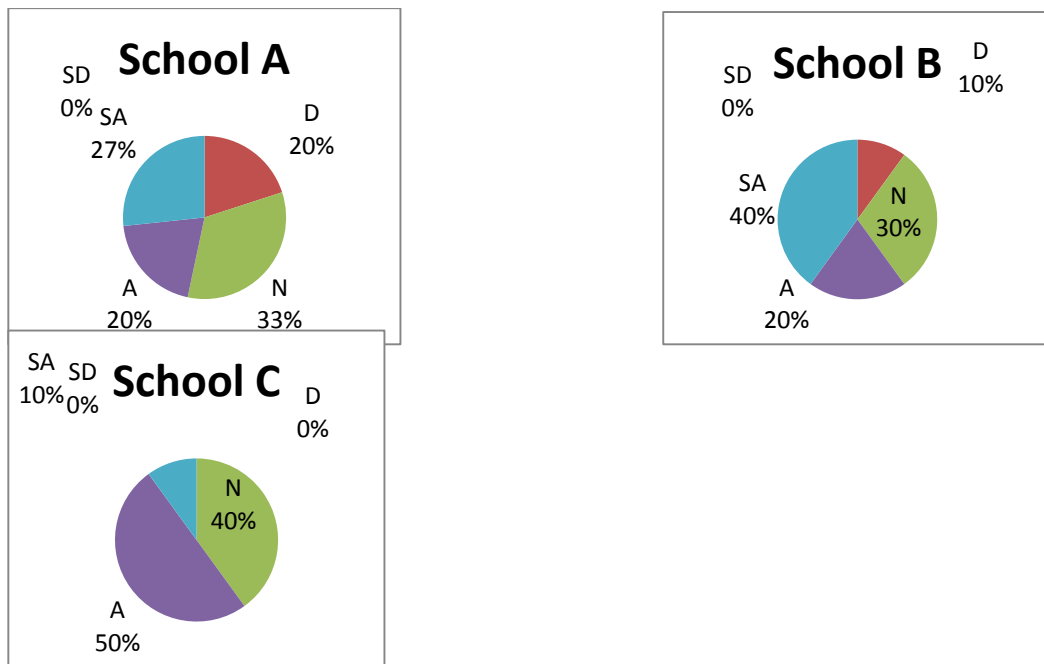
1- **Survey Question No. 8:** I am aware of ADEC policy on Special Education Needs and I understand my role as classroom teacher.



SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A= Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

This question was about teachers' understanding towards their roles and responsibilities. It can be inferred from the results illustrated in the pie chart above that, many teachers are unaware of what ADEC policy states regarding their roles as teachers in dealing with students with SEN. Some teachers had no idea what the ADEC inclusion policy states due to the fact that they are newly employed from different countries around the world, and had not been encountered much with the rules and policies of the Abu Dhabi Education Council.

1- Survey Question No. 11: Inclusive Education is good for all students.



SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A= Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

This question was directed to measure teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. It could be inferred that there was a positive change in accepting the idea of teaching students with SEN. This is a good indicator as it illustrated the fact that teachers' attitudes are changing positively for more understanding towards the priority of inclusive education and it being a right for all children.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

After analyzing and studying all the outcomes and information obtained from the various data collecting methods, a number of factors had been conducted that will be discussed in this chapter as answers for the research questions:

Research Question No. 1

What are teachers' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities regarding the implementation of inclusive education in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)?

It was very clear in most cases studied for this research that there is a clear misunderstanding prevailing among teachers of the roles and responsibilities each of them have towards inclusion as educators in the schools of UAE.. Some general education teachers still seem to think that they should be totally isolated from the responsibility of educating children with special education needs, particularly these students with severe disability; in their classrooms and that this is solely the responsibility of special education teachers. They also claim that they cannot do such a job as they have no experience or prior education regarding teaching individuals with special needs.

Their readiness to learn from special education teachers working along with them in the regular classrooms, seem to be very limited. On the other hand, special education teachers complain that they cannot reach their goals of educating students with special needs, without the help and cooperation of the general education teachers working with them; as both of them work with the same students.

To correct this misunderstanding; Kratochwill and Pitman (2002) as cited in (Survey of Teacher Attitude Regarding Inclusive, 2006), state that teachers can do any task just by watching other experienced and professional in that area performing it, or through practical interaction instructed for them.

Research Question No. 2

What is the current status of collaboration in order to make inclusion successful in schools?

The second and foremost aspect that had been observed in this case study was the collaboration amongst teachers with regards to inclusion. In this case, collaboration here represents the degree of cooperation between two; special and general education teachers and their efforts exerted towards an appropriate inclusive program.

Teachers appeared to be less collaborative than expected, where the only loser in this case were the students with special education needs; as this relationship is directly affecting the progress of such students and has a bad impact on them if practiced wrongly or carelessly.

It has also been observed that there is less communication happening between general and special education teachers working in the same classroom. General education teachers tend to be less willing to learn from special education teachers and show weak attempts to follow the techniques and strategies their peer teachers follow in the classroom with lower ability students.

Research Question No. 3

What strategies are being used by school leadership to encourage teachers to work collaboratively in a positive and supportive environment?

Another very effective factor that seemed to have a great impact on the readiness and willingness of teachers towards implementing inclusion in schools is the academic intervention and continuous guidance to such an issue. In schools where the administration had been supportive in means of offering trainings, making inclusion a basic necessity in the educational process, demonstrating education models for inclusion, facility provisions and technical assistance; teachers were delivering education comfortably without exposing any deploring reactions towards inclusion.

In other schools where the administration was neither supportive nor enhancing the implementation of inclusion; general and special education teachers tended to

complain or blame the weak management and administrative support for the fact that students with special needs were not showing any progress. Cook, Semmel, and Gerber (1999) confirm that without administrative support, the inclusive program cannot be expected to be successful in any means.

One more essential factor that was observed at the schools investigated is the presence of a learning support team and how effective it is in the process of inclusion. The learning support team in the schools investigated was either non-existent or if it existed it was not effectively utilised in the education process.

Without an effective learning support team, inclusion was not successful which is proven from the observations that the researcher observed in schools. .

Apart from the findings related to the research questions, it was found from the conversations with general education teachers that they have no problem in dealing or including students with mild special needs, such as dyslexia, language/speech difficulties and below level learners. However, in most cases they refused to agree on including students with severe education needs such as autism, intellectual disability, epilepsy, ADHD and SEBD; believing that they should be enrolled in special centre for disabled children or in special education classrooms if registered in a regular school.

Conclusion

This study was set out to trace the current situation of the mere collaboration between general and special education teachers in three Cycle 1 government schools in Abu Dhabi and the efforts exerted towards implementing proper practices for special education needs students; and provide suitable recommendations and suggestions for improving these areas in the schools of UAE. The roles and responsibilities of those teachers were investigated too, as well as the effective involvement of the Learning support team.

The researcher used qualitative data collecting methods for his research to assure the information obtained is as reliant as possible for an accurate data analysis consequently leading to interpretable findings relevant to the current situation in the education field.

Observations, surveys, interviews and data analysis were the main methods through which the researcher relied on to get information to conduct this research. These methods were designed to suit the subject of this case study as the researcher was very cautious while doing so, to ensure correct information gathering from the participants is being obtained. Ghesquie're et al. (2004, p. 172) assure that qualitative research had proven to be the best used in subject areas related to the education field, as it allows the researchers to view the picture to be studied from a broader view and enables them to access all required details by themselves.

The researcher identified the areas of concern on which this case study had been investigated. The first issue identified was the teachers' misunderstanding of the concept of collaboration between general and special education teachers working in the same classroom or school. It was also clear from many teachers that they misunderstood their roles and responsibilities as facilitators and educators in the field of education which they work and belong to.

Special education teachers claimed to find difficulties in dealing with SEN students all by themselves without any aid or help from the general education teachers working with them. On the other hand, the general education teachers in most cases were found to be lacking knowledge of ADEC Special Education Needs Policy and Guidelines or even unfamiliar with that policy and regulations,

therefore unable to implement inclusion efficiently thus impacting on the progress of special education students studying in their schools (Salend & Duhaney, 1999; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 1998). They also exposed negative attitudes when asked about handling students with disabilities in their regular mainstream classrooms which unveiled the fact that they lacked confidence and doubted their abilities to do so.

It was suggested by Keenan (1997) that working on improving the knowledge of general education teachers on the various methods and strategies through which they can deal with such students in their classrooms, would lessen their negative attitudes towards inclusion and their assumptions of inclusion being a tedious chore to carry on with by themselves.

The other area of concern to the researcher in this case study was the administrative approaches and efforts related to inclusion. Principals of schools tend to support the concept of inclusion just from the conceptual point of view. They clearly lack the vision, knowledge and leadership to effect the broad acceptance and appreciation of Inclusion in their schools. Meanwhile, the general education teachers working under these administrations are asked to be involved in implementing the inclusion program in their schools; hence, conflicts arise between teachers and principals regarding including special education needs students in the regular classrooms.

It was recommended by Pace (2003) that school administrations should examine the willingness of teachers towards inclusion before asking them to implement it. On the other hand, the teachers requested that they need more trainings and continuous professional development sessions to clarify their queries about inclusion and how they can implement it; which will alternatively help in eliminating the negative picture most of them have against inclusion.

Moreover, Cook, Semmel, & Gerber (1999) state that without appropriate support from the school administration being directed especially for inclusion, no much development can be expected.

Recommendations

Research Question No. 4: What could be recommended to improve the current practices?

Upon the findings and discussions of this case study, and in order to have successful inclusive practices based up on a good understanding and collaboration between general education teachers and special educators, the following have been suggested:

- 1- Special education teachers are preferably recommended to have intensive English Language Courses to improve their English communication skills as all of them are Arab natives who mostly find difficulties in interacting with the core subject teachers in government schools; who are English natives (English Medium Teachers- EMTs). This suggestion will help all teachers to benefit from the knowledge attained from either party on how to help students with special education needs; also communication amongst teachers can reach its supreme level.
- 2- Trainers should be well versed with the latest issues and research around the world which are related to the successful implementation of inclusion. This concern was highlighted by the researcher as a result of observations and interviews from various educationalists. Special education trainings are usually held by educationalists. The trainees feel like they do not really benefit enough as they would have if the trainer was specialised in special education needs.
- 3- Establishing and reinforcing co-planning as well as co-teaching between general education teachers and special education teachers in each of the schools, this will enhance the good collaboration and understanding of all teachers and will tend to liaise effectively for better inclusive practices as the goals and targets for all teachers in schools will be the mutual. Such planning needs and effort from the leadership teams in schools.
- 4- Academic and social performance of students with special education needs should be taken into consideration when evaluating the performance of both general education teachers and special education teachers. If all teachers are aware of the fact that their performance management is to some extent linked directly to the progression of

students with learning difficulties, they will work hard to improve the levels of those students.

- 5- ADEC Special Education Policy and Guidelines should be a dynamic document where school leadership encourage all teachers to have workshops and professional development training sessions on how to implement and follow.
- 6- Raise the competency level of general education teachers on how prepare Individualises Education Plans (IEPs) for these students who have the eligibility. Also prepare classroom teachers to be positive about students' ability to change their behavioural acts to better.
- 7- Generalizing successful experiences and best practices that are successfully implemented in various ADEC schools so that other school will benefit and try to role model these successes.

Further research

Since inclusion had been recently becoming a very vital issue in the field of education, the researcher suggests two areas that might need more research to be conducted on; to help in improving the process of inclusion with regards to teachers implementing them.

One factor that will help teachers to implement inclusive practices more efficiently and smoothly is the trainings provided for them from schools they work in. The quality of the trainings must be catered for, to ensure that suitable information is conveyed to the teachers for proper application, as well as correcting any mistaken beliefs relevant to the process of inclusion.

The time these trainings are to be offered, should be appropriate with the rate of willingness and readiness the teachers will be exposing towards attending such trainings; for instance, a one or two hour training session after a long tedious day will be of less benefit to teachers than conducting it on a student school day off,

where teachers will be expected to be more relaxed and ready to receive any new ideas to be discussed.

People conducting the trainings should be specialists in the field they are lecturing about. Specialists here don't only mean specialised in general inclusive practices, but also specialised in specific inclusive difficulties faced by general and specific education teachers to answer all their queries about any aspects relevant to this subject area. They also need to be well versed with the various special needs categories, to explain them elaborately to teachers helping them with identifying the solutions and the different strategies of dealing with such cases.

The trainings might include workshops, professional development sessions, model lessons, etc to suit the teachers' best way of learning.

The other area of concern that the researcher finds very important to make research on, is the qualification that special education teachers should have and how skilful/experienced they are before being entitled such a job.

There must be a number of fixed criteria based on which a special education teacher can be employed in a school; through which it can be examined how knowledgeable and responsible this teacher can be if they are given such a duty, to ensure that the right person is assigned the right job for a successful implementation of inclusion.

Suggestions

- Reviewing and evaluating the implementation of inclusive education in ADEC schools using an international tool such as the 'Index for Inclusion', to identify areas of strengths needed to be supported and areas of development needed to be improved.
- Assistant Teachers should be deployed to facilitate the learning of students with special education needs.
- Accredited Training institutions should be approved by ADEC as a Special Need Education Training Centres.

Summary of the research

This study research discusses the roles and responsibilities of both general and special education teachers and the collaboration amongst them towards implementing inclusion.

In this case study the researcher tended to examine the communication between both parties and the kind of support provided and offered by the school leadership team (SLT) or the learning support team (LST) for successful implementation of inclusive education in three cycle one schools in Abu Dhabi.

The researcher used qualitative methods across the research to finalize and analyze the results. The tools used in this research were as follows;
1. Questionnaire survey which was conducted with general education teachers
2. Structured interviews with special education needs teachers
3. Unstructured interviews with different parties
4. Observation of the teaching and learning process in the three schools
5. Document analysis to assess the results obtained compared to policies and procedures.

The results showed that lacking of communication and lacking of collaboration between general education teachers and special education ones is a result of either language barriers where most government schools have the majority of their staff to be Westerns (of English Language background) while the special education teachers in the same schools are Arab natives; or the miss understanding of the responsibilities that are supposed to be undertaken by either parties.

Another major factor that emerged from the research is the lack of support provided by the school leadership to set a positive work environment in schools for teachers to work collaboratively.

As a researcher, I personally learnt the professional development is a continuous process which is not subjected to age or experience, transparency and communication, willingness and dedication are core qualities that turn any educational initiative into a successful and prosperous one. I also learnt that inclusive education does not cost and can be successful in any association, 'when there is a will, there is a way'.

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ID 2013201020 Dissertation 'Roles of both General Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers in Implementing Successful Inclusive Practices.'
EDU 01500

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Consent Letter



29 January 2015

To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that Mr **Elsaid Saad Abdulaziz** – Student ID No. 2013201020 is a registered part-time student on the **Master of Education programme** (following the pathway in **Special and Inclusive Education**) programme in **The British University in Dubai**, from January 2014.

This letter is issued on Mr Abdulaziz's request.

Yours sincerely,

Amer Alaya
Head of Student Administration

Interview Questions

Questions	SEN Teacher School A	SEN Teacher School B	SEN Teacher School C
Are you Aware of ADEC policy towards students with Special Education Needs (SEN)?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do you Have a Learning Support Team (LST) in your school? How effective is it?	Yes we have one (only names on paper). we are short in staff. It is not effective due to the overloads of other works.	Yes we have one. It is effective to some extent. We might as a team have meeting with parents to discuss the students' progression in school.	No we don't have and I hear about that in different meetings but it is up to the school principal. He might show that we have one but only on documents for inspection.
How is decided that a student has a special education need?	When he registered at school or at the beginning of the school year when teachers do a	Either from a medical report and this rare because parents used to hide the fact if their child	Diagnostic tests are the first to indicate if the child has a difficulty. Notice, from both teachers and

	diagnostic test in the core subjects to measure the academic level for each student.	has a difficulty in some areas. The other thing is the level test happens at the start of each school year.	social workers, is another panel to know about the child.
In your experience, are ADEC guidelines for inclusion are followed in your school?	No sure. And that is because the lack of training for teachers and the lack of parents involvement	Yes. As an SEN teacher and also as a learning support team , we work with teachers and students to ensure we follow the ADEC guidelines	Somehow yes. The guidelines are sent online to school principals who on their part printed it out and kept it in files for documentation process.
What Type of support do you offer for classroom teachers in your school?	It depends of the severity of disability. For students who are included from special centres, I liaise with ADEC and the Special Centres to get the suitable equipment	I conduct professional development session for the teachers at the different occasions, i provide teachers with strategies of how to deal with	Writing an IEP for students who have the eligibility. Pull out students with disabilities to teach them in the resource room. Communicate with parents and community for

	<p>for those students.</p> <p>As for learning difficulties I pull the students with difficulties out of the class for some time during the school day, or visit them in the classrooms to follow up their learning progress</p>	<p>students with mild moderate disabilities , contact ADEC for equipments required</p>	<p>provisions</p>
<p>Are there regular meetings designated for SEN issues?</p>	<p>Rarely, because students with special needs we have are not many. And most of the difficulties are learning difficulties</p>	<p>Yes. We have regular meetings with teachers and head of faculties regarding reviewing plans, strategies, settings, provisions etc.</p>	<p>Maybe once each trimester</p>
<p>What is the referral process in your school for SEN teaching?</p>	<p>Teachers inform social worker, then SEN teacher. the SEN visits the classroom to</p>	<p>Diagnostic test at the beginning of the year. Then we define weak students as well</p>	<p>Teachers do a level test and then provide the social worker with names of the</p>

	monitor the student by himself	as gifted and talented. Data go to the LST to check. Then the LST decides whether any student is to be considered as SEN.	students who are under performance.
What is the role of the class teacher to support students with Special Education Needs?	Active learning. Easy tasks. and encouragement to SEN students	Differentiated activities and support to students who are having learning difficulties. Participate in writing an IEP.	Set targets for students, follow up with parents. Be positive and encourage students to learn
Do you feel that classroom teachers understand ADEC policy for Special Education?	Not all of them	Some of them do. We as SEN and LST trying to conduct PD sessions to get them familiar with the policy	They know that there is a policy for SEN but they don't have training on it.
Who participates in writing and	SEN teacher and sometimes class	Learning support team, SEN	SEN teachers

reviewing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students who have the eligibility?	teachers	teachers, Class teachers	
Who has the responsibility of tracking the progression of Students with SEN?	SEN teacher	LST and SEN teacher	SEN teacher

Appendix 3 Questionnaire Survey

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Dear Valued Teachers,

Currently, I am on my dissertation as part of my MA studies in the British University in Dubai. My dissertation topic is as follows:

A comparative Case Study amongst 3 cycle one schools in Abu Dhabi with regards to: Responsibilities of both General Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers in implementing Successful Inclusive Practices.

Please take a few moments to complete the attached survey.

Your feedback will be kept **totally anonymous**. Your name does not need to be on the evaluation form. **Nothing you say will be used against you**. Please feel free to provide your honest, candid thoughts and opinions in this survey.

The information you provide is doing to be used for research purposes.

The scale of your answers is:

1- Strongly Disagree 1- لا أوافق بشدة	2- Disagree 2- لا أوافق	3 - Neutral/No Opinion 3- لا أدري	4- Agree 4- أوافق	5 - Strongly Agree 5- أوافق بشدة
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Thank you in advance for your participation. ☹️ 😊

المعلم الفاضل :
المعلمة الفاضلة :
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،

نشكر جهودكم في مجال خدمة العملية التربوية ، وأملأ في تعاونكم ، حيث أقوم بإعداد رسالة ماجستير بموضوع التربية الخاصة بالجامعة البريطانية في دبي والموسومة بـ :
" التعاون بين كل من معلمو التربية الخاصة ومعلمو الصفوف الدراسية من أجل فهم أدوار كل منهم لإنتاج الدمج بالدارس "

لذا أرجو التكرم منكم في الإجابة على أسئلة الاستبانة المرفقة بين أيديكم ، بغرض الحصول على معلومات دقيقة تساعد على الوصول إلى النتائج المرجوة والتوصيات الملائمة ، والتي أمل أن تساهم في

تحسين وتفعيل مبادرات الدمج داخل المدارس . ولهذا الغرض تم إعداد الاستبانة المرفقة وقد وضع أمام كل فقرة سلم متدرج من خمس درجات :

موافق بشدة موافق محايد غير موافق غير موافق بشدة

حيث تتكون الاستبانة من بعد واحد مرتبط بالتعاون مع معلمو التربية الخاصة وعدد فقراتها هو (11) فقرة .

علماً بأن المعلومات التي ستقدمونها ستكون محط الاهتمام والبحث، وستعامل بمنتهى السرية، ولن تستخدم إلا لأغراض البحث العلمي. لذا فلا داعي لذكر الاسم.

وتفضلوا بقبول وافر التقدير ،،،

Personal Data: kindly put (×) where applicable.	أولاً: البيانات العامة : يرجى وضع إشارة (×) أمام الإجابة التي تنطبق عليك :
1- Gender: Male Female	1. الجنس: ذكر <input type="checkbox"/> أنثى <input type="checkbox"/>
2- Age: 22-34 35-44 45-60	2. العمر: <input type="checkbox"/> 22-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-60 فأكثر
3- Qualifications: BA MA Ph.D	3. المؤهل العلمي: <input type="checkbox"/> دبلوم <input type="checkbox"/> بكالوريوس <input type="checkbox"/> ماجستير <input type="checkbox"/> دكتوراه
4- Years of Experiences: 1-3 4-6 7-9 more than 10	4. عدد سنوات الخبرة : <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10- فأكثر

- 1- Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3 - Neutral/No Opinion 4- Agree 5 - Strongly Agree
 1-لا أو افق بشدة 2-لا أو افق 3-لا أدري 4-أو افق 5-أو افق بشدة

Statement					
	1	2	3	4	5
1- My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach students with special education needs. ما لدي من خبرات تعليمية يؤهلني لتدريس الطلبة ذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة بفاعلية.					
2- I need more training in order to appropriately teach students with special education needs. أحتاج إلى تدريب أكثر حول كيفية تدريس الطلبة ذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة بطرق مناسبة					
3- If classroom teachers teach children with an IEP, then Special education teachers are not necessary. لا يُعتبر وجود معلم التربية الخاصة ضروري عند وجود خطة تربوية فردية أقوم من خلالها بتدريس الطالب بنفسه					
4- I am provided with sufficient materials in order to be able to make appropriate accommodations for students with special needs. يتم تزويدي كمعلم بالوسائل اللازمة التي تساعدني على إجراء التكيفات الملائمة للطلبة ذوي الإحتياجات الخاصة					
5- I feel comfortable in working collaboratively with special education teachers when students with an IEP are in my classroom. اشعر بالإرتياح في التعاون مع معلمي التربية الخاصة حول تدريس الطلبة ذوي الأحتياجات الخاصة وإعداد خطط التعلم الفردي في صفي					
6- All students who have an IEP for any reason need to receive their education in a special education classroom. كل الطلبة الذين لديهم خطط تعليم فردي يجب أن يتم تدريسهم داخل غرفة المصادر أو في صفوف دراسية خاصة بهم					
7- I should only be responsible for teaching students who are not identified as having special needs. يجب أن تقتصر مسؤوليتي كمعلم على تدريس الطلبة الذين لم يتم تصنيفهم كنوي إحتياجات خاصة					
8- I am aware of ADEC policy on Special Education Needs and I understand my role as classroom teacher. أنا على دراية تامة بسياسة نوي الإحتياجات الخاصة لمجلس أبوظبي للتعليم وأفهم جيداً الدور الذي يجب علي القيام به كمعلم					
9- Special education teachers in my school provide me with strategies and provisions that help me teach students with learning disabilities يقوم معلمو التربية الخاصة في مدرستي بتزويدي بإستراتيجيات ووسائل تساعدني في تدريس الطلبة ذوي صعوبات التعلم					
10- Students with severe disabilities who are included in my school should be taught by special education teachers out of my classroom. يجب أن يتم تدريس طلبة الدمج ومن يعانون من إعاقات شديدة أن يقوم معلمو التربية الخاصة بتدريسهم خارج صفي الدراسي					
11- Inclusive Education is good for all students. الدمج مفيد لجميع الطلبة بالمدرسة					

Do you like to add any comments?

هل تود إضافة تعليقات أخرى ؟

Resource of the questionnaire: modified internet driven survey

http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/UNICEF_global_inclusive_teaching_survey.pdf

Appendix 5 Observation Tool



Teacher Observation Summary Sheet (Observation Form A)

This form is intended to guide an evaluator as they observe a classroom. It is not intended to serve as the only evidence of a teacher's performance. Some review of the teacher lesson plan or other documents may be required to fully understand some lessons and the results of all observations should be considered before making evaluation judgments. The completed summary sheet does not need to be shared with the teacher.

Teacher Observed:	ERP#:	Observer:
Date of Observation: Time:	Length of Observation:	Title:
Subject (Math/English/Arabic/etc.):	Topic:	

Area	Did the teacher:	Observed Yes No	Comments
1. Lesson planning and organization	a) Communicate a clear plan and objectives for the lesson at its start? b) Have the necessary materials and resources ready for the class? c) Is there a clear connection between the lesson objectives and the school curriculum (ADEC/MOE)? d) Review what students have learned at the end of the lesson? Ensure practical activity has a clear purpose in improving students' understanding or achievement?		
2. Engagement of students and behavioural management.	a) Keep all students engaged (doing the intended exercise) throughout the lesson? b) Correct unnecessary behaviour immediately? c) Praise good achievement and effort? d) Treat all students equitably and with respect? e) Follow the ADEC Guidelines for managing student behaviour f) Create an environment that encourages constructive student involvement? g) Encourage the students to use a variety of problem solving techniques? h) Listen and respond to pupils?		

3. Differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Adjust lessons appropriately to challenge all students in the class based on their prior learning or ability? b) Vary motivational strategies for different individuals? c) Allow students to take responsibility for their own learning by working independently? d) Teach to different learning styles (Visual/Aural, etc...) e) Use a range of strategies for learning, ie... Whole class, group, independent. etc... 		
4. Assessment for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Use a variety of questioning techniques to probe students' knowledge and understanding b) Explain to students how they will be assessed and the criteria for their grade? c) Focus on understanding and meaning more than actual memory? Skills mastery? d) Use a variety of assessment strategies? e) Provide evidence of student' written work having been marked or otherwise assessed? 		
5. Inquiry /exploration /application of understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide opportunity for or examples of applications in real-life settings? b) Encourage creativity by allowing students to develop unique responses to questions and prompts? 		
Conclusions (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Did anything stand out in this lesson? b) Did the teacher show growth from previous observations or address any recommendations? 		

Classroom Checklist

Does the classroom have:	Observed		Comments
	Yes	No	
An environment conducive to learning?			
Student list of names visible (for safety protocols)?			
The room arranged appropriately for the lesson observed?			
Student work on display reflecting current unit and shows differentiation?			
Resources readily accessible to students?			
Class rules and consequences displayed?			
Compliance with Workplace Health and Safety Guidelines? – e.g. Bags are safely stored			

Appendix 6 ADEC SEN POLICY

ID 2013201020 Dissertation 'Roles of both General Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers in Implementing Successful Inclusive Practices.'
EDU 01500



1.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of ADEC Special Education Services is to provide students with special and/or additional learning needs access to an appropriate academic and social program in the schools of the Abu Dhabi Emirate and who have not been making effective academic progress.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Abu Dhabi Education Council

ADEC aims to provide the children of Abu Dhabi Emirate with the foundations for lifelong learning so that they become well educated citizens who can make a positive contribution to UAE society.

To achieve this ADEC will:

- Provide leadership and promote successful inclusive practices.
- Initiate policy development and planning to meet identified systems needs.
- Support schools in the implementation of policy and provision of specialist advice in managing students with special education needs.
- Provide advice on current research, development and emerging trends in the area of special education.
- Coordinate executive initiatives in conjunction with relevant directorates and training providers.
- Liaise with other government and non-government agencies to support student with special educational needs.
- Develop and evaluate a range of teaching resources to support more effective teaching of students with special education needs.
- Monitor and evaluate special needs service delivery.
- Promote good inclusive education practices.
- Provide ongoing staff development in special needs education.

2.1 A STAGED APPROACH TO MEETING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS¹

ADEC expects that the needs of most students with special educational needs will be met in general schools, and in the least restrictive setting suitable to meet their needs.

Unless a student has already been diagnosed with a disability, disorder or impairment that has a significant effect on their learning, schools should apply Stage 1 processes in the first instance. If a student's progress continues to be of concern once these interventions have been in place, referral for further assessment may then be required via referral to regional teams.

Schools will follow a staged approach that responds to the severity or complexity of the needs of individual students.

The **first stage** (all schools) is good quality support in general education classrooms, which will include differentiation of the curriculum to meet different learning needs. Learning Support Teams may recommend intervention plans for some students.

The **second stage** (all schools) is referral by the Learning Support Team for special educational needs assessment and additional support whilst the student remains in the general education classroom for some or all of the time. (The student may access Resource Room services in some schools, where individual or small group support is provided for part of the day). All students will have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs).

The **third stage** is placement in a special class of a smaller group of students all of whom have special educational needs. Such classes may support general special needs or specialize in a particular disability. All students will have an IEP.

The **fourth stage** is where a student has severe or complex special educational needs that cannot be met in public schools and so requires placement in a more restrictive specialist setting. All students will have an IEP.

¹ E.g. Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, United Kingdom; Response to Intervention (RTI), New Zealand. Both cited in D.Mitchell: "Education that fits: Review of International Trends in the Education of Students with Special Educational Needs, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand,, Dec. 2010.

Appendix 7 Some Photos where teachers where interviewed and surveyed by the researcher. (permitted by teachers).



ID 2013201020 Dissertation 'Roles of both General Education Teachers and Special Education Teachers in Implementing Successful Inclusive Practices.'
EDU 01500



