Inclusive Education at UNRWA in Lebanon: A Case Study of a Lower Elementary School

Ali Hussein El Ahmad[1] & Anwar Mohammad Kawtharani[2]

[1&2]School of Education, Lebanese International University (LIU), Beirut, Lebanon
Correspondence: Ali Hussein El Ahmad, Ph.D., School of Education, Lebanese International University (LIU), Beirut, Lebanon.
Email: ali.ahmad@liu.edu.lb

Doi: 10.23918/ijsses.v9i1p18

Abstract: Development of inclusive education (IE) policies affirming explicit commitment to educating students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) alongside their colleagues without SEND is the bedrock for high quality and equitable IE provision for the former. This qualitative case study aims to examine the implementation of the IE policy of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA] at an UNRWA lower elementary school in Lebanon. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) from 24 teaching, administrative and educational support staff, and parents of students with SEND, who were purposefully and conveniently recruited. The thematic analysis generated 4 overarching themes: environment, education system, support, and relationship with parents and local community. Despite the barriers the school is facing during IE implementation, the school has exerted big efforts for overcoming those barriers and measuring and sustaining school inclusiveness.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Inclusion, Special Educational Needs, Disabilities, Case Study, UNRWA

1. Introduction

IE is an approach to educating students with SEND facing educational inequities imposed by exclusionary education policies, systems, and practices. It requires communication, commitment, and collaboration among all education stakeholders for transforming education policies, processes, and procedures to enhance access to school for those students, meet their educational needs, and maximize their participation.

UNRWA (2013a) developed an IE policy to respond to the needs of Palestine refugee students who have vulnerability to marginalization and exclusion, with special emphasis on students with SEND. UNRWA's (2013a) IE policy is human rights-based and framed by the social model of disability. The IE policy is to be mainstreamed into all aspects of UNRWA's education program on progressive and gradual basis across UNRWA's five fields of operation in the host countries: Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Gaza Strip, and the West

Received: January 25, 2022
Accepted: February 27, 2022
El Ahmad, A.H., & Kawtharani, A.M. (2022). Inclusive Education at UNRWA in Lebanon: A Case Study of a Lower Elementary School. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies*, 9(1), 18-52.

Bank, including East Jerusalem (UNRWA, 2013b); policy mainstreaming aims to achieve full inclusion within the available resources, existing structures, and systems (UNRWA, 2013a). Nevertheless, the IE policy is still being weakly and inconsistently implemented in UNRWA schools across Lebanon.

Moreover, UNRWA (2014) carried out a baseline study of classroom practices at the elementary cycle across the five fields of operation, including Lebanon. The results revealed that teachers did not provide any adaptation or additional curriculum for students with SEND. The study also suggested investigating teachers' interactions with those students using focal sampling in further research.

This study aims to examine the implementation of UNRWA's (2013a) IE policy at an UNRWA lower elementary school in Lebanon. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following four objectives: (1) investigate the barriers encountering the implementation of IE at the school understudy; (2) explore how the school overcame the barriers to implementing IE; (3) discover how the school management measured school inclusiveness; and (4) find out how they ensured sustainability of school inclusiveness.

Four questions guide this study. They are the following:

1. What barriers does the implementation of IE encounter at the school under study?
2. How does the school overcome the barriers to implementing IE?
3. How does the school management measure school inclusiveness?
4. How does the school management ensure sustainability of school inclusiveness?

According to Grima-Farrell (2017), the empirical studies on SEND are still limited, particularly in developing countries (Kuroda, Kartika, & Kitamura, 2017). In line with this, Alkhateeb, Hadidi, and Alkhateeb (2016) argue that there is relatively little empirical research on IE in Arab countries, with most studies came from United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. Alkhateeb et al. (2016) add that the studies addressed three areas: (1) attitudes towards and perceptions of IE (33 studies), (2) barriers to IE (five studies), and (3) satisfaction with and evaluation of IE programs (six studies). Consequently, they also call for carrying out more empirical research in Arab countries on IE, in general, and on IE policies and implementation models, in specific, using interviews, FGDs, and classroom observations. Moreover, empirical studies addressing solutions for overcoming barriers to IE and mechanisms for empirical measurement and sustainability of school inclusiveness are still very scarce in the international research literature on IE. Therefore, the current qualitative study contributes to the existing body of research literature on IE in these areas. Furthermore, it offers a deeper understanding of UNRWA's (2013a) IE policy implementation at an UNRWA lower elementary school in Lebanon. The findings give insight into the barriers encountering the implementation of the IE policy, how the school addresses those barriers, and how the school management measures school inclusiveness and ensures its sustainability.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

UNRWA (2013b) developed an IE strategy for supporting planning, mobilization of resources, implementation, and assurance of quality of IE systems and practices. UNRWA's (2013b) IE strategy outlines 29 implementation standards covering six areas of importance to IE. These areas describe inclusive schooling at school and classroom practices levels, education administration, and support staff and services (UNRWA, 2013b). The first area, access, and environment, describes UNRWA's (2013b) IE

approach to removing barriers to accessibility, learning, development, and engagement. The second area, identification of individual needs of students, outlines UNRWA's (2013b) IE approach to identifying students' learning, health, and psychosocial individual needs. The third area, additional school-based support, describes UNRWA's (2013b) IE approach to meeting diverse students' learning, health, and psychosocial individual needs through school-based support. The fourth area, curriculum, and assessment, describes UNRWA's (2013b) IE approach to teaching, learning, and assessment. The fifth area, special education provision for children with extensive needs, describes UNRWA's (2013b) IE approach to providing extensive support and special education services. The sixth area, professional development (PD) of staff, outlines UNRWA's (2013b) IE approach to PD of staff on IE.

This study uses Alberta Education's (2013) theoretical inclusive school's framework which sets out 21 indicators organized around five dimensions for demonstrating inclusive approach and developing inclusive schools. The first dimension, establishing inclusive values and principles, comprises four indicators: school staff, parents, and students are committed to providing inclusive experiences of learning for all students; all school staff are responsible for all students' success in the school; all school staff have high expectations and standards for all students; and the school community shows zero tolerance to all forms of discrimination and racism (Alberta Education, 2013). The second dimension, building inclusive learning environments, comprises five indicators: the school welcomes all students from the neighborhood/local area and is responsible for all of them; all school staff, parents, and students feel that they belong to the school community; there is mutual respect between school staff and students; students provide support for each other; and all people can easily access the school building (Alberta Education, 2013). The third dimension, providing support for success, comprises five indicators: differentiated instruction (DI) is a fundamental component of instructional practices in classrooms; continuous assessment informs teaching staff when students need supplementary supports, services, and interventions; specialists are available for providing teaching staff with consultation and support to help them respond to all students' diverse needs; assistive technologies (ATs), including devices for communication, are available for supporting individual students; and there are interventions and supports for minimizing problem behaviors, including bullying (Alberta Education, 2013). The fourth dimension, organizing learning and instruction, comprises four indicators: experiences of learning are designed based on the interests and strengths of all students; teaching staff provide strategy instruction explicitly so that students acquire a collection of learning strategies; there are opportunities for students to interact with their peers and take advantage of others' perspectives; and students can show their learning and growth in multiple ways (Alberta Education, 2013). The fifth dimension, engaging with parents and the community, comprises three indicators: school staff encourage and value parental engagement; staff and parents collaborate to support student success; and the school provides meaningful opportunities for the community to be involved in the school (Alberta Education, 2013). The framework of the study is displayed in Figure 1.

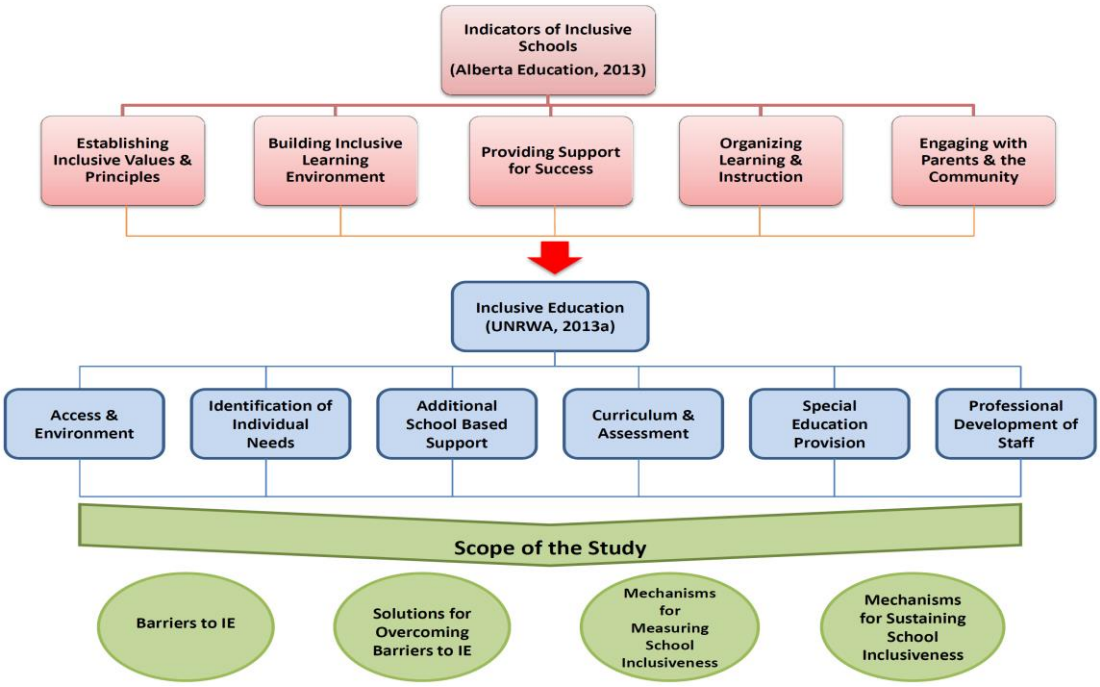

Figure 1: Framework of the study

2. Literature Review

2.1 Barriers to IE

Students with SEND are increasingly facing complex barriers hindering their school access and participation, and academic success. Social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental factors negatively affect educational access, in general, and these factors may act as barriers to the education provision for students with disabilities, in specific (Muthukrishna, Morojele, Naidoo, & D'amant, 2016). Muthukrishna et al. (2016) contend that barriers to IE can be categorized into four types: systemic, societal, pedagogical, and intrinsic. They state that the barriers to implementing policies on IE include the following:

1. Pressures on Funding (Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR], 2012; Kuzmicheva & Afonkina, 2020; Sharma, Armstrong, Merumeru, Simi, & Yared, 2019; Muthukrishna et al., 2016)

Wapling (2016) contends that education systems in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) may be providing little to no support at all for its implementation at the level of direction, resources, and skills. United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF] and World Health Organization [WHO] (2015) emphasize that ATs are a necessity for children with disabilities to enjoy their life and rights. However, in many countries with low incomes, only 5-15% of those children, who need ATs, can obtain it. Alkhateeb et al. (2016) reveal that of the main barriers to implementing IE in Arab countries is the lack of resources, educational materials, and AT.

2. Poor Development and Support for Teachers (Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; DEEWR, 2012; Kuzmicheva & Afonkina, 2020; Muthukrishna et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2019)

According to Wapling (2016), many teachers in LMICs have neither undertaken any training on how to teach students with diverse needs in their classes, nor has this concept been introduced to them. Moreover, Donohue and Bornman (2015) note that many teachers still lack the theoretical or practical foundation for designing inclusive lessons. Emam and Mohamed (2011) highlight concerns about the effectiveness of the current content of training courses in equipping teachers with the needed practical skills for including students with SEND in their classrooms. Furthermore, Alkhateeb et al. (2016) announce that there is a serious lack of knowledge and training for teachers on how to deal with students with disabilities in most Arab countries.

3. Poor Collective Knowledge about IE Policy and its Realization (Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Muthukrishna et al., 2016)

One of the critical concerns about IE is that many discourses are competing among each other, resulting in different conceptualizations, understandings, and meanings for IE (Muthukrishna et al., 2016). Sharma and Das (2015) argue that the lack of clarity between the concepts of integration and inclusion significantly affects how IE is understood and implemented. Likewise, there is no consensus among the policy makers of Arab education systems, researchers, professionals of special education and parents on the nature, definition, and parameters of IE (Anati, 2012; Weber, 2012).

4. Persistent Exclusionary Cultures and Practices of Schools (Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Cologon, 2013; DEEWR, 2012; Kuzmicheva & Afonkina, 2020; Muthukrishna et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2019)

Ahsan, Sharma, and Deppeler (2012) highlight the need for changing teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEND into regular classes and effectively preparing them to implement IE practices. Alkhateeb et al. (2016) declare that most public schools in the Arab region lack willingness for accommodating students with disabilities and have poor preparation for providing them with educational services, as well. In addition, there is inconsistency with teachers' attitudes towards IE and the factors affecting their attitudes (Alkhateeb et al., 2016). Hadidi and Alkhateeb (2015) add that the negative attitudes of teachers, parents, and students towards including students with disabilities into regular classrooms are also a barrier to implementing IE.

5. Inequalities of the Educational System (Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Cologon, 2013; Muthukrishna et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2019)

Inequalities of the educational system comprise inaccessible school facilities, classrooms with large sizes, policies, and procedures (Muthukrishna et al., 2016) and traditional assessment systems (UNICEF, 2012). In Arab countries, the implementation of IE is still challenged by crowded classrooms, inaccessible school buildings (Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Hadidi & Alkhateeb, 2015), and inflexible and rigid school curricula (Alkhateeb et al., 2016).

6. Limited Involvement of Parents and Community (Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Muthukrishna et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2019)

According to UNICEF (2012), the barriers impeding the involvement of parents in children with disabilities' education include the following: awareness lack of educational alternatives, stigmatization, and hostility fears from within their communities, family poverty, lack of information on the rights of their children and lack of options for placement of their children near to their homes. El Shourbagi (2017) found that parents did not take adequate actions for activating their involvement in IE provision for students with SEND in Oman. Similarly, Alkhateeb et al. (2016) conclude that poor parental involvement is one of the main barriers to implementing IE in the Arab region. Moreover, the involvement of Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPOs) in monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [CRPD] (UN, 2007) and holding governments accountable has been inadequate due to their low capacities (Abu Alghaib & Tromp, 2017).

7. Socio-economic Conditions (UNICEF, 2012)

UNICEF (2012) considers that disability is both a cause and a result of poverty. Many families of children with disabilities consider that disability-related costs can act as a barrier to their children's access to education, including medication, transportation, ATs, or other resources for learning (UNICEF, 2012). According to Surour and Ashour (2015), a main barrier to developing IE system for the children of Gaza strip is the bad social conditions there.

2.2 Overcoming Barriers to IE

Overcoming barriers to IE is a collective task for all IE stakeholders, which should be based on a systematic approach starting with the most critical barriers hindering access, participation, and academic success for students with SEND. Below are solutions for overcoming barriers to IE.

1. Removing mobility, communication, physical and sensory barriers (Sharma et al., 2019; UNICEF, 2012)
2. Addressing attitudinal barriers (DEEWR, 2012; Sharma et al., 2019; UNICEF, 2012)
3. Addressing socio-economic barriers (UNICEF, 2012)
4. Involving and supporting parents and partnering with local community (UNICEF, 2012; Sharma et al., 2019)
5. Developing environments for inclusive learning (Cologon, 2013; Sharma et al., 2019; DEEWR, 2012; UNICEF, 2012)
6. Developing inclusive curricula, methods of teaching and learning (DEEWR, 2012; UNICEF, 2012)
7. Introducing rights-based inclusive assessment (UNICEF, 2012)
8. Investing in and supporting teachers within schools (Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Cologon, 2013; DEEWR, 2012; Sharma et al., 2019; UNICEF, 2012)
9. Ensuring adequate and effective use of funds (DEEWR, 2012; UNICEF, 2012; Sharma et al., 2019)
10. Strengthening education information systems (UNICEF, 2012)

11. Ensuring political will and good governance (UNICEF, 2012)

2.3 Measuring IE

Measurement of IE aims to monitor the progress schools make in realizing IE policies; enhance strengths of IE system; and address its weaknesses through identifying areas for improvement and deciding on the most critical areas as priorities for development. Loreman, Forlin, Chambers, Sharma, and Deppeler (2014) contend that features of inclusion have been measured by many instruments developed for this aim. Loreman, Forlin, Chambers et al. (2014) highlight that the second edition of the Index for Inclusion: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools (Booth & Ainscow, 2002), shortly the Index, is the topmost frequently cited instrument. The third edition of the Index was significantly revised and prolonged by Booth and Ainscow (2011). Booth and Ainscow (2011) define the Index as a resource based on 16 inclusive values, working to support the self-review and development of IE at school level. They emphasize that it offers all local stakeholders, including educators, governors, parents, children and community members, the opportunity to contribute to planning, implementing, and evaluating school inclusive development plan. They indicate that the school inclusive development process passes through five phases: (1) getting started with the Index, (2) finding out together about the school, (3) producing a plan, (4) taking action, and (5) reviewing development. They point out that the self-review is considered along three interconnected dimensions, structuring school inclusive development process: (1) creating inclusive cultures, (2) producing inclusive policies, and (3) evolving inclusive practices. They indicate that each of these dimensions is divided into two sections. The six sections comprise 70 indicators, helping schools to focus on the aspects they aim to change or develop (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). Loreman, Forlin, Chambers et al. (2014) emphasize that the Index is a comprehensive tool during structured PD opportunities for school staff, yet they admit the limited value or benefit from the Index if used without a critical friend for initiating and facilitating dialog among all stakeholders.

Kyriazopoulou and Weber (2009) devised an instrument for measuring IE based on a model of input-processes-outcomes in Europe. They further believe that measuring IE should cover three levels: macro (large scale, for example nations, regions, and legislations of schools), meso (schools, schools' groups, and local communities) and micro (classrooms and people, including students and teachers). They present a set of indicators covering three focused areas out of 14: legislation (30 indicators), participation (16 indicators) and financing (21 indicators).

Loreman, Forlin, and Sharma (2014) in a literature review outline 14 themes useful for developing a set of indicators for measuring IE, grouped under inputs, processes and outcomes across the macro, meso and micro levels.

To conclude, Loreman, Forlin, Chambers et al. (2014) suggest that educational systems should adopt and use a whole school approach by measuring the following features: policy, access, pedagogy, curriculum, quality teaching, achievement assessment and support.

2.4 Sustainability of IE

Sustainability of IE should be considered a priority for policy makers and practitioners if perennial learning outcomes for students with SEND are sought. Similarly, Laisidou (2015) contends that the concept of

sustainability is significant for proceeding with debates on the long-lasting impact of the change process within the inclusion context. In line with this, Booth and Ainscow (2002) argue that IE should not be regarded as an end. Rather, it should be considered a process (Booth & Ainscow, 2002).

For sustaining inclusive reforms, possible distracters undermining the change process should be identified and challenged at the level of classroom, school, district and statewide (Laisidou, 2015). In line with this, Sindelar, Shearer, Yendol-Hoppey, and Liebert (2006) suggest that inclusive school reforms cannot be sustained if the policy of the district, school leadership and classroom teaching practices are not in favor of inclusion. Sindelar et al. (2006) also emphasize that any change in the aforementioned factors can negatively influence the sustainability of these inclusive school reforms.

According to the 'Catholic Relief Services' of Vietnam (2007), IE is "not a one-time activity" (p. 20). The 'Catholic Relief Services' (2007) regards developing IE policy as a means for ensuring longevity and expansion of IE. The 'Catholic Relief Services' (2007) further suggests establishing a panel or a steering committee undertaking permanent management for IE at local or national levels.

Stubbs (2008) adds that sustaining IE necessitates conducting in-service training for all education staff; providing regular support; spotting and solving problems; conducting ongoing participatory monitoring and evaluation; involving all relevant stakeholders; making advocacy, and influencing policy at the national level, as well as initiatives/campaigns at the international level.

3. Method

3.1 Research Context and Site

UNRWA (2020) operates 65 schools in Lebanon catering for 36,586 elementary, preparatory, and secondary students for the 2020/2021 school year. Nevertheless, as for students with SEND, UNRWA has no updated estimations for them across the five fields of operation, including Lebanon. UNRWA (2016) points out that out of 494, 243 Palestine refugee students enrolled in UNRWA schools across the five fields of operation for the 2014/2015 school year, 18,647 students had disabilities, of which 1,503 students are in Lebanon. Chaaban et al. (2016) report that 11% of Palestine refugees in Lebanon (PRL) who are not enrolled in schools live with functional disability; sixty-two percent of children with disabilities have access to UNRWA schools (Chaaban et al., 2016); and 8.9% have access to special education (Chaaban et al., 2016). This leaves 28.9% of Palestinian refugee children with disability with no access to education (Chaaban et al., 2016).

The study was conducted at a lower elementary co-educational school at UNRWA, located inside a camp for PRL and providing basic education for Palestine refugee students in grades one, two and three. The school's population was 687 students for the 2017/2018 school year. Out of those 687 students, 99 students were informally identified by teachers as having SEND. The school was characterized by diversity not only in terms of gender but also in terms of nationality. Two thirds of the school students' population were PRL while about one third of the school students' population were Palestine refugee students displaced from Syria (PRS) because of the armed conflict in Syria. The administrative team of the school consisted of a school Principal (SP), a Deputy School Principal (DSP), and a clerk. The teaching staff consisted of 20 teachers and 16 Learning Support Teachers (LSTs). Teachers were instructionally supported by Lower

Elementary Education Specialist (ES), who was also IE Area Focal Point. However, LSTs were supervised by Learning Support Assistant (LSA) and his Deputy. The school had a full-time Psychosocial Support (PSS) School Counselor providing PSS for students with psychosocial needs. It had a Health Tutor who was a teacher but with a reduced teaching load by five teaching sessions weekly. The Health Tutor catered for health needs of students. The school had a library and a learning resource center operated by a full-time Learning Resource Assistant. Finally, it had a playroom equipped with simple games.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed qualitative approach and adopted case study design. The case study design was relevant and appropriate for this study since it enables researchers to fully understand the research context as well as the processes taking place (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

3.3 Research Sample

Three semi-structured interviews and four FGDs were conducted. Participants in semi-structured interviews and FGDs were 24 in total. The first semi-structured interview was conducted with Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point who was a female and aged between 31 and 40 years. The second semi-structured interview was conducted with School Quality Assurance (SQA) Coordinator who was a male and aged between 41 and 50 years. The third semi-structured interview was conducted with Area Education Officer (AEO) who was also a female and aged between 41 and 50 years. All participants were purposefully recruited since they were responsible for providing educational and administrative support to the school understudy for implementing IE policy.

The first FGD was conducted with Student Support Team (SST) which consisted of six members. Participants were purposefully recruited because they were responsible for providing direct support and guidance for teaching staff for implementing IE policy. Table 1 displays their demographics.

Table 1: Demographics of participants in FGD with SST in terms of frequency and percentage

#	Demographic Variable		N	%
1	Gender	Male	3	50
		Female	3	50
2	Age	31-40 years	5	83.4
		51-62 years	1	16.6
3	Functional Title	SP	1	16.6
		LSA	1	16.6
		PSS School Counselor	1	16.6
		Teacher	3	50

Two of the three teachers were assigned roles in addition to their teaching duties: School Health Tutor and Head of School Human Rights Committee.

The second FGD was conducted with eight teaching staff. Participants were purposefully recruited to cover all grades and the three main subjects: Arabic, English, and mathematics. Table 2 displays their demographics.

Table 2: Demographics of participants in FGD with teaching staff in terms of frequency and percentage

#	Demographic Variable		N	%
1	Gender	Male	1	14
		Female	7	86
2	Age	25-30 years	2	25
		31-40 years	6	75
3	Functional Title	Teacher	4	50
		LST	4	50

The third and fourth FGDs were conducted with four and three parents of students with SEND respectively. Participants in FGDs were conveniently recruited. Tables 3 and 4 display their demographics respectively.

Table 3: Demographics of participants in Third FGD with parents of students with send in terms of frequency and percentage

#	Demographic Variable		N	%
1	Gender	Female	4	100
2	Nationality	PRL	2	50
		PRS	2	50
3	Age	31-40 years	2	50
		41-50 years	2	50

Table 4: Demographics of participants in fourth FGD with parents of students with send in terms of frequency and percentage

#	Demographic Variable		N	%
1	Gender	Female	3	100
2	Nationality	PRL	2	67
		PRS	1	33
3	Age	31-40 years	2	67
		41-50 years	1	33

3.4 Research Instruments

1. Semi-structured Interviews

Three semi-structured interviews were conducted: one with Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, one with SQA Coordinator, and one with AEO. Each semi-structured interview consisted of two

sections developed by the researchers: demographic profile of interviewee and open-ended questions. Some of the questions in each interview were adapted from Agius Ferrante (2012) and Rodriguez (2013). The first section comprised two items to identify demographic background of interviewee: gender and age. The second section comprised 23, 26, and 24 questions respectively divided into eight areas.

2. FGDs

Four FGDs were conducted: one with SST, one with teaching staff, and two with parents of students with SEND.

a) FGDs with SST and Teaching Staff. Each FGD consisted of two sections developed by the researchers: demographic profile of participants and open-ended questions. Some of the questions in both FGDs were adapted from Agius Ferrante (2012) and Rodriguez (2013). The first section comprised three items to identify demographic background of participants: gender, age, and functional title. The second section comprised 25 and 23 questions respectively divided into eight areas.
b) FGDs with Parents of Students with SEND. This FGD consisted of two sections developed by the researchers: demographic profile of participants and open and closed-ended questions. Some of the questions were adapted from Agius Ferrante (2012) and Rodriguez (2013). The first section comprised three items to identify demographic background of participants: gender, nationality, and age. The second section comprised 24 questions divided into eight areas.

3.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted at an elementary girl's school at UNRWA located in the same area of the research site but in a different camp for Palestine refugees between March 13 and May 22, 2017. The school's population was 680 students for the 2016/2017 school year of which 73 students were informally identified by teachers as having SEND.

Two pilot FGDs were conducted: one with SST and one with parents of students with SEND. Prior to conducting pilot FGDs, the researchers obtained feedback about relevance, language, and wording of questions of semi-structured interviews and FGDs; the feedback was provided by a special educator with a master's degree in special education and UNRWA Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point. Some questions of FGDs for parents of students with SEND were found incomprehensive, difficult, and ambiguous for parents to understand. Consequently, they were reworded to make them more comprehensive, simpler, and clearer.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

After approving the study by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the Lebanese University, permission for carrying out the study at UNRWA schools was obtained from UNRWA Chief of Education Program in Lebanon. School staff and parents of students with SEND who agreed to participate in the study were provided an informed consent for FGDs to read and sign. Lower Elementary ES, SQA Coordinator, and AEO were also provided an informed consent for a semi-structured interview to read and sign. A professional translator with good educational background translated the informed consents from English

into Arabic because the research population's mother tongue was Arabic. Semi-structured interviews and FGDs were conducted in Arabic. Data collection took place between January and February 2018.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

Thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was employed for qualitative data analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p. 79). Their thematic analysis model comprises six recursive phases, where researchers can move back and forth as needed, through the phases.

3.8 Trustworthiness of Qualitative Findings

Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose trustworthiness as a criterion to assess quality of findings of qualitative research. They add that trustworthiness comprises four aspects or criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In the present study, the four criteria were established.

1. Credibility

Credibility is about being confident about the truthfulness of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish it, the researchers used the following two techniques: triangulation and member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As for triangulation, the researchers employed two qualitative methods of data collection (method triangulation): semi-structured interviews and FGDs. Also, the researchers used different data sources (data triangulation) through these two qualitative data collection methods. As for member checking, the researchers provided research participants with an account of their preliminary findings from semi-structured interviews and FGDs and interpretations to obtain their feedback, as well. As a result, the researchers' preliminary findings and interpretations were confirmed.

2. Transferability

Transferability is applicability of findings with other participants and in other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish it, the researchers used the technique of thick description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researchers provided extensive descriptive information and rich details about the study, especially regarding the following points: education at UNRWA in Lebanon; UNRWA's (2013a) IE policy; UNRWA's (2013b) IE strategy; SEND prevalence at UNRWA in Lebanon; research site, research sample; and number and procedures of semi-structured interviews and FGDs.

3. Dependability

Dependability is repeatedness of findings upon replication of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish it, the researchers used the technique of audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researchers fully described sampling procedures, development and pilot-testing of research instruments, and steps of data collection and analysis. Also, they kept transcripts of semi-structured interviews and FGDs in a safe place, and they provided translated excerpts from those transcripts in the findings section.

4. Confirmability

Confirmability is neutrality of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish it, the researchers used the two following techniques: triangulation and audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which were covered under credibility and dependability respectively.

4. Findings

The thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews and FGDs generated four overarching themes: environment, education system, support, and relationship with parents and local community. First, the theme 'environment' describes physical and psychosocial aspects of the school's environment. Second, the theme 'education system' describes components, practices and processes enacted within the school's education system. Third, the theme 'support' describes supports provided for the school's teaching staff as well as students with SEND; these supports are essential for providing IE for students with SEND. Finally, the theme 'relationship with parents and local community' describes aspects of the school's relationship with parents and local community. Figure 2 displays the thematic map, including the four generated overarching themes and their 22 sub-themes across all participants.

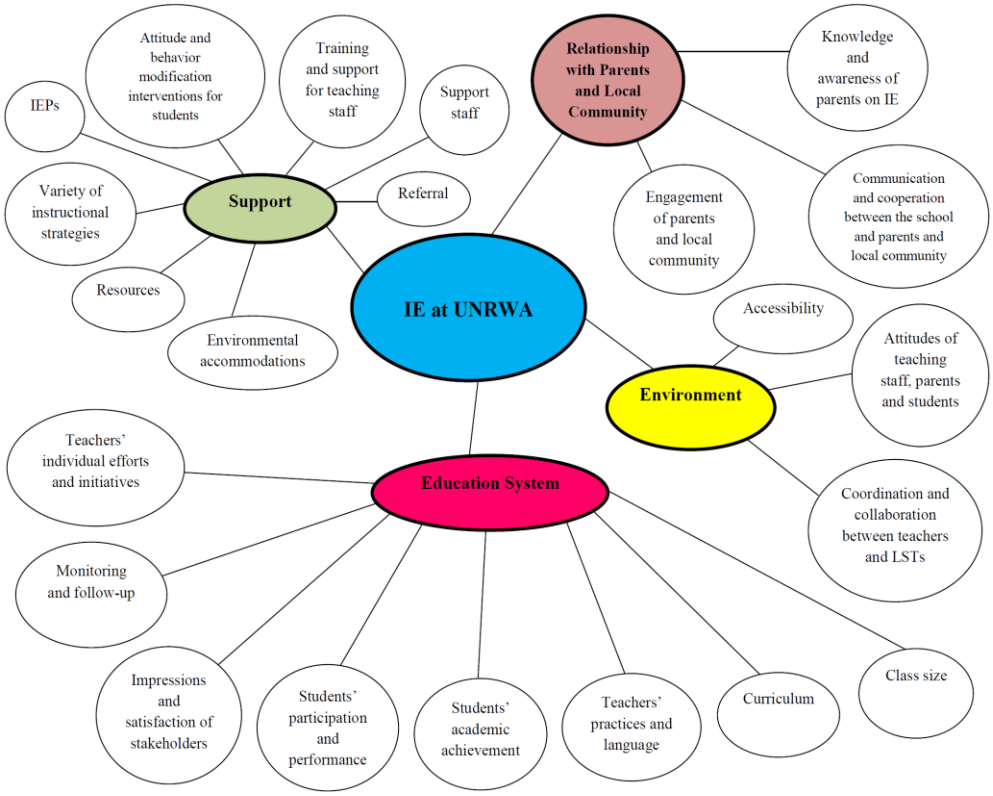

Figure 2: Thematic map

4.1 Barriers to IE

Sub-themes relevant to barriers to the implementation of IE are reported across the four overarching themes, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Sub-themes Relevant to Barriers to the Implementation of IE across the Four Overarching Themes

#	Theme	Sub-theme
1	Environment	Accessibility
		Attitudes of teaching staff, parents, and students
2	Education system	Class size
		Curriculum
3	Support	Resources
		Training for teaching staff
		Support staff
4	Relationship with parents and local community	Knowledge and awareness of parents on IE program
		Communication and cooperation between school and parents and local community

1. Inaccessible School Building and Classrooms

Many participants considered that inaccessibility of students with disabilities, especially those with physical impairments, to the school building and its classrooms could be a barrier to IE.

Some participants highlighted that students with physical impairments faced big difficulties in climbing stairs to reach their classrooms on upper floors.

> *"With respect to students with physical impairment, they cannot reach classrooms on upper floors, especially the school building is full of stairs and those stairs are high. We are talking about three floors here." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)*

> *"Students with disabilities cannot reach the upper floors." (Parent 1, PRL, Female)*

According to three participants, the structure of the school building also hindered the movement of students with disabilities around the school.

> *"Students with physical impairment do not go out to the playground because there is a stairway leading to it. They stay in their classrooms or in the corridors with one or two students during the break." (Teacher 3, Female)*

2. Negative Attitudes of Teaching Staff, Parents, and Students

When asked about the attitudes of school staff, parents, and students towards inclusion of students with SEND in regular classrooms, many participants argued that school staff, parents and students had negative attitudes; these negative attitudes could act as a barrier to the implementation of IE.

With respect to the teaching staff, teachers had negative attitudes towards students with SEND and their inclusion, as reported by a few participants.

"Sometimes, attitudes of teachers towards the program (IE) are negative." (SP, Male)

"With respect to the attitudes of staff towards IE, in general, they do not accept (inclusion of students with SEND). But if they (staff) have them (students with SEND) at school, they deal with them." (SQA Coordinator, Male)

With respect to parents, the analysis revealed negative attitudes for both parents of students with and without SEND, as well.

Two participants stated that some parents of students without SEND had rejection, fear and reservations towards students with SEND.

"Some parents ask the teacher why he/she seats their child next to this student (student with SEND). They ask the teacher to move him/her (student with SEND) away from their child (student without SEND)." (Teacher 5, Female)

Two participants pointed out that parents of students without SEND were against inclusion of students with SEND for their negative effects on students without SEND and their education, as well.

"Parents of students without disabilities are reluctant to accept this issue (inclusion of students with SEND) for fear that it will affect the achievement of their children since students with disabilities may influence the concentration of students without disabilities and distract their attention due to their uncontrolled behavior." (Teacher 4, Male)

One participant reported that some parents of students with SEND preferred to place their children in special schools, especially when they would have the financial ability.

"There are parents who prefer to place their children in a school for students with special needs, and the financial ability of parents plays an important role in this preference." (Teacher 6, Female)

With respect to the attitudes of students without SEND towards students with SEND, they were negative. These negative attitudes encompassed rejection, ridicule, and bullying, as reported by many participants.

"Sometimes students without disabilities do not accept their colleagues with disabilities. Sometimes, they ridicule them (students with SEND). They do not know because they are young. Sometimes you find that students do not accept them." (Parent 6, PRL, Female)

3. Crowded Classrooms

Many participants argued that big class size was a barrier to the implementation of IE.

"One of the obstacles is the large number of students in the classroom." (AEO, Female)

"The teacher cannot work with everyone (students with SEND); the number (of students) is large. This is one of the barriers." (SP, Male).

4. Inappropriate Curriculum

Two participants obviously considered that the curriculum was a barrier to implementing IE.

> *"The curriculum is an obstacle, surely." (LST 1, Female)*

> *"I feel that the curriculum is an obstacle." (Teacher 7, Female)*

Some participants complained about the big quantity of the curriculum and the interest in its quantity over quality.

> *"The curriculum is an obstacle. First, the curriculum is pressing. The goal of the teacher with respect to the curriculum is to cover the existing material." (SQA Coordinator, Male)*

Other participants complained about the inflexibility and difficulty of the curriculum and stressed that it should be organized and simplified.

> *"The curricula are difficult and redundant." (Teacher 3, Male)*

> *"The curriculum should be simplified further." (LST 2, Female)*

5. Lack of Resources

Most participants highlighted lack of resources, which could be a barrier to the implementation of IE. Participants complained about the unavailability of resources in general and ATs, educational aids, and special curriculum, in specific.

> *"The resources in our schools are very poor for the implementation of IE." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)*

> *"The classroom environment in general is not equipped to implement IE at UNRWA schools." (LSA, Male)*

> *"The problem is that the lack of ATs has become an obstacle to the success of this process (inclusion)." (LST 1, Female)*

> *"These devices (ATs) are not available at school. I have not seen any of them here." (Parent 5, PRL, Female)*

6. Inadequate Training for Teaching Staff

One of the factors that could act as a barrier to the implementation of IE was inadequate training for teaching staff. Some participants noted that teachers and LSTs received only one training course on IE, which lasted for three or four hours, yet it was inadequate. They also highlighted the need for having more training.

> *"There should be more intensive courses, not for 3 or 4 hours because they are not enough." (LST 3, Female)*

"Our teacher still needs training on dealing with students with special needs." (SQA Coordinator, Male)

"I have not received any training (on IE)." (Teacher 5, Female)

"Teachers have always been inquiring about how to develop a plan (IEP)." (SP, Male)

7. Lack of Support Staff

Some participants expressed teachers' need for having support staff, particularly a special educator, at the school to provide them with consultation and support to help them meet the diverse needs of students with SEND. The lack of such support staff could act as a barrier to the implementation of IE.

"There should be an educational specialist at the school so teachers can communicate with him/her and take advice from him/her on this subject (IE)." (PSS School Counselor, Female)

A few teachers and LSTs revealed that school-based SST for supporting teachers to meet students' diverse needs was unknown to them and inactive at all, as well.

"The SST does not exist on the ground and has not provided any support. We do not know who the SST is. Possibly, the names of its members are written in papers in the SP's room, but we do not know who they are." (Teacher 6, Female)

8. Poor Knowledge and Awareness of Parents on IE Program

One of the factors that could act as a barrier to the implementation of IE is poor knowledge and awareness of parents of students with SEND on IE program.

"I think parents do not know anything about IE." (Teacher 5, Female)

"Parents' participation is just attendance. Parents lack knowledge, methods, capacities, and how to deal with these situations (their children's SEND)." (SQA Coordinator, Male)

9. Poor Communication and Cooperation between the School and Parents and Local Community

Some participants complained about the poor communication between the school and parents of students with SEND from the side of parents.

"If this communication (between school and parents) stops, parents are the reason. The teachers and school management always follow up, but not all parents respond." (Teacher 1, Male)

"We called parents to come to the school; only two out of 15 parents attended." (LST 1, Female)

Most participants complained about the poor cooperation between the school and parents of students with SEND from the side of parents.

> *"Sometimes there is negligence from parents in some things." (AEO, Female)*

> *"Unfortunately, in general, the parents of students with SEN are uncooperative. You have to deal with students with SEND by yourself. Parents' role has become marginalized." (Teacher 4, Male)*

> *"I noticed that they (teachers) have sent notes more than once, but there are parents who do not care. Few parents cooperate." (Parent 5, PRL, Female)*

Few participants also complained about the poor communication between the school and institutions of local community from the side of the latter.

> *"Communication between the school and the institutions is still very weak from the side of institutions." (Teacher 3, Female)*

> *"We do not know how informed about IE the local community is. You (SP) call an institution to the school, but it does not know what's going on in school. That's the problem." (SP, Male)*

Some participants reported lack of cooperation between the school and local community institutions.

> *"I feel that there is no cooperation between the school and institutions." (Parent 4, PRL, Female)*

> *"There is no clear cooperation between the school and local community institutions." (Teacher 3, Female)*

4.2 Solutions for Overcoming Barriers to IE

Sub-themes relevant to solutions or strategies for overcoming the barriers to the implementation of IE are reported across the four overarching themes, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Sub-themes relevant to solutions for overcoming the barriers to the implementation of i.e. across the four overarching themes

#	Theme	Sub-theme
1	Environment	Coordination and collaboration between teachers and LSTs
2	Education system	Teachers' individual efforts and initiatives
3	Support	Environmental accommodations
		Variety of instructional strategies
		Attitude and behavior modification interventions for students
		Referral
4	Relationship with parents and local community	Knowledge and awareness of parents on IE program
		Engagement of parents and local community

1. Maintaining Coordination and Collaboration between Teachers and LSTs

Many participants highlighted that coordination and collaboration took place between teachers and LSTs to overcome barriers to the implementation of IE, such as overcrowded classrooms and teachers' poor knowledge, competence, and experience in IE.

> *"We (teacher and LST) work in the classroom hand in hand. One does not sit and the other works; we work hand in hand. If we have group work, I follow groups and the LST follows other groups, working hand in hand, and coordinating our work with each other." (Teacher 7, Female)*

> *"These aids are prepared by teachers with help of LSTs." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)*

2. Depending on Teachers' Individual Efforts and Initiatives

According to some participants, teachers depended on their individual efforts to overcome the lack of resources and their poor knowledge, competence, and experience in IE, as well.

> *"They (teachers) are preparing these resources by themselves." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)*

> *"Teachers are trying as much as possible with the available resources." (LST 1, Female)*

3. Implementing Environmental Accommodations

Some participants pointed out the school implemented environmental accommodations to facilitate physical accessibility for students with physical impairments to the classroom by mainly moving their class down to the ground floor of the school.

"With respect to environment, we had a student (with severe physical impairment) last year; we seated her on the ground floor." (SP, Male)

"We also have classrooms on the ground floor for any student who cannot climb the stairs." (AEO, Female)

Other participants stated that teachers and LSTs implemented environmental accommodations within classrooms to facilitate learning for students with SEND by mainly seating them in first rows and increasing their proximity to teachers.

"We can deal with minor physical problems such as poor vision and hearing. These cases are resolved by seating the student in front rows and holding him/her in place." (Teacher 1, Male)

"They (students with SEND) are seated in the front rows, not in the back. This is the most important thing, to be close to the teacher so that he/she can help them, as much as possible." (LST 3, Female)

4. Implementing a Variety of Instructional Strategies

Many participants reported that teachers implemented instructional accommodations and modifications, and DI to overcome the systemic barrier of inappropriate curriculum and to facilitate students' access to the curriculum.

"Sometimes a student has low vision, so we enlarge the size of the exam paper and the font for him/her." (Teacher 1, Male)

"The teacher makes reductions for students with SEND. For example, if a student has a dictation of three lines, the teacher gives him/her two lines or one line, according to his/her understanding." (Parent 6, PRL, Female)

"Teachers diversify their methods and I feel that this meets needs." (SQA Coordinator, Male)

When asked about how teachers solve the problem of crowded classrooms, a few participants indicated that teachers implemented group and pair work in their classrooms.

"The best solution is to implement group work because if we want to work on students individually, we cannot." (Teacher 5, Female)

5. Implementing Attitude and Behavior Modification Interventions for Students

According to many participants, the school implemented interventions for modifying negative attitudes and behaviors of students without SEND towards students with SEND. These interventions included curricular and extracurricular activities and awareness-raising.

> *"Within the human rights program, there are many activities that include students with special needs with the ordinary student. This type of activity, therefore, greatly influences the views of students regarding different students in terms of disabilities and special needs and provides a comprehensive environment within the classroom." (AEO, Female)*

> *"I spoke with the PSS School Counselor to prepare some activities on bullying." (SP, Male)*

6. Referring Students with Extensive Needs to Local Community Institutions for Part-time Special Education Services

Many participants argued that the school responded to the problem of poor knowledge and competence and of teachers in dealing with students with extensive needs by referring them to local community institutions for part-time special education services.

> *"The school refers him/her (student with speech disorders, communication and language impairment) to a speech specialist." (Parent 1, PRL, Female)*

> *"There is something called referral system. If we have any difficult cases, we refer them to the institutions." (AEO, Female)*

7. Increasing Knowledge and Awareness of Parents on IE Program

Some participants contended that the school responded to the problem of poor knowledge and awareness of parents on IE program by providing them guidance and training.

> *"Lectures (for parents) were held. They (school) held a lecture on learning difficulties." (Parent 2, PRS, Female)*

> *"Increasing awareness on IE, where sessions were conducted with parents and they were briefed on IE, the use of inclusive language and the importance of IE." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)*

8. Enhancing Engagement of Parents and Local Community

Many participants argued that the school responded to the problem of poor communication and cooperation with parents and local community by enhancing their engagement in the school community.

The school took initiative in communicating and conducting periodic meetings and activities with parents and local community to enhance their engagement in the school community.

> *"The school conducts periodic meetings (with institutions in the local community). We are part of the child protection network, and periodic meetings are held." (AEO, Female)*

> *"The school used to hold an open day." (Parent 2, PRS, Female)*

The school also gave parents opportunity to conduct classroom visits to see how their children were learning and developing.

> *"Sometimes the school allows them (parents of students with SEND) to enter classrooms to monitor the teaching learning process and how their children develop." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)*

4.3 Mechanisms for Measuring School Inclusiveness

Sub-themes relevant to how the school management measures school inclusiveness are reported across the four overarching themes, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Sub-themes relevant to mechanisms for measuring school inclusiveness across the four overarching themes

#	Theme	Sub-theme
1	Environment	
2	Education system	Teachers' practices and language
		Students' academic achievement
		Students' participation and performance
		Impressions and satisfaction of stakeholders
3	Support	IEPs
4	Relationship with parents and local community	

1. Observing Teachers' Practices and Language

Many participants highlighted that the SP measured school inclusiveness by observing teachers' practices and language inside and outside classrooms.

> *"The SP assesses the quality of IE by observing the practices and activities of the teacher, including assisting students with disabilities in group work; giving assignments to all students, individual work, pair work and group work." (LSA, Male)*

> *"The SP observes how the teacher deals with the student with special needs even in the school yard. (SQA Coordinator, Male)"*

2. Tracking Students' Academic Achievement

Some participants indicated that the SP measured school inclusiveness by tracking academic achievement of students with SEND.

> *"The SP can measure IE by monitoring students' grades because grades give an idea about the achievement of those students (with SEND)." (Teacher 6, Female)*

"The SP tracks the (academic) progress of the students identified with SEND. The identified students should be under the SP's eyes, and he should be aware of the extent of their achievement. The SP shall see the progress made." (SQA Coordinator, Male)

3. Observing Students' Participation and Performance

According to some participants, the SP measured school inclusiveness by observing participation and performance of students with SEND.

"First, through direct observation in the classroom we assess students' performance because we do not assess students' performance only through marks; there should be an assessment of how they (students with SEND) perform inside the classroom, the discussion they take part in inside the classroom." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)

"Through classroom observations, the SP focuses on students. He knows those students with special needs or low grades. He focuses and monitors those students, the process of learning and the process of participation. When this student gives a response, gives a correct answer or participates at the very least, he can conclude that this student is being worked upon. However, if the student remains inactive, he can conclude that this student is not being worked upon properly." (Teacher 4, Male)

4. Eliciting Impressions and Satisfaction of Stakeholders

Some participants highlighted that school inclusiveness was also measured by conducting meetings and eliciting impressions and satisfaction of stakeholders, including parents of students with SEND, their children, and school staff.

"The SP invites parents (of students with SEND) to meetings and asks them about their attitudes towards the quality of IE, or whether IE has helped students or not." (Parent 4, PRL, Female)

"The SP can assess IE through meetings with teachers. (Teacher 6, Female)"

5. Checking and Analyzing IEPs

Some participants highlighted that the SP measured school inclusiveness by checking and analyzing IEPs developed by teachers.

"We measure quality of IE through the IEP, how the teacher has developed the IEP and how to apply and follow it up by him/her." (SP, Male)

"The IEP could be a guide and indicator for the SP to assess the quality of IE. (Teacher 3, Female)

"School inclusiveness is measured through IEP." (AEO, Female)

4.4 Mechanisms for Sustaining School Inclusiveness

Sub-themes relevant to how the school management ensures sustainability of school inclusiveness are reported across the four overarching themes, as shown in table 8.

Table 8: Sub-themes relevant to mechanisms for sustaining school inclusiveness across the four overarching themes

#	Theme	Sub-theme
1	Environment	
2	Education system	Monitoring and follow-up
3	Support	Providing requirements and resources
		Providing training and support for teachers
4	Relationship with parents and local community	

1. Conducting Monitoring and Follow-up

Many participants noted that the school management ensured sustainability of IE by conducting ongoing monitoring and follow-up in general, and on IEPs and teachers' classroom practices, in specific.

> *"There is constant follow-up by the SP and his Deputy." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)*

> *"We keep following up. It (sustainability of IE) needs administrative follow-up. If we overlook IE program, no one talks about it. We follow up and ask for the plans (IEP), even if they are not at the level of our ambition, but we are on the road." (SP, Male)*

> *"Through constant follow-up, for example, he (SP) conducts classroom visits at the beginning of the year and then in the middle of the year." (LST 3, Female)*

2. Providing Requirements and Resources

Some participants reported that the SP ensured the sustainability of IE by providing school requirements and resources through addressing the relevant stakeholders.

> *"The school management asks the UNRWA Education Department to provide them with the aids they can meet or asks for support from the community." (SQA Coordinator, Male)*

> *"We need to get support from associations or experts from outside the school in certain situations." (Teacher 1, Male)*

> *"The school management asks UNRWA to provide talking pens, the aids by which these students can learn." (Parent 4, PRL, Female)*

3. Providing Training and Support for Teachers

Some participants stated that IE was also sustained by providing ongoing training and support for teachers.

> *"The school management should provide continuous training; provide refresher courses for the teacher." (AEO, Female)*

> *"The main factor that I have to ensure the continuity of IE in school is to strengthen the teacher." (SQA Coordinator, Male)*

> *"Through providing continuing teacher development about IE through regular sessions where the 19 tools are discussed and explained to teachers. Also, through listening to teachers, and providing appropriate support for them because these teachers may be in trouble and need support and solutions." (Lower Elementary ES and IE Area Focal Point, Female)*

5. Discussion

This study aims to examine the implementation of UNRWA's (2013a) IE policy at an UNRWA lower elementary school in Lebanon. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following four objectives: (1) investigate the barriers encountering the implementation of IE at the school understudy; (2) explore how the school overcame the barriers to implementing IE; (3) discover how the school management measured school inclusiveness; and (4) find out how they ensured sustainability of school inclusiveness.

5.1 Barriers to IE

1. Inaccessible School Building and Classrooms

This finding is consistent with these studies (Alhammad, 2017; Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Hadidi & Alkhateeb, 2015; Hussein, 2019; Muthukrishna et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2019) which found that the physical environment of schools and classrooms were inappropriate and inaccessible. This finding may be attributed to the old design and architecture of the school building, which was not mainly designed for accommodating students with physical impairments. It may also be attributed to lack of funding at UNRWA, which is required for constructing new schools or renovating existing ones.

2. Negative Attitudes of Teaching Staff, Parents, and Students

This finding is in line with these studies (Alhammad, 2017; Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; DEEWR, 2012; Kuzmicheva & Afonkina, 2020; Hadidi & Alkhateeb, 2015; Muthukrishna et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2019) which found that teachers, parents, and students had negative, stereotypical and biased attitudes towards students with SEN. Nevertheless, the finding of negative attitudes of teachers, parents, and students towards including students with SEND is inconsistent with a study by Hussein (2019) which found that attitudes of teachers, parents, and students were positive and improving. The negative attitudes of teachers may be attributed to lack of knowledge and awareness on IE due to inadequate training on IE, lack of resources and support staff, and poor communication and cooperation between teachers and parents and local community from the side of the latter. The negative attitudes of parents may be attributed

to their poor knowledge and awareness on IE due to inadequate awareness sessions and activities on IE held by the school for parents. It may also be attributed to their low educational level. The negative attitudes of students may be attributed to inadequate implementation of inclusive educational and extra curricula activities on IE due to teachers' heavy workloads.

3. Crowded Classrooms

This finding is in agreement with these studies (Alhammad, 2017; Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Hadidi & Alkhateeb, 2015; Hussein, 2019) which found that the size of classes was big. This finding may be attributed to lack of funding for having smaller class sizes.

4. Inappropriate Curriculum

This finding is in accordance with the following studies (Alhammad, 2017; Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Hussein, 2019) which found that the curriculum was inflexible. This finding may be attributed to UNRWA's first experience in developing its own curricula in line with the Lebanese official curriculum.

5. Lack of Resources

This finding reflects the findings of the following studies (Alhammad, 2017; Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; Hussein, 2019; Kuzmicheva & Afonkina, 2020; Sharma et al., 2019; UNICEF & WHO, 2015; Wapling, 2016) which found that teaching and learning materials and ATs were inadequate. This finding may be attributed to the lack of funding at UNRWA.

6. Inadequate Training for Teaching Staff

This finding corroborates the findings of the following studies (Alhammad, 2017; Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Ambia, & Rahman, 2021; DEEWR, 2012; Donohue & Bornman, 2015; Emam & Mohamed, 2011; Hussein, 2019; Kuzmicheva & Afonkina, 2020; Muthukrishna et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2019; Wapling, 2016) which revealed that professional training for teachers was inadequate. This finding may be attributed to lack of qualified trainers at UNRWA for training education cadres on IE.

7. Lack of Support Staff

This finding supports the findings of the following studies (Alhammad, 2017; DEEWR, 2012; Hussein, 2019; Muthukrishna et al., 2016) which revealed that support staff for students with SEN were inadequate. The lack of support staff, especially special educator, may be attributed to lack of funding at UNRWA. The inactive and unsupportive SST may be attributed to their poor knowledge and competence in IE. The inactive and unsupportive IE Area Focal Point may be attributed to her heavy workload since she also worked as Lower Elementary ES.

8. Poor Knowledge and Awareness of Parents on IE Program

This finding accords with the findings of these two studies (Kuzmicheva & Afonkina, 2020; Sharma et al., 2019) which found that parents had lack of knowledge and understanding about IE. The poor

knowledge and awareness of parents of students with SEND on the IE program may be attributed to parents' low educational level and their poor response to IE activities held by the school for them.

9. Poor Communication and Cooperation between the School and Parents and Local Community

This finding is similar to those of the following studies (Abu Alghaib & Tromp, 2017; Alhammad, 2017; Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Muthukrishna et al., 2016; Sharma et al., 2019) which revealed low participation of parents and local community. The poor communication and cooperation between the school and parents may be attributed to bad socio-economic conditions of parents, which negatively affected the amount of time dedicated to following up with the school on their children's education. It may also be explained by their low educational level. The poor communication and cooperation between the school and local community may be attributed to the limited opportunities for engagement in the school community offered by the school to local community institutions due to the school's busy agenda.

5.2 Solutions for Overcoming Barriers to IE

1. Maintaining Coordination and Collaboration between Teachers and LSTs

This finding confirms those of the following studies (Alexander, Choi, & McKay, 2014; Darrow, 2009) which suggested that collaboration among staff could solve the problem of teachers' lack of knowledge. This finding may be attributed to the ease of initiating and maintaining coordination and collaboration between teachers and LSTs since they worked together inside and outside classrooms within the same building for many years.

2. Depending on Teachers' Individual Efforts and Initiatives

This finding ties well with the following studies (Darrow, 2009; Sharma et al., 2019; Udoba, 2014) which proposed the following strategies for overcoming barriers to IE: educating oneself about disabilities and making teaching learning materials using local resources. This finding may be attributed to good personal skills of teachers and LSTs in developing teaching learning aids and to the low price of raw materials needed for developing such aids. It may be due to good self-learning skills of teachers, as well.

3. Implementing Environmental Accommodations

This finding is consistent with that of Ahmad (2012) who suggested making various classroom arrangements to help students with disabilities overcome physical barriers. It is also in agreement with a study by Habulezi, Molao, Mphuting, and Kebotlositswe (2016) which suggested seating students with visual impairments in front rows nearer to teachers and board. This finding may be attributed to the ease of implementing such accommodations without paying any cost. It may also be attributed to the presence of empty classrooms on the ground floor which could be used for accommodating students with physical impairments.

4. Implementing a Variety of Instructional Strategies

This finding is in line with a study by Ahmad (2012) which suggested implementing a variety of teaching methods and learning styles in the classroom. It is also in accordance with what was suggested by Darrow

(2009), DEEWR (2012), Ramchand and Dummugudem (2014), and UNICEF (2012). They proposed developing and implementing inclusive teaching learning methods and implementing instructional accommodations. This finding may be attributed to completion of the 'School Based Teacher Development: Transforming Classroom Practices' (SBTD: TCP) Program by teachers over one school year (2015/2016) as part of the Education Reform at UNRWA.

5. Implementing Attitude and Behavior Modification Interventions for Students

This finding is in congruence with a study by Sharma et al. (2019) which suggested implementing awareness activities on IE for school community, including students. It also supports what was suggested by Cologon (2013), DEEWR (2012), and UNICEF (2012). They proposed developing an inclusive environment and addressing attitudinal barriers of all stakeholders, including children. This finding may be attributed to teachers' completion of the 'Human Rights Conflict Resolution and Tolerance' (HRCRT) Program over one school year (2016/2017) as part of the Education Reform at UNRWA.

6. Referring Students with Extensive Needs to Local Community Institutions for Part-time Special Education Services

This finding corroborates what was suggested by Ekins (2012) and Hornby (2015) who stressed the need for having an organizational procedure to meet the needs of students with SEND in collaboration with members of special education teams, who could be from inside or outside the school. It also accords with a study by Sharma et al. (2019) which suggested collaborating with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This finding may be attributed to the presence of local community institutions equipped with well-trained staff and adequate resources.

7. Increasing Knowledge and Awareness of Parents on IE Program

This finding reflects the findings of these studies (Ramchand & Dummugudem, 2014; Sharma et al., 2019) which suggested providing more education, counseling and awareness on IE to parents. This finding may be attributed to school staff's belief that parents were real partners and of an important role in their children's education.

8. Enhancing Engagement of Parents and Local Community

This finding shows similarity with what was suggested by UNICEF (2012) which called for involving parents and other IE actors, including local communities, as partners in the education of children. This finding may be attributed to the open-door policy adopted by the school management towards parents and local community and the belief that their participation was a facilitator to IE.

5.3 Mechanisms for Measuring School Inclusiveness

1. Observing Teachers' Practices and Language

This finding ties well with what was suggested by Loreman, Forlin, and Sharma (2014) and Winter and O'Raw (2010). They suggested measuring IE through examining teachers' pedagogical strategies and techniques that they use for meeting all children's learning needs. This finding may be attributed to the

new role assigned by UNRWA to SP as resident education supervisors which comprises both instructional and administrative responsibilities.

2. Tracking Students' Academic Achievement

This finding confirms what was suggested by Loreman, Forlin, and Sharma (2014) who proposed measuring IE through monitoring students' achievement across school systems. This finding may be attributed to the ease of tracking academic achievement of students since UNRWA has developed and launched the Education Management Information System (EMIS) as an outcome of the Education Reform at UNRWA.

3. Observing Students' Participation and Performance

This finding is congruent with what was suggested by Loreman, Forlin, and Sharma (2014) and Winter and O'Raw (2010). They suggested that IE could be measured with respect to participation and inclusion of students with SEND in school events. This finding may be attributed to the new role assigned to SPs as resident education supervisors.

4. Eliciting Impressions and Satisfaction of Stakeholders

This finding is similar to what was suggested by Kyriazopoulou and Weber (2009). They suggested measuring IE through obtaining satisfaction of stakeholder groups. This finding may be attributed to the belief of the SP that IE is a collective responsibility and engagement of all relevant stakeholders at the level of planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation is a facilitator to IE.

5. Checking and Analyzing IEPs

This finding is consistent with what was suggested by Winter and O'Raw (2010). They suggested examining school inclusiveness with respect to IEPs in terms of parental involvement in IEP development and management of IEP supports. This finding may be attributed to the belief of the SP that an IEP is a roadmap for providing school-based additional support for students with SEND.

5.4 Mechanisms for Sustaining School Inclusiveness

1. Conducting Monitoring and Follow-up

This finding is in agreement with what was suggested by Stubbs (2008) who contended that IE can be sustained by conducting on-going participatory monitoring for IE. This finding may be attributed to the SP's responsibility of overseeing staff's professional performance and conducting ongoing monitoring as part of his job description to ensure that all students receive a high-quality IE.

2. Providing Requirements and Resources

This finding is in line with a study by Fisher, Sax, and Grove (2000) which found that IE was sustained at an American elementary school when adequate resources were available. This finding may be explained by the good relationships that the SP had developed with all IE stakeholders to ensure the provision of needed resources.

3. Providing Training and Support for Teachers

This finding is in accordance with what was suggested by Stubbs (2008) who argued that sustaining IE necessitates providing regular support and in-service training for all education staff. It also ties well with a study by Fisher et al. (2000) which found that IE was sustained when training was provided for teachers. This finding may be attributed to the inadequate training provided for the teaching staff on IE, according to most participants.

6. Recommendations

6.1 For Policy Makers:

1. Assessing students with SEND formally by specialists and not by the schoolteachers since they are incompetent for doing so
2. Appointing a full-time IE Area Focal Point with no additional professional responsibilities for supporting teachers in developing and embedding inclusive educational practices into their daily lessons
3. Appointing a special educator to provide the teaching staff with consultation and support that will help them meet the diverse needs of all students
4. Providing the teaching staff, with up-to-date PD on IE to increase their knowledge and awareness; improve their attitudes; and enhance their competence
5. Enhancing accessibility to the school and its facilities by equipping the school with an elevator and adequate ramps to facilitate access of students with physical impairments to the school and its facilities
6. Providing the school with adequate resources for helping teachers respond to the needs of students with SEND
7. Reducing size of classes

6.2 For Practitioners:

1. Conducting school-level analysis for the school's curriculum by the teachers using 'UNRWA Framework for the Analysis and Quality Implementation of the Curriculum'; the aim of this analysis is to reduce the amount of curriculum content and increase its flexibility to be more appropriate for students with SEND
2. Implementing more curricular and extracurricular activities to improve attitudes of students without SEND towards their colleagues with SEND
3. Organizing more awareness sessions for parents at the school to increase their knowledge and awareness on disability inclusion
4. Providing the local community with adequate opportunities for more effective engagement in the school community in support of IE
5. Involving all IE stakeholders, including school staff, parents, students, and local community in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating IE provision

7. Limitations of the Study

Although the present study gives rich, in-depth account on the implementation of UNRWA's IE policy at an UNRWA lower elementary school in Lebanon, it is appropriate to recognize three potential limitations. First, students with SEND were informally identified by their teachers; this may affect the accuracy of diagnosis of those students as having SEND. Second, the researchers had to translate informed consents from English into Arabic and conduct semi-structured interviews and FGDs in Arabic too because the research population's mother tongue was Arabic. Finally, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to all schools at UNRWA in Lebanon since it was conducted with case study strategy, and the research site was purposefully selected, as well.

8. Suggestions for Future Research

As the findings of the present study surprisingly reveal poor communication and collaboration between the school and parents and local community, future research should explore the causes of the poor parental and local community engagement to achieve inclusive schooling. Future research is also needed to examine the implementation of the IE policy at UNRWA schools in the upper elementary, preparatory, and secondary educational cycles across Lebanon.

9. Conclusion

Students with SEND are still facing marginalization and exclusion hindering their school access and participation. Therefore, educational policymakers are responsible for developing IE policies that clearly recognize the right of those students to quality equitable education. UNRWA's IE policy reflects UNRWA's commitment towards Palestine refugee students with SEND in its five fields of operation; however, there is still weak and inconsistent implementation of this policy in UNRWA schools across Lebanon. The implementation of the IE policy at an UNRWA lower elementary school in Lebanon faces many barriers. Nevertheless, the school has exerted big efforts for overcoming those barriers and measuring and sustaining school inclusiveness.

References

Abu Alghaib, O., & Tromp, R. (2017). Inclusive education and accountability mechanisms: "Paper commissioned for the 2017/8 global education monitoring report, accountability in education: Meeting our commitments". United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] & Leonard Cheshire Disability. Retrieved from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002595/259577e.pdf

Agius Ferrante, C. (2012). *A case study of inclusion and diversity: A whole school approach using the social model of disability*, (Doctoral dissertation), Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK. Retrieved from http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/8772/

Ahmad, W. (2012). Barriers of inclusive education for children with intellectual disability. *Indian Streams Research Journal*, 2(2), 1-4.

Ahsan, T., Sharma, U., & Deppeler, J. (2012). Challenges to prepare pre-service teachers for inclusive education in Bangladesh: Beliefs of higher educational institutional heads. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 32(2), 241-257.

Alberta Education. (2013). Indicators of inclusive schools: Continuing the conversation. Retrieved from https://education.alberta.ca/media/482253/indicators_of_inclusive_schools.pdf

Alexander, E., Choi, S., & McKay, L. (2014). Barriers and solutions to effective inclusive practice. Retrieved from https://educateemily.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/3300ednef80a2portfoliobef80a2emily-alexander.pdf

Alhammad, M. (2017). *The issues of implementing inclusion for students with learning difficulties in mainstream primary schools in Saudi Arabia*, (Doctoral dissertation), University of Lincoln, UK. Retrieved from http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/30675/\

Alkhateeb, J., Hadidi, M., & Alkhateeb, A. (2016). Inclusion of children with developmental disabilities in Arab countries: A review of the research literature from 1990 to 2014. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 49-50(1), 60-75.

Ambia, S. U., & Rahman, M. S. (2021). Challenges in primary level inclusive education in Bangladesh. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research*, 9(11), 14–20. https://doi.org/10.31686/ijier.vol9.iss11.3453

Anati, N. M. (2012). Including students with disabilities in UAE schools: A descriptive study. *International Journal of Special Education*, 27(2), 75–85. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ982862.pdf

Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools*, (2nd ed.). Bristol: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2011). *Index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools*, (3rd ed.). Bristol: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-10.

Catholic Relief Services of Vietnam. (2007). Inclusive education for children with disabilities. Retrieved from https://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/how-to-guide-inclusive-education-children-disabilities.pdf

Chaaban, J., Salti, N., Ghattas, H., Irani, A., Ismail, T., & Batlouni, L. (2016). Survey on the socioeconomic status of Palestine refugees in Lebanon 2015. American University of Beirut (AUB) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Retrieved from https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/survey_on_the_economic_status_of_palestine_refugees_in_lebanon_2015.pdf

Cologon, K. (2013). Inclusion in education: Towards equality for students with disability. Children with Disability Australia. Retrieved from https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2013-10/apo-nid36129.pdf

Darrow, A. A. (2009). Barriers to effective inclusion and strategies to overcome them. General Music Today, 22(3), 29-31. Retrieved from http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.898.7575&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR]. (2012). Report on the review of disability standards for education 2005. Retrieved from http://auspeld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Report_on_the_Review_of_DSE.pdf

Donohue, D., & Bornman, J. (2015). South African teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of learners with different abilities in mainstream classrooms. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 62(1), 42-59.

Eisenhardt, K. M., & Graebner, M. E. (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1), 25–32.

Ekins, A. (2012). *The changing face of special educational needs: Impact and implications for sencos and their schools*. London: Routledge.

El Shourbagi, S. (2017). Parental involvement in inclusive classrooms for students with learning disabilities at Omani schools as perceived by teachers. *Journal of Psychology and Cognition*, 2(2), 133-137.

Emam, M. M., & Mohamed, A. H. H. (2011). Preschool and primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Egypt: The role of experience and self-efficacy. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29(1), 976-985.

Fisher, D., Sax, C., & Grove, K. (2000). The Resilience of changes promoting inclusiveness in an urban elementary school. *The Elementary School Journal*, 100(3), 213-227. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1002152

Grima-Farrell, C. (2017). *What matters in a research to practice cycle? Teachers as researchers*. Singapore: Springer.

Habulezi, J., Molao, O., Mphuting, S., & Kebotlositswe, K. (2016). Inclusive education and challenges of providing classroom support to students with blindness in a general education classroom at a school in Botswana. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 15(1), 30-41. Retrieved from https://www.ijlter.org/index.php/ijlter/article/viewFile/540/254

Hadidi, M., & Alkhateeb, J. (2015). Special education in Arab countries: Current challenges. *International Journal of Disability Development and Education*, 62(5), 518-530.

Hornby, G. (2015). Inclusive special education: Development of a new theory for the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities. *British Journal of Special Education*, 42(3), 234-256.

Hussein, S. (2019). Wakih tatbik manha el taalim el jamih fi madares wikalet el ghawth fi dawa el namothag el mantiki [Current application of the inclusive education approach being implemented in UNRWA schools in Palestine in light of the logical model], (Master's thesis), Birzeit University, Palestine. Retrieved from http://library.birzeit.edu/librarya/bzu-ths/show_ths_category2.php?catid=23&src=0&catnameالتربية=

Kuroda, K., Kartika, D., & Kitamura, Y. (2017). Implications for teacher training and support for inclusive education in Cambodia: An empirical case study in a developing country. Working paper No. 148. JICA Research Institute. Retrieved from https://www.jica.go.jp/jica-ri/publication/workingpaper/l75nbg000006u18l-att/JICA-RI_WP_No.148.pdf

Kuzmicheva, T. V., & Afonkina, I. A. (2020). Social and educational barriers to inclusive education of individuals with special health needs. In I. Gafurov, & R. Valeeva R (Eds.), Proceedings of the VI International Forum on Teacher Education: Perspectives and Priorities of Teacher Education in Times of Change, Choice and Challenge. (pp. 1353-1367). Kazan Federal University, Russia: ARPHA Proceedings. https://doi.org/10.3897/ap.2.e1353

Kyriazopoulou, M., & Weber, H. (Eds.). (2009). Development of a set of indicators for inclusive education in Europe. Odense, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.

Laisidou, A. (2015). *Inclusive education and the issue of change: Theory, policy and pedagogy.* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Loreman, T., Forlin, C., & Sharma, U. (2014). Measuring indicators of inclusive education: A systematic review of the literature. In C. Forlin, & T. Loreman (Eds.), *Measuring inclusive education: International perspectives on inclusive education,* (Vol. 3, pp. 165-187). Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Loreman, T., Forlin, C., Chambers, D., Sharma, U., & Deppeler, J. (2014). Conceptualising and measuring inclusive education. In C. Forlin, & T. Loreman (Eds.), *Measuring inclusive education: International perspectives on inclusive education*, (Vol. 3, pp. 3-17). Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Muthukrishna, N., Morojele, P., Naidoo, J., & D'amant, A. (2016). Access to education: Experiences from South Africa. In E. Garcia-Iriarte, R. McConkey, & R. Gilligan (Eds.), *Disability and human rights: Global perspectives*, (pp. 133-149). New York: Palgrave-Macmillan Education.

Ramchand, B., & Dummugudem, Z. (2014). Inclusion education as solution to barriers of CWSN and answer for their success. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, 3(8), 43-48. Retrieved from http://www.ijhssi.org/papers/v3(8)/Version-2/G0382043048.pdf

Rodriguez, J. (2013). An examination of inclusive education in schools operated by the Jordanian field of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, (Doctoral dissertation), University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida. Retrieved from http://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/2684/

Sharma, U., & Das, A. (2015). Inclusive education in India: Past, present and future. *Support for Learning*, 30(1), 55-68.

Sharma, U., Armstrong, A. C., Merumeru, L., Simi, J., & Yared, J. (2019). Addressing barriers to implementing inclusive education in the Pacific. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 23(1), 65-78. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1514751

Sindelar, P., Shearer, D., Yendol-Hoppey, D., & Liebert, T. (2006). The sustainability of inclusive school reform. Exceptional Children, 72(3), 317–331. Retrieved from https://www.cec.sped.org/~/media/Files/Policy/IDEA/IDEA40/Exceptional%20Children2006Sindelar31731.pdf

Stubbs, S. (2008). Inclusive education: Where there are few resources, (Rev. ed.). The Atlas Alliance. Retrieved from http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/IE%20few%20resources%202008.pdf

Surour, S., & Ashour, A. (2015). Linking advocacy and inclusive pedagogy: An example from Gaza. *Enabling Education Review*: Special Issue 2015, 14–19. Retrieved from http://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/EER%20advocacy.pdf

Udoba, H. (2014). Challenges faced by teachers when teaching learners with developmental disability, (Master's thesis), University of Oslo, Norway. Retrieved from http://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-46844

United Nations [UN]. (2007). Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. Adopted by the General Assembly, 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106. Retrieved from http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?docid=45f973632

United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], & World Health Organization [WHO]. (2015). Assistive technology for children with disabilities: Creating opportunities for education, inclusion and participation: A discussion paper. WHO. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/Assistive-Tech-Web.pdf

United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF]. (2012). The right of children with disabilities to education: A rights-based approach to inclusive, position paper. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/UNICEF_Right_to_Education_Children_Disabilities_En_Web.pdf

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA]. (2013a). Inclusive education policy. Retrieved from https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/unrwa_inclusive_education_policy_2013.pdf

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA]. (2013b). Inclusive education strategy. Retrieved from https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/unrwa_inclusive_education_strategy_2013.pdf

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA]. (2014). Baseline study of classroom practices in UNRWA elementary schools- final report. Retrieved from https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/unrwa_classroom_practices_baseline_study_english.pdf

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA]. (2020). UNRWA in figures. Retrieved from https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/unrwa_in_figures_2021_eng.pdf

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA]. (2016). UNRWA disability program fact sheet. Retrieved from http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/disability_programme_fact_sheet.pdf

Wapling, L. (2016). Inclusive education and children with disabilities: Quality Education for All in low and middle income countries. CBM. Retrieved from http://www.cbm.org/article/downloads/54741/Quality_Education_for_All_LMIC_Evidence_Review_CBM_2016_Full_Report.pdf

Weber, A. S. (2012). Inclusive education in the Gulf Cooperation Council. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World*, 2(2), 85–96.

Winter, E., & O'Raw, P. (2010). *Literature review of the principles and practices relating to inclusive education for children with special educational needs*. Trim, Ireland: National Council for Special Education.