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**Attitudes of teachers in primary schools  
in the Arab sector in Israel  
towards inclusion of students with special needs**

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**Poznań 2023**

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## **Abstract**

The integration of children with special needs in the regular educational frameworks is both a goal and value.

The Arab education system in general and the issue of caring for children with special needs in school, in particular, are at huge gaps. With the increase in the trend towards integration in Israel and the expectation that this trend will grow in the future, it is essential to continue to explore teachers' perceptions and attitudes regarding integration as well as their needs for training and continuing education.

The purpose of the study is to examine the perceptions of 250 teachers regarding the full inclusion of students with special needs. The research included obtaining comments from public education teachers in primary schools in the Arab sector in Israel.

The findings of the study confirm the behavioral-value support of teachers from the Arab sector in the integration of children with SEN in normal frameworks, but also limitations in the level of teachers' knowledge of the subject, as well as personal reluctance of teachers to apply it in their classroom.

The attitudes of teachers in the Arab sector are influenced by the level of education of the teachers, so that teachers with a higher level of education are more likely to have a lower emotional openness towards the integration of students with SEN in ordinary settings, when this means that these teachers are often more sober about the gap between the expectations of a successful integration and their personal ability to successfully complete such a project.

The training process has a significant impact on teachers' attitudes towards the integration of students with SEN. The findings of the study indicate an indirect effect of this training process on the level of knowledge and the emotional-subjective openness of teachers towards integration, which is a product of the improvement in the behavioral and value support of teachers in the sector.

These findings embody significant practical meanings. A change is needed in the way Arab society perceives students with SEN, and how this society treats their integration into the framework of regular students. The conservative and traditional nature of Arab society towards these students assimilates among many a negative perception of the disabilities, and with it also reservations about such students or their inclusion in accepted social frameworks. To change the

limiting perception towards students with SEN ,A perceptual change that begins in education is required, but this also requires openness among the teachers themselves. Teachers' training institutions should expand the range of courses and practical training in the field of special education.

## Introduction

The purpose of the study is to examine the perceptions of 250 teachers regarding the full inclusion of students with special needs. The research included obtaining comments from public education teachers in primary schools in the Arab sector in Israel.

Integration of special needs children in the regular education system deems the incorporation of students with special needs as its main objective and core ideology. Thus, whether the integration of special needs children in regular classrooms and mainstream schooling systems is temporary or permanent, it is advocated by the program for the integration of special needs kids. Additionally, this program functions through customized rehabilitative and instructive strategies in the pedagogical scopes. Such strategies aim to encompass and yield to the needs and requirements of children with special needs. Moreover, due to the upsurge in the integration of students with special needs in the Israeli educational frameworks and the inevitability of a larger increase in integration in time to come (Ronen, 2003), teachers' attitudes towards integrative education, their readiness to do it, and the training they undergo, become important factors that must continue to be thoroughly scrutinized.

Thus, teachers play an irrefutable role in the success of the integrative process for children with difficulties and disabilities. Therefore, educators' awareness of the importance of social acceptance and the provision of support to a child with special needs and debilities will lead to the success of the integration procedure. This is because the child's perception of himself is affected by his teachers' attitude and outlook on [him\her]. Accordingly, research indicates that positive self-perception and improved sociability can be attained by the teachers' readiness to dedicate in-class time and effort to teach these skills and values to the students.

I chose this subject due to two reasons. Firstly, to the best of the author's knowledge, no previous studies have examined the integration of students with special needs into regular classes in primary schools in the Arab sector in Israel. Secondly, the attitudes of the teachers influence the process of integration. Thus, knowledge of their attitudes will allow the expansion of programs aimed to change the attitudes, and hence, to facilitate integration in the elementary schools in the Arab sector.

The thesis consists of six chapters, introduction and appendix. The first three chapters present the review of the literature. It includes such topics, as: special needs; integration in

education; inclusion in education; inclusion of children with special needs in Europe, in Poland, in Israel; inclusion policy in Israel, the Arab society in Israel, inclusion in Arab society; attitudes of Teachers towards Integration. Chapter four presents the research methodology in detail, which describes the research philosophy, the research design and approach. Because the attitude has a behavioral, cognitive, and emotional components, I have identified specific research problems:

- 1.1. What is the teachers' knowledge of the integration of students with special needs?
- 1.2. What is the teachers' behavior towards the integration of students with special needs?
- 1.3. What are the teachers' emotional attitudes towards the integration of students with special needs?

I decided to pose a research question connected with chosen factors: age, gender, level of education, field of study, current level of teaching in elementary schools, years of working seniority at the school, and prior exposure to special education, the teachers' participation in courses that dealt with special education, experience with students with special needs and the teachers' effectiveness. This section also discusses the research methods used in this study and describes the process of qualitative content analysis. Trustworthiness is also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter five provides data analysis and findings of this research. The major themes that emerged in the data analysis have been retained, together with other findings from the literature. Chapter six presents the limitations of the research, the potential avenues for future research and conclusion, and ends with the recommendations. This is where findings are concluded and where proposals are made for areas which require further research.

The conclusions aim to reform the educational and caring systems and to breed comfortable and decent conditions for the integration and education of pupils with SEN. Moreover, the strategic objectives have been determined:

1. Preventing the placement of students with special educational needs.
2. Developing and promoting alternative models for students with special educational needs.
3. Modernizing the institutional system, improving the care conditions, and rehabilitating education.
4. Mobilizing and developing the community and the family in supporting the students with special educational needs.



5. The teachers' personal development towards students with special educational needs.

The completion of this Phd Thesis was made possible by the support and encouragement of many people. I would first like to thank my family who has helped me reach this point in my academic career. I especially want to thank my husband, Alla, for all his support, advice and understanding of the time needed to spend on my doctoral work. who has been a constant source of encouragement and support. I could not have done this without you taking charge and ensuring the smooth running of the household. He led me down the right path and supported my ability to complete this study.

To my four children Leen, Adam, Lama and Lmar, who have been putting up with me and the long hours I spend on the computer.

I thank the teachers who filled out the questionnaire I sent them, I very much appreciate your investment in contributing to my research.

I would like to thank my supervisor prof. Sylvia for the support and help and encouragement, she gave me lots of knowledge throughout my research writing, and she was a very understanding academic advisor during this journey. she motivated and encouraged me by setting deadlines for the accomplishment She was always there to answer my many questions and give me the support and encouragement I needed .This study would not be possible without her patience, reassurance, and support.

## **CHAPTER 1. Educational aspects of integration and inclusion**

### **Introduction**

According to Tilstone, Florian & Rose, (1998) the inclusion of students with disabilities in schools and regular classrooms is part of a major global human rights movement, calling for the full inclusion of all people with disabilities in all aspects of life. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) calls on all governments to adopt a comprehensive policy and enroll all students with disabilities in regular schools (UNESCO, 1994). This is because students with disabilities were often expelled from regular schools, schools they would have attended if they did not have disabilities.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007) endorsed and strengthened the calls for the inclusion of all persons with disabilities in all areas of life. Article 1 of the Convention sets out the general principles of the Convention, which include non-discrimination, equal opportunities, respect for diversity and the acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity and the full effective participation of individuals (UNESCO, 2007). However, this chapter covers the literature pertaining to the foci of this study. That is, to explore the perceptions and attitudes of ordinary teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in primary schools.

This chapter is divided into five main parts. First, it defines the term of special education needs (SEN). Second, it outlines perspectives on the Integration in education. Third, it examines the journey to Inclusion in education. The fourth part examines the inclusion of children with special needs in Europe and the fifth part deals with the concept of Inclusion in Poland.

### **1.1. Special needs**

Special education, as it is defined by The Arkansas Department of Education (2008) is a free form of special instruction which is designed to adhere to the special education needs (SEN) child's abilities. Additionally, it encompasses instruction implemented in the classroom, home, hospital, and other relevant settings. SEN children, on the other hand, are children with disabilities, such as visionary, physical, cognitive, and auditory handicaps (Malak, 2013).

Moreover, the term special education needs is the most predominant terms used, due to the fact that it is embedded in legislation and cannot be easily substituted. Nonetheless, one can

eliminate the word 'special' in some cases. For instance, as individuals, and as professionals we could get used to not utilizing this word a lot. When it comes to the press, for another example, some journals have been renamed. For example, what was previously called Remedial Education, has been recently changed to Support Learning. Additionally, many secondary schools have renamed their SEN departments to Learning Support. Sadly, SENCOs have not caught up with the trend. Another recent change is the employment of the words 'additional' or 'individuals needs' instead of special needs. In the adult contexts, the terms learning disabilities and learning difficulties are predominant. These positive alternations, however, do not change the fact that these new terms will also be disavowed with time (Mittler,2012).

Nevertheless, a separation between common needs, individual needs, and exceptional needs have been done by Norwich (1996). Accordingly, the distinction goes as such:

- Individuals needs engender from the different and individualistic traits of each person which differ from other people's characteristics.
- Exceptional needs result from mutual characteristics for certain groups, such as visual impairments and high musical potentials.
- Common needs stem from characteristics that are shared by everyone (e.g. the emotional need to be socially accepted and included).

Sadly, despite the good intentions behind the development of special needs education approaches, reports show that they still herald progress (Florian& Black-Hawkins,2010). Furthermore, research reveals the lack of aid provided for special needs pedagogy (Florian& Black-Hawkins,2010). Subsequently, research suggests that special needs pedagogies increase the levels of exclusion and marginalization of students with disabilities (Lewis & Norwich,2005). However, Davis and Florian continue to acknowledge the need for special education, which we address in a later section.

Chhabra, Srivastava, and Srivastava (2010), also elaborate on the emerges of inclusion. They reveal that in recent decades, societies' perception of special education has shifted notably. Such change has been often regarded as integration and mainstreaming, and latterly as inclusion. Substantially, integration and mainstreaming are synonymous, as both terms indicate the placements of students with disabilities into common schools that have regular curriculums without amending the curriculums heavily. Nonetheless, integration provides the students with additional support that aims to aid the student in the process of accommodating the schools'

programs and requirements. However, whereas integration aims for the student to live up to the school's environment, rather than the other way around, inclusion is a much more radical model. Accordingly, inclusion evokes the need to adapt regular school systems, teaching methods, environment, and curriculums to the needs of all students regardless of their needs and abilities, in order to enable all kids to profit from education (Mittler, 1995). Thus, inclusive education rejects the segregation between special-needs students and regular students and rather encourages the need for merging the two groups together within a shared framework, such as shared regular classrooms and comprehensive schools. However, whereas inclusion is not easily attained, and is often rendered as a challenge in a lot of countries, the ideology of inclusion suggests that the educational system is obliged to provide a tolerant and an inclusive pedagogical environment between special-needs students and other students by appropriating education for all (Flem & Keller, 2000).

In the past, the common approach towards individualized education methods as cited in (Ainscow, Dyson, & Weiner, 2013), was negative, for it was believed that they harm the process of creating teaching methods that benefit all the students (Ainscow, 1997). This can justify why special education-oriented methods in regular classrooms can engender new forms of discrimination. A common example of these practices is the employment of teacher-assistance who work closely with SEN students (Balshaw, 1999). Thus, whenever this support is inhibited, the teachers become dysfunctional. Moreover, as cited in (Ainscow, Dyson, & Weiner, 2013), the need for individualized education plans in Europe, for instance, is becoming a financially problematic issue, since there has been a need for extra individualized plans (Fulcher, 1989). Furthermore, in some countries, the term 'special educational needs' has also been used to refer to minority children who faced racial segregation (Trent, Artiles, & Englert, 1998). This means that racism is concealed under the concept of 'special education,' and is thus justified, instead of it being addressed and rejected.

Furthermore, the provision of special education services to children with disabilities is determined by the type of deficiencies. Thus, disabilities can be physical, cognitive, neurological, psychiatric. Moreover, different learning disabilities (LD) are also included in the typology of disabilities. Thus, children with dyslexia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), are lawfully entitled to receiving special education services, which includes placement in regular integrative classrooms, with the provision of additional assistance. Additionally, SEN

students are taught by professional educators who provide them with special teaching and learning methods. Nonetheless, research shows that SEN students are not provided for example with adequate tools to allow them to learn new languages. This is because research shows that SEN students' inability to master their native language can also be reflected in their inability to acquire new languages (Russak, 2016).

On a more positive note, the history of special education and its progress show a drastic improvement in the status of SEN students during the 20th century. Rodriguez & Garro-Gil (2015) divide this historical advancement into four stages (Buchem, 2013: 387-395):

1. Exclusion of the isolation of people with disabilities from society
2. Discrimination: in spite of society's awareness of the right of education for disabled persons, they still excluded them from the social context.
3. Integration: the integration of SEN students in public schools, in order to enable them to socialize with their non-SEN peers. This was achieved by placing the SEN students in regular classrooms and special education classrooms (Franklin, 1996: 18).
4. Inclusion: this stage was started by the Salamanca Statement in which delegates of the World Conference on Special Needs Education called for "Education for All" (Jomtien, 1999), and proclaimed 5 principals that would find special education policies and practices (UNESCO, 1994: VIII-XIX). Accordingly, inclusion meant building the social frameworks (schools, communities, and classrooms) and the socio-educational actions with the needs of SEN students in mind.

The 5 principles that would constitute special education policies and practices are as such:

- a. The right to education should be provided to every child, irrespective of his disabilities.
- b. The awareness of the fact that each child has his own individual needs, abilities, interests, and learning methods.
- c. The education should be designed in a way that pertains to the children's needs.
- d. The SEN children's right to be placed in regular schools which would provide them with the necessary aid, and which are based on a child-oriented pedagogy.
- e. The acknowledgment that inclusive education in regular schools will help abolish discrimination against and the exclusion of SEN students from society. Moreover, it must

be noted that placing SEN kids in regular schools can be an economic advantage to the educational system.

When it comes to the academic achievements of SEN students, Brophy (1986) revealed that the students were more likely to succeed when their teachers had positive attitudes towards the students' abilities, underlined clear academic objectives, and utilized timing to the maximum. Moreover, the findings show that the academic excellence of LD students can be attained by the slow and steady placement of them into the curriculum, whilst also accommodating the latter to the former's needs and abilities (Brophy,1986). Nevertheless, the mathematics teachers' concerns and attitudes towards the students' scores, show that the tactics mentioned above are not being executed.

Moreover, in comparison to regular education, special education is more favored. This is because it is believed that special education revokes the stigma accompanying SEND (special educational needs or disability) students which are often stressed by the regular education system. Advocators for special education elaborate on this subject by saying that regular education labels students with SEND, and thus, it enhances the exclusion of these individuals from the socio-educational context. Thus, according to them, regular education should be avoided. From these viewpoints there arises a dilemma, which is called Norwich's (2013) 'dilemma of difference.' Such quandary results from the fact that on the one hand, labeling kids as SEND would further enhance the discrimination and the stigmas about them. On the other hand, not labeling them would then lead to an insufficient provision of special education, which is necessary for their success. However, findings show that this quandary can result from the false idea that SEND students can be stigmatized by other pupils and educators, even if they are not formally identified as SEND people. Therefore, this means that stigmatizing is not linked to being identified as having SEND. This, however, is due to the fact that having SEND automatically renders them somewhat different from other children. Thus, the avoidance of labeling of SEND children is not favored, for it will only harm their educational process (Kauffman & Bada, 2014b).

Concurrently, it has also been argued that the engrossment in others' perceptions and presuppositions on SEND children, has shifted the attention away from the creation of adequate special programs and teaching methodologies in schools (Ainscow, 1997). Such a shift can justify why integrative efforts that are derived from the field of special education can lead to the

**Z komentarem [SJ1]:** Why here you start using "SEND". Above was always SEN. Can we use SEN everywhere? Of course I understand the meaning of SEN and SEND, but why you use only here SEND? Can we change to SEN?

formation of new mild forms of discrimination within regular education frameworks. For instance, many inclusive classrooms in regular schools employ assistant teachers whose job is to provide additional help to SEND kids (Balshaw, 1999). It has also been noted that teachers cannot function without these assistants. Additionally, in many European countries, the need for the provision of special education plans is heightened. This means that most of the educational system's budgets go to students with special education, which causes favoritism to SEND kids.

In the context of Palestinian-Israelis, SEND children suffer from double oppression, which stems from the fact that they are both a minority and educationally and socially marginalized group (Hagar & Jabareen, 2016). This double oppression can justify how a single-axis approach is not beneficial. The fact that these children are a Palestinian minority and are identified as having special needs makes them invisible in the eyes of advocates of Palestinian civil rights and of people with special needs. This ethical and social disadvantage is further worsened by the fact that they belong to a patriarchal, traditional, and closed society, that which is shameful, pitiful, and condescending towards their existence (Abbas, 2013).

Furthermore, in spite of the irrefutable benefits of integrating special needs children in regular non-restrictive environments (LRE), in practice, this concept has been hard to implement. According to research, the restrictions behind the practice of inclusive education derives from the overload of work and demands on regular education teachers, which leads to the teachers' frustration (Eiken, 2015).

From the findings and attitudes towards special education, it can be inferred that special education should provide everyone, regardless of their disabilities, with their needs, whilst also promoting equity and justice. Furthermore, special education seeks to ensure the provision of each individual with the necessary educational needs within regular schools, on the condition that their disabilities permit them with the ability to attend such schools (Rodriguez & Carro-Gil, 2015).

Nevertheless, it is more substantial to include SEND children with similar disabilities together, than to group them according to their chronological age. This is due to the fact that children in general, and SEND children in particular, are more relieved when they are surrounded by peers who share similar interests to themselves. Accordingly, for special needs children, the concept of education 'alongside their peers' means being surrounded by other children with similar SEND. This is also due to the fact that being in contact with regular

students is not contingent on the formation of meaningful connections (Kauffman & Badar, 2014).

To conclude, from these findings it can be noted that whereas for some SEND children being included means being placed in regular classrooms, for others, it means learning in special classes, special schools, or a resource room, with peers who share similar SEND to themselves. Therefore, inclusive special education notes that many children with severe SEND are often calmer when placed with peers who share their needs and difficulties. Thus, such factors should be considered during the placement process, in order to form educational frameworks that are inclusive and communal regardless of its type (Hornby, 2015).

## **1.2. Integration in education**

The concept of school integration has been elaborated on by Gherut (2001), who argues that school integration involves a shared partaking in school activities and events between kids with special needs and other students, based on the students' abilities and potentials in relation to their fellow schoolmates. Furthermore, while Gherut anatomized what school integration is, he also demonstrates what it is not (Gherut, 2006). Accordingly, school integration does not encourage the seclusion of special-needs kids from their classmates by placing them in separate classrooms, school activities, or extracurricular events. Additionally, school integration does not refer to the act of admitting special-needs kids to mass schools with the intention of obtaining large profits, especially when the school lacks the ability, means, and training that are necessary to this act. Moreover, Danescua and Iodachescua (2012) recite Gherut's (2006) psycho-pedagogical outlook on school integration by stating that it can be divided into 3 aspects: as a target, as a process, and as an outcome.

- As a target, integration demands the recognition of the union between demands and articulations, the submission of the secondary aspects to the aspects that avail the orientation (ideally, it is about the increasing of motivation and stimulus, articulating the goals, the patterns that exhilarate the process of integration). Moreover, the building stones of personality such as assimilations, fitness, propriety, and abilities, must be tested, encouraged, and nurtured in order to prompt the adaptation-integration process.



- As a process, integration is vigorous, intricate and rich of mechanisms that work heavily, so as to complete the action in demand. The psycho-pedagogies attention to the educational programs that are individualistic for each child includes the stages and levels of the process of regulation and autoregulation in the schools.
- As an outcome, integration is a socio-economical influenced field, as it is organically corresponsive with the social life and pedagogical labor. As a result, integration becomes an outstanding socio-educational phenomenon.

Moreover, in order to be able to grasp the teachers' attitudes and viewpoints on the integration of special-needs students in mainstream schools, we believe that one must get exposed to the meaning of the concepts of "attitude" and "integration." Accordingly, Verza (1998) explains that integration coincides with the act of normalization. Driven by the concept of "equality," normalization means providing the special-needs students with conditions that are similar to students without special needs. Furthermore, Gherut (2001) expands upon this concept by mentioning a functional normalization (securing persons with deficiencies with individualistic conditions), a social normalization (belonging to small groups), and a societal reconstruction (broadening social groups to social life). Moreover, whereas for Verza (1995) school integration is the process of the child's adaptation to the school's requirements from him\her, for Ghergut (2001), it is the process of embracing special-needs students in school activities that involve normal students, regarding the formers' potential and ability to do so. Thus, in Ghergut's viewpoint integration must not isolate special-needs kids from other kids in classrooms, nor prohibit them from partaking in inclusive school activities with other children.

Additionally, the integration of SEN students encompasses three aspects, which are physical, social, and curricular, instructional integrations. Most disabled students strive to be placed in normal classrooms, and the experience of learning in regular classrooms has been proven to be a beneficial social experience for such students, as they acquire social norms and conducts, develop friendships and learn what is rendered as socially acceptable and what is not (Friend & Bursuck, 2006). These acquired skills alongside the motivation from the teachers improve the children's educational and pedagogical abilities (Fullan, 1993). Admittedly, experts advocated the role of the educators' demeanors, mindsets, abilities, and proficiency to the success of the inclusion, with a particular focus on the regular classes' educators who work on

including disabled kids within their regular classrooms (Bender, Vail, & Scott 1995; Friend & Bursuck 2006).

In some places, integration is a necessity. In the Caribbean, for instance, integration is a must, and according to Conrad and Brown, it can be argued that integration is the reality and inclusion is the aim (Conrad & Brown, 2011). Generally, integration is done with the intention of abolishing discrimination against special needs students whilst educating them. Thus, when integration of disabled students within regular schools is done, other children acquire the capacity to accept, tolerate and understand the differences between them and their classmates, which leads to the emergence of better citizens (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003; Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005). We note, however, that integration and inclusion are not synonymous terms in the research literature. Following Thomas, Walker, and Webb (1997), on the one hand, integration aims to cater to the needs of the 'special needs' students, altering or amending the subject, and integrating them and providing them with constitutionalized aid.

Inclusion, on the other hand, is more comprehensive, as it caters to the needs of all students, regardless of their status, improves and alternates school culture, supports educators, and qualifies them to provide the best teaching methods for all the students.

Chhabra, Srivastava, and Srivastava (2010), also elaborate on the emergence of inclusion. They reveal that in recent decades, societies' perception of special education has shifted notably. Such change has been often regarded as integration and mainstreaming, and latterly as inclusion. Substantially, integration and mainstreaming are synonymous, as both terms indicate the placements of students with disabilities into common schools that have regular curriculums without amending the curriculums heavily. Nonetheless, integration provides the students with additional support that aims to aid the student in the process of accommodating the schools' programs and requirements. However, whereas integration aims for the student to live up to the school's environment, rather than the other way around, inclusion is a much more radical model. Accordingly, inclusion evokes the need to adapt regular school systems, teaching methods, environment, and curriculums to the needs of all students regardless of their needs and abilities, in order to enable all kids to profit from education (Mittler, 1995). Thus, inclusive education rejects the segregation between special-needs students and regular students and rather encourages the need for merging the two groups together within a shared framework, such as shared regular classrooms and comprehensive schools. However, whereas inclusion is not easily

attained, and is often rendered as a challenge in a lot of countries, the ideology of inclusion suggests that the educational system is obliged to provide a tolerant and an inclusive pedagogical environment between special-needs students and other students by appropriating education for all (Flem & Keller, 2000).

Lately, it has been reported that values of teamwork, participation, sharing, and cooperation have been intensified, due to the fact that schools are embracing inclusion (Friend & Bursuck 2006). The studies of Ben-Yehuda, Leyser, and Last (2009) reveal that educators who contributed the most to social integration disclosed that they were engaging in collaborative activities that demand daily teamwork with their colleagues. Such teachers exceeded their teaching roles by initiating meetings, acquiring and implementing new instructional strategies during their work, while they were also executing their teaching duties. Additionally, literature and empirical studies show the undeniable impact of teachers' collaboration and co-teaching on the integration of special-needs students socially and academically (Federico, Herrold, & Venn 1999; Hallahan & Kauffman 2000). Research also shows that factors such as collaboration, a sense of shared duty and liability, showing initiative, planning, instructing, and affinity between the special education teachers and their fellow regular education teachers contribute greatly to the success of inclusion.

However, the difference and shift between integration and inclusion do not merely stem from a semantical meaning, although these two terms are often rendered as synonymous, in reality, they possess practical differences. However, such differences cannot be merely epitomized for there is not enough unanimity on this subject to validate this. Nonetheless, with the aid of recent studies and by resorting to the concept and the exercise of inclusion in later chapters, we can locate a few signs. Consequently, on the one hand, integration aims to prepare the students of special needs to be placed in regular schools. Blamires elaborates on this concept by saying that integration manifests a social and educational 'readiness' to move the child from special education schools to ordinary ones (Blamires, 1999). This process, however, does not obligate the schools to adapt to the children's needs, but it rather expects them to adapt to the school's curriculum. Moreover, Integration is done by providing the best special education plans into a regular school and thus making the ordinary a special one. Some people believe that the Individual Education Plan (IEP) which was originally made to be used in special schools has been getting used to educate pupils in regular schools. Inclusion, on the other hand, calls for

drastic reform in the regular school system, teachers, curriculum, environment, pedagogy, methodology, and the classroom's heterogeneity. Additionally, inclusion derives from an open-minded ideology that promotes the acceptance of heterogeneity and diversity based on colors, religion, gender, race, nationality, the language of origin, social background, and the level of one's educational abilities. However, whereas schools can apply the concept of inclusion in a variety of ways, the curriculum and assessment bound this process greatly according to the national legislation (Mittler, 2012).

Despite the differences, ideologically, however, inclusion replaced integration and mainstreaming (Jahnukainen, 2015). Accordingly, whereas inclusion posits the necessity of focusing on the children's prerogative to get educated alongside his classmates and that schools are obliged to serve the purposes of all types of students regardless of their abilities, integration is mainly based on the belief that the pupil must be ready to learn in a regular classroom. Nonetheless, inclusion and integration are often used conversely when talking about educating SEN pupils in regular classrooms.

### **1.3. Inclusion in education**

Inclusion has been discussed by many. According to Yell (1998), inclusion means having special needs children learning in regular classrooms, with students without disabilities. UNESCO also notes that inclusive education is an accessible field to all pupils, for it celebrates difference ethnicities, sexual orientations, genders, socio-economic status, disabilities, races, religions, cultures, and social classes (UNESCO, 2009).

Moreover, the field of inclusive education can be rendered as a philosophical practice for placing special-needs students in regular school settings (Bryant, Smith & Bryant, 2008). Thus, inclusion ensures that the child attains his right to be educated among his peers, and should be socially accepted and respected, similarly to the students without disabilities. This means that both students with disabilities and those without disabilities will benefit from inclusion. This is due to the fact that special-needs students will be able to learn from their peers, while the latter will get exposed to diverse characters and become more tolerant of others. Additionally, according to Ajuwon (2008), inclusion refers to the necessity of educating every child regardless of their abilities within the classroom he/she are placed in. Inclusion, therefore, operates on the

provision of each child with his needs for him\her to be able to excel to the maximum in the classroom, instead of them struggling to fit in. In other words, inclusion brings the appropriate environment to the child, rather than isolating the child from his peers (Smith, 2007).

Over and above, the process of appropriating the environment to the child becomes dependent on regular education teachers. This means that if regular education teachers teach diverse students, even students with different disabilities, they will be able to make the inclusion process successful. In addition, it is mentioned that many countries, such as Nigeria, have adopted inclusion in their education system, and even as part of their National Policy on Education (1998). Nigeria's policy, for instance, calls for the need to include special needs students in regular schools and provide them with free education at all levels. In practice, however, only one state out of over thirty states implemented inclusive education in its primary school levels, other states of the federation in Nigeria are creating special units in their schools for special needs pupils.

Likewise, Bowerman asserts that inclusion is "a philosophy that states all individuals, regardless of ability, should participate within the same environment with necessary support and individualized attention" (Bowerman 2007). However, inclusion does not solely mean the placement of special needs kids with regular kids in regular classrooms. Inclusion, therefore, is a moral compass that views all children in the face of their disabilities are to be valued, respected, and nurtured. Furthermore, Gokdere (2012), encapsulates inclusion as the educational mentality that gives students with special needs the ability to learn in regular classrooms, while gratifying their needs with additional aid in a non-bounding environment. Thus, inclusion is a class-based and school-based practice, that renders inclusion and exclusion as intertwined aspects, and it mainly focuses on the mending of the curriculum with the acceptance of diversity.

Moreover, in an attempt to excavate the difference between "inclusion" and "integration," Bhattacharya (2010) explains that whereas the two terms can be used jointly when talking about the difference between mainstream education and special education, the difference between the two lies in the education itself. Bhattacharya suggests that when inclusion/integration becomes an intertwined aspect, so will the special needs education and special schooling become tangled. This means that it will be perceived that children will either need special schools with special education, or they will need an integrated/inclusive education in which they will learn with regular students with the addition of special aids and facilities.

Thus, Bhattacharya notes that this semantic parity is quite dangerous because integration entails assimilation of all students into a pre-determined model (Nikolić, Branković, Lazić & Rakočević, 2019).

Despite the attempt of adopting inclusion in Nigeria, the studies show that inclusive schools there lack the means, tools, and the technology that are needed for the process's success. This lack of tools emerges because inclusion is a very demanding process. According to studies, schools must acquire special types of equipment, special technologies, highly- professional teachers, demanding teacher training, a lot of motivated educators, and intense supervision on the educators and the inclusive programs. Such examples are only partial to what Nigeria lacks. As a result, researchers now aim to study the teacher's demeanor and viewpoints on special education within the framework of our general education system.

When talking about the advantages of inclusion, however, Ajuwon (2008), states the advantages of inclusive education, by stating that special needs students acquire social skills from students without disabilities, they learn to behave in ways that gratify society's norms. Moreover, in their early development stages, children absorb language and linguistic skills more effectively when they are surrounded by other children who speak it fluently (Mitchell & Brown, 1991). Additionally, inclusion allows kids with disabilities to be an active part of the community. This is because, when schools and education centers are more inclusive and open to diversity, these kids will suffer less from segregation, and will learn to be part of society. This social accessibility is also provided to kids without disabilities when they too learn with those with disabilities (Ferguson, 1996).

Furthermore, UNESCO elaborates more on Ajuwon's (2008) research by stating the things that will enable maximal success for inclusion. UNESCO states that education practices must be child-oriented for it to succeed. In other words, it is the teacher's duty to disclose the needs, strength and weakness points, and requirements of each pupil in their class, with a focus on their academic, social and cultural status, in order to help provide the best education for the child (Gildner,2001). In order to help the teachers, reach these objectives, they must master the ability to conduct curriculum-based evaluations, work in teams, assess the children's learning abilities and styles, teach in ways that speak to a variety of students, with varied intelligence and learning approaches (Gardner, 1991). These requirements are imposed on both special education teachers and regular education ones.

Another flawed outlook on inclusive education is the fact that it is preferred to special education because it is believed that the latter is based on a medical intervention due to the child's deficiencies and inabilities. This is false due to many reasons. On the one hand, special education mediations are affected medically, as they are based on the assessment of the child's psychological, medical, and therapeutic models. Farrel (2010) further expands on this notion by stating that "the knowledge base of special education includes a wide range of disciplines and contributions supplemented by related research and methods informing evidence-based practice." Likewise, inclusive special education also employs special education interventions that focus on the child's medical-psychological strengths, weaknesses, abilities, and needs. This means that inclusive education is mainly centered around pragmatic and factual practices, which implement research-proven interventions (Hornby et al., 2013).

Nonetheless, despite the demanding nature of inclusion and the socio-economic and political aspects that bound it, it has undergone great improvements in the last few decades (Eskay, 2009; Abang, 1988; Oluigbo, 1986). Historically, this progress began from the provision of Section 8 of the National Policy on Education since 1977 and has provided support mechanisms for children with disabilities. However, in light of governmental and cultural boundaries, there was not enough advocacy for the field of inclusive education, especially in the USA. This eventually led to the recourse for legal means and the establishing of them in order to provide special needs kids with the support they lacked, such as the PL (public law) 99-457 which encompasses special education interests for the sake of the young disabled persons. Inclusive education, by definition, refers to the placement of both kids with disabilities and kids without them in the same educational environment, whether it is in universities, high schools, or pre-schools. For Okwudire and Okechukwu (2008), inclusive education narrows the gaps between kids, as it aims to hinder the act of segregation and exclusion of students from the social, educational, and cultural fields. This is done according to Okwudire and Okechukwu (2008) by the fact that all students partake in an active role in the educational field, regardless of their differences, weaknesses, or disabilities. Thus, inclusion strives on equality and acceptance while eliminating marginalization and segregation. Eskay (2009) and Oluigbo (1986) explains that laws, situating problems, instructional programs, and lack just of evaluation are aspects that limit the process of inclusion. As a result, countries like the United States legislated protective

laws, such a PL 94-142 and IDEA (Individual with Disabilities Education Act) in 2004, in order to protect and provide special needs kids with the aids they require.

Furthermore, inclusive education is a multi-faceted multi-colored concept that encompasses different values with the intention of adhering to human rights, equity issues, social justice and socio-political viewpoints of educating as well as a social outlook on disabilities

It also focuses on the remodeling of schooling, schools, teachers with the intent of providing the children with their right to learn (Kozleski et al., 2011; Loreman et al., 2011).

Salend (2011) evokes the research on inclusive education, four primary components that enable the philosophy of inclusion to be conducted. The four components are:

1. The provision of all types of students with thought-provoking, motivating, and adaptable general education curricula.
2. The celebration of heterogeneity with the intent of adhering to each child's different needs.
3. The employment of multi-faceted instructional practices.
4. The promotion of an inclusive community which celebrates adversity and collaboration between students, teachers, parents, and important personnel.

Thus, inclusive education provides improved and facilitated education for kids with SEND.

#### **1.4. The inclusion of children with special needs in Europe**

Recent studies report a radical change in the field of educational inclusion. Accordingly, more schools worldwide are adopting the educational inclusion of SEND with students without disabilities in regular classrooms and schools, whereas, in the past, the dominant tendency was to admit students with disabilities to special schools. Moreover, the act of placing students with deficiencies in regular schools with regular students is referred to as "inclusion" (De Boer, Pijil, & Minnaert, 2011).

Correspondingly, the subject of integrating SEN students and students with disabilities in regular and mainstreamed schooling systems and environments has been a controversial and widely discussed subject in the last 25 years (Avraamides, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000). However, the meaning behind integration has shifted to a great extent towards the end of the 20th century. This is due to the fact that in some places in the world the word 'integration' has been associated



with the mere act of placement of SEN kids and kids with disabilities in regular schools with no respect for their actual needs and abilities (Hodkinson, 2009). Nonetheless, recently, the act of 'inclusion' has replaced the act of 'integration' in countries around the globe.

In the UK, for instance, inclusive education seeks to implement the belief that “. . . pupils with special educational needs should wherever possible receive their education in a mainstream school” (DfEE, 1997). Moreover, it is important to differentiate between 'inclusion' and 'integration.' On the one hand, whereas integration simply focuses on the placement of the SEN students in classes, inclusion aims to reform and amend the schooling system, curricula, pedagogical methods, and environment, in ways that would serve all its students regardless of their abilities or disabilities. Consequently, Hodkinson and Deverokonda, (2011) and Avramidis et al. (2000:192) declare that inclusion is a broad humanitarian ideology that celebrates and welcomes diversity. This means that inclusion is driven by the notion of equality, equity, and the principals of human rights. Nonetheless, despite the convincing notion behind 'inclusion', its practical meaning remains vague (Hodkinson & Vickerman, 2009).

Hence, inclusion remains hard to define because it is a multi-faceted field that is affected by many factors, such as politics and socio-economics. Thus, inclusion cannot be rendered as an isolated field, which makes the act of allocating special terminology for it, harder (Hodkinson, 2009). Nevertheless, whereas the UK alongside other countries have been affected greatly by inclusion, for example Poland has not been as equally impacted by it (Starczewska, Hodkinson, & Adams, 2012).

Nowadays, the implementation of educational inclusion and its prospect in the future remain demanding and difficult concepts to achieve. This is because of factors such as economics tend to undermine individualization and allocation of special resources for SEN students and students with special needs. Nonetheless, there is still light at the end of the tunnel, since organizations of great leverage such as the European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Child, call for the need for inclusion and denounce exclusion and segregation. However, despite this optimistic tone, research reveals that teachers and their representative administrations are expressing concerns and doubts about their ability to foster educational inclusion. Nevertheless, one must not regard such concerns as a declaration of the teachers' hopelessness, surrendering, or incapability to provide their students with the best education possible. On the other hand, such worries, which were also expressed by parents,

therapists, and researchers, must be taken into consideration, and treated with immediacy. Accordingly, such qualms can be primarily calmed by the understanding that the solution for inclusion is not easy, nor fast, but rather demands a lot of practical effort and consideration. Thus, issues of political disintegration and lack of facilities must be addressed as soon as possible. Additionally, a beneficial step towards inclusion would be to scrutinize principals, teachers, kids, parents, families, and professionals' points of view and experiences in research that deal with inclusion. Equally, teacher inclusion-oriented programs can also aid this process (Allan, 2010).

Furthermore, according to Armstrong et al. (2011), the human right to education is extremely imperative to international and national organizations. As a result, many countries fostered the integration of SEND children in their educational system, and later the same countries started adopting inclusion in mainstream schooling. Such observations are manifested in the UN's Convention on Human Rights of 2007, and other conventions held by UNESCO. Moreover, when it comes to legislation and reports on children's rights, the Warnock Report (1978) and the Salamanca Statement (1994) are regarded as the most substantial to that aspect. Subsequently, after four decades of this report's publication researchers started shifting focus on the challenges and possible implications that accompany inclusion and examined how to implement the latter in education. According to the findings, the education system must undergo urgent changes to accommodate itself to the children's needs (Ainscow, 2005). Correspondingly, the provision of extra teaching training programs is also needed according to these studies (Persson, 2006). Justifiably, researchers and professionals involved in inclusive education still express their concerns and doubts about it, and thus, inclusive education remains an arguable topic (Sharma et al., 2008). Therefore, critics of educational inclusion argue that it has negative implications and effects on the students (Anastasiou & Kauffman 2011). In addition, factors such as teaching experience and teachers' low self-esteem can have a negative impact on their role and attitude (De Boer et al., 2011).

In the context of Europe, however, the inclusion of people with disabilities in regular schools is favored and fostered in most EU countries. In addition, each country individualized her unique inclusion methodology in ways that suit its ideology, political viewpoint, and heritage (Hardman, 2008).

Nowadays, inclusion has become a transnational phenomenon that affects international schooling systems, as it calls for the collaboration between educational personnel who are expected to celebrate children's' diversity. Nonetheless, although teachers and the people involved in inclusion respect and nurture the right of education for each child regardless of his disabilities (Foreman, 2008), the implementation and the practice of inclusion remain a challenge. This disparity shows that there is an aloofness between the practice of inclusion and the theory behind it.

Moreover, whereas most European countries adopt the inclusion of special needs students in regular classrooms, there remains a gap between the implementation of inclusion in the different national and local contexts. However, normally the support for inclusion depends on the right of children to get mainstream education and on the realization that general education is more advantageous than special education (Lindsay, 2003). According to Kozleski et al. (2011) and Loreman et al. (2011), inclusive education is multi-faceted and is driven by values of human rights, social justice, and equal opportunities. Moreover, in addition to the social model of disability, special education endorses the acceptance of differences. Furthermore, it demands the schools to modify their practices in ways that would satisfy their students' needs, regardless of the latter's abilities or inabilities. This is because inclusion believes in the child's right to education. Accordingly, inclusive schools are expected to adapt their curricula, environments, methodologies, and pedagogies to all of its students regardless of their differences, by resorting to different means and in collaboration with the communities surrounding them (UNESCO, 1994). Nonetheless, the objectives of inclusion have not been fully practiced in many countries, such as Slovenia.

Additionally, there is a confusion between integration and inclusion, as they are often rendered equivalent to one another (Schmidt & Ksenja, 2015).

Nevertheless, Dizdarevic, Mujezinovic, & Memisevic (2017) report that in European countries inclusion is successful in both practice and theory (Boyle, et al., 2013). Moreover, teachers play the main role in the implementation of inclusion. Thus, it is crucial that they adopt positive mindsets towards inclusion in order to enable this process's success (De Boer et al., 2011). Moreover, a large amount of research on education in the EU countries reveals that most educators view educational inclusion from a positive light (Ahsan, et al., 2012; Schwab et al., 2015). Also, these teachers were also very knowledgeable and proficient in the field of

educational inclusion for all children (Kavkler et al.,2015). Hence, these results call for the necessity of maintaining positive teacher attitudes towards the inclusion of special needs students in regular schools. Such an objective can be achieved by focusing on the students' abilities and strengths, rather than solely focusing on their inabilities and deficiencies. Moreover, slight positive attitudes towards inclusion are also reported in BIH (Memisevic & Hodzic, 2011). On the other side of the spectrum, some research (De Boer et al., 2011) report negative or neutral educators' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities and SN in regular primary schools. The educators' attitudes in these studies were affected by the level of the students' disabilities, the environment, the teachers' training, teachers' prior experience, and their familiarity with inclusive education.

Furthermore, considering their prominence, teacher education issues are a priority to the political agenda in the EU countries. This is also reflected in the way that the UN's Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (2006) is still dominant and fostered by many international and European Unions, which are aware of the vitality of the role of education to the development of equality and justice. Accordingly, in order to implement inclusive education, teachers must be highly trained in order to deal with all types of students' abilities and lack thereof. This goal can be attained during training programs and in collaboration with their fellow teachers (Donnelly & Watkins, 2011).

As showed in study by Chhabra, Srivastava & Srivastava, 2010, teachers in Botswana have expressed their worries, doubts, and negative points of view on the inclusion of SN students and students with disabilities in the general classroom. Moreover, studies show that a negative outlook on disabled people lowers the educators' expectations and faith in the inclusion process (Wilczenski, 1995), which as a result, harms the students' learning. Thus, the provision of tools and methods that aim to positively affect the educators' attitude on inclusion is of great importance. Additionally, a common and shared concern expressed by many regular education teachers is their incompetence towards the prospect of implementing the educational inclusion of kids with disabilities in their regular classrooms. Their concerns stemmed from their lack of knowledge, experience, and tools. The same teachers also argued that inclusive education can subordinate the academic status and as a result expressed dissatisfaction, outrage, and negative perception towards it.

It has been mentioned that this outcome was hailed as a 'Pathbreaking judgment' in relation to inclusion: 'Its ruling is particularly significant now, as Europe grapples with the implications of its rapidly growing ethnic, racial and religious diversity' (Open Society Justice Initiative, 2007).

Moreover, a lot of inclusion-oriented organizations pose a threat to the prospect of segregation and exclusion. Nonetheless, a lot of the voluntary organizations support parents of SN children as well as their appeal to governmental and official bodies. An example for such organizations is, The Alliance for Inclusion and Parents for Inclusion (in the UK) and Equity in Education (in Scotland). In other countries, unions such as the Flanders group Parents for Inclusion, Speranta, and Romania, have been advocating inclusion affectively. While other organizations that focus on specific types of disabilities, such as FUB (The National Association for Children with Intellectual Disability) in Sweden, Inclusion Europe, which exposes intellectually disabled persons and their families on an international level, and in the UK, the Dyslexia Association and the Autistic Society, which have provided children and youngsters who suffer from special types of disabilities with their needs, such as the aid in the process of special school placements. On the other hand, disability organizations that were led by persons with disabilities aimed to focus less on the educational aspect, and more on the social status and rights of the disabled person. Moreover, the UK organization of People First was highly successful and renowned for its achievements in inclusive education. The same organization successfully lobbied the Government's support and guidance in House 8 of Commons Select Committee Report (2006), which advocated inclusion. As a result, teacher unions' queries and concerns towards inclusion were successfully calmed (Allan, 2010).

Lately, however, a need for inclusive and comprehensive laws and legislations has emerged considering the realization that inclusive education cannot be implemented in a vacuum and demands support from other variables. Such a change in attitude towards inclusive education is manifested in the increased involvement of people of power in the process of educational inclusion, and their acknowledgment of its importance to the overall educational system. The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2009), for instance, reported that the success of inclusive education is highly affected by uniformity and cooperation between inclusive education and other policy initiatives. Moreover, in light of the progress of inclusive education in the EU countries, the term 'inclusion' is not only confined to special education

needs students as it also encompasses students who are generally more prone to exclusion than others (Donnelly, & Watkins, 2011).

Additionally, instructions on how to increase the quality of education for all students can be found in the recent Council of the European Union's (2010) findings on the social facet of education and training. According to the study, it is necessary to create and employ teaching methods and conditions that will satisfy the needs of all students regardless of their disabilities in the regular schools in order to provide a general benefit to all learners. It is also crucial to personalize the learning experience in ways that would match each child's needs. This can be done by personalizing learning plans assessment methods for each learner. Moreover, teachers must be provided with the necessary information and tools to help aid the inclusion process. Also, another way to increase the overall educational quality is done by the employment of collaborative teaching and learning methods, the celebration of children's differences, and the inclusion of SEND children in social activities.

In the context of special education in Europe for instance, Avramidis et al. (2000) survey of 81 primary and secondary teachers in the United Kingdom reported that although inclusion was generally regarded positively, the inclusion of pupils with emotional and behavioral disabilities was often perceived the hardest and most stressful task in comparison to students with other types of deficiencies. A study on general education teachers in Spain, for instance, revealed the negative perception of such educators towards the inclusion of disabled children in regular schools. They regarded it as a failed undesirable attempt (Molto, 2003). The results also show that the teachers also noted that their colleagues were not in favor of cooperation (Daane et al., 2000). In Italy, Cornoldi et al. (1998) stated that they were not pleased with the time, preparation, professional support and other services available for inclusion programs.

One must note, however, that when speaking of the placement of students in regular schools, in comparison to special schools, there are regular kids in several European countries who aren't even attending schools, especially in rural areas such as Turkey, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Albania. The results were often associated with gender since most orthodox rural families refused to educate their girls in schools. Nonetheless, the study shows a weak link between gender inequality and lack of education. Such data is present in a provincial study on education in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (UNICEF, 2007), which revealed that 2.4 million 'missing 6 children of primary school age were

not attending schools, and that 12 million children of lower and upper secondary school age were also not getting schooled. Researchers also report that kids with disabilities in places such as Rome, Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, Montenegro, and Macedonia were generally admitted to special schools and institutions, and thus, were less included in general education classrooms. This shows that minority groups often suffered from a lack of inclusion in education. For instance, Belarus, Bulgaria, Moldova, and the Russian Federation scored the highest numbers in the institutionalization of kids with disabilities. Additionally, such results highlighted the ongoing crisis and the poor provision of resources and equal opportunities for kids with disabilities in many countries worldwide. In the context of EU countries, the figures reveal a lack of accountability for an approximate number of 1 million children with disabilities, due to the high level of infant deaths or the defective enrollment procedures. Regarding higher education provision, however, UNICEF reports a distinct rise of approximately 55% in the provision rates of higher education in many countries. As a result, whereas some countries are finding it hard to cope with this increase, other countries such as those in the Caucasus and Central Asia, are struggling to keep up with this expansion. Thus, to mend these discrepancies, UNICEF decided to rationalize its allocated expenses on education. This is done by increasing the expenses on education, on the one hand, and decreasing it, on the other hand, by creating autonomous systems that serve this purpose. Nevertheless, UNICEF also fostered anti-segregation and inclusive policies, with the intention of providing minority groups such as disabled children and girls in developing countries with their right to education (Allan, 2010).

Moreover, according to UNESCO's reports, learning divisions (Wilms, 2006) strengthen the link between academic success and equity. This is manifested in the fact that this study's results revealed that comprehensive schools with diverse students performed as well as homogenous student-bodies schools. Moreover, it showed high academic scores by students who were learning in inclusive schools. Such success has also been attributed to the teachers' ability and readiness to entertain inclusive education. However, Bartolo et al. (2007) note that the preparation of teachers for inclusive education remains a controversial subject. Nonetheless, Hollins and Guzman (2005) note the inclusion of acceptance, an "equity pedagogy", adequate field experiences, awareness for and welcoming of cultural differences in the teacher training programs, are important to teachers' willingness to foster inclusive education. Such themes and results are also manifested in a review of the literature on teacher education in European

countries by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2010). Likewise, Guojonsdottir et al. (2008) also called for the need to be mindful of issues of poverty, equity, and diversity, during the development of inclusive education programs. Saloviita (2005), for instance, stressed the need to adopt a shared and mutual language and terminology for the field of inclusive education. Esteve (2009) and Nuova (2009) attribute the development of important knowledge on inclusive education to teaching practices and experiences. All in all, the authors call for the need for collaborative work, teaching, and learning, in order to attain sufficient inclusive education. On the other hand, authors such as Acedo et al. (2008) claimed that pre-service teacher-training programs are not efficient, due to the fact that they are not practical and do not mirror the actual challenges that face in-service teachers. Thus, we conclude that educators should first be knowledgeable and experienced in mainstream education, and later, they could specialize in special education. This view is backed by Young (2008), who believes that specialties and the overwhelming of qualifications that are expected from educators can overwhelm the teachers and bound their pedagogical creativity. Nevertheless, authors like Arnesen et al. (2009) report a change in the teacher training programs for special education personnel. They reveal that general education courses for pre-service teachers in universities have started covering the topic of special needs kids as part of their general programs and not just as a specialty. They stress the importance of exposing teachers to diverse students and the need for educational inclusion (Donnelly & Watkins, 2011: 15).

## **1.5. Integration in Poland**

The Polish special education system for disabled students is undergoing continuous changes, which resulted from the change in the perception of disabled people, and the sociopolitical shift. Until now, the changes led to inclusive education and the exclusion of segregated special institutionalization. This means that the Polish education system is abolishing its previous isolationist model and moving towards a normalizing one, where the right to education is granted to all children regardless of their disabilities. Glodkowska (2010) notes that considering this progress, Polish education has become an inclusive education that celebrates diversity and rejects segregation and exclusion. These values have been developing in Poland for



many decades and shape the historically ever-developing Polish education system (Sekulowicz & Sekulowicz, 2015).

Zarebska (2008), for instance, notes that the Poland is allocating vocational training to youngsters with intellectual impairments. Moreover, the vocational training for disabled students in the special education system has seen a notable improvement in quality. Hence, whereas in the past vocational schools lacked the means, tools, supervision, and uniform standards to better the integration of disabled students in the vocational field, and as a result provided students with obsolete professions, nowadays this issue has been changed and resolved.

Accordingly, the educational field's awareness of prior vocational issues and inequalities for disabled people has led to the need for the development of tools that aim to provide disabled people with better job opportunities. This goal is being achieved by the utilization of professional assessment tools that work on examining the graduate students' vocational abilities, so as to verify their competence (Dziennik Ustaw, 2003).

Moreover, historically, Poland established the first-ever Ministry of Education (Komisja Edukacji Narodowej) worldwide, in 1773. Thus, the Polish education system had an immense effect on European public education and its establishment (Parker, 2003).

In the context of special education, however, Poland only started adopting educational inclusion and integration at the beginning of the 1990s. Nonetheless, inclusion in physical mainstream education is still an underrepresented field that would require collaborative work between legislators and educational personnel (Bełza, 2014; Omianowski, 2008). This observation on physical education is also mentioned by the Polish Central Statistical Bureau's reports, which show that during the years 2013/2014 there were approximately 160,000 disabled pupils in primary, secondary, and middle schools (System Edukacji Oświatowej, 2014). Nevertheless, in spite of the results' large figures, disabled students' physical education was still disregarded.

Moreover, according to Starczewska et al's (2012) research on educational integration and inclusion in Poland, there has been a drastic change in Polish society's attitude towards disabled persons. However, whereas people with disabilities' rights were acknowledged and respected by the Polish state after the 18th century, there was still evident educational segregation between people with disabilities and people without them (Lichtensztein, 2006).

Only after the 1980s educational integration was adopted for the first time in Warsaw (Grzegorzewska & Wapiennik, 2008).

Furthermore, according to a renowned Polish professor and advocator of educational integration, Aleksander Hulek, Poland perceives integration as the provision of similar rights and equal opportunities to both people with and without disabilities. In other words, it is the shared bond between disabled and non-disabled people with the intent of attaining holistic success for all (Hulek, 1992). Moreover, Polish society views integrations as an advantageous act for all students. This is due to the fact that Polish society believes that both disabled and non-disabled children can learn from each other. On the one hand, non-disabled children get exposed to diversity and learn to accept it. On the other hand, disabled students learn from their peers (Kossewska, 2003). In a similar tone, Wdowiarska (2008) also claims that non-disabled students' attitudes towards disabilities would be improved in light of the daily contact with their disabled peers (Starczewska, Hodkinson, & Adams, 2012).

Moreover, a significant amount of time has passed since the first integrative education effort was practiced in Poland. Integrative education has been a vital factor in the educational progress of disabled people, and it has improved the theoretical and pragmatic attitudes towards it. Such progress is manifested in society's newly found open-mindedness towards people with disabilities (Ostrowska, 2002).

Nevertheless, the results of studies that examined teachers' perceptions of integrative education revealed their willingness to accept the idea in theory, but not in practice. In other words, a large number of teachers were not ready to implement integration in their classrooms. Minczakiewicz in her study noted that "almost 70 percent of teachers from primary schools would not like to teach pupils with intellectual disabilities in their classes" (Minczakiewicz, 1996). Similarly, Erenc's research reveals that 71% of educators were not in favor of the establishment of integrative classes with intellectually disabled students (Erenc, 2008). Studies also report that the reason behind the teachers' concern and unwillingness to entertain integrative education was the lack of awareness on this subject and their ineligibility to implement it (Chodkowska & Kazanowski, 2007).

Ideologically, Integrative education in Poland adheres to Hamburg's model, which demands the provision of adequate environment, tools, technologies, and pedagogical methods, from schools, to efficiently provide students with their needs. Additionally, integrative education

in Poland calls for the need of teamwork, especially the cooperation between two highly trained educators. Schools are also expected to employ special personnel, such as therapists, physicians, speech-language pathologists (Gajdzica, 2009).

In their study, Starczewka et al. (2012) report that due to the fact that this study is regional and local, its data cannot be applied to the whole Polish educational system. Nonetheless, research on integrative education supports the holistic idea presented in the literature base. Accordingly, the studies' main results reveal that most teachers are not familiar with inclusion as a concept both on the theoretical and practical levels and that the dominant educational approach was integrative education. As such, data on the Polish system shows that whereas Poland adopts the principle of inclusion, in reality, it implements integration. Moreover, whereas laws clearly call for the holistic right of education to all children, integration is not revolved around "all" children. The findings also reveal that children with mild to moderate intellectual deficiencies are usually the most integrated children in mainstream Polish schools. On the other side of the spectrum, students with acute physical and intellectual disabilities do not get integrated into schools. The findings of this study also reveal that during the primary school years, teachers view integration more positively, than teachers who work with older pupils. Teachers are also aware of the educational system's failure to integrate students of older age in mainstream schools. Nonetheless, the teachers' attitudes are not related to the teacher training courses they were provided, because most teachers reported that they were sufficiently trained to teach all children irrespective of their disabilities. The data also shows that some teachers were forced to get special training, which means that a lot of the educators did not choose to work with disabled children. Thus, their attitude towards integration was more negative ( Starczewska et.al., 2012).

According to Braigel (2016) Apanel's study which looked into the findings of the research that aimed to examine school staff members' attitudes on integrative education, the school's staff acknowledged the many positive and negative aspects of integrative education. On the bright side, the personnel noted that there was an improvement in the internal exams' results, an increase in the association of parents in the educational process, and improved provision of eligible professionals that answer the students' needs, improved assessment tools for the disabled students, increased levels of confidence towards integrative education from parents of regular kids, social inclusion of disabled students, and the employment of teachers from outside the

integrated classes in order to provide the students with their additional needs. On a gloomier note, the staff reported difficulties in the integration of autistic students and intellectually disabled students in regular classrooms, unfavorable grouping of children with the shared behavioral disabilities, the isolation of autistic students from their regular peers, insufficient training, poor preparation, lack of support, and shortage of specialization in integrative education (Apanel, 2009).

The teachers also expressed the financial difficulties that accompany integration, in light of the poor provision of expenses to this field. Apanel also noted that schools might start favoring special needs children over non-special needs ones, and thus, would start to disregard the needs of regular kids in schools (Apanel, 2009). Moreover, Apanel reported that a significant number of children found it hard to learn in such classes. Nevertheless, the most prominent problem according to Apanel, is the shortage of eligible staff members in integrative schools. Krause (2004) explains this problem by revealing that there was a lack of adequate resources and information to sustain the integration process, and thus teachers were neither competent enough or supportive enough to be able to entertain integrative education in their classroom. This negative attitude stems from the fact that teachers must be trained to teach children with different levels of abilities and different types of disabilities in regular schools first, and then in integrative schools (Pańczyk, 2002).

Moreover, statistical data reports reveal that “the prevalence of intellectual disability (ID) in Poland is estimated at 47.8/10,000 among the population aged over 15 years” (Wapiennik, 2008). Moreover, despite the recent positive shift in society’s perception of ID persons, people with ID are still excluded from society. Nonetheless, the Polish Parliament ensures pension, education, and healthcare to people with disabilities. Accordingly, the provision of pension to ID persons can be attained on the premises of the person’s demonstration of his vocational inability. Moreover, in regard to the positioning of children with ID in Poland, their families are able to admit them into one of the 103 independent institutions which do not belong to the education system. As such, persons with ID can be admitted to social welfare homes if the families cannot take care of them. The inclusion of ID children in general Polish schools, on the other hand, is not commonly practiced. Additionally, reports show that disabled adults are often excluded from social and vocational activities. From these results, the 3 main setbacks in Poland are the poor provision of adequate training to professional personnel in the field of inclusive education,

exclusion and isolation of disabled people from their community, which is done by their institutionalization, and the vocational exclusion of prohibition of disabled adults (Wapiennik, 2008).

Inclusive education emerged as a result of the notion of autonomy for and normalization of disabled persons. However, in Poland, the concept of inclusive education is yet to be defined. This is because inclusive education in Poland is often perceived as the place of people with disabilities in the mass system and especially their integration in the educational contemporary system. Statistics show a massive change in the Polish special education system since the establishment of special schools. This change has led to a shift in society's attitude towards people with disabilities. Nonetheless, the presented article shows that the special education system in Poland must be further improved. As such, it is up to the Polish society and researchers to take the responsibility of implementing educational inclusion in their educational system (Sekulowicz & Sekulowicz, 2015).

## **CHAPTER 2. Educational aspects of integration and inclusion in Israel**

### **Introduction**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007) endorsed and strengthened the calls for the inclusion of all persons with disabilities in all areas of life. Article 1 of the Convention sets out the general principles of the Convention, which include non-discrimination, equal opportunities, respect for diversity and the acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity and the full effective participation of individuals (UNESCO, 2007). In this chapter I focus on the specificity of integration education in Israel, with particular emphasis on the Arab society. The chapter is divided into four major sections. First part considers the concept of Special education in Israel secondly, it outlines perspectives on Inclusion policy in Israel; thirdly, it considers the journey to The Arab society in Israel. The fourth section considers the concept of inclusive education in the Arab society.

### **2.1. Special education in Israel**

Out of 5.5 million citizens in Israel an estimation of 1.2 million are children. Moreover, 18 % of the Israeli population are Palestinians, while 82% are Jewish. The majority of the Israel-Palestinians are Sunni Muslims (the minority are Christians) with a 95% literacy rate among all citizens over the age of 15. Furthermore, the Israeli education system is branched into 4 predominant turfs that are comprised of the Jewish Secular, Jewish religious, Jewish Independent (Jewish-Ultra Orthodox), and Israeli-Palestinian (Non-Jewish) divisions. Additionally, the Israeli general and special education systems are individualistic and distinct for each of the 4 sectors. Nonetheless, whereas the Israeli public schooling services operate on a national level, they are divided into different geographical regions (Tel-Aviv, Central, Northam, Jerusalem, Haifa, Southern), which are, in turn, managed by the local supervisors who oversee the daily pedagogical functions of public schools.

Furthermore, statistics show that about 2.8 % of the pupils in Israel schools (33,500 children) are classified as special education students. However, whereas that percentage was mostly Palestinian-Israeli children between 1984 and 1996, nowadays the percentage of both Israeli-Palestinian and Jewish Children classified as eligible for receiving special education is almost the same. Such changes emerge from the change in the affluence and the quality of living in both sectors. This is because socio-economic status improvement often leads to an increase in the budgeting for special needs education and their inclusion. This shift also led to the moving of previously isolated special needs kids from special schools to general inclusive schools. Therefore, due to the prevalence of educational inclusion of special needs children in regular schools, the reported rate of children who are eligible for special education (i.e., children with mild to moderate disabilities) increased. In the Palestinian sector, for instance, the improved socioeconomic status also led to an increase in parental awareness and involvement in special education. Moreover, the amenities and conditions available for special needs children improved (Gumpel, 1999). Nonetheless, one must note that the improvement in the field of special education for the Israeli- Palestinians is not a sole product for the former's demands, as it also stems from the fact that the Ministry of Education in Israel worked on providing the status of this national minority (Gumpel & Awartani, 2003).

Ethnicity wise, Israel's population is mostly comprised of immigrants. As such, 7,184,000 Israelis belong to different ethnical, racial, religious, and national backgrounds. Moreover, education is mandatory for Israeli citizens from the ages of 5-18 years, and most of the schools in Israel are public. Regarding inclusive education for special needs children in Israel, Israel enacted the 'shiluv' law in 1988, which calls for the inclusion of disabled students in mainstream education classrooms. This law provides schools with the necessary aid, tools, training, service, and support to aid the inclusion process. The Ministry of education reports (Margalit, 2000; Ronen, 2007) almost 8% of pupils with mild to moderate disabilities are educated in included regular education classrooms, whereas almost 2.25% of disabled students learn in special schools (special classrooms in regular schools or classrooms in special schools). Ronen (2007) notes that this placement pattern adheres to the 'shiluv' law (inclusion law) (Ben-Yehuda, Leyser, & Last, 2009).

Furthermore, The Israeli Special Education Law is based on the US Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975. This law calls for the placement of special needs children in

regular classrooms. This law led to the creation of special support centers that aimed to support special needs students in the regular classroom. Such amenities are allocated to almost 14,000 regular education students in Israel (Paz, 1997). Nonetheless, in Israeli inclusive classes, students with intellectual disabilities are excluded, while the majority of people with mild to moderate disabilities (learning, sensory, and physical disabilities) are included. However, recent legislation is obliging regular schools to include people with Down's Syndrome in regular classes with assisting teachers. Nonetheless, Israeli teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education are a negative one, as they regard themselves to be incompetent in achieving the task (Lifshitz & Glaubman, 2002).

In relation to the Palestinian-Israeli's attitudes towards education, both Gumpel & Awartani report that the former acknowledges education's substantial role in the preservation of the nation's unity and identity. This is because Palestine is a developing nation, undergoing what Sharaga (1986) calls 'nation-building.' Moreover, Sharaga also used 'nation-building' in his description of the emergence of the Israeli nation during the independence years. Accordingly, we believe that the Palestinian correspondents' responses should also be understood from the historical context of people who belong to an emerging country. Thus, upcoming research should put this claim to test by comparing between the superficial and deep structures of special education in wealthy and established nations on the one hand, and the emerging Palestinian nation and its educators on the other hand.

Furthermore, overall, Israelis tended to see inclusive education as an individualistic process, which demanded each educator to work on providing each student with his special needs. Palestinian teachers and preservice educators, on the other hand, perceive their role in special education from a societal community-oriented stance, which can lead to emerges of two separate and yet intertwined, trends. This is because Arab culture is based on clans and the notion of extended families. This is why Arabs cherish the community and believe that an individual derives his power from his clan and community. Accordingly, educators who come from an emerging country in general, and to Palestine in particular, play a crucial role in the building of the national identity of their nation. Moreover, similarly to the Israeli approach, special education is an inherently individualistic process, in which the educators work on the individualistic success of each child. Such cultural clash might explain the Arab participants' abstention from providing individualistic aspects for special education. Nonetheless, this



assumption should be examined by analyzing other indigenous cultures' deep structures. Moreover, the participants' general opinions should be compared to the actual practices in schools. It is also important to note that in spite of the Palestinian educators' acknowledgment of the right of education for people with disabilities, in reality, the Palestinian Ministry of Education is not sufficing when it comes to providing such students with basic educational rights. This shows that there is a distinct gap between theory (intentions) and practice, which must also be further examined in the research.

Similarly, Leyser & Romi's (2008) study aims to examine student-teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education for disabled people in Israel. In the study, the participants belonged to the Arab and Jewish sectors and came from 6 different religions. The results show a shared acknowledgment of the right of education for disabled persons irrespective of the participants' religious affiliation. The participants agreed that inclusive educations yield social, emotional, and academic benefits for disabled students and their non-disabled peers, who also learn to accept and value the former. Therefore, this teachers-to-be all adhere to the Ministry of Education's laws on inclusive education in general schools for people with disabilities. However, they all expressed worries and concerns towards the actuality of their ability to implement inclusive educations in their classrooms. These two concerns were the possibility of having behavioral problems in class and the negative effect this will have on the other students, and the lack of adequate teacher training for this purpose. Similarly, other research reveals the same concerns researchers (i.e., Daana et al. 2000; McLeskey et al., 2001). On a separate examination of each factor, the results show that on the one hand, Jewish (secular and religious) teachers were more supportive of inclusion, whereas the least supportive were the Muslim participants. On the other hand, when it comes to concerns about classroom management, the ultra-orthodox Jewish group and the Arab groups were the most worried groups about the possible behavioral problems in inclusive classes. Romi's (2004) earlier study also justifies this research's results, who conducted a similar study on the attitudes of teachers and student teachers from different backgrounds on inclusive education.

## 2.2. Inclusion policy in Israel

The first Israeli Special Education Law which was legislated in 1988, is based on The American Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1975). This law called for the positioning of SEN students in regular school settings with the delivery of professional adequate support. Afterward, the Amendment to the Special Education Law was formed in 2002. This law provided equal funds and amenities to both SEN students learning in regular schools and pupils learning in special education schools. The law also called for the employment of special education teachers who were asked to provide additional services to the SEN students. Nonetheless, many parents protested against the difficulties behind the inclusion of SEN students in regular classrooms. As a result of their complaints, the Durner Committee was established in 2007. This committee called for the need to provide every child with the necessary educational funds irrespective of the settings in which he was placed. The committee also asserted that regular education teachers working with SEN students needed to undergo professional training. As a result, there has been a yearly increase in the integration of SEN students in regular schools. Consequently, recent data (National Council for the Child, 2014) reveal that about 8.8% (191,328) of the entire pupils in the Israeli educational system in 2013 were pupils with SEN. Moreover, only 59.4% of those SEN pupils were included in regular classes.

Moreover, Israeli inclusive education refers to the integration of disabled students in regular classrooms and the placing of them in special classrooms within regular schools. Nonetheless, in comparison to the regular classrooms, the special classrooms are quite small. This is because, whereas regular classrooms entertain between 35 to 40 students, special classrooms are comprised of only 7-12 students. Still, pupils learning in special education classrooms also attend regular school activities with the principal's assent. Thus, in Israel, inclusive schools are schools that either place SEN students in regular classrooms or include SEN students in regular activities, whilst placing them in special classes (Karni, Reiter & Bryen, 2011).

In the Arab context, according to Gumpel & Awartani (2003), due to the fact that Arab culture is oriented on communal values, where Israeli culture is not, Israelis tended to view education and special education from within an individualistic point of view. This means, that

Israeli educators were aware of their individual role and responsibility to provide each individual student with his needs, whereas the Palestinian educators did not possess this view.

Furthermore, teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are affected by 3 variables according to Avramidis and Norwich (2002). The variables are child-related, teacher-related, and educational environment-related. Nonetheless, most of the teachers' responses in this study, were teacher-related, since they revolved around aspects such as educators' capability, competence, and classroom management skills. Accordingly, the positive perceptiveness on inclusive education was related to the teachers' self-perception, thus, when the teacher felt competent in inclusive education, he showed optimism towards inclusion. Likewise, when the teacher rendered inclusion useful to the non-SEN students, his attitude was positive. Additionally, teachers showed a positive attitude towards inclusion when they felt that this process will help them be better educators for all students, irrespective of their abilities. The study also shows that special trained educators were more ready to include SEN students in EFL classes, than teachers who were trained to work with SEN students. This result is elaborated on in the following section. Moreover, the attitude towards the inclusion of SEN students in regular EFL classes reflected teacher- and- environmental-related variables, such as lack of adequate tools, poor support system, and inadequate training. Additionally, teachers reported a negative impact on all types of students, since they acknowledged that the SEN students were not getting the attention they needed, and in turn, were halting the success of their peers. Such attitudes are also manifested in other research on the attitude of educators towards educational inclusion (De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011; Gavish & Shimoni, 2011). Furthermore, teachers often demonstrated different emotions toward the same attribute. For instance, whereas some teachers regarded inclusion as a hard task that demands a lot of effort, others saw it as a challenge that can yield a lot of rewards. Similarly, whereas some teachers thought that repeating the same material a lot is a negative thing, others saw it as a good revision for the entire class. Such vague emotions could either reflect society's new perceptions of disabled persons, which celebrates diversity, or, they could mirror the teachers' own personal beliefs towards inclusion.

Furthermore, a large number of the participating teachers in this study stated that English should be taught for SEN students in either regular settings with additional professional help or in special classrooms. Their responses were reflective of the fact that they thought SEN children needed one-on-one care, therapeutic help, special pedagogical methods, tools, and programs, and

extra time in and out of the classroom. Therefore, from the negative outlook on teaching SEN children in regular EFL classes and the mentioning of the demanding needs for those children, it is obvious that these teachers felt incompetent in teaching SEN children in their regular classes. Their responses are based on the awareness that they will not be able to provide the SEN child with the necessary help due to the lack of resources, time, training, and help, in the regular schools. These findings are in line with similar findings reported by Nijakowska (2014) for teachers and teacher trainees in six European countries.

Nonetheless, the increase in the number of educated younger Palestinians, the decrease in the status of the Hamula, and the growth in the provided social welfare services, led to the progress and the modernization of the Palestinian community's status and attitudes towards disabilities, (Essawi, 2002, personal interview with Director-general, Ministry of Social Welfare, Palestinian Authority). Thus, the intervention program has changed their attitudes towards inclusive education and bettered the status of the previously excluded disabled children. Moreover, our study aimed to examine the teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education for disabled persons in regular classrooms, half of the teachers did not have any prior contact with SEND kids, nor did they have a lot of information about it. Moreover, many of the Palestinian teachers expressed their gratitude towards the intervention program, as they were more ready and able to include disabled children in their regular classrooms. Moreover, in the studies whereas most of the teachers were not knowledgeable when it comes to inclusive education, most of them still expressed willingness to include students with different types of disabilities in their classrooms. According to Heider's (1958) theory of homeostasis, people strive to maintain a corresponding level of cognitive and emotional homeostasis between their own and others' attitudes. Therefore, unbalanced homeostasis can cause emotional dissonance, discomfort, chaos, uncertainty, and tensions and leads to attitudinal change. This theory explains why teachers changed their attitudes in ways that would match their employers when they knew that the Israeli and the Palestinian Ministry of Education intend to impose the policy of educational inclusion. A possible explanation for such attitudinal change could be that when inclusive education for disabled students is not a matter of choice, the educators' attitudes become more positive. Furthermore, the theory of Homeostasis could also rationalize the Palestinian participants' attitudes towards the educational inclusion of students with learning disabilities and physical impediments. These findings are also expressed by Gemmel-Crosby and Hanzlik (1994), who

also reported positive attitudes towards people with mild to moderate physical and sensory disabilities, which did not require much assistance. Such positive outlooks on the inclusion of people with severe handicaps were also demonstrated by Israeli student-teachers in our previous study (Lifshitz & Glaubman,2002). To conclude, we believe that such findings mirror the changes in Israeli society's attitudes towards physically handicapped persons.

### **2.3. The Arab society in Israel**

Almost 20% of Israel's population is Arab, this means that 1.4 million people out of Israel's total 8 million residents are Arab. Out of the total Arab-Israelis Muslims constitute about 85.2%, Christians about 9%, and Druze about 8.5% (since 2004). Geographically, most Israeli Christian, Muslim, and Druze Arabs reside in the Northern district- the Galilee, in small villages and mingled towns. Whereas the Bedouins inhabit the Southern region of Israel (Niri & Shunit, 2013).

Recently, Arab-Israeli society has been undergoing many changes following the process of normalization. These changes led to the shift from it being a collective society to it becoming a nuclear-family oriented one. This progress is also accompanied in the bettering of the vocational status for women and the educational level for all. This means that more Arab-Israeli women are being recruited, while Arab-Israelis are becoming more educated. These two social components affect the general social-foundation for the Arab society, and thus, cause a change in their mentality, value-system, and attitudes (Aboderin, 2004). However, in spite of this progress, the general traditional bonds persist and affect each individual in that society. This persistence is manifested in the children's respect and docility towards their elders and the naturally patriarchal nature of the Arabic society, which stems from the traditional 'Hamula' (patrilineage) concept that is patriarchal in nature, and which provides its members with social, psychological and economic security (Yaffee & Tal, 2002).

Comprehensive research conducted in Israel's (Sandler-Loeff, 2006) findings shows that Arab-Israelis suffer from many aspects shared by all disabled persons. While other barriers are particular to the Arab socio-cultural context. In relation to Arab-Israelis' attitudes towards people with disabilities, an Israeli study shows that most Arabs expressed negative thoughts towards disabilities. Their negative attitude results from their lack of knowledge, lack of support,

society's refusal to view disabled people as equals, and poor coordination between the organizations that deal with disabilities. Nevertheless, the last decade in Israel yielded many improvements in the status of disabled people in Israel, which is also reflected inside the Arab Israeli society. Such progress can be associated with the changes in laws, policies, and services provided to aid disabled persons. However, findings show that Arab parents are more overprotective of their children than Jewish parents. Arab parents also tend to have less faith in their children's ability to succeed, be independent, and get employed. Moreover, Jewish parents were less ashamed and hypertensive to others' reactions in comparison with the Arab parents. The Israeli-Arab's perception of disorders such as autism spectrum is also similar to the Arabs in the neighboring Arab countries. This shared view can be associated with religion's irrefutable impact on the Arab's mentality and attitude. As such, religion plays a bitter-sweet role in Arab society's values, for it is a source of solace, on the one hand, and a barrier to the mainstreaming process of disabled people, on the other hand (Nirit & Shunit, 2013). In one study Christian, Druze, and Muslim ethnic Arab-Israeli groups were examined (Leyser & Romi, 2008). All parties regard the Arab culture as communal and authoritarian (Dwairy, 1998), and mainly valorizes religion, tradition, and family (Barakat, 1993; Dwairy, 1998; Jackson, 1997). Therefore, social ties are built with the intention of pleasing others' needs (family and friends), rather than one's own. Thus, most Arabs rely on their families (Nydell, 1987), and the family's name depends on its members' individual acts. The idea of respect and pride are coincided notions in Arab society and affect the function of the family units. Sadly, such vicinity and dependence can inhibit one's individuality, self-express, attitudes, and needs. Nonetheless, despite this shared cultural aspect, there are cultural differences within the different Arab ethnicities. Such differences are dependent on whether the ethnic group is westernized, traditional, or bicultural (Dwairy, 1998; Lee, 1997). In villages, traditional Arab identity is the most common one, due to the fact that rural areas are communal, extended-family, and family-oriented. Among the middle-class educated Arabs, a Bicultural identity is present. Moreover, a materialistic westernization identity is also evident in the same category (Al-Sabaie, 1989). However, in general, Muslims comprise the largest group in Arab society. Traditional Islamic society is clan-based, as everyone's role is linked to his clan. Nevertheless, in recent years, due to modernism, there has been a shift from the valorization of clans to the valorization of the nuclear family and personal achievements (Perry, 1998). Moreover, many studies were

conducted in Israel in order to examine the attitudes of Muslim-Arabs towards disabilities, while other studies compared the former's and the Israeli-Jew's attitudes towards disabled people.

#### **2.4. Integration in Arab society**

According to Avissar (2012), if the school exercises inclusion in Israel, teachers are required to make general education materials available to the student through modifications or facilities, provide an individualized education plan for their students, and develop a curriculum that is agreed upon by all teachers in the school.

Avissar (2012) stresses that there is an obstacle to comprehensive practices in Israel. There are questions about how students with difficulty in learning are identified as having a disability, how far students with severe disabilities can be included in general education classes, and how to teach the content of common curricula for students with disabilities (Avissar, 2012). Issues such as curriculum guidelines for students with special needs have not been addressed, and Avissar (2012) noted that the Ministry of Education of Israel implemented a plan in 1998 to reduce the number of students in special classes and private schools and raise the integration rates for special education students in schools and regular classes.

Principles of the plan: "Differential services according to individual needs, placement in a generalized educational facility in accordance with the principle of the least restrictive environment, and organizational flexibility in service delivery" (Avissar, 2012:38). By 1999, the law of the State of Israel made it compulsory for all schools to include students with disabilities (Al-Yagon & Margalit, 2001).

According to Al-Yagon and Margalit (2001), the law has resulted in non-exhaustive settings separate from general education students or self-contained special education classes in regular schools. In 2002, the amendment to the Special Education Law led to the withdrawal program for children with special needs for additional educational services within the framework of public education (Special Education Law, 2002).

Whereas in general, disabled people face many hardships and constraints, Arab people with disabilities suffer from additional barriers that are particular to or triggered by the Arab socio-cultural case. Lack of knowledge and help, poor provision of services, poor communication between the organizations that deal with disabilities, and a negative societal

outlook on people with disabilities, are all factors that hurdle the process of the inclusion of people with disabilities in the Arab culture. Nonetheless, due to the changes in legislation and the improvements of services for people with disabilities in Israel, the general status of people with disabilities has undergone notable improvements, which are also manifested in the Arab context (Sandler-loeff & Shahak,2006).

Arab families demonstrated a sense of disgrace and shame towards girls with disabilities. Thus, the family's esteem and dignity can be vindicated by hiding people with disabilities from the public eye (Reiter et al., 1986). Moreover, these views are still relevant according to Karni and Reiter's interviews with student-teachers at Sakhnin's College. Therefore, visually impaired girls are not perceived as incapable of marrying and raising a family.

Additionally, geographically, the majority of the Arabs reside in the Northern district in the Galilee area. They mainly live in villages that are either Christian, Muslim, or Druze. Nonetheless, there are also comprehensive and mixed villages in which they reside. During 2014, 450,000 out of 1.5 million Israelis who were classified as having disabilities, were Arabs. In a more recent report by Israel's Ministry of Justice on disabled persons, BenMoshe, Rofman, and Yisrael (2011) offered comparative data regarding disabilities among Israeli Jews and Arabs. According to the data, 26% of the Arab population and 17% of the Jewish population were classified as having disabilities.

Among the Jewish population, 5% in the Jewish sector was classified as having severe disabilities, compared to 14% in the Arab sector. Nonetheless, the authors acknowledged that many Arabs were excluded from the data, due to the fact that the Arab-Bedouins in the Negev were excluded from the findings. Moreover, the high percentage of classified people with disabilities in the Arab society reflects their low socio-economic status (Haj, 2011), and their poor health care services, in comparison to the Israeli-Jews' (Habib, 2008). The exalted percentages also result from their consanguineous marriages, which often lead to hereditary illness (Jaber, Halpern, & Shohat 2000).

A study by (Karni , Reiter & Bryen, 2011), reported that the success of the educational inclusion of students with special needs in middle schools in northern Israeli Arab schools depends heavily on the support of the school principals, the provided teacher training programs for special education, and the educators' positive attitudes towards inclusion. Thus, from these



findings, it is obvious that the provision of teacher training and the support of the principals are necessary for the improvement of the educational status of people with disabilities.

Historically, the provision of inclusive education was initially adopted in community-based and philanthropic bodies in the Israeli-Arab society. In 1974, the MOE was the formal organization for special education in the Arab community. However, only during the 1980s, there was a formal establishment for the provision of special education services (Abu-Asbah 2008). Moreover, the general status of people with disabilities in the Arab and Jewish communities was improved by the 1988 Special Education Law in Israel. This law called for the government's duty to provide children with disabilities with their defined set of rights. Nonetheless, despite this law, the status of special education in Arab society was not as improved like that of Jewish society. This setback hails to the poor provision of training, services, materials, and competent personnel, to the Palestinian students. Furthermore, this unwanted condition was also worsened by the lack of knowledge and awareness towards SEN pupils in Arab society. However, Abu-Asbah (2008) noted the continuous efforts to spread awareness of disabilities for the bodies in charge. In addition, the educational setback in the Arab society can also be attributed to poverty, which is also enhanced the Arab welfare departments' administrative incompetence, which harms their capacity to utilize the government's funds (Haj, 2011).

Kasler & Jabareen (2017) conceptualize 'triple jeopardy.' According to them, this concept refers to a condition in which Israel's most vulnerable societies are faced with difficult barriers. Accordingly, in addition to disabilities, the weakened group suffers from the placement in the periphery of society, governmental and institutionalized segregation, poverty, and inequality. Nonetheless, although equality before the law has been made more attainable due to the legislations, governmental and non-governmental reports show that this law has not been entirely realized (Naon et al., 2000; Weissblei, 2011; Israel National Council for the Child, 2013; Agbaria & Mustafa, 2014). Accordingly, special education in the Palestinian-Israeli Arabs' society, poses severe socio-political demands on the governmental agencies allocated for the support of people with special needs. Moreover, the amelioration in the status quo is contingent on various factors, which include utilization of available governmental funds, beneficial management, the provision of local leaders with the necessary knowledge of the inclusion of special needs children (Abbas, 2013), fair provision of resources, training, professional

personnel, and legal action taking by the NGO and the grassroots activists. This change can also yield higher education levels in the Palestinian-Arab community. Nevertheless, the change will not be attained with the persistent existence of poverty.

The Equal Rights for Persons with Disabilities Law in Israel was enacted in 1998 and was last amended in 2014. This law aims to protect the dignity and freedom of individuals with disabilities, and to ensure their right to effective and equal participation in society, in all areas of life. In addition, it aims to ensure an appropriate response to their needs, thereby enabling them to enjoy independence, privacy and respect, while taking advantage of their capabilities.

With regard to children with disabilities, the law must be reflected in formal and informal education frameworks. In Israel, the local authority framework is the main public service that provides non-formal education and leisure-related activities for young people in general; therefore, the local authority plays an important role in opening the doors of the community to persons with disabilities. However, as the regulation of leisure time for residents with special needs is still not organized, there is no formal framework to guide the work of local and municipal frameworks. Consequently, there are significant differences between the different local authorities in terms of the degree of their involvement in this endeavor (Weissblei, 2011).

In addition, the representation of minorities in special education is also affected by teachers' behavior ratings (Peters et al., 2014). As such, educators' demeanors and beliefs towards special education for minorities can affect their judgment since they are usually the first to recommend special education services. Moreover, the provision of children with special education is also based on the child's educational accomplishments (Hosp & Raschly, 2004). Though, according to Hibel, Farkas, and Morgan's (2010) 'pond effect,' the provision of special education was more likely to happen when general academic achievements were higher. That is to say that when with the raising of the academic achievement bar, the children will most likely be identified as special education students. Furthermore, when it comes to the Palestinian- Arabs in Israel, the improvement of general education achievements is a conflict that cannot be resolved under poverty (Magnet, 2015). The described of schools are located in poor peripheries, and foster a negative outlook of people with disabilities, due to the stigmas that accompany this subject. Thus, this leads to the isolation of the SEND students in special schools, or their placement in separate classes in regular schools. These findings show that the Ministry of

Education's call for the placement of SEN children in regular classrooms is not fully implemented (Abbas, 2013).

Therefore, it is mandatory to conduct research that aims to examine the cultural beliefs and attitudes on the teachers' perspectives, attitudes, and implementations of inclusive education. This is a better perception of the educators' attitudes on inclusive education that can improve the quality of the allocated teacher-training programs, the teachers' performance, and attitudes towards special education. Similarly, (Gaad, 2004; Schechtman & Or, 1996). Moreover, Schechtman and Or (1996) argued that teachers' wronged attitudes towards people with disabilities and towards their ability to educate them can be altered by resorting to extreme modes of interference and mediation. The study they conducted in Israel reveals that teachers' attitudes, stigmas on special education, and rejection of the 'other,' can be changed by the special education teacher training programs. This is why teacher-training programs in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East should encompass the pre-service teacher's stigmas on special needs kids and impose modes of intervention that aim to alter their attitudes towards people with disabilities.

According to Groce (1999), different cultures hold different beliefs and attitudes toward people with disabilities. In Ghana, for instance, religious (or magical) (Avoke, 2002) and traditional models (Agbenyega, 2003; Anthony, 2011) have caused people to regard disabilities as demonic, as they believe that this is a curse from the gods, devils, and evil spirits. They also believe that disabilities are the works of witches, ghosts, or the punishments from the gods (Agbenyega, 2003; Avoke, 2002; Botts & Owusu, 2013). Moreover, such attitudes are most prevailing in sub-Saharan African countries (see example Anthony, 2011; Dart, 2006; Gaad, 2004). Additionally, findings of studies conducted in Asian and Middle Eastern countries such as Israel (Florian & Katz, 2004), United Arab Emirates (Gaad, 2004), and Nepal (Dhungana, 2006), have reported that in these areas disabilities are perceived as a curse from the God, a punishment for one's sins and his family in general, and is a fearful concept. Furthermore, they believe that disabilities are inherent, and are ominous and sinister, which is why people with disabilities should be excluded from family functions and religious ceremonies.

Furthermore, in comparison to the Jewish education system, the Arab education system in general, and the issue of special needs education, in particular, is much worse in the Arab schooling system, State Comptroller 1992; Lahav, 1995). This is also manifested in the fact that

in Arab schools, many special education students are placed in either special or regular education classes that do not provide them with their needs.

Nonetheless, there is a lack of studies that address Arab's attitudes and beliefs towards people with disabilities. The existing studies, however, stress on the negative attitudes towards disabilities. Furthermore, interviews with family's who have daughters with disabilities show that girls with disabilities are often hidden from the public eye, regarded as shameful, and harmful to the families' honor. Additionally, studies that examined teachers' attitudes on the placement of special needs students in regular classrooms show that female teachers were more in favor of integrating students with mild learning disabilities, compared with students with other severe disabilities. These attitudes are related to the teachers' self-esteem and whether she believes in her ability to educate more challenging students (Heiman, 2004).

From the attitudes of Arab teachers on inclusive education for special needs kids, it can be inferred that there is a need to examine the Arab-Israeli society's unique attributes and the education system's status, as factors that influence this study (Zmero, Kurtz, & Reiter, 2007). Perhaps the inclusion of SEN students in regular schools is influenced by the nature of the integration, the implementation of the integration, and the stable provision of support, services, and tools for the SEN students in the integrative frameworks. Accordingly, the inclusion of SEN kids in Arab society is heavily dependent on the previous state's factors.

Furthermore, according to Florian (1977), Jewish high schoolers regarded people with disabilities more positively than the Arab students. Similarly, in their review, Florian and Katz (1983) reported that Jewish citizens had a more positive attitude towards people with disabilities, than the Arab citizens. The attitudes of secular and religious Israeli Jews and Muslim youngsters were examined by Wiesel and Zaidman (2003). They revealed that secular students from both groups held more positive perceptions of people with disabilities. However, the level of piety did not foretell attitudes. Moreover, when it comes to teachers' support for inclusive education for people with disabilities, two recent studies (Gumpel & Awartani, 2003; Lifshitz et al., 2004) revealed that Palestinian Arab teachers were less in favor of the inclusion of SEN students than the Jewish Israeli participants who demonstrated high levels of readiness to do so (Leyser & Romi, 2008). Similarly, Gumpel and Awartani (2003) reported that pre-service and in-service Israeli teachers believed that it is the teachers' duty to include and educate all students regardless

of their abilities. The Palestinian teachers and student-teacher however, were not in favor of inclusion.

Additionally, Attitudes of Muslim Arabs towards people with disabilities were more negative compared to members of the Jewish community (Florian,1977; Florian & Katz,1983). Moreover, according to Westbrook & Legge (1993), similar negative beliefs on the integration of special needs students in regular schools were also expressed by Arabs in Australia. Moreover, when it comes to teachers' support for inclusive education for people with disabilities, two recent studies (Gumpel & Awartani, 2003; Lifshitz et al.,2004) revealed that Jewish Israeli teachers showed higher levels of readiness towards the inclusion of SEN kids in regular classrooms in comparison to the teachers from the Westbank. These authors revealed that Arab society's attitudes on disabilities are based on stigmas that accompany this concept, an attitude imprinted with shame, fear, and the need to conceal the person with disabilities from the public eye (see also Westbrook & Legge,1993). Additional reports show higher efficiency rates by the Jewish teachers and student-teachers, higher self-esteem, and a strong sense of readiness towards working with SEND kids than Arab (Muslim) teachers and student-teachers. Nevertheless, Arab students scored higher when it comes to personal teaching efficiency. The high level in Arab teachers' scores can result from the participants' choice of profession outside the patriarchal home, which can lead to heightened levels of autonomy followed by modernization and the acceptance of others' differences (see Fogel-Bisawi & Bachar, 2003).

Moreover, Shor (1998) reports a link between piety and the support of drastic means of punishment. In comparison to the study's Muslim and Druze groups, the secular Jewish group was more concerned about the inadequacy of educators' expertise. Hence, the least worried groups were the Arab groups and the ultra-orthodox Jewish group. This disparity between the groups reveals the authoritarian nature of religion, which celebrates the teacher's dominance over his docile students. Moreover, according to Gumpel and Awartani (2003), Arab Palestinian pre-and-in-service teachers were more pleased with their vocational status than were their Jewish counterparts.

## **CHAPTER 3. Attitudes of Teachers towards Integration**

### **Introduction**

The next chapter will review the attitudes of teachers toward the integration of students with special needs considering literature review. The chapter reviews the positive and negative perceptions of teachers regarding inclusion. The literature review will go in depth on why teachers have positive attitudes and negative perceptions of generalization, as well as what teachers need to do to increase their perception of inclusion.

This chapter discusses attitude as a psychological category and the possibility of using this category in reading knowledge, emotions, and behavior of teachers towards integration in education.

### **3.1 Teachers attitudes towards integration - psychological aspects**

According to Oskamp, attitude is perhaps the most celebrated and vital concept in contemporary social psychology (Oskamp, 1991). In psychological terms, as defined by Corsini (1999) in the Dictionary of psychology, attitude is an acquired readiness to provide a cohesive response to a certain situation, person, or other provocative acts. Allport (1967) one of the founding fathers of the attitude studies, recalls how predetermined notions and stigmas affect a person's attitudes. He states that a certain grouping brings forth certain stereotypes, which affect the way cognitively humans would react to them. As such, disabled persons can be categorized as a certain group that evokes stereotypes towards it (Dalal et al., 1996). Thus, according to Roberts and Smith (1999), one's attitude and demeanor towards disabilities will affect the way they behave towards a person with disabilities. In relation to the attitudes of schooling and education in many countries, there has been an improvement in the inclusion of special needs kids as they are being included in regular schools instead of being segregated and isolated in special schools, due to the fact that inclusion in mainstream education is an important goal for a lot of countries nowadays.

Moreover, the demeanor of teachers', their attitudes and thoughts on special needs kids, can either better or worsen the process of inclusion of SEN children in mainstream schooling

(Schmidt & Ksenja, 2015). Similarly, Batsiou et al. (2008) reveal that educators' attitudes and mindsets are vital and even crucial to the process of inclusion and its aftermath. However, in studies about regular education teachers' attitudes towards inclusions and SEND kids, Arvamidis and Norwich (2002), found that during the early 1980s until 2000, the teachers' attitudes (teacher-related variables) and the educational atmosphere (educational/school environment-related variables) had less effect on the inclusion, in comparison with the nature of the disabled child (child-related variables).

Therefore, effective inclusion relies on 3 aspects: attitudes, resources, and curricula (Favazza, Phillipsen, & Kumar, 2000). Thus, due to the proven liaison between attitudes and conduct, there has been a heeded wave of interest in the field of attitudes. According to Eagly one's nature of responses is contrived by the nature of one's attitudes. This means that one would react positively if he possessed a positive attitude and would have a negative reaction if he had a negative mindset (Eagly, 1992). Scutaro and Coneanu (2012) reference Croll and Mores' (2000) research on the effect of the level of the child's disorder on the teacher's attitudes. They concluded that students who suffered from mild deficiencies were rendered more acceptable than those who had acute disorders in the teachers' viewpoints. In a similar study conducted by Etenesh (2000) and cited in Camaruc (2012) on teachers' attitudes towards students with impairments, the results show a correlation between the severity of the child's disorder and the level of the teachers' rejection of the same child. In that sense, children with severe disorders were rejected more than those with mild ones. Camaruc (2012) also references Lie Yueh Cheng's (2005) studies on attitudes, which revealed that 45% of the Taiwanese teachers believe in the isolation of special needs students in special classes. Another study on attitudes towards the integration of directors, special education teachers, and regular education teachers from New Jersey, conducted by Daunarummo (2010). The findings reveal that the three parties reached the consensus that a positive outlook and impact on the act of integration is mandatory for its success, alongside the support and the provision of the adequate integration tools to the three groups. In Canada, for instance, Sharma and Sokal (2016) proved a positive correlation between the teachers' level of conduct, attitude, attention, and concern in the classrooms to the process of inclusion. The findings reveal that educators who harbored a positive mindset towards inclusion scored lower in the attitude measurement scales and in the concern about inclusion. A study in Romania done by Bolea (2007), examined the success of the inclusion in relation to

aspects such as communication between the involved parties (teachers, principals, therapists, special education teachers), stereotypes towards disabilities and the process of integration, the amount of provided training and proficiency of the involved personnel, the conditions and provided technologies that aid this process. Accordingly, results reveal that problems in the mentioned aspects led to the hindrance of the process of integration and the adoption of a negative attitude (Lupu, 2017).

Moreover, attitudes in general, and towards disabilities in particular, are affected to a great extent by one's surroundings, such as his family, friends, the books he reads, the media he gets exposed to, and the school experience he/she underwent (Triandis et al., 1984), prior to the student's enrollment in teacher education programs. Moreover, empirical and practical researches have revealed that attitudes are subject to change under certain coursework, like being exposed to presentations about disabilities. This can also be done by allocating a consistent relationship between the educators and the mainstream students. Additionally, Leyser and Romi (2008) allude to other strategies that can aid the process of inclusion and acceptance. They mention presentations, group works, book readings, educational movies exposition, lectures attendance, and discussions conduction on the subject of disabilities, as activities that stimulate acceptance (Leyser & Romi, 2008).

Lupu (2017) resorts to the focus-group method in his research on the attitudes of a small group of educators on the integration of SEND kids in public schools. The data reveals the adoption of a positive mindset towards inclusion, as those teachers did not regard disabilities as a negative or an obstructive aspect, but rather focused on the students' right to get educated, trained, and included in society regardless of their disabilities. Additionally, the same teachers reported that they believed that students with moderate to severe disabilities are able to be integrated into mainstream schooling. However, students with hearing impairment, followed by those with a mental disability, and with eyesight problems, were thought to be more difficult to include in the mainstream education system. In other words, the teachers regarded the integration of students with physical impairments and those with mild mental disorders, easier. However, most of the teacher's attitudes were affected by the fact that they were exposed to their peers and were anxious about being judged.

Eliot (2008) looked into the relationship between the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of SEND kids with mild to moderate mental impairments in physical education settings and the



success of these children in being included with other kids without disabilities. Eliot reveals that teachers with a positive mindset towards this matter succeeded in providing the students with more practice attempts and thus attained high levels of success. These results become strengthened by other studies that reveal that a positive teacher attitude is substantial for the success of the inclusion of SEND students in physical education (Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992).

Moreover, these studies examined the relationship between varied types of attitudes with elements such as the teachers' age (Rizzo, 1985; Rizzo & Wright, 1988), gender (Patrick, 1987), teaching experience (Marston & Leslie, 1983), educational readiness (Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992), perceived teaching competence and ability (Rizzo & Wright, 1988), and the spectrum and nature of the students' disabilities (Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). Many pupils' and educators' related elements have been closely linked with the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion (Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992). Moreover, elements such as the students' grade levels and the spectrum of their disability have been linked to the teachers' notions towards inclusion. Accordingly, students in lower level grades have been regarded with a more positive attitude than those who are in higher-level grades (Rizzo, 1984), and students whose disabilities were milder were also perceived more positively than those with intense impairments (Rizzo, 1984; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991; Rizzo & Wright, 1987).

Other studies on inexperienced newbie special education teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, show an attitude change during ITE (Carroll et al., 2003; Shade & Stewart, 2001). Those teachers reveal that their level of confidence in teaching and their knowledge about the legislation was specifically correlated with the pervasive attitudes on special education, and less affected by their concerns and worries about inclusive education. Nonetheless, despite the statistical data on this subject, one must note that positive outlooks and confidence towards inclusion was remarkably smaller than concerns and worries towards it. In a similar manner, a link between the teachers' knowledge and their attitudes towards inclusion has been marked. Thus, the more knowledgeable the teacher is, the more he is positive and inclusion. However, here too, differences in means show that those who are concerned are more than those who aren't. Thus, those who were not very knowledgeable were concerned about integration, whereas those who were knowledgeable reported being more confident. Another outcome of this study was the mild increasing of the levels of confidence towards teaching students with varied abilities and needs and their overall knowledge about legislation (Forlin, & Chambers, 2011).

Nevertheless, in spite of the change of attitude, many studies reveal that during the inexperienced teachers' training, many of the teachers shift their viewpoint on inclusion, and become less supportive of it (Romi & Leyser 2006). For example, in India, a study on the pro-inclusion teachers shows that their support of inclusion was not factual, nor dependent on actual practices. Thus, according to experts, pro-inclusion would be strengthened only after the teachers have undergone realistic and intense experiences with SEND children (Gafoor & Asaraf, 2009). Moreover, similarly to the majority of mainstream education teachers, Irish special education teachers, have reported their worries towards having large classes. However, research shows that after one year of training the same teachers revealed a professional improvement, however, many of them were unable to ditch their worries (Lambe & Bones, 2006).

Unianu (2012), regards inclusion as the amending of the regular schooling, in a way that would serve the children's abilities regardless of their differences, and provide a comprehensive experience for all types of students, which will give them an inlet to the social world (Avramidis, Bayliss, Burden, 2000). In other words, inclusion means that the school must adapt itself to the children's needs, this also means that teachers must adhere to their students' needs and thus schools become a more heterogeneous place. Due to the teachers' pivotal role in inclusion, their attitudes towards are regarded as one of the primary boundaries for the inclusion process. Moreover, many factors impact teachers' attitudes, such as the intensity of the student's disability, the child's nature, lack of prior exposure to SEND students, the curriculum, the teacher's expectations from the students and so on.

Ridarick and Ringlaben (2013) also stress the important role of the teachers' attitudes towards disabilities to the success of the inclusion. In a similar manner, Subban and Sharma (2005) note the importance of examining teachers' attitudes in relation to the process of inclusion, and they conclude that positive teaching attitudes lead to successful inclusion results.

Factors such as the age of the children affect the teachers' attitudes. Thus, whenever a child gets older, the teachers' attitudes shift towards a negative viewpoint. Hence, preschool teachers are more welcoming to SEND kids than teachers of older pupils (Aravaidis & Norwich, 2002; Sharma, Forlin, & Loreman, 2008). This also means that in this research, pre-school teachers will report more positive attitudes towards inclusive education, whereas highschool teachers would adopt a more negative mindset towards this educational approach.

In their study on 81 practicing UK primary and secondary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2000), revealed that experienced teachers who have been exposed to inclusion had more positive attitudes towards it than those who were inexperienced. In a similar study on Australian pre-service teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, Bronwlee and Carrington (2000) reveal that teachers who were in direct contact with disabled persons reported more positive outlooks on inclusion, than those who were exposed to disabled people. Burke and Sutherland (2004) also conducted a similar study on pre-service and in-service teachers' experience with disabled pupils and their attitudes towards inclusion in Newyork. The data demonstrates that there is a statistical correlation between having prior experience and knowledge of disabled students and their attitudes towards inclusive education. Hence, pre and in-service teachers who have been exposed to disabilities and have prior knowledge about it have reported more positive attitudes towards inclusion. However, whereas the best way to alter attitudes to the better is during the pre-service period, there is very little research on this aspect.

Findings here, by Ben-Yehuda, Leyser, and Last (2010), suggest that when it comes to the inclusion of all students and the socio-academic benefits of inclusion, there has been a notable gap between the significant groups. Hence, strong, successful, and agile teachers reported a positive attitude and genuine belief in inclusion for students with most disabled students, with the exception of those with severe behavioral and cognitive impairments. As experts suggest, positive outlooks on inclusion are bound to the teachers' abilities and their quality of interaction with their students, which would contribute to their social and academic prosperity (Cook 2001, Friend & Bursuck, 2006). These results have also been justified by a prior study conducted by Vaughn et al. (1993), which reported that students with learning disabilities placed with teachers who identified as effective and accepting, were accepted by their peers.

As mentioned previously, teachers' attitude is a crucial and indispensable factor in special education (Smith, 2000). Thus, a great number of research have proven the substantial role of the teachers' positive attitudes on the success of inclusion (Winzer, 1985). Since attitudes partake a pivotal role in our daily lives, they also play a big role in the teachers' job and their relationship with their students. Thus, when the teachers adopt inclusion into their ideology the outcome of the inclusion would be successful (Ringlaken & Price, 1981). Likewise, McEroy, Nordgreist, and Cunningham (1998) stress the undeniable effect of the teachers' stance on

inclusion on the process itself. Additionally, the teachers' outlooks on inclusion would affect to a large extent the child's ability to be socially acceptable and would play a major role in his emotional, social and intellectual abilities. In addition, in light of the weight that the teachers' attitudes have on the child's development, and especially the regular education teachers' readiness to accept SEND students in their classrooms, research has revealed the necessity of unveiling the teachers' points of view on inclusion (Roberts & Zubrick, 1992; Forlin et al., 1996; Smith, 2000).

### **3.2. Positive and Negative Attitudes**

Attitudes could be positive, for instance, joy, bliss, being exciting for certain experiences, or desiring certain people's company. On the other hand, demeanors can also be negative. Thus, a person can also avoid certain situations, feel gloomy, depressed, or abhor certain things and people, in this case, one would experience sadness, fear, disgust, resentment and even pettiness, towards situations or persons that evoke negative attitudes. Moreover, the two components of comprehension and feeling, for the most part, pursue comparative lines. An inspirational demeanor regardless of whether it is latent, or manifest brings with its positive emotions. This relation also applies to negative attitudes, whether they are obvious or hidden. Hence, a negative attitude summons negative feelings. The third aspect of attitudes is behavior (Norwich, 2002; Reiter, 1996). Research proves that there is also a correlation between human attitudes and behaviors, the way one perceives certain occurrences would affect one's actions (Karni, Reite & Bryen, 2011).

This explains why teachers' attitudes affect the success of the practice of implementing inclusion (Unianu, 2012). Thus, when educators adopt negative mentalities towards educational inclusion practices, they may not try to participate in the important vocational advancement which is needed to assure the success of inclusion (Galovic, Brojcin, & Glumbic, 2014). Furthermore, studies such as that which was conducted by Magumise and Sefotho aim to examine teachers' viewpoints on inclusion in the three countries that adopt this educational ideology. Magumise and Sefotho (2018) who studied the parent-teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Zimbabwe have categorized their results into three categories, which are positive, mixed, and negative attitudes. Similarly, Chavuta, Itimu-Phiri, Chiwaya, Sikero, and

Alindiamao (2008) also reported negative teacher attitudes towards inclusive education in Malawi. Haitembu (2014) also recognized negative educator mindsets towards inclusion Namibian schools as an obstruction towards the process of educational inclusion. Moreover, since educators' demeanors towards inclusion are probably going to impact their own exertion towards expert improvement in Namibia, it is a quite troubling revelation that such negative dispositions have only been exposed lately in the three countries (Chitiyo et al., 2019).

According to Cassady (2011), on the one hand, teachers with a positive mindset and demeanor towards inclusion are often associated with aspects such as teamwork, open-mindedness, cooperation, competence, and flexible teaching methods (Cassady 2011:3). On the other hand, teachers with negative outlooks on inclusion and disabilities have led to the hindering of the inclusion process (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000b).

In Buford and Casey's (2012) and in Kern's studies on the seniority of teaching and its effect on the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, has revealed that the number of years a teacher accumulates during his/her career does not affect his/her perception of inclusion.

There is a consensus on the undeniable correlation between teachers' perception of SEN students and disabilities on the process of educational inclusion in mainstream classrooms. Thus, it is believed that defying teachers' negative outlooks on SEN and disabilities is the first and pivotal building stone for the success of the inclusion process (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Campbell, Gilmore, & Cuskelly, 2003; WHO & World Bank, 2011). Nonetheless, there are varied data on teachers' perceptions of the inclusion of SEN and disabled students in regular classrooms in both first-world and less developed countries.

For example, some findings refer to the fact that teachers hold impartial or negative outlooks on the inclusion of SEN and disabled kids in standard primary education (Chhabra et al., 2010; De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011; Hudson, Graham, & Warner, 1979; Parasuram, 2006) whereas other findings reveal positive teachers' attitudes (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). In a similar manner, studies on pre-service teacher points to the positive demeanors towards disability (Forlin & Chambers, 2011; Haimour, 2012) and inclusion in education (Muwana, 2012); while other data shows negative demeanors towards disabilities (Alghazo et al., 2003) and the inclusion of pupils with impairments in mainstream education (Malak,2013).

Moreover, both practicing teachers and preservice ones have revealed their fears and doubts towards inclusion in education. Such concerns are affected by scanty timing, teaching incompetence and lack of readiness, deficient expertise, not enough tools or funds, shortage of awareness and information on the subject, and inadequate facilities or personnel accompanied by a demanding job, inappropriate physical environment, unsuitable curricula and so on (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Chhabra et al., 2010; De Boer et al., 2011; Hudson et al., 1979; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996).

Therefore, considering the leverage and agency teachers' attitudes possess over the inclusion process (Ainscow, 2007), a change in their outlooks would allow the students with SEN and disabilities the ability to be included. In the same manner, teachers who regard disabilities as a disease and a barrier would often avoid interacting with students with disabilities, because they believe that they are not competent to do so, and only trained professionals can. On the other side of the coin, there are teachers who regard students as equals, as they believe that education should be available to all students regardless of their disabilities. Those teachers are often more responsive to the students' needs and are interactive with them because they believe that such students will benefit from the inclusion and the learning (Jordan, Lindsay & Stanovich, 1997). Additionally, teachers' attitudes affect their teaching methods, as negative minded teachers will usually avoid applying the teaching methods that were proven to be successful in working with SEND and students with disabilities (Bender, Vail & Scott, 1995). Therefore, SEND students often lack success when they're taught by teachers who possess negative attitudes towards disabilities (Ellins & Porter, 2005). As a result, teachers' demeanors affect the SEND students' chances of being accepted by their fellow classmates in regular classes. Thus, teachers must learn to think positively when speaking of disabilities, so as to enable the SEND child's socio-educational development and success (Westwood 2003: 87). Furthermore, students acquire a lot of their perceptions from their teachers, therefore, teachers must carefully pick their actions, and must show other students the importance of accepting and interacting with their SEND peers (Salend, 1999).

According to the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) and to Manetti, Schneider, and Siperstein (2001), by taking part in comprehensive projects, educators will grow progressively inspirational frames of mind towards educational inclusion, which is also affirmed by most of the studies on that subject (Cook et al., 2000; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Gyimah, Sugden

& Pearson, 2009). These findings are justified by the fact that a study on teachers in the UK shows that teachers who took part in inclusive programs and activities held a positive mindset towards inclusion, as opposed to their peers who did not take part in such programs (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000a). Findings also allude to the fact that teachers aimed to adopt inclusion in their classes, however, they also admitted that the reality of daily life and its accompanying challenges made this process more difficult to implement (Van-Reusen, Shoho, & Barker, 2001). However, in face of the orthodox nature of their institutions, Greek teachers, aim to include students with SEN in their classrooms, and they become more positive when they are provided with special needs training and tools (Koutrouba, Vamvakari & Theodoropoulos, 2008). In Italy for instance, special schools have largely decreased, and the educators show strong support for the inclusion of students with SEN in regular classrooms. However, most educators report their dissatisfaction with the provided resources, time, training, and help they get to do this job adequately (Cornoldi et al., 1998).

### **3.3. Teachers' Profession in the context of integration**

In Israel, teacher-training is partitioned into two strands: elementary education and secondary education. Primary-schools' teachers attend teaching-colleges for ideally 3 to 4 years. After three years they can acquire a teaching certificate or a BED (Bachelor of Education Degree) after 4 years of studying. During the initial three years of college, understudy teachers invest continuously more energy in the classrooms in field placements. For secondary educators, however, training, undergraduates attend one of the five Israeli universities for education and get both a baccalaureate degree and an optional teaching certificate following 4 years. Teacher training in colleges and universities can be forged into both regular education and special education with the last being general and inclusive of all types of disabilities. Notwithstanding undergrad preparing, numerous instructors strive to earn an advanced degree in special education or regular ones (Gumpel & Awartani, 2003).

When speaking of teachers' knowledge and its relation to educational inclusion, many pieces of research have been conducted (Ryle, 1971; Schulman, 1986). Ryle (1971) for instance, defines teachers-knowledge as the differentiation between 'knowing that' and 'knowing what.' Eraut (1994) elaborates on teacher knowledge by dividing it into 4 types, which are,

propositional information of hypotheses, ideas and academic standards, pragmatic learning portrayed by schedules, methods, and procedures, inferred information, which is implied but not manifested, and know the way they should implement these in a certain situation. Additionally, the social and educational frame also affects the educators' viewpoints and demeanors as well as their knowledge about inclusion (Shulman, 1986). The success of the educator and the inclusion is contingent on the teachers' mastering of his students, the subjects, and the schooling strategies (Karp & Voltz, 2000). Studies have exposed an array of effective teaching methods that were employed by professional teachers in their classrooms (Florian & Rouse, 2001). Such teaching methods incorporate the utilization of suitable distinction systems; helpful learning methodologies; the development of in-class directory skills; and providing the students with the needed social conducts and mannerisms. A study by Jordan and Stanovich (1998) revealed that teachers' ability to adhere and satisfy each child's needs during teaching was able to absorb and teach a variety of students with different abilities. Florian and Rouse (1998) showed that teachers who did not segregate between their students and who adopted a problem-solving attitude to their teaching methods enabled the success of the inclusion process. However, although most teachers according to their studies, were familiar with the inclusive teaching methods, the usage of the latter varied between each subject teacher, as some subject teachers employed more strategies than others. There is a multiplicity of reasons for the gap between the different subjects, such as the teachers' prior knowledge, and their outlook on the subjects they taught. Math, for instance, was regarded as a successive subject, whereas English and other humanities were not regarded as sequential (Florian & Rouse, 2001). In relation to the teaching of mathematics, findings indicate that the teachers' stance on the subject fashion an individual ideology and mindset on the teaching of it, and thus affect the learning process and the inclusion (Cross, 2009).

Studies attribute the most paramount effect on inclusion to the regular education teachers (Bhatnagar & Das, 2013; Das et al., 2013a; Shah, 2005). Thus, the inclusion of all students and the learning experience they attain regardless of their disabilities is contingent on the teachers' attitudes and beliefs in the regular classrooms. Moreover, all findings on inclusive education and its success attribute regular education teachers' contribution to their SEN students learning by providing them with effective learning methods, to be the main factor behind the success of the inclusion (Das et al., 2012; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000). However, a close reading of the



findings shows that regular education teachers do not feel confident about their ability to provide to include SEN students (Bhatnagar & Das, in press, Das et al., 2013b; Shah, 2005).

Many of them reported dissatisfaction with the training they were provided, as they feel it is inadequate. As a result, this feeling of inadequacy creates anxiousness about the idea of inclusion.

Although other study (Forlin & Chambers 2011) provided the teachers with the ability to socialize with disabled individuals, the teachers did not show any signs of a positive outlook on the process of inclusion. This is proven by the fact that pre-service teachers who were exposed the most to people with disabilities, did not show any signs of positive attitudes towards it, compared to teachers who had no or less exposure to disabilities. The teachers also did not grant import to inclusion. Perhaps, their disinterest stems from their realistic realization that most schools lack the means and support needed to make the process of inclusion successful. Another possible reason behind their attitudes could be, as discussed by Richards and Clough (2004), that “the students have been ‘socialized’ into accepting the provision of segregated services as being the norm.”

Many studies have examined the effect of teachers’ demeanors on students with impairments. Thus, Clough and Lindsay (1991) have displayed a classification of the educators, to whom the satisfying of the needs of emotionally and behaviorally troubled children seemed to be an arduous task to do, followed by visually impaired students, and students who suffer from hearing problems. Studies have revealed that teachers who are only concerned with the material they must teach often regard the inclusion of pupils with disabilities in their classrooms as a problem. According to Calmers (1991), secondary school teachers were not as receptive and accepting of the inclusion of students with disabilities, in comparison to primary school teachers. Forlin (1995) indicates that special schools’ teachers and those who teach in learning centers were more accepting of special needs kids, especially with students with mental disabilities than teachers who taught in mass schools. Thus, whereas special schools were more inclusive of children with severe impairments, mass schools were more focused on students with physical disabilities. When talking about teachers’ attitudes and mentality towards the possibility of the improvement of the students, however, Jordan, Lindsay, and Stanovich (1997) demonstrated a link between the teachers’ attitudes and the child’s improvement. They showed that teachers who

believed in reformation employed teaching methods that differ from those who do not believe that the students' status is subject to improvement.

Alqurainis's study (2012) demonstrated that there is no correlation between the teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of severely disabled kids and the class level they teach. Such disassociation might stem from the very few differences between the grade levels in elementary schools. Giacchi (2003) strengthens this research's findings by mentioning other research that show the lack of connection between educators' attitudes on inclusion and the grade levels.

Nonetheless, when comparing different levels of grades, such as highschool, elementary school, and middle school, teachers' perspectives on educational inclusion become an effective factor in the leveling of grades. Such an assumption can be justified by previously conducted research; for instance, Elhoweris and Alsheikh (2006), that elementary school teachers are more negative towards inclusion in comparison with high-school teachers. On the other hand, other studies note that teachers in secondary schools are more positive about inclusion than those in high schools (Avramidis & Norwich,2002).

Besides the importance of research on teachers' attitudes' effect on inclusion, it is also crucial to examine the link between the provision of professional and adequate preparation for the teachers and their perception of educational inclusion. This linkage (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996) shows that although educators support inclusion only a small portion of them render themselves capable and qualified to teach special needs students. In a similar manner, studies that examined the impact of teacher training on the educators' viewpoints towards inclusion reveal a higher success rate for the inclusion process by the teachers who regarded themselves as competent and professionally ready in the special education field, even if the training programs were not meant to advocate inclusion (Wilkins & Nietfeld, 2004). Accordingly, directing and instructing pre-service teachers would heighten the success of inclusion due to the fact that the teachers would view inclusion from a more positive, knowledgeable, confident, and enthusiastic attitude (Bender, Vail, & Scott, 1995; Walsh et al., 2008).

Many educators hold claim that students with disabilities' needs can best optimally meet in special classes, and thus might regard their inclusion in regular classes as a negative thing. They focus on the children's' possible frustration with the gap between them and their regular peers and they consider the inadequate time, and tools that are needed to meet the students' needs (Freeman & Alkin, 2000; Zion & Jenvey 2006; Ben-Yehuda, Leyser &Last, 2010). This is

why a large number of teachers do not view segregated education and special schooling as immoral. Additionally, a lot of educators believe they lack the necessary skills and proficiencies to teach kids with special needs, which as a result, evokes a lot of doubts about the teacher training programs and the implied methods and techniques in inclusive classes (Steinhoff & Lignugaris-Kraft, 2007; Mitchell, 2008; Friend et al., 2010). Such figures view the inclusion programs in a dubious light. Such dilemma and concern have been raised by Wilkins and Nietfeld (2009) whose studies have shown that teachers who did not participate in inclusion-oriented programs were more likely to provide their students with a comprehensive and accepting atmosphere, in relation to teachers who actually attended inclusion-based programs.

For example, in Slovakia, laws dealing with SEN and students with disabilities were ratified more than a decade ago, which meant that schools had to provide suitable and inclusive atmospheres immediately. Moreover, although the subject of SEN and disabilities inclusion is often talked about, very little instruction and training have been provided in pre-service programs. Thus, the provision of adequate training will not only render economic profits (since the teachers in-service would need training after their graduation), for it will also boost the educators' self-esteem and as a result, lead to a better inclusion process. Additionally, it will also boost the students' self-esteem when the teachers take into consideration the child's confidence and mindset. Moreover, students' ability to think critically and reflect on their actions whilst evaluating themselves could be done through the use of portfolios (in this case EPOSTL, see more in Straková, 2016, 2016a). However, although the findings reveal that most in-service educators reported a high level of confidence and comfort towards inclusion, most of them have been trained to deal with students with disabilities. On the other hand, pre-service teachers, such as pre-service English language educators reveals discomfort and low levels of confidence towards the integration of disabled learners, due to the fact that they felt incompetent and not trained enough to do so. Accordingly, teachers must acknowledge and grasp the advantages of integrating learners and including them in the educational field, and they also need to know the tools, modes, and the materials used to do these processes.

In relation to the USA, Gumpel & Awartani (2003), similarly to Kauffman (1989), argue that the 1980s' U.S. Regular Education Initiative (Biklen, 1985; D. K. Lipsky & Gartner, 1987) are to be perceived as the expressions of the conservative economic policies promoted during the Reagan–Bush administration (Hallenbeck & Kauffman, 1994). In a similar manner, one cannot

comprehend the Danish model of special education, without taking into consideration the political democratic and social nature that influenced it (Pijl, 1994; Rizvi & Lingard, 1996). Therefore, policy and legislation are affected by outlooks on education concerning equality and the needs of students with disabilities. Weatherly and Lipsy (1977) discuss this link during their studies on the aspects that lead to policy enforcement by “street-level bureaucrats” (Lipsky, 1983). Notably, special education is an extremely exigent field. Thus, special education teachers must undergo progressive training in order to be qualified to teach. Additionally, during his/her work, special education teachers come upon many hurdles and hardships that can be quite frustrating.

Thus, only training programs will not suffice when it comes to special education, and in order to be able to face such challenges, the teachers must have high levels of enthusiasm, self-belief, and faith in their ability to do the task. Moreover, the teachers’ self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) is vital to the process of teaching successfully in the face of the possible reforms that can come upon when working with regular students and SEN students. Gibson and Dembo (1984) for instance view teachers’ self-perception and efficiency as a two-faceted concept. The first dimension is the general faith of the educators’ professional competency to improve the students’ status quo and the second is the personal belief in his role as an individual to affect the students for the better. When talking about stressful occurrences, however, such dimensions can either aid the person’s ability to lead to a change, or it can lead to his frustration and inability to perform the task (Jerusalem, 1993).

According to Ben-Yehuda, Leyser & Last (2009), aspects such as teacher-student individualized relationships, nurturing and encouraging them, fathoming the students’ milieu, and keeping in touch with their parents, differ from each other immensely. Nonetheless, attainment of these aspects by the teachers will lead to a successful inclusion process. This is because when teachers understand the children’s nature and background while keeping in touch with their parents, he/she can ensure higher success rates for the students’ inclusion in mainstream education. Therefore, by paying attention to these dimensions, educators manifest their interest in the child’s success and show their expectations from the latter. Similarly, previous research shows that the way teachers behave in class is linked to their teaching methods and philosophies (Clark & Peterson, 1987; Sarason, 1982).

When comparing special education teachers to regular education ones, according to Ross Hill (2009) the former reported higher levels of confidence towards teaching SEN students, when provided with the appropriate training. In addition, Bruce (2010) revealed that the more time was provided in the teacher training, the more teachers were confident about integration. In addition, Walker (2012) shows a strong link between teachers' viewpoints towards inclusion and their professional improvement. Wogamon (2013), for instance, examined the effect of teachers' perceptions of inclusion, the training time provided to them, the support hours from professional personnel and administrators addressing the needs of pupils with disabilities, on inclusion in South Carolina. Her study unveils an undeniable statistical link between the professional hours provided in the teacher training programs and the teachers' demeanors towards inclusion. Thus, it is vital that the teachers get enough hours of training in order to enable them to adopt a positive outlook on inclusion.

In many studies, it has been revealed that most educators view students' physical disabilities as easier to include and deal with within the classroom than those who suffer from emotional and behavioral disabilities (Chhabra, Srivastava & Srivastava, 2010). Research also shows that most educators feel ineligible to teach regular and special needs students, in light of the fact that they feel that they lack the necessary training in inclusion-oriented activities (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001). The mentioned results coincide with the fact that teachers who fostered positive attitudes towards inclusion were able to do it more confidently (Buell, Gamel-McCormick & Scher, 1999). Moreover, a lot of educators refuse to take responsibility for the teaching of special needs kids, as they regard their condition to be a pathological one, which they cannot treat (Angelides, Stylianou & Gibbs, 2006).

Furthermore, research shows that the amount of years a teacher teaches affects his/her perception of inclusion. In that manner, teachers who have taught for a few years, reported higher levels of optimism towards inclusion, as opposed to those who taught for a significant amount of time. However, a contradictory result is present in the special education field. In the context of special education, teachers who have experienced educational inclusion show a more positive attitude towards it than teachers who lack the experience of inclusion. According to Avramidis and Norwich 2002, Balboni and Pedrabissi 2000, Leyser et al. 1994, this claim is justified and supported throughout other research. They also disclose that teachers' attitudes and perceptions of inclusion became more positive when they were more experienced with working

in an inclusive environment than educators who lacked prior experience. The research on teaching experience and experience in inclusive education, however, shows that the results are contradictory to those mentioned above. This can be explained in light of the fact that many teachers grow tired from putting a lot of effort into teaching kids with disabilities, and they might find it hard to deliver the material to a disabled child in comparison to teaching normal kids who do not suffer from developmental issues. Thus, these teachers will normally have a negative attitude towards the implementation of inclusion, since one's experiences affect one's attitude, which stems from the theory on the formation of attitudes (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). In face of the conflicting results, it has been reported that teachers who underwent prolonged training in the field of special education, fostered positive attitudes towards inclusion, more than teachers who did not get enough training. In addition, other studies reveal that educators' perceptions of inclusive education are highly affected by the training available in the scope of special needs education (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Balboni & Pedrabissi, 2000; Leyser et al., 1994). From such results, it becomes apparent that the increasing of inclusive education teacher training prompts progressively positive outlooks on inclusion and improve the ability to implement inclusive education in schools. However, there are a few points that must be clarified when talking about this correlation, which is that other aspects also affect the development of positive viewpoints on inclusive education (De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011).

In a study on the attitudes of educators towards their position as educators in Saudi Arabia, has shown that the educator's attitudes towards inclusive education affected their outlook on their existing current position. Interestingly, the general education teachers were more positive towards inclusive education of students with special needs, than special education teachers. These results could be contributed to the unsuccessful experiences that the special education teachers had in the past when working in an inclusive environment. Thus, one's nature of prior experience with kids with disabilities in the past has a direct effect on the special education teachers' attitudes towards inclusion (Cook et al., 2000). Additionally, the study also entertained a group of general education teachers who have taught special needs students within the framework of their schools, and have had the opportunity to get to know the students during extra-curricular activities. Such teachers reported a more positive attitude towards inclusion, due to the fact that they got to know the special needs students on a more personal level that exceeds the pedagogical realm. Moreover, previous studies on this subject can affirm the presented

results. For instance, Mastropieri's (1996) study also alludes to the fact that general education teachers fostered a more positive attitude towards inclusive education than special education teachers. Nonetheless, the results from previous studies remain varied in this regard. For instance, some researches revealed that special education educators possessed a more positive outlook on the possibility of including students with severe cognitive deficiencies than regular school teachers (Alhamad, 2006; Elhoweris & Alsheikh, 2006). Other results show that whether the teacher is a special or general education one, his/her position does not affect their perception of inclusive education for disabled kids (Al-Ahmadi, 2009).

Furthermore, it is argued that exposure and perception of the pre and in-service educators are vital to the training that must be provided to them (Pajares, 1992). The studies have shown that the teachers' self-perception and faith must be carefully scrutinized during the teacher-training period. This is important because although it is known that perspectives are subject to change, studies have proved that teacher trainees' attitudes can be altered immensely during the initial period of the teacher training. These programs, as noted by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), have incorporated types of experience that Bandura (1977) regarded as contributors to the teachers' association of themselves with eligibility and aptitude. These training courses expect the educators in training to show initiative, eligibility, efficiency, and a readiness to present multi-colored teaching methods in order to lead to the success of inclusion. During their practical experience, student-teachers get exposed to teaching strategies and methods from the observation of in-practice teachers. Student-teachers then implement the observed methods while teaching, and get constructive feedback from their supervisors.

In addition, according to the findings of the research, many educators adopted a worrisome and dubious attitude towards educational inclusion. This negative outlook on inclusion stems from the fact that they feel incompetent of doing the task, are afraid of the possible negative implications of the inclusion towards students who do not have disabilities, and their dissatisfaction towards the inadequate aspects such as, small classrooms, lack of resources, lack of professional training (Avissar, 2003; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996).

Nonetheless, other recent studies a significant alteration in the education system. According to Leyser & Romi (2008) due to the ongoing increase in inclusive education schools, educators must learn to accommodate their teaching methodologies, adapt the taught materials to the students' abilities, alter their attitudes and demeanor towards inclusion, and develop

pedagogical and evaluative techniques to help aid the inclusion process. Furthermore, the understanding and mastery of these requirements must be emphasized during teacher training courses, supplement teaching programs. Moreover, such aspects must especially be taught to pre-service teachers during their learning period (Friend & Bursuck, 2006).

Therefore, teachers' mentalities and attitudes towards inclusion play a major role in the implementation of educational inclusion in schools. Such a point is proven by Barnyak and Paquette (2010) who concluded that teachers' attitudes are subject to change only when their mindset and ideology are altered. In a similar manner, Rakap and Kaczmarek's study on the attitudes of Turkish teachers towards inclusion shows similar results to Barnyak and Paquette's research. In their study, Rakap and Kaczmarek revealed that most educators' readiness to implement the inclusion of SEN students in regular classrooms was largely contingent on their belief system and prior trials. Additionally, many studies contend that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion in elementary and secondary schools were affected by the educational courses they attended in the universities (e.g., see Gao & Mager, 2011).

Likewise, Daniel's (2017) research also showed the positive effect teacher training programs have on their attitudes towards inclusive education. Nonetheless, a large number of educators expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of inclusive education training programs and thus, expressed their incompetence towards the inclusion of SEN students in regular classrooms. With these findings in mind, a legislated requirement of teacher training to work with specific disabilities for all teachers and not just special education teachers becomes instrumental to the success of the inclusion process. Therefore, such training needs to encompass the different types of disabilities in order to help regular education teachers understand the nature of all different kinds of disabilities. For instance, special education teachers are required to receive training on Autism, but general education teachers are not. Thus, providing this type of training for all teachers could render a lot of profits for SEN students' inclusion. Additionally, the provision of inclusion-oriented courses and activities to all teachers is crucial to the success of inclusion. This means that activities such as differentiated instruction, accommodations and modifications, and specific instructional strategies for students with various disabilities should be accessible to all types of teachers. Moreover, allowing pre-service regular and special education teachers to work with SEN pupils during their training years in universities is of great importance to the teachers' abilities and readiness to be inclusive during their careers.



In addition, educators' training programs must be more pragmatic and realistic rather than theoretical and speculative (Forlin,2012). Likewise, the taught material during the teaching programs must be reflective of the professional educational personnel's experience in that field (i.e., school teachers, principals, therapists, etc). This is because student-teachers will be able to gain experience from the experts. This is done particularly in developing countries, where training courses are starting to integrate information about inclusion, and the instructors of such courses are also getting indoctrinated with the necessary knowledge (Forlin & Dinh, 2010).

## **CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of the study is to examine the attitudes of general education teachers in Israel regarding the integration of students with special needs in regular education. It is important to examine the differences in teachers' integration perceptions because teachers are the individuals responsible for the classroom.

This chapter presents the research methodology in detail, which describes the research philosophy, the research design and approaches.

### **4.1. Research goals**

The main research aim is:

**Explore the attitudes of the Arab-Israeli sector's primary school teachers towards the integration of students with special needs into regular classrooms in the Arab society in Israel and to examine the factors that differentiate these attitudes.**

The study aims (in the practical aspect) to reform the educational and caring systems and to breed comfortable and decent conditions for the integration and education of pupils with SEN.

Moreover, the strategic objectives have been determined:

- Preventing the placement of students with special educational needs.
- Developing and promoting alternative models for students with special educational needs.
- Modernizing the institutional system, improving the care conditions, and rehabilitating education.
- Mobilizing and developing the community and the family in supporting the students with special educational needs.
- The teachers' personal development towards students with special educational needs.

## **4.2. Research problems and variables**

The main research questions should be based on the research's target statement. The research questions should also be concise and make the research more focus, thus, they must clearly list what will be studied or examined, the purpose of the researcher and the best method to go about the research. Furthermore, there are many ways to develop research questions, one of the best methods is to kickstart with a general subject and then narrow it to a precise question, consequently, the research enterprise will be based on that concise question. Moreover, researchers investigate various aspects that are dependent on the type of questions. Aspects such as cause and effect can be utilized in the study of attitudes, tendencies, relationships, individual or cultural experiences. Furthermore, the research's assigned design must correspond to the research question. Qualitative researchers, for instance, get guidelines on the process of discovery through research questions. Additionally, researchers usually update their questions based on their accumulated knowledge of people's attitudes towards the examined hypothesis (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2006; Greenwood & Levin, 2006).

### **My study main research problems are:**

1. What are the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?
2. What factors differentiate the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?

Because the attitude has a behavioral, cognitive and emotional component, I have identified specific problems:

- 1.1. What is the teachers' knowledge of the integration of students with special needs?
- 1.2. What is the teachers' behavior towards the integration of students with special needs?
- 1.3. What are the teachers' emotional attitudes towards the integration of students with special needs?

Elias and Norwich's (2002) attempt to answer a similar question, have suggested that teachers' attitudes towards integration can be affected by various interconnected factors. Moreover, previously conducted studies dealt with teachers' attitudes towards different types and categories of children with special needs and asked questions about the teachers' outlook towards the students' abilities to integrate successfully and the worthiness of this process. In general, the teachers' attitudes were distinguished based on either physical-sensory, cognitive, and behavioral-emotional dimensions. Researches as Harvey (1985) as cited in Elias and Norwich (2002), for instance, revealed that female teachers tended to hold more positive attitudes towards the idea of integrating children with behavioral problems than male teachers.

Leyser et al. (1994) as cited in Elias and Norwich (2002) found that, in general, educators who held a teaching experience that wavered between 14 years' or less held a more positive attitude towards integration in comparison to teachers with more than 14 years of experience. In addition, they did not notice any distinct differences in the perception towards integration among teachers whose teaching experience ranged between one and four years five and nine years and ten and 14 years (no mention was made based on individual country). Leyser et al. (1994) as cited in Elias and Norwich (2002) also found that, in total, teachers that were exposed to dealing with disabled people held significantly more positive attitudes towards dealing with special needs students in comparison to teachers who lacked the exposure.

The awareness towards kids with special needs has also gained a platform in higher formal studies during pre- and in-service training. This awareness was regarded as extremely important in the refining of teachers' attitudes towards an inclusive dogma, this is because the success of the inclusion of special needs students in mainstream schooling depends heavily on the provision of teacher training programs that deal with SEN students (Elias& Norwich, 2002).

I decided to also pose a research question connected with chosen factors:

- 2.1. How age differentiates the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?
- 2.2. How gender differentiates the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?

2.3. How level of education differentiates the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?

2.4. How field of study differentiates the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?

2.5. How current level of teaching in elementary schools differentiates the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?

2.6. How years of working seniority at the school differentiates the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?

2.7. How background and prior exposure to special education differentiates the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?

2.8. How the teachers' participation in courses that dealt with special education differentiates the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel?

From such research problems arises the list of dependent and independent variables:

1. the attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel

1.1. teachers' knowledge of the integration of students with special needs

1.2. teachers' behavior towards the integration of students with special needs

1.3. teachers' emotional attitudes towards the integration of students with special needs

2. factors that differentiate attitudes of teachers towards the integration of students with special needs in regular schools in Arab society in Israel: age, gender, level of education, field of study, current level of teaching in elementary schools, years of working seniority at the school, background and prior exposure to special education, the teachers' participation in courses that dealt with special education.

### 4.3. Research hypothesis

The results documented in the literature review become the basis of the studies' hypotheses. Moreover, operational definitions of factors should always be in alignment with the hypotheses as these definitions determine how the variables will be gauged or altered. In addition, techniques employed in the studies used in the review of literature may act as the basis for operational definitions. Nonetheless, it is substantial that the researchers use them so as to clarify the role of these variables in the study in question.

Accordingly, this study will be focusing on the following hypotheses:

1. There is a relationship between the age of the teachers and the attitudes of the teachers towards the integration of students with special needs.
2. Differences in attitudes between genders: we expect to see that gender can generate different attitudes towards integration.
3. I assumed: there will be differences between professional qualified and non-professional qualified teachers in their attitude towards the inclusion of special needs and children in general education.
4. I assumed: there will be differences between teachers in their fields of professional teaching specialization towards the inclusion of special needs students in the general education classrooms.
5. Teachers for students of different age groups will have different attitudes towards integration.
6. Years of teaching: there will be differences in the attitudes towards the inclusion of SENs children in regular schools between teachers with less than 10 years of teaching experience and their counterparts who have more than 10 years of teaching.
7. Early background and exposure about special education students can differentiate attitudes towards integration of students with special needs.
8. There is a relationship between teachers' participation in special education courses and teachers' attitudes towards integration.

#### **4.4. Research methods, techniques, and procedure**

The present study is a quantitative one, which employs the survey research method and online surveys to gather data. This is because an online survey was proven to be the most effective way to solicit responses from pre-service teachers across Arab schools in Israel.

Compared to qualitative researchers, quantitative researchers often analyze their statistics using numerical manipulation when they have received all the data, whereas qualitative researchers may do this analysis at the beginning of their research (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Neumann, 2003). In addition, whereas qualitative study demands the researcher to devote an individual effort based on logic in the act of reading, rereading, comparing and excluding data notes, quantitative analysis gives the researchers an easy access to the alteration of data due to its enablement of “mathematical properties of numbers” (Neuman, 2003:466).

Furthermore, researchers that belong to the Positivist Perspective party seek cause and effect whilst searching for universal rules. In other words, they opt to find a unified theory that would give a cohesive explanation to everything. Thus, they focus on what they can see and examine their hypotheses by manipulating the study’s factors. Furthermore, there are multiple categories for quantitative studies’ designs which are divided by Plano Clark and Creswell (2009). These designs aim to solve different research problems individually, include; (1) experimental; (2) quasi-experimental; (3) single object experiments; (4) correlation; (5) survey research designs. The difference between qualitative and quantitative studies is based on the emphasis on examining the hypothesis (Creswell, 2006).

In this study, a quantitative research paradigm and constructivist approach were used to reveal the pedagogy, experiences, and perceptions of teachers about integrating special needs students in regular schools. This is because as Creswell (2009) reveals, researchers who aim to see and comprehend a certain phenomenon from the participant’s point of view will find a constructivist approach fruitful and helpful. Creswell (2009) also notes that the nature and method of this chosen research depend on its participants’ attitudes towards the possibility of solving and untangling the problem.

Researchers can choose what to exclude or include within the limits of the study (Glesne, 2011). Therefore, in this particular research, the boundaries included the fact that the target

population was strictly elementary school teachers and the elementary classrooms to which the questionnaires were transferred.

Descriptive survey research seeks to detect types of human conducts, outlooks, attitudes, and treatment of prevailing educational problems. Such observations are then reported using percentages to each response. This is why surveys become an essential means of gathering data from participants. Furthermore, whereas the common belief states that descriptive surveys are easy to design, in reality, successful surveys demand a distinct amount of effort, knowledge, and proficiency. Also, similarly to experimental research, descriptive surveys are quantitative and are distributed to an arbitrary target population to which the researcher wants to generalize the findings. Nevertheless, whereas experimental research gives the ability of variable manipulation, in a descriptive survey this option is not present, and data is not collected to test a theory. Hence, descriptive surveys are not deemed as an experimental approach, for it's a non-experimental method. Rather, a comprehensive examination of the literature that belongs to the area of study is used to develop demographic items that include data on the participants and the survey questions, while deductions are attained based on the participants' answers. Furthermore, 70% of research used to examine educational problems relies on the descriptive survey method (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler, 2010).

Online surveys are beneficial due to their economization of time and money. Furthermore, it is an easy and fast method to amass a lot of data without wasting money on paper and mail (Braithwaite, Emery, de Lusignan, & Sutton, 2003; Creative Research Systems, 2010). In addition, in relation to emails, online surveys can yield more answers due to their accessibility and rejuvenation (Creative Research Systems, 2010). Such success postulates that the concealment of identity provided by online surveys encourages the participants to answer more candidly. Moreover, utilizing online surveys grant the participants the ability to receive "standard format items" (Creative Research Systems, 2010). In addition, whereas manually entered information can often be distorted by commonly made human mistakes, online surveys provide accurate electronic data, that is free of errors (Braithwaite et al., 2003).

Nonetheless, in spite of the overarching pros of online surveys, this method suffers from some cons. Such cons include the fact that some people lack access to computers, and thus, they might not be able to take the online survey. Furthermore, computer systems vary from one



person's computer to the other. As a result, these systemic differences can lead to design issues, that in turn, lead to a prolonged download period for the survey (Braithwaite et al., 2003).

An additional impediment in conducting online surveys hails back to people's lack of motivation to do them, for participants can quit the survey without answering it fully (Creative Research Systems, 2010). Moreover, some people do not favor unlisted emails, and thus, they might refrain from opening them. Another problem might be the possibility of people retaking the survey multiple times, and/or forwarding it to others. Accordingly, such pros and cons were taken into consideration in the choosing of the survey method.

My survey included 43 questions, each one had 5 possible responses. The responses ranged from '1' (strongly agree) through '2' (agree) to '3' (neither agree nor disagree), '4' (disagree) to '5' (strongly disagree).

In my research the integrated survey instrument included some demographic items developed by the researcher. Demographic items measured the variables: age, gender, level of education, field of study, current level of teaching in primary school, years of working seniority at the school, background and prior exposure to special education, the teachers' participation in courses that dealt with special education, experience with students with special needs.

I sent an email to school administrators, from which we asked for help with data collection. In addition, we clarified the nature of the study and its purposes. The email also encompassed the confidential rights of service teachers and included instructions on what to do if they choose to partake in or to discontinue the survey. In case the teachers chose to agree to participate in the research, they were directed to complete the survey. Instructions and response keys were posted at the top of every web page and the teachers were instructed to respond to items in the survey in a way that reflected their best judgment. Furthermore, the chosen method of randomly selecting the participants was beneficial because it gave an equal opportunity to have various and different individuals participate in the study.

## 4.5. Research sample

250 teachers who attend Arab schools in Israel were chosen as the target population for this study. The educators were randomly selected from various locations and were sent an email asking them to answer questionnaires that focused on the integration of special needs students into the teachers' classrooms.

I chose to investigate teachers' attitudes toward integrating special needs students in primary schools in the Arab sector in Israel, and I chose to investigate primary school teachers. I sent teacher questionnaires via email all over the country in Israel, from north to south. Teachers attend from most Arab cities and villages in Israel.

After excluding questionnaires with missing data, the sample consists of 237 pre-service teachers. As summarized in Table 1, 92% of the participants are females, almost half the sample (48.1%) are 36-45 years of age while 36.3% of the sample are younger and the rest older. All participants hold an academic degree, most of them (52.7%) are graduates. 41.8% of the participants teach 5-6th grades students, 29.5% teach 3-4th grades students, and the rest (28.7%) teach 1-2nd grades students.

*Table 1: Participants' Background Characteristics*

Background characteristics		N	%
Gender	Female	218	92.0%
	Male	19	8.0%
Age group	18-25	13	5.5%
	26-35	73	30.8%
	36-45	114	48.1%
	46-55	32	13.5%
	55+	5	2.1%
Academic Level	Education BA/Bed	112	47.3%
	MA/Med	125	52.7%

Teaching Grade	1st-2nd grades	68	28.7%
	3rd-4th grades	70	29.5%
	5th-6th grades	99	41.8%
Total		237	100.00%

Participants' professional experience characteristics are summarized in Table 2. Participants' experience in teaching ranges from 1 to 34 years with an average tenure of 14.62 years ( $SD=7.70$ ) and a median of 14 years. Similarly, participants' experience in special education teaching ranges from 0 (i.e. with no experience) to 30 years, with an average of 6.65 years ( $SD=7.09$ ) and a median of 4 years, and their experience in teaching in their current school ranges from 1 to 31 years with an average tenure of 10.27 years ( $SD=7.08$ ) and a median of 9 years. Overall, this means that the teachers in sample are very experienced in teaching and enjoy relative high seniority, as they spent most of their teaching years in the current school and approximately half their experience in special education.

*Table 2: Participants' Professional Experience*

	M	s.d.	min.	max.	Median
Years teaching	14.62	(7.70)	1	34	14
Years in Special Education	6.65	(7.09)	0	30	4
Years teaching in current school	10.27	(7.08)	1	31	9

As presented in Table 3, the most popular professional specialization of the participants is Languages (44%). Other professional specializations are less popular, with 18% of the participants specializing in Science, 17% specializing in Special Education, 11% in Mathematics, and Pre-Elementary, Arts and other fields of expertise with less than 5% of the participants each.

*Table 3: Participants' Professional Specialization*

Professional Specialization*	%	N
Languages	44%	104
Special Education	17%	41
Science	18%	42
Math	11%	26
Arts	3%	7
Pre-Elementary	5%	13
Other	4%	10

\* participants could state more than one professional specialization

On average, participants' report participating in 5.83 (SD=7.35) courses in special education. However, there is a large variance in his regard, with the number of courses ranging from 0 to 25 and a median of 3 courses in special education. This means that most teachers only participate is less than 3 courses in special education, and relatively few teachers participating in many such courses (see Table 4). Also from Table 4, only 24% of the participants participated in a special SE training program.

*Table 4: Participants' Special Education training characteristics*

	M	SD	min.	max.	Median
Courses in Special Education	5.83	(7.35)	0	25	3
Participated in a special SE* training program	24%	(.43)	0	1	0

\*SE=Special Education

## CHAPTER 5. Teachers' Attitudes Regarding Integration of Students with Special Needs– research findings

### Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the attitudes of teachers toward the integration of students with special needs in elementary schools in Arab society in Israel.

This chapter will cover the organization of the data, how to analyze the data, the use of the sample, the descriptive statistics used for the sample, the investigation of each hypothesis and the summary of the findings.

Chapter provides data analysis and findings of this research. The major themes that emerged in the data analysis have been retained.

### 5.1. Teachers' Attitudes Regarding Integration of Students with Special Needs

In the table (5.) percentage of answers to the questions is collected.

*Table 5. The percentage of answers to the questions*

	Total		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	M	SD	%	%	%	%	%
<b>BEHAVIOR</b>							
1. I change my teaching style to meet the needs of students with SEN.	4.33	.80	0.4	2.6	10.4	36.4	50.2
2. I change my teaching approaches to accommodate students with SEN.	4.31	.81	0.9	2.2	10.5	38.0	48.5
3. I devote most of my attention to the child with SEN at the expense of the other students.	3.46	1.11	4.8	14.4	31.0	29.7	20.1
4. As a teacher who integrates students with special needs into my classroom, I am required to spend extra preparation hours, which comes at the expense of other important things to do.	3.91	1.01	3.1	4.4	24.0	35.8	32.8
5. I am ready to receive the help of the (integrating) teacher in my classroom.	4.32	.85	1.8	2.2	8.3	38.2	49.6
6. I am ready to put in the effort required to integrate special needs	4.17	.97	1.7	5.7	12.7	33.6	46.3

students into my classroom.							
7. I am ready to face the challenge facing a special needs student.	4.16	.90	0.9	4.8	14.1	37.9	42.3
8. If I have the option of choosing an integrated class or a regular class for a SEN child, I will choose an integrated class	3.42	1.26	7.5	18.0	26.3	21.9	26.3
9. I, as a teacher, combine encouraging and helping the student to improve his or her academic achievements.	4.46	.86	1.8	2.6	6.1	26.3	63.2
10. I give positive and methodical feedback to the combined student response	4.48	.80	1.3	1.8	6.6	28.1	62.3
11. I use various reinforcements to reinforce desired behavior	4.56	.80	1.8	0.9	6.6	21.6	69.2
12. I use the demonstration and illustration of difficult assignments for the student.	4.40	.87	1.8	1.8	9.7	28.2	58.6
13. I gather information about student behavior from other teachers.	4.19	.97	2.6	3.1	14.0	33.6	46.7
14. I use classroom grouping techniques (small groups, individual work), And various diagnostic methods	4.08	.97	1.8	6.3	13.9	38.1	39.9
<b><u>KNOWLEDGE</u></b>							
1. Integration of students with SEN will require significant change in regular classroom procedures.	4.26	.86	0.4	4.8	10.1	37.4	47.1
2. Regular classroom teachers have sufficient training to teach students with SEN.	3.14	1.12	6.2	23.9	33.6	22.6	13.7
3. Dealing with students with special needs in the classroom can threaten the success and status of the teacher.	3.12	1.18	11.5	17.7	30.5	28.3	11.9
4. The therapist / integrator is the one who needs to be in charge of the special needs student.	3.55	1.04	4.0	12.0	26.7	40.0	17.3
5. Incorporating a student with special needs in a regular classroom may pose a professional challenge for the classroom teacher.	4.14	.84	1.3	2.7	13.4	46.0	36.6
6. A class that incorporates a child with SEN should be more creative than a regular class	4.13	.87	0.0	5.3	16.4	38.5	39.8
7. A classroom teacher incorporating a child with SEN should have more skills than a regular classroom teacher	4.21	.96	2.2	5.3	8.0	37.8	46.7
8. There is a lack of training for mainstream teachers teaching students with SEN	4.19	.95	2.2	3.1	14.2	34.1	46.5
9. Inclusion is very beneficial to all students in the class	3.77	.98	1.8	9.7	22.6	41.6	24.3
10. Special classes in the mainstream	3.74	1.04	2.7	10.2	23.5	38.1	25.7

school is better for students with SEN							
11. The integrating / therapeutic teacher does not have enough knowledge and tools to help integrate a student with special needs into a regular classroom.	3.44	1.12	5.4	16.5	24.6	35.7	17.9
12. In my opinion, teachers come to the school to teach students and not to treat them.	3.00	1.20	10.7	26.3	28.6	21.4	12.9
13. A special needs student will be a negative role model for the other class students.	2.96	1.14	11.8	23.1	30.8	25.8	8.6
14. A teacher should not be required to integrate a student with special needs into a regular classroom because he lacks the knowledge and tools to do so.	3.28	1.25	9.9	18.5	24.3	28.4	18.9
<b>EMOTIONS</b>							
1. I feel that I have a greater enjoyment of teaching as a result of inclusion.	3.75	.93	1.3	8.0	26.5	42.9	21.2
2. The slow progress of a special needs student is a professional frustration for the teacher.	3.44	1.05	3.9	14.0	32.8	32.8	16.6
3. I feel comfortable contacting the (integrating) therapist working in the school for help.	3.85	.96	2.6	5.7	21.9	43.9	25.9
4. Compared to a regular classroom teacher, a classroom teacher who incorporates a child with SEN is more satisfying than her job	3.50	.99	3.5	9.1	37.4	33.5	16.5
5. I am fully aware of my role and responsibilities regarding students with SEN	4.04	.97	2.6	3.9	17.9	38.0	37.6
6. I like my job	4.34	.94	2.6	2.6	9.6	28.8	56.3
7. My job is stressful	3.79	1.07	3.5	8.3	23.9	34.8	29.6
8. Working with students is a constant sense of danger	2.72	1.21	17.2	29.5	27.3	15.9	10.1
9. I have good relations with other teachers	4.51	.80	1.8	0.9	6.2	26.9	64.3
10. I have good relations with my parents	4.52	.82	2.2	0.9	5.3	26.3	65.4
11. I have good relations with school management	4.37	.90	2.2	2.2	8.7	30.1	56.8
12. I am happy with the conditions of my work	3.71	1.15	4.8	10.5	23.7	30.3	30.7
13. Public opinion about students hurts me.	3.37	1.14	6.1	16.2	29.8	29.8	18.0
14. I think that special needs student raises anxiety among other classmates.	3.04	1.15	10.0	22.6	31.7	24.8	10.9

Teachers' attitudes regarding integration of students with special needs in regular classes are summarized in table 6. All dimensions were measured using a 5-item ordinal scale. The first dimension relates to teachers' Behavior (i.e., actual actions) regarding integrating students with special needs in a regular class. Participants scored an average of  $M=4.16$  ( $SD=.58$ ), implying a relatively high engagement in practice of teachers in integrating special education students in their classrooms. Chronbach's  $\alpha=.871$  imply high internal consistency of the Behavior dimension.

*Table 6. Dimensions of teachers' attitudes regarding integration of students with special needs in regular classes – Descriptive and Correlations*

Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration	Descriptive			Correlations		
	M	SD	Chronbach's $\alpha$	Behavior	Knowledg e	Emotion
Behavior	4.16	.58	.871	1		
Knowledge	3.65	.58	.817	.431**	1	
Emotion	3.79	.54	.799	.521**	.549**	1

\* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.01$

The second dimension relates to teachers' Knowledge (i.e. professional awareness of potential risks and benefits) regarding integrating students with special needs in a regular class. Participants' scored an average of  $M=3.65$  ( $SD=.58$ ), implying only a moderate proficiency of teachers in this regard. Chronbach's  $\alpha=.817$  imply high internal consistency of the Knowledge dimension.

The third dimension relates to teachers' Emotion (i.e. personal and subjective attitude) regarding integrating students with special needs in a regular class. Participants' scored an average of  $M=3.79$  ( $SD=.54$ ), implying only a relatively moderate support of teachers in integrating special needs students in regular classes. Chronbach's  $\alpha=.799$  imply high internal consistency of the Emotions dimension.

As summarized in 6, all three dimensions are significantly and positively correlated. The correlation between participants' Behavior toward integration of students with special needs in



regular classes and their Knowledge about this issue is  $r=.431$  ( $p<.01$ ). Similarly, participants' Behavior toward integration of students with special needs in regular classes correlation with their Emotion about it is  $r=.521$  ( $p<.01$ ), and participants' Knowledge toward integration of students with special needs in regular classes correlation with their Emotion about it is  $r=.549$  ( $p<.01$ ). These significant positive correlations between all three dimensions of teachers' attitudes regarding integration of students with special needs in regular classes imply a high content validity of the measurements.

## 5.2. Factors differentiate teachers' Attitudes Regarding Integration of Students with Special Needs - research hypotheses

### 5.2.1. Relationship between the age of the teachers and the attitudes of the teachers towards the integration of students with special needs

ANOVA analyses were used to examine age group differences in teachers' attitudes toward SEN students' integration. As summarized in Table 7, the results of the analysis do not indicate any significant age differences of teachers attitudes toward SEN integration.

*Table 7. Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers' age-group – ANOVA Analysis*

Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration		Age Group					$F_{(4,226)}$
		18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	55+	
Behavior	M	4.14	4.11	4.22	4.07	4.00	0.755
	(SD)	(.47)	(.62)	(.55)	(.61)	(.44)	
Knowledge	M	3.68	3.68	3.64	3.64	3.70	0.067
	(SD)	(.38)	(.55)	(.62)	(.64)	(.43)	
Emotion	M	3.71	3.80	3.79	3.81	3.75	0.089
	(SD)	(.54)	(.60)	(.52)	(.52)	(.37)	

According to these findings the hypothesis regarding age differences of teachers attitudes toward SEN integration **cannot be supported**.

### 5.2.2. Gender differences in Teachers’ attitudes toward SEN integration

According to the hypothesis, male and female teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration differ. To test for gender differences a t-test comparison for independent samples was conducted (see Table 8). However, no significant differences were documented regarding the behavior, knowledge and emotional attitudes of female-teachers and male-teachers regarding SEN integration.

*Table 8. Teachers’ attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers’ gender – t-test comparison*

Teachers’ attitudes toward SEN integration	Gender				t	(df)
	female		male			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Behavior	4.17	.56	3.98	.73	1.41	(229)
Knowledge	3.66	.56	3.53	.84	.67	(19)
Emotion	3.81	.52	3.53	.74	1.62	(20)

According to these findings the hypothesis that there are gender differences **cannot be supported**.

### 5.2.3. Teachers' academic education level and their attitude toward SEN integration

To test for education level differences a t-test comparison for independent samples was conducted (see Table 9). While no significant differences were documented regarding behavior and knowledge dimension of teachers' attitude toward SEN integration, Undergraduate teachers

Emotional attitude ( $M=3.87$ ) was found to be significantly higher ( $t_{(df=229)}=2.203$ ,  $p<.05$ ) than graduate teachers ( $M=3.71$ ).

*Table 9. Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers' education level – t-test comparison*

Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration	Education Level				t	(df)
	BA/Bed		MA/Med			
	M	SD	M	SD		
Behavior	4.15	.62	4.16	.53	.119	(229)
Knowledge	3.67	.60	3.64	.57	.318	(229)
Emotion	3.87	.52	3.71	.55	2.203*	(229)

\* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.01$

These findings suggest that **teachers' education level is in relation with their emotional attitude** towards SEN integration.

#### **5.2.4. Teachers' professional specialization and their attitude toward SEN integration**

As can be seen in Table 10, t-test analyses were used to test how teachers' professional specialization preferences are related to their attitudes toward SEN integration. The findings suggest that professionally specializing in SE teachers' Behavioral attitude toward SEN integration ( $M=4.43$ ) was found to be significantly higher ( $t_{(df=229)}=3.289$ ,  $p<.01$ ) than other teachers ( $M=4.10$ ). Similarly, specializing in SE teachers' Emotional attitude toward SEN integration ( $M=4.02$ ) was found to be significantly higher ( $t_{(df=229)}=3.070$ ,  $p<.01$ ) than other teachers ( $M=3.74$ ).

Additionally, science teachers' attitude toward SEN integration ( $M=3.97$ ) was found to be significantly lower ( $t_{(df=229)}=2.365$ ,  $p<.05$ ) than other teachers ( $M=4.20$ ). However, other fields of

professional teachers' specialization were not significant with teachers' attitude toward SEN integration.

*Table 10. Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers' Professional Specialization – t-test comparison*

Professional Specialization		Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration					
		behavior t	knowledge t	emotion t			
Languages	no	4.18	0.735	3.65	0.161	3.81	0.636
	yes	4.13		3.66		3.76	
Special Education	no	4.10	3.289**	3.64	1.035	3.74	3.070**
	yes	4.43		3.74		4.02	
Science	no	4.20	2.365*	3.67	1.05	3.80	0.928
	yes	3.97		3.59		3.72	
Math	no	4.16	0.289	3.66	0.624	3.80	0.874
	yes	4.13		3.61		3.70	
Other	no	4.16	0.057	3.66	0.496	3.79	0.444
	yes	4.16		3.60		3.75	

\* p<.05, \*\* p<.01

Overall, these findings suggest that SE specialization differ teachers' Behavioral and Emotional (but not knowledge) attitude toward SEN integration. Conversely, these findings also suggest that Science specialization negatively affect teachers' Behavioral (but not knowledgeable or emotional) attitude toward SEN integration.

### 5.2.5. Teachers' attitude toward SEN integration in relation to their teaching grade

According to the hypothesis teachers for younger students are expected to hold different attitudes toward special education students' integration than teachers of older students. For this purpose, ANOVA analysis were used to examine teachers' teaching grades differences in teachers' attitudes toward SEN students' integration. As summarized in Table 11, the results of the analysis do not indicate any significant age differences of teachers attitudes toward SEN integration.

*Table 11. Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers' teaching grade – ANOVA Analysis*

Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration		Teaching grade			F <sub>(2,228)</sub>
		1st-2nd grades	3rd-4th grades	5th-6th grades	
Behavior	M	4.25	4.14	4.10	1.361
	(SD)	(.57)	(.59)	(.56)	
Knowledge	M	3.71	3.56	3.68	1.159
	(SD)	(.60)	(.53)	(.60)	
Emotion	M	3.92	3.73	3.74	2.674
	(SD)	(.49)	(.55)	(.56)	

According to these findings the hypothesis regarding teaching grade differences of teachers attitudes toward SEN integration **cannot be supported**.

### 5.2. 6. Teachers' teaching tenure and their attitudes towards the integration of students with special needs

The hypothesis suggests that teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration is related to their years of teaching Table 12, presents the results of Pearson's correlations analyses, according to which

no significant correlations were found between teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration and teachers' years in teaching, years in teaching in the current school or teachers' years teaching in special education.

*Table 12. Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers' teaching experience – correlations analyses*

Background Characteristics	Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration		
	Behavior	Knowledge	Emotion
years teaching	-0.036	-0.077	-0.011
years teaching in current school	-0.053	-0.070	0.002
years in Special Education	0.072	-0.015	0.066

Alternative interpretation of the hypothesis might suggest that teachers with less than 10 years of teaching experience and their counterparts who have more than 10 years of teaching differ in their attitudes toward integration of SEN students. the results of a t-test analyses for independent sample are presented in Table 13. However, these results do not indicate any significant differences of teachers' attitudes toward SEN students' integration between teachers with more than 10 years' experience in teaching and teachers with less teaching experience.

*Table 513. Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers' gender – t-test comparison*

Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration	Years of teaching				t <sub>(df=229)</sub>
	More than 10 years		Less than 10 years		
	M	SD	M	SD	
Behavior	4.19	.56	4.06	.63	1.454
Knowledge	3.67	.60	3.62	.54	.571
Emotion	3.82	.52	3.69	.59	1.714

According to these findings the hypothesis regarding the relation between teaching experience and teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration **cannot be supported**.

### 5.2.7. Relationship between teachers' pre-service training in SE and their attitudes towards the integration of students with special needs

According to the hypothesis, teachers' pre-service training in SE, measured by the number of courses in SE teachers had participated during their initial (pre-service) training, is positively correlated with their attitudes toward SEN integration. Correlations analysis was used to test how teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration are related to the number of SE courses they took (see Table 14). The findings suggest a significant positive correlation ( $r=.231$ ,  $p<.01$ ) between Behavioral attitudes toward SEN integration and the number of SE courses. Conversely, no similar significant relations were found between teachers' Knowledge and Emotion dimensions of their attitude toward SEN integration and the number of SE courses they took.

*Table 14. Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers' Age, Teaching grade and teaching experience – correlations analyses*

	Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration		
	behavior	knowledge	emotion
Courses in Special Education	.231**	.048	.161

\* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.01$

These findings **partially confirm the hypothesis**, as they might suggest that SE courses positively differ Behavioral attitude toward SEN integration, but they do not differ emotional or knowledge dimensions of the attitude.

### 5.2.8. Relationship between teachers' post-service training in SE and their attitudes towards the integration of students with special needs

According to the hypothesis, teachers' participation in SE training during their professional work (i.e. post-service) are expected to be reflected in their attitudes toward SEN integration.

At-test comparison between independent samples was used to examine if participating in such special SE training is related to teachers' attitude toward SEN integration (see Table 15). The findings suggest that teachers who participated in such trainings Behavioral attitude toward SEN integration ( $M=4.33$ ) is significantly ( $t_{(df=229)}=2.547$ ,  $p<.05$ ) higher than teachers that did not participate in such trainings ( $M=4.10$ ). No significant differences were found regarding Emotional or Knowledge dimensions of teachers' attitude toward SEN integration.

*Table 15. Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration by teachers' participation in SE training – t-test comparison*

Teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration	Teachers' participation in SE				t	(df)
	No		Yes			
	M	SD	M	SD		
Behavior	4.10	0.58	4.33	0.55	2.547*	(229)
Knowledge	3.67	0.56	3.60	0.67	.737	(229)
Emotion	3.75	0.52	3.89	0.58	1.691	(229)

\* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.01$

These findings **partially confirm the hypothesis**, as they might suggest that SE training positively differ Behavioral attitude toward SEN integration, but they do not affect emotional or knowledge dimensions of the attitude.



### **5.3. Data analysis**

Analysis of the data was done using SPSS version 23. In the first stage, descriptive statistics of the characteristics of the research population and the main research variables was examined. In this framework, the distribution of univariate frequencies was examined for each of the variables, as well as averages and standard deviations. In the second stage, the internal reliability of the various research questionnaires was examined based on the Cronbach  $\alpha$  index. This analysis is followed by a correlations analysis between the research variables.

Next, the study hypotheses were examined. The research hypotheses have generally argued for differences of teachers' attitudes toward SEN integration regarding their age, gender, education level, professional specialization, and teaching grade. These hypotheses were examined by using a statistical mean comparison test (i.e., t-test and ANOVA analysis) to compare the mean of independent sub-samples with respect to the study hypotheses. Pearson correlation tests were used in the sixth and seventh hypotheses as an indication of a significant linear relation between variables.

Finally, regression analyses were carried out to better understand how teachers' professional background aspects are interrelated to teachers' attitude toward SEN integration. The first set of analyses used a "stepwise" approach with .05 threshold for inclusion and .10 threshold as an exclusion criterion in which teachers' attitude dimensions (separately) served as dependent variables. Such analyses approach help identify only significant relations between dependent and independent variables in the model. Another regression analysis was carried out. This set of analyses used a "stepwise" approach with .05 threshold for inclusion and .10 threshold as an exclusion criterion in which teachers' attitude dimensions (separately) served as dependent variables, but each model included also the other two dimensions of teachers' attitude toward SEN integration.

#### **5.2.10 Regression analysis**

A short summary of the findings suggests that teachers' attitude toward SEN integration is only related to teachers' professional background. Furthermore, the findings suggest that professional

specialization and training is mostly related to Behavior dimension of this attitude, while education level and Science specialization are related to the emotion dimension to the attitude. Thus, to better understand how teachers' professional background aspects are interrelated to teachers' attitude toward SEN integration, a regression analyses were carried out. The first set of analyses used a "stepwise" approach with .05 threshold for inclusion and .10 threshold as an exclusion criterion in which teachers' attitude dimensions (separately) served as dependent variables. Such analyses approach help identify only significant relations between dependent and independent variables in the model. The findings of the analyses are summarized in the following table.

*Table 6: Stepwise regression analysis of teachers' attitude toward SEN integration dimensions on their background characteristics and professional background*

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Behavior			
	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>	F
Courses in Special Education	0.225	3.446**	.051	F <sub>(1,223)</sub> =11.88**

  

Independent variables	Dependent variable: Emotion			
	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>	F
Special Education specialization	0.206	3.173**	.063	F <sub>(2,222)</sub> =7.431**
Academic Education Level	-0.149	-2.298*		

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

^ the model in which Knowledge dimensions served as a dependent variable did not produce any significant model.

The model in which Behavior dimension served as the dependent variable is significant (F<sub>(1,223)</sub>=11.88, p<.01, R<sup>2</sup>=.051). The model suggests that teachers' Behavior dimension of their attitude toward SEN integration is only related to the number of SE courses the teachers participated in ( $\beta$ =.225, p<.01). This means that the number of SE courses mediates all other potential relations to the Behavior dimension.

The model in which Emotion dimension served as the dependent variable is significant ( $F_{(2,222)}=7.431$ ,  $p<.01$ ,  $R^2=.063$ ). The model suggests that teachers' Emotion dimension of their attitude toward SEN integration is positively related to the teachers' professional specialization in SE ( $\beta=.206$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and is negatively related to their academic level ( $\beta=-.149$ ,  $p<.05$ ). As before, this means that the professional specialization plays a key role in emotional attitudes toward SEN integration and that academic level might have an adverse effect on Emotional attitude.

As expected, no significant model was found for the Knowledge dimension.

As all three dimensions of teachers' attitude toward SEN integration are correlated, another regression analysis was carried out. This set of analyses used a "stepwise" approach with .05 threshold for inclusion and .10 threshold as an exclusion criterion in which teachers' attitude dimensions (separately) served as dependent variables, but each, model included also the other two dimensions of teachers' attitude toward SEN integration.

The results are summarized in the following table.(17)

*Table 7 Regression analysis*

Independent variables	Depended variables					
	Behavior		Knowledge		Emotion	
	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t	$\beta$	t
Behavior			.206	3.204**	.330	5.740**
Knowledge	.199	3.012**			.395	6.997**
Emotion	.393	5.936**	.456	7.139**		
Courses in Special Education	.176	3.180**				
Participated in a special SE training program			-.124	2.253*		
Academic Education					-.125	2.449*

Level	Education			
Special specialization				.106 2.024*
R <sup>2</sup>	.328	.343	.427	
F	F <sub>(3,221)</sub> =35.94**	F <sub>(3,221)</sub> =38.41**	F <sub>(4,220)</sub> =41.00**	

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01

Controlling for Knowledge and Emotion dimensions, the model in which Behavior dimension served as the dependent variable is significant ( $F_{(3,221)}=35.94$ ,  $p<.01$ ,  $R^2=.328$ ). The model suggests that teachers' Behavior dimension is positively related to the other two dimensions and is only related to the number of SE courses the teachers participated in ( $\beta=.176$ ,  $p<.01$ ). This means that the number of SE courses mediates all other potential relations to the Behavior dimension.

Similarly, controlling for Behavior and Knowledge dimensions, the model in which Emotion dimension served as the dependent variable is significant ( $F_{(3,221)}=41.00$ ,  $p<.01$ ,  $R^2=.427$ ). In addition to positive relations with the other two dimensions, the model also suggests that teachers' Emotion dimension of their attitude toward SEN integration is positively related to the teachers' professional specialization in SE ( $\beta=.106$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and is negatively related to their academic level ( $\beta=-.125$ ,  $p<.01$ ). As before, this means that the professional specialization plays a key role in emotional attitudes toward SEN integration and that academic level might have an adverse effect on Emotional attitude.

Converse to the previous set of regression analyses, controlling for Behavior and Emotion dimension, the model in which Knowledge dimension served as the dependent variable is significant ( $F_{(3,221)}=38.41$ ,  $p<.01$ ,  $R^2=.343$ ). In addition to positive relations with the other two dimensions, the model also suggests that teachers' Knowledge dimension of their attitude toward SEN integration is negatively related to the teachers' participation in a special SE training program ( $\beta=-.124$ ,  $p<.05$ ). This finding suggests that participation in such trainings might have an adverse effect over teachers' Knowledge attitude regarding SEN integration.

## **CHAPTER 6. Teachers' Attitudes Regarding Integration of Students with Special Needs– discussion, conclusions, and practical implications**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter all findings, conclusions, and practical implications will be collected and discussed.

#### **6.1. Background of the findings analysis- summary**

The present study examines the topic of integration of children with special educational needs (SEN) within the framework of regular education in the Arab sector. This issue represents the meeting point and melting point of three dimensions. On the one hand, there is the issue of the special educational needs of the students, the reasons for their occurrence, the extent of them and the appropriate educational means of coping for the purpose of promoting the students. The second dimension concerns the role of the education system, and in particular its role in the inclusion, promotion and integration of students who have difficulty within the formativeness of the other students. The third dimension concerns the unique aspects of the Arab sector in general, and the characteristics of the education system in this sector.

The first issue, concerning the special educational needs of students was reviewed in a theoretical manner. In general, the concept of special needs in education usually pertains to a diverse group of students 'disorders manifested in difficulties in acquiring and using basic learning skills (reading ,writing and arithmetic), listening, and speaking (Hyman, 2000; Tamari et al. 2002). These disorders may be manifested in the development of a gap between the child's overall ability and the educational and emotional level expected of him depending on his age or stage and his actual level of functioning. The research literature finds that the extent of these disorders affects, to varying degrees of severity 2-8% ,of students (National Council for the Child 2014 , Margalit, 2000; Ronen, 2007).

It is assumed that students' educational difficulties stem from a neurological failure in functioning, and especially that these difficulties are not likely to disappear over time. Moreover, emotional disturbances, sensory deprivation or ADHD can accompany the existing disorder, but they are not the cause of the students' educational difficulty. Similarly, it is commonly assumed that these difficulties are universal and may occur in different cultural, social, and linguistic environments. At the same time, it is important to clarify that the intellectual ability of children with learning disabilities is generally normal, although there are children among them who function at a lower intellectual level. They will often suffer significantly from various difficulties such as language and thinking functions, motor skills and perceptual coordination. These difficulties are personal and can be experienced with varying degrees of severity (Hyman, 2000). In addition to the learning disorder, students with SEN suffer from problems adapting to social situations that require flexibility in responses. Due to repeated failures, the disorders will be accompanied by emotional difficulties, leading to low self-esteem, decreased academic motivation and anxiety. Moreover, although it is often possible to locate and characterize various disabilities among students already at the beginning of school, or even at a younger age, many times, during the years and adolescence, these disabilities may change. Thus, students who have succeeded in school despite learning disabilities may encounter new difficulties with the increasing complexity of learning requirements, as well as against the background of additional difficulties related to the emotional and social development that characterizes adolescence including physiological changes (Solberg, , 2006; Porat & Parchak, 2004), puberty (Seruf, Cooper & Rahat, 2004), cognitive changes (Porat & Parchak, 2004; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011), and emotional-social changes (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Crone & Dahl, 2012).

The literature review on the second issue on which this study focused concerns the integration of students with SEN in regular educational settings shows that there is agreement that the integration of students with special needs in regular education constitutes a significant reform in the perception of education, which supports and encourages the integration of children with special needs within regular education, and that the integration program directly affected policy makers. Service providers in the school and especially on the educational staffs. Respectively, it is customary to define the concept of integration in different ways, the leading

ones being inclusion, integration, or a combination of the two ways<sup>1</sup>, where each of these conceptual definitions constitutes a different ideological system that folds within it a significant and conceptual difference. The integration assumes that there are two types of students while the generalization holds that there are similarities between the students who are supposed to study in one educational system (Margalit, 2000). The outcome of these perceptions have led to empowerment of the trend that supports the integration of students with special needs frameworks of study hours and actually debate taking place not on the nature of the idea that if the method of execution that includes figuring out how the optimal realization of integration , programs of study, organization, school, resource allocation and clarifying the various Among the needs of students (Reiter, 2007). In general, the research literature researching integration found that most teachers tend to recognize the importance of integration of students with special needs (e.g.Dixon, 2005), but at the same time teachers were also found to oppose this integration due to the many difficulties involved in the integration (Cook et al., 2007; Avramidis & Norwich , 2002 ; De Boer et al., 2011; Gavish & Shimoni , 2011). If so, even among many of the educators who recognize the educational and social value of integrating students with SEN in ordinary educational settings there is a clear gap between the perception of the importance of integration and the idyllic aspiration for the advancement of students and the level of their practical and pedagogical knowledge on the subject, and between these two and their subjective emotional sense of integration of students with SEN in their classrooms. The present study provides a rare opportunity to learn about these characteristics of educational staff.

This issue is sharpened in the context of the educational frameworks in the Arab sector , which has undergone many social and cultural changes in recent years, including in the sense of a shift from it being a collective society to it becoming a nuclear family oriented one. Arab society is still a traditional society in nature ,patriarchal and traditional 'Hamula' (patrilineage) which provides its members with social, psychological, and economic security (Yaffee & Tal, 2002). Changes in this society challenge the traditional cultural values of the sector and undermine the structure of authority in this society (Aboderin, 2004). In the context of dealing with special needs, Arab society expressed negative thoughts towards disabilities. Their negative attitude results from their lack of knowledge, lack of support, society's refusal to view disabled

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1 The term "integration" in this context refers to the way that combines inclusion and integration.

people as equals, and poor coordination between the organizations that deal with disabilities (Sandler- Loeff , 2006).

The family framework in the Arab sector is problematic in dealing with the special needs of children, when Arab parents are relatively overprotective of their children, have less faith in their children's ability to succeed, be independent, and get employed , and more ashamed and hypertensive to others' reactions (Nirit & Shunit , 2013).

Against this background, the present study aims to examine the attitudes, knowledge and subjective feeling towards an issue include children with special needs in inclusive educational settings and environments among service teachers from the Arab sector. Understanding the perceptions of teachers in the Arab sector towards the integration of students with SEN it will make it possible to deepen the existing knowledge about the integration of these students in general, and it will make it possible to characterize the unique aspects related to teachers in this sector and to promote the successful implementation of an inclusive program in primary schools depends. To this end, emphasis was placed on understanding the personal and professional backgrounds of teachers in the sector associated with their attitudes towards the subject.

For this purpose, a survey was conducted among 250 teachers who teach in primary schools in the Arab sector. Most of the study participants are women, most of them are 26-45 years old all have an academic education and more than half of them have a master's degree. A high proportion of teachers specialize in language learning, and other common areas among participants are science and math. Nearly 1 in 6 study participants also has a special education specialization ,and about a quarter of the participants participated in special education training. On average, study participants teach for about 15 years, the vast majority in the same school.

For the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire consisted of three sections that examined teachers 'attitudes toward integration of students with, respectively SEN in ordinary frameworks, their level of knowledge on the subject and their feelings towards such a combination. All three indices were found to have high reliability and it was found that there is a high and significant correlation between them .All dimensions were measured using a 5-item ordinal scale. The first dimension relates to teachers' Behavior (i.e., actual actions) regarding integrating students with special needs in a regular class. Participants' scores imply a relatively high engagement in practice of teachers in integrating special education students in their classrooms.



The second dimension relates to teachers' Knowledge (ie professional awareness of potential risks and benefits) regarding integrating students with special needs in a regular class. Participants' score is implying only a moderate proficiency of teachers in this regard. The third dimension relates to teachers' Emotion (ie personal and subjective attitude) regarding integrating students with special needs in a regular class, with participants' scores reflecting a relatively moderate support of teachers in integrating special needs students in regular classes.

These findings confirm the trends reviewed in the theoretical part of this work. Among other things, they reaffirm the principled support for the integration of children with SEN in normal frameworks, but also limitations in the level of teachers' knowledge of the subject, as well as personal reluctance of teachers to apply the subject (Cook et al., 2007; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002 ; De Boer et al., 2011; Gavish & Shimoni , 2011).

In particular, it is interesting to see that the research findings also indicate that the value support for students' integration is higher than their emotional willingness to implement it in class, and there may also be concern that their abilities and skills will not allow students to integrate optimally SEN students without compromising the well-being of regular students in the classroom, teachers fear that all parties will lose out on the unsuccessful implementation of the integration, similar to the findings of Nijakowska (2014).

As noted above ,the research hypotheses focused on how teachers' professional and personal backgrounds influence their perceptions regarding the integration of students with SEN in classrooms. The examination of the hypotheses, which will be reviewed below, was performed on two levels: first in the specific context of each participant's background characteristic, and later through regression analysis that examined the interrelationship of all moment characteristics on teachers' perceptions regarding integration.

## **6.2. Summary of findings and discussion**

In the light of previous studies, it could be assumed, that teachers' perceptions regarding the integration of students with SEN Regular classrooms change with age, and especially older teachers will present more inclusive attitudes toward integration, be more knowledgeable about the subject (since knowledge is an outgrowth of experience) and be more emotionally open to integrating students into regular classrooms. In practice ,the findings of the study did not indicate

the existence of such relationships ,and therefore according to these findings the hypothesis regarding age differences of teachers attitudes towards SEN integration **cannot be supported.**

The significance of the findings is that teachers' perceptions of integrating students with SEN are probably formed at a relatively early stage of their professional development, and it is not affected by personal events and developments they have encountered throughout their lives. This conclusion is particularly bleak because it reflects emotional opacity towards the subject and lack of development of knowledge over the years of life. The reasons for this may be the teachers' disappointment with the system's ability to support them and / or the curriculum required to promote learning (Apanel, 2009). Similarly, the fact that no differences were found in attitudes, knowledge, and emotion towards integration of students with SEN Ordinary classrooms in relation to the different age groups of teachers may also reflect social stagnation in the Arab sector, indicating that attitudes among this public have not changed significantly over the years. Unlike many countries for many around the world, which led to the change in the education system is also changing societal attitudes toward disabilities in general society (Sekulowicz & Sekulowicz, 2015). According to the findings of the current study, the lack of change in the education system may also indicate the conservatism of teachers in relation to the issue of the integration of students with SEN in the education system, and from it also to determine the lack of openness of the entire Arab society towards the subject.

The research hypothesis holds that the gender of teachers is important in the context of teachers' perceptions in relation to the integration of students with SEN in regular classrooms. This argument rests to a considerable extent on the character of Arab society as a patriarchal, conservative society and to a considerable extent religious (Aboderin, 2004). According to the findings of the study ,no significant differences were documented regarding the behavior, knowledge and emotional attitudes of female-teachers and male-teachers regarding SEN integration. According to these findings the hypothesis that there are gender differences **cannot be supported.**

Even if it could be assumed a priori that the level of knowledge of teachers and men is the same regarding the integration of students with SEN at least one would have expected that the personal attitudes, as well as the subjective emotional perception, of teachers would be different from those of men, if only because most of those involved in teaching are women. As stated, the findings of the study do not confirm this rationale. In fact, the findings of the study

reflect a uniform perception between men and women regarding the integration of such students in the normal framework - a perception that expresses reservations and even skepticism regarding the chances of success of integrating students within the normal framework (Sandler-Loeff, 2006). It is evident in this context that women teachers in the Arab sector internalize the masculine values of society (Aboderin, 2004) and have not yet expressed more open values about inclusion or open-minded ideology that promotes the acceptance of heterogeneity and diversity (Mittler, 2012).

Unlike the first two research hypotheses, the third research hypothesis (as well as the following research hypotheses), sought to emphasize personal differences (as opposed to cultural and / or contextual background effects) on attitudes toward student integration with SEN in the usual frameworks. The third research hypothesis held that the level of education contributes to more positive attitudes toward inclusion.

The findings of the study in this context were also examined directly (by comparing respondents' attitudes with BA / Bed To respondents with MA / Med (And also through regression analysis. Two main insights emerge from the findings. The first insight is that the level of education is not reflected in the attitudes or knowledge of the respondents towards the integration of the students in ordinary frameworks. This finding is consistent with previous findings that teachers' attitudes toward integrating students with SEN in the usual frameworks, even before the stage of choosing the profession and studies, in other words, these are attitudes that are influenced by the culture in which the teachers, as mentioned above, grow up and are shaped. This is a conservative culture, with a perception that expresses reservations and even skepticism about the chances of success of integrating students in a normal framework. (Sandler-Loeff, 2006). Moreover, it is apparent that education also does not contribute to significant gaps among study participants, and hence exposure to the subject during undergraduate studies for teaching includes such a reference, but it is insufficient. The fact that no differences in the level of knowledge were found in this subject between the undergraduate and graduate students indicates that this subject does not receive appropriate or wide enough exposure in post graduate studies.

In contrast, it was found that teachers with a higher level of education were less emotionally open to the issue of student integration. This gap was found, both when the participants' subjective emotional support in relation to the level of education was examined, and

in regression analyzes, after monitoring the level of knowledge and value attitudes towards the integration of students with SEN as usual. The implication of this finding is that teachers with higher degrees are more skeptical about success inclusion of students with SEN in their class. In this sense, it is possible that this finding indicates that all custodians with a higher level of education have more professional experience and are therefore more sober about the gap between the expectations of a successful integration and their personal ability to successfully complete such a move .The research findings, in this sense, only partially confirm the research hypothesis. The level of education was not found to have a significant effect on attitudes and knowledge regarding inclusion Of students with SEN In regular classrooms, however, it was found that the level of education has an expression in the subjective emotional perception towards the subject.

Like the third research hypothesis, the fourth research hypothesis also seeks to examine an aspect of the teachers' training process on their attitudes toward inclusion of students. Hypothesis no. 4 focuses on the professional training field of teacher training.

Overall, the findings suggest that SE specialization positively differs teachers' Behavioral and Emotional (but not knowledgeable) attitude toward SEN integration. Conversely, these findings also suggest that Science specialization negatively differs teachers' Behavioral (but not knowledgeable or emotional) attitude toward SEN integration.

With respect to the behavioral-value attitudes toward integrating students with SEN, the findings confirm the insight that these positions are formed even before the choice of profession and specialization, and that they are probably influenced by the personal or cultural background characteristics of the teacher. In this sense, students who have chosen to specialize in special education have a more supportive attitude towards integrating students with SEN in regular classrooms, however, students who chose to specialize in science were characterized by a priori skepticism towards such a combination, which even sees people with disabilities as people with lower abilities (Nirit & Shunit, 2013). At the same time, it is interesting to see that in "infamous" areas, such as mathematics or language teaching, this gap is not noticeable, and hence the conclusion that a significant number of teachers who chose these areas did so from a worldview that seeks to promote dealing with various learning difficulties (Karp & Voltz, 2000 ; Florian & Rouse, 2001).

Regarding the emotional-subjective position, the significance of the research findings is that specialization in special education brings with it greater openness and a higher potential for success in the process of inclusion, and in fact the regression analysis indicated that the contribution of this training is even above and beyond and to the contribution of knowledge and value attitudes towards the subject.

The fifth research hypothesis held that the attitudes of research participants toward inclusion of students with SEN depending on the age of the children the teachers are teaching. The findings of the study did not indicate differences in the positions of the participants in this context, hence that According to these findings the hypothesis regarding teaching grade differences of teachers attitudes towards SEN integration **cannot be supported.**

These findings are consistent with the findings of Alqurainis (2012) and Giacchi (2003), according to which it is not possible to indicate a connection between the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion in relation to the age of the children. As stated in these studies, the differences between the different age groups in primary school are not significant, and accordingly are not significantly reflected in the context of inclusion of students with SEN.

The sixth research hypothesis is also one of the research hypotheses that seeks to identify relationships between the characteristics of the profession and teachers' attitudes toward the integration of students. In the age example, the research hypothesis holds that teachers' attitudes toward the integration of students will change with the experience gained by teachers in the field. The research hypothesis assumes that a more experienced teacher will be able to better understand the characteristics of students and the needs of students with SEN, and at the same time have a better understanding of the characteristics of the system and other aspects of teaching that are there to enable a successful integration of students in the different classes. The findings of the study in this context do not indicate any change in the attitudes of teachers over different periods of seniority and experience, and hence, according to these findings the hypothesis regarding the relationship between teaching experience and teachers' attitudes towards SEN integration **cannot be supported.**

These findings are consistent with the research literature on the subject (Casey, 2012) and they point out that to a large extent the teachers' attitudes, value-behaviors, and the ornaments of their knowledge of the subject, are determined before the teachers enter actual work. That is, these attitudes are shaped before the choice to study teaching, or during teacher training studies,

in which the level of knowledge is also determined and in which the subjective emotional attitude towards the ability to successfully complete the inclusion of students with SEN.

Hypothesis 7. sought to examine one of the important aspects of teacher training in the context of inclusion of students with SEN in regular frameworks - the scope of training in the subject. As part of the research hypothesis it is hypothesized that the scope of training ,measured through the number of courses on the subject to inclusion of students in regular settings , will positively affect the attitudes of teachers in the context of this integration.

The findings of the statistical analyzes on this subject showed that the scope of the courses on the subject e inclusion Had a positive effect only on the behavioral-value attitude of the teachers towards the inclusion of students with SEN in regular classrooms. The unsupported findings indicated a direct relationship between the amount of courses and the level of knowledge of the students or the emotional-subjective attitude towards this combination. These findings are interesting in several respects. First ,they point out that the scope of academic attention given to the integration of students in regular settings changes the value perception.

As noted above ,this behavioral attitude of teachers is hardly influenced by cultural or practical aspects of training, which has led to the conclusion that it is formed before the choice of teaching studies or is crystallized during training but not necessarily related to teaching content (except in the context of specialization). These findings suggest that the number of courses does not directly contribute to the level of knowledge of teachers in the field, or even to their emotional-subjective perception of the subject of integration ,but rather signals to students the importance of the subject, and therefore contributes to promoting the behavioral dimension regarding inclusion of students with SEN in normal settings.

Moreover, regression analysis indicated that teachers' level of knowledge regarding student integration with SEN and the emotional perception of the subject are positively differentiated by the behavioral attitude of the students. Hence, the scope of the courses on the subject inclusion it has an indirect impact on teachers' level of knowledge and emotional attitude towards the subject. In other words, a greater amount of courses leads to a more supportive position in inclusion of students with SEN, and only in the second stage does the change in behavioral attitude affect the level of knowledge and the emotional perception of the teachers on the subject. Here ,too, perhaps it is appropriate to address the fact that this issue has hardly been explored in the research literature, since most of the literature has addressed how a particular

aspect of training has contributed to supportive or opposed positions for integration (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Campbell, Gilmore, & Cuskelly, 2003; WHO & World Bank, 2011). However, these studies did not reflect the process development of teachers throughout the training process.

Like Hypothesis 7, the eighth research hypothesis also addressed how teachers' attitudes toward me inclusion depending on the characteristics of the training, however in this case the emphasis was on practical training in special education. Examination of the findings on this topic revealed that students who participated in such training had more supportive behavioral attitudes regarding inclusion of students with SEN in normal settings. In this sense, the findings confirm the research hypothesis.

At the same time, it was not found that participation in such an experience directly differsthe level of knowledge on the subject or the emotional attitude towards the subject, and hence, again, it can be pointed out that the effect of practical experience in special education on teachers' attitudes is process. That is, participation in such an experience changes (positively) the teachers' attitudes toward the issue of inclusion, and from it leads to an improvement in the level of knowledge on the subject as well as to a (positive) change in the participants 'subjective emotional attitude towards the subject.

As stated above, most of the research on the subject focused on examining the direct effect of training characteristics on teachers' attitudes towards the subject, while the findings of the research literature in the field were mixed) (Chhabra et al., 2010; De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011; Hudson, Graham, & Warner, 1979; Parasuram, 2006; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). The present study provides an initial opportunity to examine, and confirm ,the way in which the characteristics of training influence the shaping of teachers' attitudes regarding inclusion of students with SEN in normal settings.

### **6.3. Conclusions and practical implications**

In order to understand the research findings and the meanings that emerge from them, one must understand the context in which the research took place. The education system has been operating in recent years in a situation described as "on the verge of a crisis" (Amit, 2014), including in the form of significant disparities in achievements between different groups in the

population, a decrease in the overall achievements of Israeli students in the core subjects, a constant and exacerbating shortage of resources and an unequal and inefficient distribution of resources, changes in teacher quality and status. This ongoing situation has led to great interest, both theoretical and practical, to change the situation for the better by promoting educational innovation, systemic changes and the autonomy of teachers and schools in promoting learning, initiatives to promote teacher involvement in the educational process and change teachers' training processes. The challenges ahead (Weiniger, 2017; Wolansky & Friedman, 2003).

Despite these efforts, it is clear that there are two population groups whose potential to be affected by this crisis situation is particularly great: the students in the Arab sector and the students with SEN. As an ethnic and political minority, students in the Arab sector choose to study in a separate education system whose achievements are less good than those of the central education system. Moreover, the education system in the Arab sector is influenced by the cultural nature of the sector, which is expressed in conservatism, patriarchy, and support for values and a traditional way of life in which there is a commitment to the extended family (clan) and community, low status, or limited ability of women to work. Religion (Aboderin, 2004; Yaffee & Tal, 2002). These aspects are also reflected in educational conservatism, both in the context of the adoption of more liberal and inclusive conceptions and in the context of the implementation of innovative practices.

The second group is students with SEN. This group, by definition, has to deal with many difficult challenges in learning, but most of the time it also has to deal with a lack of social acceptance and limited support of the educational system in their educational needs (Buchem, 2013). Students with SEN in the Arab sector therefore suffers twice, they are both a minority and educationally and socially marginalized group (Hagar & Jabareen, 2016). This ethical and social disadvantage is further worsened by the fact that they belong to a patriarchal, traditional, and closed society, that which is shameful, pitiful, and condescending towards their existence (Abbas, 2013).

One of the most effective means of promoting students with SEN and to improve society's attitude towards them is through their integration into the regular educational frameworks (Kauffman & Badar, 2014). However, one of the important factors in this context is the educational framework provided by the teachers (Hornby, 2015). . Against this background, the present study sought to understand the attitudes of teachers from the Arab sector regarding



the integration of students with SEN in their classroom. The teachers' attitudes were examined with reference to 3 dimensions: a behavioral, a dimension of knowledge, and an emotional-subjective dimension.

The following is a summary of the research conclusions:

- The findings of the study confirm the behavioral support of teachers from the Arab sector in the integration of children with SEN in normal frameworks, but also limitations in the level of teachers' knowledge of the subject, as well as personal reluctance of teachers to apply the subject in their classroom.
- The findings also show that there is a close relationship between the behavioral attitude of teachers in the Arab sector and their level of knowledge, and their emotional-subjective attitude.
- The attitudes of teachers in the Arab sector are not differentiated by the age of the teachers, the extent of their teaching experience, the level of age they teach or their gender. It can be concluded that the cultural-personal background of the teachers has a role in shaping their attitudes towards the integration of students with SEN in ordinary classrooms, and hence the negative perception in Arab society towards students with SEN. Also reflected in the attitudes of teachers.
- Confirmation particular this approach shows that parents who choose to specialize in special education who have the support combined, whereas teachers in the fields of science who relatively oppose to such a move. Precisely in the core areas of mathematics and languages there is no significant tendency, a fact that may indicate a change in the perception of the role of the teacher in the context of promoting students with SEN and to promote openness in Arab society to such students.
- The attitudes of teachers in the Arab sector are influenced by the level of education of the teachers, so that teachers with a higher level of education are more likely to have a lower emotional openness towards the integration of students with SEN in ordinary settings, when this

means that these teachers are often more sober about the gap between the expectations of a successful integration and their personal ability to successfully complete such a move.

-The training process has a significant impact on teachers' attitudes towards the integration of my husband's students with SEN in normal settings. Two key elements in the process: The amount of courses on special education and practical training, have a direct impact on behavioral-value support in the integration of students. The findings of the study also indicate an indirect effect of this training process on the level of knowledge and the emotional-subjective openness of teachers towards integration, which is a product of the improvement in the behavioral and value support of teachers in the sector.

These findings embody significant practical meanings:

- A change is needed in the way Arab society perceives students with SEN, and how this society treats their integration into the framework of regular students. The conservative and traditional nature of Arab society towards these students assimilates among many a negative perception of the disabilities, and with it also reservations about such students or their inclusion in accepted social frameworks.

- To change the limiting perception towards students with SEN ,A perceptual change that begins in education is required, but this also requires openness among the teachers themselves.

- The attitude of teachers from the Arab sector towards the integration of students is significantly influenced by the training process, and in particular in the first degree. The impact of the training process is on the level of teachers 'knowledge ,but more (quantitative) training influences a positive change in teachers' behavioral support in integrating students with SEN, and only in the next stage is this support expressed in both the level of knowledge and the emotional position of the teachers. Therefore ,teacher training institutions should expand the range of courses and practical training in the field of special education.

### **6.3. Limitations and recommendations for future research**

The findings of the study reflect the importance of the teachers' training process in formulating their attitudes towards the integration of children with SEN In ordinary frameworks ,both in itself and as a means of changing values and culture in the perception of the sector towards such students and their integration into society.

However, the present study has several limitations: First, the research field is based on sampling from the teacher population only. This fact undermines the ability to generalize the research conclusions and meanings that arise from them, both to other fields of practice and to other positions in the educational system, and especially to principals. In view of this, it is advisable to include, in a continuation study, additional sources of information related to the education system, including teachers, parents and other officials, in particular those responsible for outlining policy.

A second limitation, this study did not address the relationship of other intervening factors on which personality characteristics (such as altruism), cultural and social backgrounds, as well as characteristics related to the nature of the school and the climate prevailing on research variables and their relationships can be enumerated. These aspects may affect teachers' performance, both in their pedagogical beliefs, in their perception of their role as teachers, and in their organizational commitment and level of erosion as an expression of their time orientation in the system. These aspects can also shed light on the options available to them for various behaviors in their roles, such as how they demonstrate leadership, the degree of corporate civilian resilience they exhibit, and their success in roles in terms of their learning outcomes and their ability to deal with conflicts. In view of this, additional features can be recommended for future research.

Third, the findings of the study are based on data collected from teachers primarily in the Central District and primarily from the public Arab sector. As such, the findings of the study may not articulate other aspects that may exist among teachers in other districts and / or other sectors operating in the education system. It is therefore advisable to extend the scope of the research exam to include representation of these populations.

Fourth, at the methodological level, this research is based on a quantitative research system, which results from the very use of closed questionnaires, and it is difficult for them to

learn about the process itself and its implications. To further deepen the topic of research, we recommend using a research set that combines quantitative research with qualitative research, for example through interviews or observations.

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## Appendix

עמדות מורים לגבי חינוך כוללני

מורה יקר/ה שלום,

ראשית ברצוני להודות לך על נכונותך להקדיש מזמנך ולהשתתף במחקר בנושא

היבטים הקשורים לחינוך כוללני במגזר הערבי .

היענותך חשובה ותתרום להבנת התהליכים ולשיפור הנושא.

בעמודים הבאים נבקש ממך להשיב על כמה שאלות, ולסמן בכל שאלה את התשובה

המתאימה ביותר לדעתך. אין בשאלון הזה תשובות נכונות ולא נכונות, אנחנו

מעוניינים רק בדעתך והערכתך הכנה.

שימי לב - השאלון הינו חסוי לחלוטין ומשמש אך ורק למטרת המחקר. הנתונים

שייאספו לא יימסרו לשום גורם שאינו קשור למחקר.

השאלון מנוסח בלשון אישה, אך מיועד גם לגברים וגם לנשים.

בתודה על שיתוף הפעולה,

אינאס מגאדלה

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdqoJfGMSeVR0uTKyS64y-kiYo06VN7z6jnyR2kt1xbYZKfig/viewform>

## QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS

### **Gender:**

Male

Female

### **Your age range:**

below 25

25-35

36-45

46-55

56+

### **Your educational level:**

Bachelors

Masters

Doctoral

### **Current level you are teaching in the Elementary School:**

Grad 1-2

Grad 3-4

Grad 5-6

### **Number of years teaching at this school:**

### **Amount of courses received in teaching children with special needs:**

### **Amount of experience with teaching children with special needs in your classroom:**

### **Check your dominant teaching Filed:**

sciences

Art

language

other (specify)

**Did you attend any training program in special education**

yes

no

Each item has 5 possible responses. The responses range from '1' (strongly agree) through '2' (agree) to '3' (neither agree nor disagree), '4' (disagree) to '5' (strongly disagree).

Please read each statement. Mark the one response that most clearly represents your degree of agreement or disagreement with that statement. Please respond to all of the statements.

Strongly agree 1

Agree 2

Neither agree nor disagree 3

Disagree 4

Strongly disagree 5

**What is your opinion of the inclusion of students with special educational needs (SEN) in the mainstream class?**

**BEHAVIOR**

-I change my teaching style to meet the needs of students with SEN. -I change my teaching approaches to accommodate students with SEN. -

- Incorporating a special needs student in the classroom requires the teacher to devote most of his attention to the child at the expense of the other students.

-A teacher who integrates students with special needs into their classroom is required to spend extra preparation hours, which comes at the expense of other important things to do.

- I am ready to receive the help of the (integrating) teacher in my classroom.
- I am ready to put in the effort required to integrate special needs students into my classroom.
- I am ready to face the challenge facing a special needs student.
- If I have the option of choosing an integrated class or a regular class for a SEN child, I will choose an integrated class
- Compared to a regular classroom, the classroom teacher incorporating a child with SEN should put more effort into teaching planning
- Working in a classroom that incorporates a child with SEN enriches the teacher professionally, more than a regular classroom job
- I, as a teacher, combine encouraging and helping the student to improve his or her academic achievements.
- I give positive and methodical feedback to the combined student response
- I use various reinforcements to reinforce desired behavior
- I use the demonstration and illustration of difficult assignments for the student.
- I gather information about student behavior from other teachers.
- I use classroom grouping techniques (small groups, individual work) ,And various diagnostic methods
- I change my teaching approaches to accommodate students with SEN
- The behavior of students with SEN will set a bad example for students without disabilities.

### **KNOWLEDEGE**

- Integration of students with SEN will require significant change in regular classroom procedures.
- Regular-classroom teachers have sufficient training to teach students with SEN.
- The integrating / therapeutic teacher does not have enough knowledge and tools to help integrate a student with special needs into a regular classroom.
- Dealing with students with special needs in the classroom can threaten the success and status of the teacher.
- In my opinion, teachers come to the school to teach students and not to treat them.
- The therapist / integrator is the one who needs to be in charge of the special needs student.

- Incorporating a student with special needs in a regular classroom may pose a professional challenge for the classroom teacher.
- The teacher can adapt the teaching method to the needs of a heterogeneous class without any difficulty
- A class that incorporates a child with SEN should be more creative than a regular class
- A classroom teacher incorporating a child with SEN should have more skills than a regular classroom teacher
- There is a lack of training for mainstream teachers teaching students with SEN
- Inclusion is very beneficial to all students in the class
- Special classes in the mainstream school is better for students with SEN
- Integration of students with SEN will require significant change in regular classroom procedures.

### **EMOTIONS**

- I feel that inclusion helps students with SEN improve academically. -
- I feel that I have a greater enjoyment of teaching as a result of inclusion.
- The slow progress of a special needs student is a professional frustration for the teacher.
- I feel comfortable contacting the (integrating) therapist working in the school for help.
- Compared to a regular classroom teacher, a classroom teacher who incorporates a child with SEN is more satisfying than her job
- I feel that inclusion helps students with SEN improve academically.
- I feel that students with SEN would receive a better education in a special education classroom
- I feel that inclusion helps students with disabilities develop friendships with class mates without SEN.
- I feel that I have a greater enjoyment of teaching as a result of inclusion.
- I am fully aware of my role and responsibilities regarding students with SEN
- I feel that Students with SEN in the class do not receive the attention they deserve
- Integration will likely have a negative effect on the emotional development of the students with SEN.