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UAE Preschool Teachers' Attitudes toward Inclusion Education by Specialty and Cultural Identity

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Abstract

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Health Psychology

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Abstract

Inclusion of children with special education needs into public classrooms in United Arab Emirates applied in 2006. The application of inclusion programs started in high schools, and followed by elementary schools and preschools. Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion evaluated among high school and elementary teachers but not among preschool teachers. The effect of the cultural background of teaching staff on inclusion education not evaluated in a UAE preschool. The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the effect of educational specialty and culture on teachers' attitudes toward an inclusion education system in United Arab Emirates. The theory of planned behavior of Ajzan (1991) used in this study to explain teachers' attitudes. This quantitative study evaluated teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education through a distributed questionnaire, including a demographics form and a STATIC scale for evaluating teachers' attitudes. A two-factor ANOVA used to test the effects of teachers' specialty and cultural background on STATIC scores. Findings showed a main effect of preschool teachers' cultural identity on their attitudes toward inclusion education. Teachers with Asian identity showed better attitudes toward inclusion education than Gulf identity or African identity teachers. No differences found between preschool teachers' specialty (general and special education teachers) on their attitudes toward inclusion education. This study will contribute to social change by providing valuable knowledge about UAE preschool teachers' attitudes toward the application of inclusion education to improve the inclusion classrooms settings and environment.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Improving education is a primary means for people to gain a higher quality of life, well-being, and achievement. Historically, education of special-needs students has carried out in specialized centers according to the type of disability (Gaad, 2004). However, despite the multiple benefits specialized centers offer in preparing special needs students for the future, isolation from other classmates' leads to reduced integration into society, loss of confidence, and isolated living conditions (Colrusson & O'Rourke, 2004). This unhealthy educational approach necessitates the provision of inclusion education as a new educational setting where students with disabilities and nondisabled students have the same opportunity and educational setting in regular classrooms (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 2008).

Special needs students are students' ages 3 to 22 years with physical or mental disabilities, who often receive education in separate schools and institutions (Russo, 2006). Special needs individuals can participate in all areas of society and have the same rights as others, and schools worldwide recognize the importance of involving this group in mainstream society (Gaad, 2004). With nearly 25 million special educational students worldwide (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, 2007), the necessity for new educational settings for these students is recognized globally to provide the rights of students with special needs to be educated in the same settings as nondisabled peers. Educational authorities and institutions observed social adaptation, academic achievements, and enrollment among disabled students in the community after inclusion education became the norm in different countries including UAE; however, many

difficulties found with teacher and school preparation (Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Gaad, 2004; Thomas, 2009).

In this chapter, I discuss the history of inclusion education, including application dates and procedures of inclusion in the United Arab Emirates. I included a problem statement related to preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education, the purpose of this study, research questions related to teacher type and culture. In this chapter I discussed the nature of the study, definitions of keywords, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations of study design and procedures. Finally, Iconcluded the study's significance in relation to community and education system.

Background

Inclusion education is the practice of educating students who have or are at increased risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions, in addition to those who require health and related services of a type or quantity beyond that required by nondisabled children (Lewis & Doorlag, 2006; Russo, 2006).The first global action to reframe education settings to implement inclusion practices was in Salamanca, Spain in 1994. Inclusion education practices adopted in the UAE in 2006 (UNESCO, 2008). The UAE is an Arabic gulf country composed of seven emirates: Abu Dhabi (capital), Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah, Umm Al Quwain, Fujairah, and Ajman. The UAE's population was nearly 4.9 million in 2010, including both local Emirate citizens and foreigners (Bowman, 2007).

The UAE is a multicultural community including three main cultures: Gulf (composed mainly from Emirates), Asian, and African cultures. The process of

enculturation produces different attitudes and behaviors. Social factors as well as biological and ecological factors interact together to represent individual culture, which is reinforced by family, community, and institutions to form individual attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and behaviors (Matsumoto & Juang,2008). Teachers from different cultural backgrounds recruited to teach in the UAE schools. Consequently, teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education programs may differ based on their self-identified culture.

In 1979, the government educational strategies expanded to provide educational services for special needs students in community and center-based institutions (Bradshaw, Lydiatt, & Tennant, 2004). The Ministry of Education of the UAE provided required educational services to disabled students in these centers, including equipment, teachers, and classrooms (Arif, Gaad & Scott, 2006). In 2006, the UAE Federal government launched Federal Law No. 29, the inclusion program *School for All*, which stated that students with disabilities in public and private schools must enjoy equal access to educational opportunities with their nondisabled peers in the same schools (Gaad, 2004). The purpose of this program was to provide education programs with the highest international standards and services to disabled students to prepare them to be productive members of society (Ministry of Education, 2006).

The Ministry made great efforts to prepare schools and modify curricula to provide the necessary environment for disabled students (Hassan, 2008). The UAE inclusion system adopted first by elementary and high schools when school and staff members were ready to receive disabled students. Although researchers reported successful adaptation of inclusion philosophy in certain studies (Blake & Monahan,

2007; Norwich, 2002), many studies reported negative issues regarding the implementation of inclusion (Berry, 2010; Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005).

A few studies have evaluated teachers' attitudes toward the application of inclusion education in elementary and high schools in the UAE. Anati (2012) evaluated elementary schools teachers' attitudes toward the application of inclusion education through distributed questionnaires. Gaad (2004) evaluated attitudes of elementary and high school teachers according to their experiences and training courses in teaching disabled students through direct interviews.

Finally, elementary and high school teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education were evaluated in UAE, England, and Egypt by direct interviews of teachers regarding their preparation and choices to teach in inclusion setting (Gaad, 2005). Although preschools are run by teaching staff who are capable of teaching basic educational elements, preschool inclusion in the UAE was delayed due to lack of training of both general and special education preschool teachers (Gaad, 2004). Therefore, studies of preschool teachers' attitudes are scant. The recent application of inclusion education in the preschool education, and the absence of teachers' feedback toward this new program application in the preschools are major gaps in the literature that my study fills.

Attitude is an important factor in shaping people's behavior toward life activities and situations (Boer, Pijl &Minnaert, 2011). Teachers are critical regarding the application of inclusion education programs as well as other educational programs. Teachers' attitudes toward educational programs are important for program

successfulness. Teachers may have positive attitudes toward inclusion education framework, but they may have negative attitudes toward the implementation of inclusion education programs. Attitude differences related to schools' preparations, teachers' preparations, and program application (Cassady, 2011; Charafeddine, 2009; Gaad, 2004). In this study I addressed preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education, which has not been evaluated in UAE.

Cultural background, such as family, community, and experiences, affects people's attitudes toward different life situations (Gaad, 2004). Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education evaluated in different countries and research studies (Avramidis, E. & Kalyva, and E.2007);However, no studies done to examine differences in attitudes toward inclusion education from teachers of different cultures. The UAE is a multicultural community consisting mainly of people from Gulf, Asian, and African cultures (Gaad, 2005). Gulf culture represented by Gulf countries where Islam is the predominant religion, and Arabic is the main language. Boys education were more preferable than girls; however, the number of girls attending schools increased in the last decade (Mandell & Novak, 2005). People in this culture have lower expectations toward academic achievement of disabled children, which affects their attitude toward the participation of their children in inclusion classrooms (Gaad, 2004).

Asian residents in the UAE were mainly from southwest Asian countries where Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism are the predominant religions, and people speak Arabic, Urdu, and Persian languages (Crabtree, 2007). Education was more likely to be equally open to boys and girls; however, low socioeconomic factors made education for

boys a higher priority than education for girls. Researchers concluded positive trends toward education of disabled children among Asian cultures if the facilities and professional staff were available (Ghanizadeh, Bahredar, & Moeini, 2006; Miles, 2002; Pearson, Eva, Ernest, & Donna, 2003).

Finally, residents from African cultures are often Islamic and speak Arabic. Gender norms and the traditions of society play an important role in deciding if resources allocated to the education of girls and women. In the traditional gender paradigm, boy and men's education considered more profitable because the man expected to be the only breadwinner in the family (AbouZeid, 2006). The vast majority of disabled children in this culture brought up in single-parent households, and families prefer seeking professional assistance to mainstream classes (Baker & George, 2008). Preschool teachers' attitudes related to their specialties and their cultural differences in the UAE, were the primary research gaps addressed in this study.

Problem Statement

Many researchers documented teachers' attitudes, experiences, specialties, and teaching levels in relation to the inclusion programs in many countries. UAE was one of these countries.(Arif et al., 2006; Gaad & Khan, 2007; Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005; Semrud, Clikeman & Cloth, 2005; Thomas & Loxley, 2007); However, researchers documented a lack of quantitative studies for evaluating preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education in the UAE (Anati, 2012; Gaad, 2004). Because preschool teachers were the last education staff to be trained with training courses in the UAE, examining preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education is vital to the

evaluation of inclusion education for preschools, and providing information for future programs in the UAE (Arif et al., 2006; Gaad, 2004).

Emirate citizens represented 20% of the UAE's society, whereas Asian, African, and Chinese cultures represented 50%, 25 %, and 5% respectively (National Bureau of Statistics, 2014). Although Asians comprise the largest category of the Emirates' populations, teachers with excellent Arabic language skills are an essential asset for the teaching staff in the UAE schools. According to this classification, schoolteachers are primarily Gulf citizens (45%), Asian (30%), and African (20%). The problem that this study addressed was UAE preschool teachers' attitudes according to their self-reported-cultural identity. The goal was to improve and maintain this program because many researchers cited the benefits of teaching disabled children in inclusive classrooms (Avramidis, E., & Kalyva, E. 2007, Moeini, 2006; Miles, 2002).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study is to evaluate differences in attitudes (dependent variable) of general and special education preschool teachers toward inclusion education of students with severe disabilities in regular UAE classrooms. In this study, I examined attitudes of teachers in the UAE who self-identity as being from the predominant cultures (Gulf, Asian, and African) toward inclusion at the preschool level.

Research Questions

The study answered the following questions:

RQ1. Is there a significant difference between general and special education preschool teachers' attitudes, as measured by the STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

$H_0 1$: There is no significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes, as measured by STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

$H_a 1$: There is a significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes, as measured by STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

RQ2. Is there a significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

$H_0 2$: There is no significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

$H_a 2$: There is a significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

RQ3: Is there a significant interaction between general and special preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

$H_0 3$: There is no significant interaction between general and special preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

$H_a 3$: There is a significant interaction between general and special preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that I used for this study was Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior, which is an extension of the theory of reasoned action. The theory includes a broad model that evaluates the likelihood of behavior that arises from attitudes and used in research involving attitudes toward individuals with disabilities (Hodge & Jansma, 2000). The model suggested experiences, previous knowledge, and new knowledge influence attitudes toward behaviors (see Figure 1). Attitudes played a role in determining behavior, so it is paramount to ascertain factors that shape attitudes of mainstream teachers as they include students with special needs into their classrooms. These factors are: (a) experience with teaching students with special needs, (b) inclusive

education training, and (c) new knowledge (i.e., professional development or training
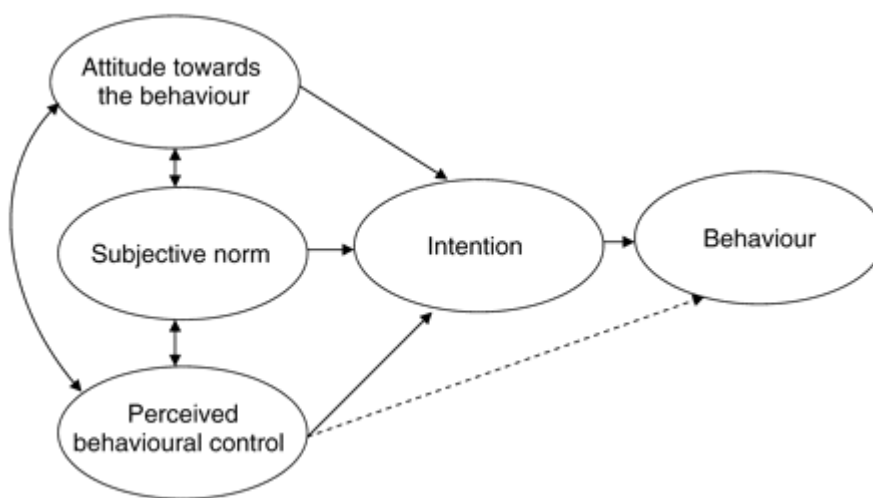
modules).

Figure 1. Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Nature of the Study

A nonexperimental survey design was the best method to evaluate attitudes and

discover trends regarding a phenomenon (Creswell, 2008). I tested in this study the

effects of two factors: educational specialty (general or special education teachers) and

cultural identity (Gulf, Asian, African) on the dependent variable, which was preschool

teacher attitudes toward inclusion of disabled students into mainstream classes. To

measure the dependent variable, participants completed the Scale of Teachers' Attitudes

toward Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC) questionnaire developed by Cochran (1998),

second questionnaire that I created and administered to measure the independent

variables: teacher educational specialty and cultural identity, demographic data such as

age, gender, education, and years of teaching experience.

In this study, the selected teachers represented the study sample of the population

of teachers in the UAE. After final approval from the Ministry of Education to conduct

the study, I got the list of preschools with the inclusion program with a list of both general and special education teachers who had experience in teaching in inclusion classrooms and teachers who are teaching in inclusion classrooms for each Emirate. Given the limited number of special education teachers, all special education teachers in the 35 preschools were included in the study, and three general education teachers selected randomly from each school by a drawing to get the required sample for this study. I analyzed the data using a two (special education, or general education teacher) by three (Gulf, Asian or African culture) factorial ANOVA to determine whether multiple factors alone or in combination influence teachers' scores on STATIC Scale.

Definitions

The following list describes terms used throughout this study:

Attitudes: Inferred beliefs, judgments, and perceptions—both positive and negative—toward an object, situation, or person manifested through experience, report, or behaviors (Cassady, 2011).

Culture: A complex system of behaviors, values, beliefs, and artifacts that transmit through generations (Harrison & Carroll, 2006). Categories examined in this study include Gulf, Asian, and African cultures.

Federal Law No. 29/2006 (School For All): A law enacted by the UAE Federal Government that protects the rights of people with special needs, granting them equal opportunities and rights to a decent life and comprehensive care regarding education, training, health, and rehabilitation.

General education teachers: Individuals who are qualified to teach a standard curriculum for typically healthy, developing children.

Inclusion education: Inclusive education suggests that children with special education needs should be included in classrooms designed for the majority of children. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to students' diverse needs, accommodating both disparate styles and rates of learning, and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational operations, teaching strategies, resource use, and community partnerships (Idol, 2006; UNESCO, 2006).

Ministry of Education: The governing body of UAE's education sector, public and private.

Special education teachers: Individuals charged with all duties associated with general education teachers, and who are qualified to instruct students who have various mental and physical disabilities that impede learning, including autism, visual and hearing impairments, and emotional disturbances (Bos & Vaughn, 2005).

STATIC Scale: An instrument that measures teachers' attitudes as an individual response, positive or negative, concerning several degrees, expressed using 6 points—strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, but tend to disagree, not sure, but tend to agree, agree, and strongly agree—toward an issue or situation (Cochran,1997;Weisel & Tur-Kaspa, 2002).

Students with special needs: Students who have or are at increased risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions, and who require

health and related services of a type or quantity beyond that required by children (Russo, 2006).

Assumptions

I based this study on three pivotal assumptions. First, I assumed that preschool teachers currently teaching in inclusive classrooms would have different attitudes toward inclusion education, based on their knowledge and experience, than teachers who do not have teaching experience in inclusive classrooms. Consequently, only teachers who have experience teaching in inclusion classrooms at some point in their careers were included in this study. My second assumption was that teachers respond honestly to survey questions. The final assumption is that STATIC scale measurement would act as a representative of participants' attitudes toward inclusion education program.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study, I examined teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education among general and special education preschool teachers, and the influence of teachers' cultural backgrounds on those attitudes. In this study, teachers' attitudes and cultural background considered important factors for inclusion education success; however, many factors could affect program success, such as the type of student disability, parents' attitude toward inclusion education, and the number of disabled students in the classroom, which could be addressed in future studies.

Limitations

Participants might have professional concerns regarding participation in the study and choose not to participate. To mitigate this limitation, I assured all participants that

answers would be confidential, and not shared with administrators or institutions. Results of this study pertain to preschool teachers, and cannot be generalized to elementary, middle, or high school teachers. A final limitation related to the effect of other non-tested factors on the study results such as student's disabilities and parents' attitudes toward inclusion education. I suggested further studies to study these variables in my recommendation.

Study Significance to UAE Communities

The application of inclusion education is associated with many advantages (Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Gaad, 2004; Thomas, 2009). Many studies examined elementary, middle, and high school teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education as a critical factor in program success (Gaad & Khan, 2007; Thomas & Loxley, 2007). In this study, I examined preschool teachers' attitude toward inclusion education to provide information to the program administer to improve inclusion program structure, recognize and remove program obstacles to maintain program application, and to better prepare teachers before their involvement in educational programs (Park & Chitiyo, 2009). This shared a part with other studies to maintain the continuity of such valuable programs for the benefit of students, families of disabled children, and community. These benefits include preparation of students with special needs to be contributing members of the community, to promote social skills, and to promote regular communication with their peers in adulthood (Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007). Enrollment of special needs children into inclusive environments will prepare them for future relationships and

friendships in the community, which provides support and nurtures skills to participate in various work fields inside the community (Boutot, 2007).

Inclusion education benefits the families of disabled children socially by easing the stigma of isolation from others in the community and by helping them become more integrated into community (Carter & Hughes, 2006). This fact is especially true when a student is an only child and whose parents may be unable to "fit in" to the community unless the student is placed in an inclusion setting (Carter & Hughes, 2006).

Summary

Inclusion of disabled students with their nondisabled peers in the same educational setting is a valuable step for their preparation to be a vital part of the community. The application of inclusion education in UAE started in 2006 in elementary, middle, and high schools; however, the application of this program in preschools started in 2010. There are many advantages of inclusion education; however, the successful application and continuity of this program relies on good teacher preparation to run the new classroom setting. Teachers' attitudes are critical factors in their behavior toward new educational settings. Teachers' cultures are an important factor in shaping their attitudes toward inclusion of disabled students into mainstream classes. I examined in this quantitative study preschool teachers' attitudes and the influence of their cultural background on their attitudes toward inclusion education according to the theory of planned behavior. I discussed if there will be an effect of teachers' type and cultures with their attitude toward inclusion education.

In chapter 1, I introduced the research problem of this study, describing the background and the history of UAE inclusion education. The problem statement and purpose regarding preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion discussed and explained. Research questions and hypotheses were stated, and a description of the study's nature in relation to extant theory discussed. In this chapter, I defined operational terms and identified the study's assumptions and limitations regarding methods and design. Finally, the advantages of inclusion education and the importance of teachers' attitudes reflect the study's significance.

In chapter 2, I included a literature review including numerous studies that examined inclusion education and teacher attitudes relating to different factors in various countries. In Chapter 3, I mentioned the study's methods including sample selection, data collection, and analyses. In Chapters 4 and 5, I included study's results and interpretations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Inclusion or inclusive education is the incorporation of special needs children in general education classrooms where they socialized and accepted by peers. In 2006, the government of the UAE launched the inclusion program School for all, which adopted the philosophy of inclusive education by ensuring that all students with disabilities in public and private educational institutions in the UAE have access to equal educational opportunities. Although the inclusion program had already been running in elementary and high schools, preschools began accepting disabled preschool children in the inclusion program in 2010.

Inclusive education depends on multiple factors to achieve the recommended goals toward disabled as well as nondisabled students. These factors included school preparation as well as, classroom preparation, provision of the necessary facilities for disabled children and teachers' habilitation for the new program. Although the two former factors are important, the latter is the most important because teachers are the primary tools for adapting programs and addressing difficulties or obstacles using their experience (Khochen & Radford, 2012; Singal, 2008).

Teachers' attitudes were one of the successful keys of inclusive programs. Teachers' perceptions, judgments, and experiences demonstrated the obstacles and difficulties of inclusive education. Many studies examined high school, middle school, and primary school teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education, but due to recent

application of inclusion education in preschools, few studies have assessed teachers'
attitudes in that context.

The UAE is a multicultural community. Teachers from different cultures with
good Arabic and English standards are included in the education process according to
their professional standard. Differences in cultures affect teachers' concerns as well as
their attitudes and solutions toward different educational settings (Gaad, 2004). The
purpose of this quantitative study was to evaluate the differences in attitudes of general
and special education teachers from different cultural backgrounds toward inclusion
education of preschool students with special needs in regular education classrooms in the
UAE.

In the literature review, I included information on vital and historical issues for
two main topics: (a) inclusive education, including an overview of inclusive education
background, benefits and barriers of the program, social effects, as well as, the academic
effects of the program and the relevant factors for program application; and (b) teachers'
attitudes. I included attitude definition, components, and theories of attitude. I included
the importance of teachers' attitude and the impact of teachers' culture, age, education,
years of experience, and training courses on their attitude. In addition to the preceding
introduction, I included the following related topics: inclusion education, pre-school
education, attitude, culture, and theoretical framework. Finally, in this chapter I
demonstrate empirical studies of teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education,
conclusion, practical implications, and summary.

Literature Search Strategy

I conducted this review using three main sources: (a) Ministry of Education of United Arab Emirates, (b) the online Walden University library, and (c) Google Scholar. These main sources opened the door to the secondary sources, such as general rules for special education program in UAE and EBSCO search from which databases like ERIC, Sage online journals, Academic Search Premier, ProQuest incorporated for the most recently published peer-reviewed articles (2006-2013). I searched for peer-reviewed articles through Google Scholar in addition to other online sites, which found through Google. Book resources were included in this review to a lesser extent. The search process done through the following terms: *inclusion, inclusive education , special education , advantages and disadvantages of inclusion, strategies of inclusion, disabled children, inclusion program among preschool children, preschool learning and behavioral goal,. attitude component, the effect of attitude on behavior, measurement scales for attitude , static scale, factors affecting attitude, teachers attitude toward inclusion , culture, types of culture,* and *the effect of culture on teachers attitudes .*

Inclusion Education

History of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education had historical roots in many countries, but the first legal approval of the inclusive program took place at the global conference of the United Nations in Salamanca, Spain (1994) when the majority of world countries approved the statement of inclusive education (Killoran, Tymon, & Frempong, 2007). At the same time, many countries started solid steps for the application of inclusion education, and a

new educational system started to teach children with special needs in regular classrooms (Osgood, 2005).

Although education of special needs children was under debate in United Sates of America a long time ago, true steps for an inclusion program started in1975, when American efforts made to remedy the problem of providing the necessary educational facilities like blackboards, headphones, and classrooms for disabled students (Wright & Wright, 2007). The legal approval of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was in 1997, and ensured that children with disabilities would have equal education opportunities and quality of education (Ornstein & Levine, 1997). In 2004, IDEA reassessed and modifications made in line with No Child Left behind Act (NCLB), which expanded and improved special education for disabled children. Since 2007, schools throughout the United States have adopted full inclusion of disabled children into regular classes (Peters, 2007). Excellence for All Children was the banner of inclusive education in England where barriers to inclusive education analyzed and solved to have a smooth program transition. In 2004, the application of the program began in the majority of the British schools (Gartner & Lipsky, 2005).

Inclusion program awareness started by the year 2002 in Western Australia with the emergence of building inclusive schools for raising awareness and preparing required facilities followed by preparing schools to accept disabled children (Althau, Bridgman & Davis, 2007). In Queensland, the inclusion program started in 2005 after proper preparation of the education staff for the program and explanation of the inclusion education program to the community (Gillies & Carrington, 2004). In 1970, European

countries, such as the United Kingdom, Denmark, France, Ireland, Austria, Finland, and Poland began to assess community awareness of inclusion programs and community support for the development of inclusion programs in schools (Flem, Moen, & Gudmundsdottir, 2004). The legal starting point of inclusion programs in England was in 2004, followed by the countries mentioned above and New Zealand. The laws mandated that disabled citizens enjoy equal rights and opportunities for education and life accommodations (UNESCO, 2008). Since 1996, the education system in Africa was struggling with providing a new policy regarding children with special needs education, but the changes took place in 2001-2002 with new education policy, "Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education," which represented the starting point of inclusive education in South Africa (Eleweke, 2001).

Due to the large geographical size of India, the cooperation of Indian state governments to finalize a policy for educating special needs children needed from all the states governments. The efforts begun in the 1990s focused on improving education for children with disabilities, which followed by an increase in community awareness toward educating special needs children (Croft, 2006; Raja, Boyce, & Boyce, 2003). In 1994, the District Primary Education Program (DPEP) launched by the Ministry of education in India to provide additional support for educating special needs children. Finally, the inclusion program launched under the name of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the minister of education recommended that all schools in India accommodate inclusive programs (Raja et al., 2003).

New educational trends in the Middle East established by education authority staff regarding inclusive education. In Egypt, the beginning of the school inclusion program was in 1993 and accomplished by admitting small numbers of disabled students into one of the local schools in Cairo. Similar steps in different schools followed this step with limited educational facilities (Gaad, 2011). By the year 2000, the government approved a new strategy plan for disabled students' education under the banner of Community Education for All, which incorporated an inclusion program in different areas of the country. In 2008, Minister of education in Egypt (UNESCO, 2008) documented 4000 schools with inclusive education.

The Jordanian government introduced the legal recognition of disabled students' needs in 1993. The higher educational institution statement declared that education is a right for disabled children according to their capabilities (Saleh & Al-Karasneh, 2009). The limited educational and economic resources needed for disabled children were the main barriers to the slow progress of inclusion programs in Jordan (Al-Zyoudi, 2006). In 2007, a new law adopted for the rights of disabled children to study in regular classrooms with their nondisabled classmates. In 2010, 500 schools in Jordan implemented an inclusion program (Tabutin, Schoumaker, Rogers, Mandelbaum, & Dutreuilh, 2005; UNESCO, 2008).

The UAE, one of the Arab Gulf countries, recognized the importance of special education programs for disabled students since 1979 (Charafeddine, 2009). Special schools have been prepared for disabled children with different physical, mental, and emotional disabilities, and the need for improving special education opened the door for

federal law in year 2006 under the statement "School for All" to include disabled

children, and gifted and talented students in regular classrooms (Alghazo & Gaad, 2004).

Although inclusive education program offered in elementary, middle, and high schools

since 2006, preschools joined the program in 2010 throughout the whole UAE (Alghazo

& Gaad, 2004; Tabutin et al., 2005).

Benefits of Inclusive Education

The goal of inclusive education is to prepare both children with special

educational needs and nondisabled students to be vital partners in the community;

however, benefits are different between disabled and non-disabled children. Children

with special educational needs acquired social skills as well as academic ones;

communications and relationships formed between the disabled and the non-disabled

partners. Additionally, independence and higher self-confidence enabled the disabled

students to participate successfully among community categories (Downing & Peckham-

Hardin, 2007).

Inclusive education assisted the healthy students by increasing their empathy and

tolerance toward students with educational needs. They had a higher appreciation and

respect for those individuals who struggle in school. The main benefit for children

without disabilities is to accept the presence and participation of the special needs

individuals in daily life activities (Yanoff, 2006). Researchers found that all participants

in inclusion education recognized social benefits from the experience (Downing &

Peckham-Hardin, 2007; Frederickson, Dunsmuir, Lang, & Monsen, 2004 : Bunch and

Valeo ,2004) identified increased friendship between non-disabled and special needs

students. Researchers also found that increased academic achievement of students with special needs is another major advantage of inclusion programs (Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007; Frederickson et al., 2004; Giangreco, 2007).

The application of inclusion education in preschools added more benefits for many students. Students with special educational needs gained a broad range of learning age appropriate skills, independence in a natural setting, and established an early social life ((Yanoff, 2006). Children without health needs appreciated differences between people at an early age, developed positive attitude toward students with special needs, and had opportunities for friendships with disabled students (Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007). Direct staff used this opportunity in different ways. They gained experience in dealing with special needs students in a preschool setting, felt successful in a new, challenging opportunity for teaching learning skills for young students, made significant changes in classroom setting, and cooperated with a wider circle of teaching staff and administrators (Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007).

Limitations of Inclusive Education

Studies of teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education reflect possible program limitations from teachers' points of view The first inclusive program limitation is the presence of special needs students in the classroom, which disrupts the focus on teaching non-disabled students (Talmor, Reiter, & Feigin, 2005). The second inclusive program limitation is the absence of the required number of special education teachers for children with special educational needs (Brakenreed, 2008). Limited capacity for accommodations in the schools and classrooms is a third limitation for an inclusive program (Mitchell,

2004). The application of an inclusion education program in preschools with such limitations will weaken the program and expose students to inappropriate skills and experiences, which could affect student, parent, and teaching staff attitudes regarding the benefits of this program.

Several researchers (Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007; Frederickson et al., 2004; Giangreco, 2007; Talmor et al., 2005) found teachers' attitudes also affected benefits and limitations of inclusion education. I examined preschool teachers' attitudes in UAE toward inclusion education to provide valuable information toward inclusion education including benefits and limitations of inclusion education in UAE.

Preschool Education

The education process all over the world started at the preschool level, which offers similar theoretical, behavioral, and developmental programs in most of preschool programs (Odom, 2000; Yanoff, 2006). Important academic skills learned in pre-school help preschool students in their future elementary and high school education (Odom, 2000). Math, science, and literacy basics taught in simple language for all students in preschools (Odom et al., 2004). Preschool children practice jumping, running, throwing, and hopping as well fine arts and crafts activities to acquired motor skills and helped muscles to stretch properly (Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 2003). Preschool students practiced social skills, learned how to communicate, appreciate, participate, investigate, and helped other people (Odom, 2000). Finally, important skills started at preschool level by teaching students to pronounce letters, use words, and form sentences, which help them communicate properly with others through expressing emotions and feelings (Pianta &

Kraft-Sayre, 2003). Preschools are the foundational core for education as well as behavior and communication. Proper preparation of healthy children and children with special educational needs helped them cope in future settings without difficulty.

<div align="center">**Attitudes**</div>

Components of Attitude

To understand teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education of children with special needs, it is helpful to understand the components of attitudes in general. The structure of attitudes is the integration of three components: affect (i.e., an emotional component), behavior (i.e., an action component), and cognition (i.e., a mental component) (Ajzen, 2002; Trafimow et al., 2004). Affect represents personal emotions individuals feel toward an object, situation, or person, which influences opinions and decisions (Ajzen, 2002; Perkins et al., 2007). Behavior represents actions that individuals practice when they feel various emotions according to background information (Ajzen, 2002). Cognition represented information and knowledge that individuals acquired from the environment and other sources according to knowledge acquisition (Cassady, 2011). For this study, I used the STATIC scale, which investigates teachers' affect, behavior, and cognition in relation to the advantages, disadvantages, philosophical, and psychological issues toward inclusion education.

Measurement of Attitude

A variety of methods was available for measuring attitudes; however, research goals influenced a researcher's choice for a suitable method (Cassady, 2011). The importance of attitude measurement is evident in translating an image of individual

feelings toward an object, situation, or person regardless of whether the attitude is positive or negative (Jamieson, 2004). Generally, attitudes measured by different methods; however, the scaling technique, which uses various degrees ranging from negative to positive and passing through a neutral response, is the best attitude measurement technique (Trochim, 2006). I represented in this study, teachers' attitude toward inclusion education, which measured by the Scale of Teacher Attitude toward Inclusion Education (STATIC).

STATIC Scale for Measurement of Teachers' Attitude

Cochran developed the Scale of Teachers' Attitude toward Inclusion (STATIC) Scale in 1998. The scale included 20 items to measures teachers' attitude toward inclusion of children with special needs into regular classes. In addition, demographic questions added as a second form to compare teachers' attitude toward inclusion education in relation to the specialty type and teachers' self-reported culture. Through STATIC scale and the demographic questionnaire, I described and explained in the methods section. Teachers' self-reported cultures differentiated according to their cultural background to understand their attitude from different perspectives.

Culture

Culture is a society system in which individuals share beliefs, behaviors, values, traditions, and history, to transmit them across generations through learning (Gaad, 2011; Thomas, Au, & Ravlin, 2003). Culture, genetics, and experiences are major predispositions of behavior, and influenced by family, community, language, and religion (Gaad, 2011). According to this framework, people learn to think and to behave in a

particular way, and every culture's members follow certain patterns, traditions, and beliefs in their daily lives toward various issues and toward other cultures (Norwich, 2008).

Cultural distinctions found according to cultural characteristics act as a cultural print for a community; what learned in one culture may not be acceptable in another (Lockwood, Marshall, & Sadler, 2005). Technology and international financial systems play a crucial role in knowledge exchange between cultures and nations through travel, mass media, immigration, work opportunities, and social activities (Gaad, 2011). Three main cultures comprise UAE: Gulf culture, Asian culture, and African culture.

Gulf culture. This culture was represented by countries lined the Arab Gulf region including UAE. Islam is the predominant religion in these countries and tradition influenced by their religion. Arabic is the official language in these countries; however, the majority of local people speak English. Oil industry is the contributing factor in providing a wealthy environment to these countries (Mandell & Novak, 2005). Men and women separated in the majority of workplaces including schools. Marriage between relatives is part of their tradition, which has afflicted the next generation with hereditary diseases and disabilities. Social stigma is the main family concern regarding children with special educational and health needs, and families of healthy children prefer to hire specialized maids who can take care of disabled children in their houses (Crabtree, 2007).

Education is available for both genders with separate classes in separate classrooms; however, some private schools with English education program offer classes for boys and girls without separation. Families had lower expectations toward academic

achievement of disabled children (Gaad, 2004). The issue of special needs children was highly influenced by religion. Most families considered disability is God's will to test the faith; however, the minority considered that mothers were the main cause for disabled children, and it is a way of God's punishment (Baker & George, 2008).

    Asian culture. Asian culture was represented a variety in different aspects due to the presence of different nationalities, societies, and ethnic groups. The majority of Asian residents of UAE are from southwest Asia. Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism are the predominant religions in this culture. People speak Arabic, Urdo, and Persian languages. Oil industry is the main economic resource of this area; however, agriculture and tourist industries represent secondary economic resources. Men and women worked in the majority of workplaces without separation in their fields including schools (Al-shammari, 2006). Disabled children in this culture are taken care by their own families due to low socioeconomic standards and problems associated with transportation and medical problems that force these families to take care of these children at home; however, families show positive perceptions toward education of disabled children if the facilities and professional staff are available (Baker & George, 2008). Mothers often blamed for bringing a child with a special need into the world. This belief affects mothers' family relationships and their husbands may repudiate mothers of children with a special need. Healthy siblings, particularly daughters, will find their marriage prospects blighted. Education is open for both boys and girls under separated conditions (Crabtree, 2007).

    African culture. The main African residents in UAE are from North Africa, mainly from Egypt, Libya, Sudan, Tunisia, and Morocco. Islam is the predominant

religion in this area. Arabic is the main language; however, French is considered the second option. The occupations are trade, agriculture, and human resources (Asante & Molefi, 2007). Men and women work in all workplaces without separation including schools. Disability in South Africa still surrounded by stigma and prejudice. Having a child with special needs is associated with punishment, curses, and failure. Parents of disabled children often experience ostracism within their communities, and the birth of a child with a special need doubles the likelihood of abandonment (Munyi, 2012). Women blamed for children with a special need and men are seeking to escape the associated pressures of caring for the child rather than the stigma associated with the birth. The vast majority of children with a special need brought up in single-parent households. Families prefer seeking professional assistance over mainstream classes; however low income and education affect such expectation (Baker & George, 2008). The above-mentioned cultures agree that a child with a special need is not welcome and represents a bad sign and a big responsibility for the family. However, with the presence of educational facilities, specialized persons, and acceptable fees for the education of disabled children, families will overcome any barriers toward educating their disabled sons and daughters. This study investigated the attitude of Gulf, Asian, and African cultures that live in one environment (UAE) and find out if multicultural environment will affect teachers' attitude toward the education of children with a special need in comparison to teachers that live in separate cultures.

Theoretical Framework

Few studies have mentioned theoretical backgrounds when evaluating teacher attitudes toward inclusive education (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005; Thomas, 2009). Ajzen and Manstead (2007) discussed three major theories of attitude. Social cognitive theory, theory of reasoned action, and theory of planned behavior used to explain individuals' behavior and the causes of behavior changes. These theories compared to justify the choice of theory most relevant to this study.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory is a learning theory, which presented by Bandura in 1962. The theory stated that behavior shaped by external factors and personal knowledge rather than inner cues like intentions and perceptions. Therefore, behavior depends on people's direct observation to learn how to behave and to gain experience regarding various life situations and activities. Accordingly, individuals acquired knowledge, strategies, attitudes, and skills from individuals' models (Bandura, 1986). "Of the many cues that influence behavior, at any point in time, none is more common than the actions of others" (Bandura, 1986, p. 206). Personal attitude according to social cognitive theory greatly influenced by the environment and judgment of the surrounding people rather than personal beliefs toward life issues.

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

Theory of reasoned action is a behavioral theory, which presented by Fishbein and Ajzen in 1975. The theory's principles state that individuals' behavior related directly to their intentions toward different situations (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2005; Glanz,

Rimer, & Lewis, 2002). Intentions determined by two factors: social factors and personal

factors. The first one was the personal attitude to perform the behavior whereas the

second one included cultural and social norms, which assist or prevent certain behavior

(Fishbein & Ajzen, 2005).Personal attitude according to the theory of reasoned action

affected by personal beliefs and others' judgment toward life's issues.

Theory of Planned behavior (TPB)

Theory of planned behavior is a behavioral theory, which considered an extension

of reasoned action theory presented by Ajzen (1991). Although the theory of reasoned

action deals with personal attitude and social norms, which predict behaviors with

volitional control (Fishbein &Ajzen, 2005), the theory of planned behavior added

perceived behavioral control factor to the theory construction. Perceived control factor

represents perception as a vital factor for shaping individual reaction toward a situation.

Ultimately, the theory consisted of three domains: attitudes toward behavior, subjective

norms, and perceived behavior control (Ajzen & Manstead, 2007; E. S. Casper, 2007).

Attitudes toward behavior. Attitudes develop from individuals' beliefs held

toward a situation or an object (Godin, Belanger-Gravel, Eccles, & Grimshaw, 2008).

Positive or negative beliefs will guide individuals to like or dislike objects, issues, or

situations and link behaviors to their outcomes or to their attributions accordingly.

Personal attitudes shaped positively or negatively (Ajzen, 1991).

Subjective norms. Subjective norms are the social rules, and cultural pressures

that can encourage or discourage certain behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Individuals will take

into consideration the approval or disapproval of others in the community regarding an

act or behavior. Subjective norms are the mirror image of individual salient normative beliefs where the likelihood of accepting or refusing behaviors is motivated by other people's behavior (Hagger & Chatzirarantis, 2005).

Perceived behavior control. The addition of perceived behavior control factor distinguished the theory of planned behavior from social and reasoned action theories by testing personal judgments and attitudes toward their capabilities to perform behaviors and helped researchers to study personal behavior under different situations and knowledge background (E. S. Casper, 2007). Perceived behavior control represented the hidden fuel to achieve the required task, and reflected individual confidence in determining the success for a given situation (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavior control factor comes along with Bandura's (1986) concept of perceived self-efficacy of how well an individual feels capable of executing a required behavior in a certain situation (Hagger & Chatzirarantis, 2005).

The addition of perceived behavioral control factor in planned behavior theory represents an advantage of this theory by testing the effect of experience and future goals on required motivation to act in certain way (Ajzen & Manstead, 2007). Personal attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavior control are the three elements of planned behavior theory that will answer the research questions in this study by testing attitude differences among general and special education preschool teachers toward inclusion education as well as the effect of culture on their attitude. This study investigated teachers' attitude toward inclusion education in relation to the teacher specialty, which includes experience, ability, and teacher culture, which affected by personal beliefs. The

theory of planned behavior chosen to conducted this study and addressed the required questions.

Empirical Studies on Teachers' Attitudes toward Inclusion

Although many studies done to measure teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, the majority of these studies utilized different research questions, different school levels, variables, cultures, and has achieved different outcomes and suggestions. A literature review of recent studies divided into two major parts: Part I: Global view of teachers' attitude toward inclusive education and Part II: Studies of pre-school teachers' attitude toward inclusion.

Part I: Global view of Teachers' Attitudes toward Inclusive Education

Many studies conducted worldwide to assess teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education regardless of their specialty or students level. In the United States, teachers reported unfavorable to negative attitudes toward inclusive education (Cook, Cameron, and Tankersley, 2007; DeBettencourt, 1999; Everington, Steven & Winters, 1999; Hammond & Lawrence, 2003; Rheams & Bain, 2005; Wilkins & Nietfeld, 2004). Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) assessed teacher attitudes toward inclusive education in Greece and the results suggested those teachers held positive attitudes toward inclusion. In contrast, results from Batsiou et al.'s (2008) study of the attitudes of 179 Greece and Cypriot teachers toward inclusive education suggested negative attitudes.

In the United Kingdom, Sadler's (2005) study suggested teachers have limited knowledge and negative attitudes concerning inclusive education. Ghanizadeh et al. (2006) assessed teacher attitudes toward inclusive education in Iran, reporting that 78%

of participants demonstrated negative attitudes toward inclusive programs; participants preferred separate classes for students with special needs. In Zimbabwe, the majority of teachers were against inclusive education; they, too, preferred separate classes for children with a special need (Mushoriwa, 2001). In contrast, results from India and Portugal, reported teacher's attitudes toward inclusion were positive (Freire & César, 2003; Parasuram, 2006).

An assessment of 224 teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education in China suggested negative perceptions due to program difficulty for both students and teachers (Pearson et al., 2003). In Korea, teacher attitudes were in favor of inclusive education if schools and class settings were available (Kim, Park, & Snell, 2005), and similar results were found in studies conducted in New Zealand and Turkey (Monsen & Frederickson, 2004; Sari, 2007). Another finding in Anwar and Sulman's (2012) study showed that the majority of general school educators had a positive attitude toward participation of physically disabled students in inclusive programs rather than cognitive disabled students.

David (2010) found that 78% of 578 general teachers in Korea had concerns for inclusive program success regarding the required facilities, curriculum, and classrooms settings for the special needs students. In Palestine, Opdal, Wormaes, and Habayeb (2001) reported positive teacher attitudes toward inclusive education programs, but some reservations also reported concerning limited training, availability of qualified specialist teachers, and the high cost of supporting inclusive programs. Similar results found in Lebanon (Khochen & Radford, 2012).

Overall, findings varied between acceptance and rejection of inclusion education program; however, Buford and Casey (2012) and Anke, Sip and Alexander (2011) found that special education teachers showed more positive attitude toward inclusion education than general education teachers due to their training courses in communication with special needs students. Schools, required facilities, and teachers' preparation were the main reasons for teachers' attitudes differences.

Part II: Studies of Pre-school Teachers' Attitude toward Inclusion

A few studies in different countries evaluated pre-school teachers' attitudes toward inclusion of disabled students into regular classrooms; however research types, variables, and methods were different from one study to another. Few studies mentioned theoretical background for their studies in evaluating teachers' attitude toward inclusive education (Clough and Nutbrown (2004). The majorities of extant studies of teacher attitudes explored attitudes toward inclusion program concerns, needs, technical problems, and obstacles regarding implementation, but did not include culture as a factor (Killoran et al., 2007; Thomas, 2009).

One study examined disparities of teachers and parents' attitudes toward inclusion programs in three cultures—United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and England—without regard for education type or school level. Gaad (2004), who was in these three countries, and recorded an interview with the participants regarding their experience in inclusion education program, performed this qualitative study.

England and Emirates teachers' attitudes were positive with some limitations toward the type of child disability included in the classrooms. The majority of Egyptian

teachers showed a negative response toward inclusion education program (Gaad, 2004).This study showed that people's attitudes and beliefs could be similar in one culture and different between cultures due to community rules and beliefs through generations. Another finding from Gaad's interviews was that social preparation of community members is an important factor in the application of new trends.

Clough and Nutbrown (2004) described feedback from 94 general preschool teachers from the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) using a qualitative study design. Participants asked to finish the questionnaire, and an interview regarding five fields related to the educators' personal experiences, professional development, views of childhood, inclusion, and exclusion, and the roles of parents toward inclusion education. Participants insisted on early application of inclusion education in preschools and the importance of teachers' participation in this program according to their capabilities and willingness.

Using an information from 141 general and special education pre-school teachers in Ontario, Canada, Thomas' (2009) quantitative study identified teachers' positive attitude toward inclusion education to be 92%, and the necessity of training courses when developing inclusive education programs to be 94%. In northern Thailand, a qualitative study of 20 pre-school teachers conducted regardless of participant specialty concerning attitudes toward inclusion education. Direct interviews demonstrated positive agreement on the importance of teacher preparedness, school facilities, and shortages of teachers are primary causes of inclusion program difficulties (Sasipin, Michael, & Ian, 2012). Zarifi (2010) compared between teachers attitudes toward inclusion education according to the

number of pre-training courses for teachers' preparation to teach in inclusive classrooms. Study findings suggested that 80% of participants insisted on the importance of teacher preparedness regarding inclusion education in required courses.

Teachers' qualifications tested in four countries (Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, and Singapore). The study used Attitudes toward Inclusive Education scale (ATIES) to measure pre-service teachers' attitude toward inclusion education. Results showed that 90 % of the participants did not receive any pre-services training, and 58% had not taught disabled children (Forlin, Loreman, Sharma, & Earle, 2009).

Previous studies measured preschool teachers' attitudes among different nationalities in different environments. Most of the preschool studies used qualitative study designs and a few studies using a quantitative study design utilizing self-developed questionnaire or Attitudes toward Inclusive Education scale (ATIES). Main findings in most of these studies were positive attitude toward inclusion education, the absence of training courses for teaching students with educational needs, and the incorporation of different variables to assess teachers' attitude toward inclusion education. The effect of teachers' culture on teachers' attitude examined in any study.

Anati (2013) discussed education challenges regarding inclusive program application in Abu-Dhabi and education system obstacles in UAE. This qualitative study represented 26 high school, primary school, and pre-school general teachers in Abu Dhabi Emirate. However, it did not include special education teachers, and it did not study the effect of culture on teachers' attitude toward inclusion education. The study used a self-developed questionnaire to assess their attitudes, schools facilities, and

required staff for inclusion program. Results showed almost generalized agreement from all of the participants toward the importance of inclusion education, schools preparations, and the importance of specialists in this program.

The studies mentioned in the previous paragraph measured preschool teachers' attitudes among different nationalities in different environments; however, the majority of these studies used qualitative study designs in the form of interviews and direct answers. Quantitative studies used self-developed questionnaire or different scales according to the research questions among elementary and high school teachers rather than STATIC scale that was designed to include major and minor issues regarding inclusion education. Finally, studies mentioned in this section carried out among teachers representing their culture in their country.

In this quantitative study, I investigated the attitudes of general and special education preschool teachers in a multicultural society where teachers have run inclusion education from different cultures. I used a survey tool to gather data from preschool teachers teaching in inclusive classrooms as a selected sample of preschool teachers' population in UAE. The researcher used STATIC scale, which represents a flexible, clear instrument used to gather research data in previous studies. The STATIC scale designed to cover vital issues related to the application of inclusion program rather than scales designed especially for the research goals (Cochran in 1998).

Conclusion

Pre-school teachers had provided different information regarding inclusion of disabled students with nondisabled students in general classrooms. Their opinions ranged between support and opposition. The supporter category showed approval rates from 70-90 % in different studies (Anati, 2012; Buford & Casey, 2012; Khochen & Radford, 2012). These studies considered inclusion programs an essential step for future education. Although the program may need major changes for implementation, the social, academic, and psychological benefits are important for disabled students to be vital members in the community (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005; Anati, 2012).

The main reason for disagreement among other teachers was the lack of community knowledge regarding program elements, program goals, and low salary against the heavy workload of teaching staff (Thomas, 2009). Some educators depend on essential factors like teachers' training, the provision of necessary equipment for disabled students like wheelchairs, ramps, blackboards, headphones, and necessary equipment for classrooms. Finally, administrators help to achieve a positive attitude (Anati, 2012; Killoran et al., 2007; Zarifi, 2010). Recent application of inclusion education in UAE preschools requires inclusion program evaluation among teachers attending inclusive classrooms to investigate the negative and positive directions of new educational programs in the country from the view of different teacher specialties and cultures.

Practical Implications

Studies of teachers' attitudes toward disabled students' programs contributed several practical implications for inclusive education programs to decrease the negative attitudes and strengthen positive issues of inclusive programs. I provided teachers with

attitude awareness toward inclusion education program, which applied recently in preschools in UAE. The gathered data helped educators to deal with program obstacles and improve teachers' attitudes toward the idea of including children with special needs into regular classrooms. I provided social comparison toward inclusion education among teachers from different cultures to encourage the positive ones and decrease the negative ones. Investigating preschool teachers' attitude will help educators to overcome program difficulties and increase the success of inclusion education program for next educational levels (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005).

Summary

The genesis of inclusive programs in various countries in 1994 opened the door for future research regarding assessment and evaluation of these programs (Osgood, 2005). Studies of teacher attitudes toward the programs included global data from inclusive programs at varying educational levels and multiple cultures. In this literature review, I considered a variety of education principles such as school level, definitions of attitudes, components tied to attitudes, and attitude theories. In this review, I reflected the measured attitudes toward inclusive education in many studies towards the important practical applications and suggestions for future studies.

I reported teacher attitudes toward inclusive education at different educational levels, but due to recent application of inclusion education, the attitudes of preschool teachers toward inclusive education in UAE was the topic in the present study. Although I represented a global view of teacher attitudes from many different nations, the presence of many cultures in UAE community with different attitudes toward inclusion education

not been investigated. I potentially provided preschool teachers' attitude to help educators in the assessment, analysis, and application of inclusive education program in UAE, the Gulf area, and other countries.

  In chapter 3, I explained the research methodology used in this study, including the sample, design, data collection, and instruments. I explained selection criteria and sample setting in addition to methods of data analysis.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate differences between general and special preschool teachers' and the effect of teachers' culture on their attitude toward inclusion education in UAE. In this chapter, I described the research methodology that I used in this study. I also included description of the research design, population, sampling procedure, instruments, data collection, data analysis, and ethical procedures.

Research Design

Establishment of research goals depends on accurate selection of the appropriate research design (Fink, 2009). The quantitative research method is the suitable method for gathering trends, attitudes, and opinions according to numerical scales (Creswell, 2007). I examined teachers' specialty (general and special), and teachers' cultures (Gulf, Asian, or African), which were the independent variables (IV). Teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education was the dependent variable (DV).

Survey research was appropriate for this study because the data for this non-experimental study were observational data (the IVs observed not manipulated). Surveys were used to measure the teachers' attitude toward inclusion education programs in UAE in relation to teachers' specialty (general or special education) and cultural identity (Gulf, Asian, African). I used the Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC) to investigate preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education programs in UAE. The survey was distributed by the researcher to

the participants as two questionnaires and the consent form throughout the educational zones of each Emirate of the UAE.

Methodology

Population

The target population of this quantitative study was general and special education teachers who had experience or were currently teaching in an inclusion education classroom in one of the seven Emirates of the UAE. The lists provided by the Ministry of Education identified the schools that use the inclusion education program and teachers by educational specialty. In this study, I included the preschools across the seven Emirates of the UAE. Currently, 35 preschools have inclusive education programs in the UAE. There were 552 general education teachers, and 70-105 special education teachers distributed over these preschools. Female teachers represented 65% of the total teachers, and 40% of teachers identify themselves as Gulf culture. I used a sample size analysis to determine the number of participants needed in each group by teacher educational specialty, and cultural identity.

Sampling and Sampling Procedure

I used a convenience-sampling procedure to collect the required data for this study. The needed size for this study was 158 participants with almost 80 participants from each educational specialty group. I used the convenience sampling procedure, which is suitable for this study to include the required number of special education teachers as well as the general education teachers and to provide equal number of participants in each group.

I determined the required sample for this study for 2x3-study design by specifying the number of the levels of tested factors (2, 3), alpha level 0.05, and estimated effect size. Previous studies on teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education used an effect size of 0.14 (Kulo, 2012; Kieran, 2012). I estimated the required sample size for ANOVA 2x3 factorial design using G power analysis and the total sample size for this study was a minimum of 158 participants with 80 in each group of teachers (G power 3.1). The accepted response rate for paper-based survey is 77-80% (Nulty, 2008).I included an additional 15 teachers in each group to account for this response rate.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I sent a study request to the Ministry of Education to get the approval to conduct the study (Appendix A). After study approval, I selected the names of all preschools running the inclusion education program from the list provided by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education sent an official letter to the selected schools to inform these schools about the Ministry's approval to conduct the research. I visited each school and contacted both general and special education teachers. I included all special education teachers in my study, while I selected general education teachers randomly by drawing three names from a box, which contains the names of all general education teachers. I explained the research, the survey, and the answering procedure to the participants. Each participant signed a consent form for participation and completed two study questionnaires. The first questionnaire was a demographic questionnaire gathering data concerning age, specialty, cultural identity, and years of experience. The second questionnaire was the STATIC scale questionnaire, which related to the inclusion

education programs. Each participant given 10 days to finish the survey and I picked them up from the participants myself.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

Demographic Questionnaire

The demographic questionnaire (Appendix C) that I created included questions about independent variables (teachers' specialty and cultural identity). The questionnaire also included questions about teachers' gender, age, teaching years' experience in inclusion education setting, and highest educational degree the teacher earned.

Assessment of Independent Variables

Teachers' education specialty and self-reported cultural identity were the independent variables in this study. The teachers chose either general or special education as their specialty, and teachers' options for their cultural identity were Gulf culture, Asian culture, and African culture. I provided a clear definition of culture in the questionnaire form so that participants could correctly choose their identity; I defined culture as a complex system of behaviors, values, beliefs, and artifacts that transmitted through generations (Harrison & Carroll, 2006).

STATIC Scale

The second questionnaire form was Scale of Teachers' Attitude toward Inclusion Education STATIC (Appendix D), which includes 20 questions with a 6 point answering scale. STATIC is an instrument to measure teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education (Cochran, 1997). I contacted the publisher and received his approval to use the STATIC Scale in this study (Appendix E).The scale was developed in a study where

approximately 1,440 in-service teachers were asked to complete the STATIC in Alabama
in the United States. The static scale composed of 20 questions divided into four major
subscales as follows:

Subscale 1: Advantages and disadvantages of inclusion education.

Subscale 2: Professional issues regarding inclusion education.

Subscale 3: Philosophical issues regarding inclusion education.

Subscale 4: Logistical concerns of inclusion education.

Total scale answers were rated along 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (*strongly
disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The total score ranges from 0-100 across subscales, the
higher the total score the more positive the attitude, while lower score indicates negative
attitude (Cochran-Smith, & Lyte, 1999; Cochran, 1997). I used the total score summed
across all subscales as the dependent variable in this study

Reliability and validity of the STATIC. The population sample for STATIC
scale development was 516 teachers from north and central Alabama (Cochran, 1997).
Study reliability on STATIC scale showed Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.89, which was
consistent for the total group as well as for individual groups for both regular and special
education teachers. Item to total correlations ranged from 0.26 to 0.70 with a mean of
0.51, standard deviation of 0.11 and a standard error of measurement of ±0.04. Recorded
values for STATIC scale considered almost excellent (Cochran, 1997, George & Mallery,
2003).

The validity of the STATIC instrument supported during scale construction by a
pilot study conducted in 1996 on a sample of 280 teachers in seven schools (Anwar &

Sulman, 2012). Content validity of the STATIC questions analyzed by related studies during its construction. Scale construct validity indicated by item to total correlation coefficient ranging from 0.26 to 0.7 on 516 teachers from Alabama. These results demonstrated and compared with other studies of different instruments measuring similar constructs (Neary, Halvorsen, Kronberg, & Kelly, 1992; Salisbury, Palombaro, & Hollowood, 1993; York &Tudidor, 1995). The results of the comparison showed a positive validity support to pursue the use of STATIC scale as a measurement tool for teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education (Cochran, 1997).

Threats to Validity

Threats to research validity are important factors, which considered while conducting a study. According to Dillman (2007), Study biases avoided by reminding the participants in the beginning of the questionnaire that the most important thing is the accuracy of the answers. I assured the participants that both positive and negative attitudes were acceptable answers. Creswell (2007) stated that the main external threat of data conclusion when the researcher generalizes or draws final conclusions from the data of the tested sample of preschool teachers to elementary, middle, and high school teachers . Therefore, I did not generalize the findings to other grades; however, the generalized data compared with data of the same grades of other cultures.

Another important issue is the possibility of participants opting not to participate in this study. To achieve high return rate from the participants, the questionnaire was clear with simple language and Iexplained the advantages of this survey and the importance of teachers' feedback regarding inclusion education. Creswell (2008) stated

that the researcher assured teachers that identifying information collected, without mentioning participants' names to keep their identity confidential. Therefore, I kept the data in confidential folder to destroy after 5 years. The final sampling issue to avoid was under representing or over representing any one Emirate. I recruited almost equal participants from each school to avoid study bias.

Creswell (2008) stated that threats to statistical conclusion found when measures, assumptions, variable scales, and statistical power are inaccurate. I avoided these threats through many channels. I included clear instructions on the questionnaire sheet at the beginning of the questionnaire about the answering method to avoid misunderstanding of participants' responses to survey questions. A reasonable time allotted to finish the questionnaire so the participants can finish the questionnaire without pressure. Because the STATIC scale has not been validated with the population of UAE, I provided Arabic and English translation of the demographic questionnaire as well as for the STATIC scale instrument to ensure proper understanding of the questionnaire

Variables

I investigated preschool general and special education teachers' attitude toward inclusion education.. Teachers' attitude toward inclusion education will be measured by scoring each item on the STATIC from 0-5 according the scale coding as follows: (0)*strongly disagree*, (1) *disagree* ,(2) *not sure but tend to disagree*,(3) *not sure, but tend to agree*,(4) *agree*, (5) *strongly agree*) Total scoring of the 20 items ranged from 0-100. The higher the final score the more positive the teacher attitude. Teachers' specialty defined as follows:

General education teachers; individuals who are qualified to teach the standard curriculum for typically healthy developing children. special education teachers; individuals who had all the duties of general education teachers and are qualified to instruct students who have various mental and physical disabilities that may impede learning, including autism, visual and hearing impairments, and emotional disturbances (Bos & Vaughn, 2005; Appendix C). Teacher's self-identified cultural group defined as a complex system of behaviors, values, beliefs, and artifacts that transmit through generations (Harrison & Carroll, 2006). Teachers cultural background classified in this study into Gulf culture, Asian culture, and African culture). These choices were in the study questionnaire form (Appendix C) and teachers chose the answer that best describes their cultural background.

Data Analysis

I collected data from the demographic questionnaire and the STATIC Scale and analyzed them using SPSS V22.0 statistical software. The SPSS software package was the recommended software for statistical analysis of social science research (Bryman, Alan; Cramer, Duncan, 2011). The demographic data (gender, age, Emirate, educational specialty, cultural identity, and years of experience) coded and shifted to the spreadsheets of SPSS software. STATIC scale addresses 20-items with a Likert-scale of six options starting from 0=*strongly disagree* to 5=*strongly agree*. Each item of the STATIC scale will be coded from *strongly disagree* to stro*ngly agree* as (0 = 1, 1 = 2, 2 = 3, 3 = 4, 4= 5, and 5 = 6) and shifted to the spreadsheet. The sum of all 20 items indicated teacher attitude toward inclusion education. Higher score indicated positive attitude whereas the

lower the score the more negative attitude. Variables frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation were used for data analysis. STATIC Scale was analyzed using means, and standard deviation for overall scores. I analyzed the effect of teachers' specialty and cultures on the STATIC Scale using factorial ANOVA with an alpha level of .05 and a confidence level of 0.95 for statistical tests. The study answered the following questions:

RQ1: Is there a significant difference between general and special education preschool teachers' attitudes, as measured by the STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

H_01: There is no significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes, as measured by STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

H_a1: There is a significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes, as measured by STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

Variables for Research Question 1. The independent variable is the education specialty for the participants. Education specialty in this study has two levels (general and special education) teachers. The dependent variable is the STATIC scale to measure teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education.

RQ2: Is there a significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

H₀2: There is no significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

Hₐ2: There is a significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

Variables for Research Question 2. The independent variable is the cultural identity for the participants. Cultural identity has three levels (Gulf, Asian, and African) in this study. The dependent variable is the STATIC scale to measure teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education.

RQ3: Is there a significant interaction between general and special preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

H₀3: There is no significant interaction between general and special preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

Hₐ3: There is a significant interaction between general and special preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

Variables for Research Question 3. The independent variables are the education specialty for the participants, which has two levels (general and special education) teachers and the cultural identity for the participants. Cultural identity has three levels

(Gulf, Asian, and African) in this study. The dependent variable is the STATIC scale to measure teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education.

To test the study hypotheses, a 2×3 factorial ANOVA statistical test was conducted to address the differences in the means of teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education in relation to teachers' specialty levels and teachers' cultural identity. When I obtained significant results or interactions, post hoc test conducted to explore which group is different from the others.

Ethical Protection of Participants

Ethical procedures are important in data collection. First, I got the approval of Walden IRB for the study design to ensure protection of the participants. Second, I submitted a letter for study approval to the Ministry of Education (Appendix A) to conduct the study with the preschool teaching staff. Third, preschool teachers received and signed a consent form (Appendix B) to get their approval for their participation in the study. Consent form included the following information:

1- Researcher identification.

2- Purpose of the research.

3- Advantages of this study.

4- Guarantee of confidentiality to the participants.

5- Participants can withdraw from the study at any time.

6- Names and contacts of responsible persons if questions arise.

I assured participants that all correspondence, and study data was confidential. No identifiers appeared on any research data that allowed for identification of participants. I

used only codes for sorting information related to the participants and the questionnaire was absent of any personal information. All permission forms and data gathered throughout the research are in a locked storage cabinet in safe place that only I had the key. Data will be destroyed after 5 years.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate differences between general and special preschool teachers' and the effect of teachers' culture in their attitude toward inclusion education in UAE. The target population is the preschool teachers including general as well as special education teachers from the UAE selected randomly according to convenience sampling procedure. The survey included a demographic form and the STATIC scale forms, which completed by teachers and returned to me.I discussed study reliability and validity in addition to the necessary actions to avoid erroneous study outcomes. In this chapter, I defined study variables according to the coding and analysis of these variables. In data analysis, section I described the analysis procedure according to the study questions, and finally I discusses the ethical issues required for participants' protection. In chapter 4 I presented the results of data analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to evaluate UAE preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education and to determine if there were differences in the attitudes of preschool teachers in relation to their specialty (General vs. Special education) and cultural identity (Gulf, Asian, African).

I designed this quantitative study to test the effect of independent variables (preschool teachers' specialty and preschool teachers' cultural identity) on their attitudes presented by (STATIC) Scale, which represented the study dependent variable. I used a two-part questionnaire to measure the attitudes of 218 preschool teachers who were involved in UAE preschools with inclusion education program.

This study answered the following research questions:

RQ1. Is there a significant difference between general and special education preschool teachers' attitudes, as measured by the STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

$H_0 1$: There is no significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes, as measured by STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

$H_a 1$: There is a significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes, as measured by STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

RQ2. Is there a significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

H_a2: There is a significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

RQ3: Is there a significant interaction between general and special education preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

$H_0$3: There is no significant interaction between general and special education preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

H_a3: There is a significant interaction between general and special education preschool teachers' attitude as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools?

Chapter 4 includes the following sections: study purpose, research questions, and hypothesis, data collection procedure, study results, and final summary. This section includes tables of statistical testing results.

Data Collection

I evaluated preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education in relation to their specialty and cultural identity. The research questionnaire consisted of two parts: a demographic questionnaire that addressed the study's independent variables (teacher specialty and cultural identity) as well as teachers' ages, genders, teaching experience, and education level (Appendix C).

The second part was the STATIC Scale, which consisted of 20 questions with Likert scales for answering procedure from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The scale measured teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education (Appendix D). After receiving the IRB approval letter (03-03-16-0134654) and Ministry of Health approval letter to collect the data, the Ministry of Health provided me with the list of 35 preschools running inclusion education program. I visited each preschool and contacted both general and special education teachers. All the special education teachers in each school were included in the survey, whereas I selected the required number of the general education teachers randomly by drawing three names from a box that contained the names of all general education teachers for each school. I explained the research, the survey, and the answering procedure to the participants. Each participant signed a consent form for participation and completed two study questionnaires. I gave participants a period of 10 days to finish the survey, after which time I collected the survey from the participants myself. The needed sample size for this study was 158 participants with a confidence level of 95% and 0.5 alpha level. 218 preschool teachers participated in this study. There were 105 special education teachers from the 35

preschools, and 101 of them participated in the study. Out of 135 general education

teachers selected randomly, 117 participated in this study. The response rate was 96% of

the special education teachers, and 86% general education teachers.

Descriptive Statistics

Collected data from demographic information represented in Tables 1- 4.

Demographic questionnaire items include teachers' distribution according to Emirate,

specialty, culture, gender, ages, educational background, and experience history. I

presented teachers distribution among Emirates in table 1. Of the 218 survey respondents,

24.3 % ($n = 53$) were teaching in Abu Dhabi Emirate, 17.9 % ($n = 39$) were teaching in

Dubai Emirate, 16.5 % ($n = 36$) were teaching in Ajman Emirate. Almost 13.8 % ($n = 30$)

were teaching in Ras al-Khaimah Emirate, 11.0 % ($n = 24$) were teaching in Fujairah

Emirate, 9.6 % ($n = 21$) were teaching in Sharjah Emirate, and 6.9 % ($n = 15$) were

teaching in Umalqewen Emirate.

Table 1

Teaching groups by Emirates distributions

Emirates	Frequency	Percent
Abu Dhabi	53	24.3
Dubai	39	17.9
Ajman	36	16.5
Ras al-Khaimah	30	13.8
Fujairah	24	11.0
Sharjah	21	9.6
Umalqewen	15	6.9
Total	218	100.0

Table 2

Age groups and Gender of participated teachers

Age groups	Frequency	Percent
22-27	18	8.3
28-32	38	17.4
33-37	35	16.1
38-42	106	48.6
43-47	15	6.9
> than47	6	2.8
Gender		
Male	52	23.9
Female	166	76.1
Total	218	100.0

In table 2 I represented age groups and gender distribution among study participants. Participating teachers represented themselves in one of the six age groups. The majority of preschool teachers were between 38-42 years of age, with a 48.6 % ($n =$ 106), while the smallest group represented was 2.8% ($n = 6$) with an age of older than 47 years. The results revealed that 76.1% ($n = 166$) of respondents who completed this survey were females, and 23.9 % ($n = 52$) were males.

Table 3

Educational background and years of teaching experience of participated teachers

Education	Frequency	Percent
High school	3	1.4
Diploma	18	8.3
Bachelor	189	86.7
Master	7	3.2
Doctor of philosophy	1	.4
Years of teaching experience		
0-5	121	55.5
6-11	49	22.5
12-17	34	15.6
18-23	12	5.5
> 23	2	.9
Total	218	100.0

In table 3 I represented educational background and years of experience of teaching in schools with inclusion education programs. The majority of the participants held a Bachelor's degree (86.7 %, $n = 189$), while 55.5% ($n = 121$) of the participants had 0-5 years of experience teaching in an inclusion education program and 22.2 % ($n = 49$) of teachers had 6-11 years of teaching experience in an inclusion education program.

Table 4

Cultural identity and specialty composition of participated teachers

Specialty	Frequency	Percent
Special education	101	46.3
General education	117	53.7
Cultural identity		
Gulf	91	41.7
African	71	32.6
Asian	56	25.7
Total	218	100.0

In table 4 I represented teachers specialties and cultural identities of the participants. Of the 218 participants, 53.7 % (n = 117) were general education teachers and 46.3 % (n = 101) were special education teachers. Teachers with Gulf cultural identity represented 41.7 % (n = 91). Asian cultural identity represented 32.6 % (n = 71), and African Culture represented 25.7 % (n = 56).

Data Analysis Results

I analyzed data obtained from participants' answers to study questionnaires using SPSS software program. I analyzed the data related to questions 1, 2, and 3 by using a two-way ANOVA statistical procedure for hypothesis testing. I performed a post hoc test for statistically significant findings to clarify the significant differences between groups.

Tests of Assumptions

The application of ANOVA analysis in this study necessitated testing ANOVA assumptions to ensure the validity of the study results. I tested study assumptions using the Shapiro-Wilks test, tested data normality using Standardized Skewness. Tests results with $p = .198$, and $p = 2.00$ indicated the data were normally distributed. The test of homogeneity of variance of the used data was not significant ($F (5,212) = 1.56, p = .171$), indicating that this assumption met the application of ANOVA test. An alpha level of .05 used for initial analysis.

Results of ANOVA

I used the SPSS program to analyze data obtained from participants. I conducted a two-factor (2X3) Analysis of Variance to evaluate the effect of general vs. special education teachers and their cultures (Gulf, Asian, African) on their attitudes toward inclusion education. In this study I represented the results with no significant main effect of preschool teachers' specialty on their attitudes toward inclusion education; $F (1, 212) = .000, p = .999$; However I represented a significant main effect of cultural identity of preschool teachers on their attitudes toward inclusion education; $F (2, 212) = .4.25, p = .015$ in my results (Table 5). Finally, I indicated that there was no significant interaction effect of preschool teachers' specialty and their cultural identity on their attitudes toward inclusion education; $F (2, 212) = .491, p = .613$.

Table 5

Analysis of variance between preschool teachers' specialty and their cultural identity

Source	SS	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Specialty	.000	1	.000	.000	.999
Culture	1042.19	2	521.098	4.255	*.015
Specialty* Culture	120.23	2	60.116	.491	.613
Error	25961.53	212	122.460		
Total	684804.0	218			

a.   R Squared = .042 (Adjusted R Squared = .020)

Figure 2 Results of 2-way Anova representing means of general and special education teachers among Gulf, Asian, and African cultures.
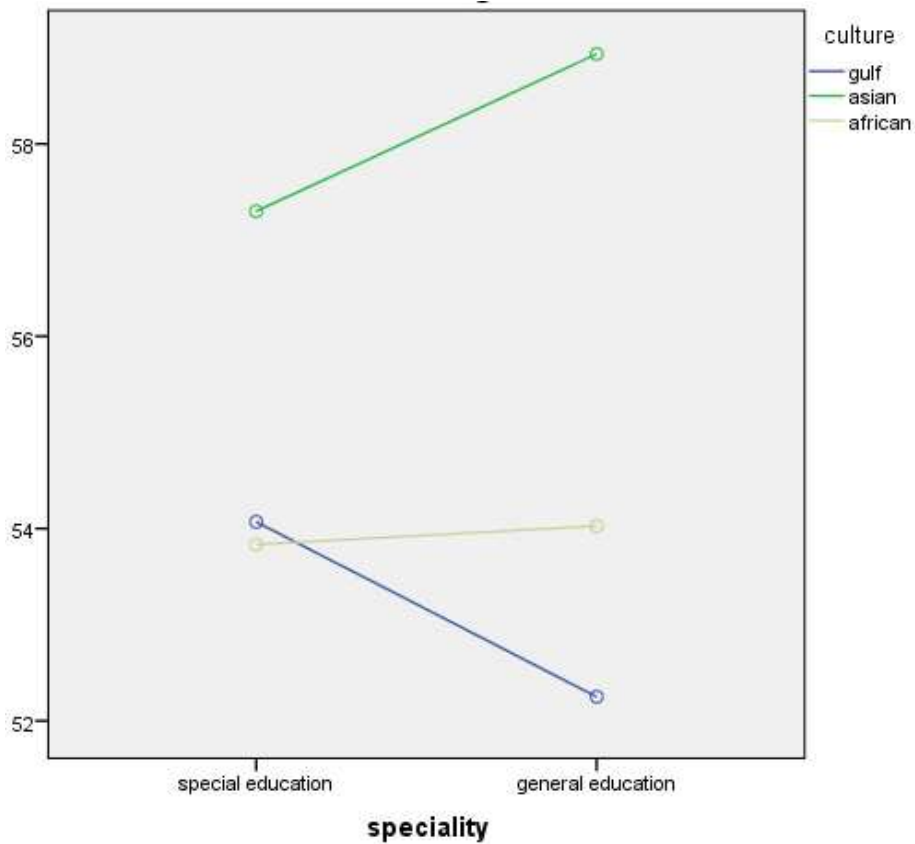
RQ 1

H₀1: There is no significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes, as measured by STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

Hₐ1: There is a significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes, as measured by STATIC scale, on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

In table 6, I represented participants' attitudes mean and standard deviation for each specialty type. Teachers' attitudes were $M = 55.31$, $SD = 10.62$ for special education teachers, and $M = 54.93$, $SD = 11.668$ for general education teachers. I revealed from the analysis that there were no significant differences between general and special education teachers and their attitudes toward inclusion education at a $p < .05$ significance level. From this finding, I concluded that I failed to reject the null hypothesis for hypothesis 1, and there is no significant difference between general and special education preschool teacher attitudes on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

Table 6

Descriptive statistics for Static Scores by teacher specialty

specialty	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
special education	55.31	101	10.627
general education	54.60	117	11.668
Total	54.93	218	11.178

RQ 2

H$_0$2: There is no significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

H$_a$2: There is a significant difference in preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale related to their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

Table 7

Descriptive statistics for Static Scores by teacher Cultural Identity

culture	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Gulf	53.11	91	10.704
Asian	58.01	71	9.078
African	53.96	56	13.487
Total	54.93	218	11.178

In table 7 I represented teachers' STATIC scores in relation to their cultural identity. I revealed similar mean scores for teachers with Gulf and African identity of (M = 53.11, SD = 10.704; and M = 53.96, SD = 13.4, respectively). Teachers of Asian culture had a mean score of M = 58.01, SD = 9.078.

I conducted post hoc test using LSD test to differentiate the significant group means among the tested groups. I showed that teachers with Asian cultural identity showed a higher positive attitude toward inclusion education than did teachers with Gulf cultural identity (M difference = 4.90, p = .006) and teachers with African cultural identity (M difference = 4.05, p = 0.42). from my results I showed that teachers with Gulf and African cultures had similar attitudes toward inclusion education programs (Table 8). From this finding, I concluded that the null hypothesis rejected and there is an effect of teachers' cultures on their attitudes toward inclusion education program.

Table 8

LSD test : dependent Variable : STATIC

(I) culture	(J) culture	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Gulf	Asian	-4.90-*	1.752	.006	-8.36-	-1.45-
	African	-.85-	1.879	.650	-4.56-	2.85
Asian	gulf	4.90*	1.752	.006	1.45	8.36
	African	4.05*	1.978	.042	.15	7.95
African	gulf	.85	1.879	.650	-2.85-	4.56
	Asian	-4.05-*	1.978	.042	-7.95-	-.15-

RQ3

H$_0$3: There is no significant interaction between general and special education preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

H$_a$3: There is a significant interaction between general and special education preschool teachers' attitudes as measured by STATIC scale and their cultural identity on inclusion of Special needs children into regular UAE preschools.

In Table 5, I showed that there was no significant interaction found between teachers' Specialty (general vs. special education) and teachers' cultures (Gulf, Asian, African) on their attitudes toward inclusion education. Accordingly, the null hypothesis rejected.

Conclusion

In chapter 4, I presented the findings of the statistical analysis of research data. Data was Collected from 218 preschool teachers teaching inclusion education program. Research questionnaires consisted of two sets; demographic questionnaire and the STATIC scale of teachers' attitude toward inclusion education. No differences found between Preschool teachers' specialty (General and Special Education teachers) on their attitudes toward inclusion education.

I reflected through my finding that there were no significant differences between preschool teachers' specialty and cultural identity on their attitudes toward inclusion education at $p<.05$. Finally, I reflected that teachers with Asian identity had better attitudes towards inclusion education than teachers with Gulf or African Identity. In chapter 5 of this study, I summarized findings, draw conclusions, and makes recommendations. I included an interpretation of the findings, implications for social change, and recommendations for action and further study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendation, and Conclusion

I designed this quantitative study to test the effect of preschool teachers' specialty (general and special education) and their culture (Gulf, Asian, or African) on their attitudes toward inclusion education program.

In 2006, the government of UAE launched the school program "School for All," which included the policy of including students with special healthcare and educational needs into the mainstream classroom. The application of the inclusion education program in preschools started in 2010 throughout the UAE, with an absence of studies evaluating preschool teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion education experience in preschools. I conducted this study to fill the literature gap of the effect of teacher specialty and culture on their attitudes toward inclusion education program in UAE preschools.

In this quantitative study, I measured preschool teachers' attitudes according to teacher specialty and culture by employing the STATIC scale (Cochran, 1998). I coded and analyzed data by SPSS program using factorial ANOVA for statistical analysis. Teachers of Asian cultural background showed more positive attitudes toward inclusion education. Both general and special education teachers showed similar positive attitudes toward inclusion education. In this chapter, I provide a discussion of the results presented in Chapter 4, as well as the limitations of the current study, recommendations for further studies, and implications for social change.

Interpretation of the Findings

In this section, I will summarize the results according to the research questions. I then related study findings according to the literature and to the study's theoretical framework.

RQ1

The STATIC scale consists of 20 questions. The scores of each question range from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An overall STATIC scale score ranges from 0 (completely negative attitude) to 100 (completely positive attitude). Scores interpretation could represent 3 options; < 50 (negative attitude), >50 (positive attitude).

In data analysis of Research Question 1 I revealed an overall positive attitude of general and special education preschool teachers, with values of ($M = 55.31$, $SD = 10.62$) for special education teachers to ($M = 54.93$, $SD = 11.668$) for general education teachers, with no significant difference between general and special education teachers. These results align with those of literature studies in which researchers evaluated preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education with different percentages. Gaad (2004) reported the positive attitudes of English and Emirate teachers from preschool as well as high schools. Clough and Nutbrown (2004) reported that 94 teachers from the UK insisted on the importance of inclusion education in early the education process. Thomas (2009) reported positive attitudes of 92% of preschool teachers in Ontario, Canada toward inclusion education, while Zarifi (2010) reported positive attitudes of 80% of preschool teachers in Tehran toward inclusion education. Anati (2013) found a

generalized agreement toward the application of inclusion education with no differences among teachers of Abu Dhabi Emirate.

Young-Ja lee, Jeehyun Lee, Myae Han, & Judith A. Schickedanz. (2011) compared the attitudes of 94 American preschool teachers and 69 preschool teachers from South Korea using the My Thinking About Inclusion (MTAI) Scale. They found positive attitudes toward inclusion education, with a mean score of 79 for special education teachers and a mean score of 81 for general education teachers. Recent researchers have had similar results. Bülbin Sucuoğlu et al. (2014) investigated the attitudes of 30 preschool teachers in Ankara. Participants attitudes were neither positive nor negative regarding inclusion education, with a positive preference mean score of (M = 59, SD = 7.89).

Rakap, Parlak-Rakap, and Aydin (2016) compared the attitudes of 123 American and Turkish preschool teachers toward inclusion education using the ORI scale. Findings showed similar attitudes between both groups, with slightly positive scores and no significant differences between them. Overall, participant scores ranged from 39 to 120 (M = 84.42, SD = 15.11). Bi Ying Hu et al. (2016) created a literature review for Chinese studies regarding the attitudes of preschool teachers toward inclusion education among general and special education teachers. These authors reported overall positive agreement toward the implementation of inclusion education, with important recommendations for program improvement.

The positive attitude found among general and special education preschool teachers mentioned in different studies related to different factors. For example,

preschool teachers require preparation for inclusion education. Provision of the necessary equipment, tools, and staff in the classrooms reduces teachers' anxiety and discomfort in inclusion classrooms. Pre-services courses for general education teachers also aid special education teachers in classroom and student behavior management.

RQ2

In data analysis of Research Question 2 I revealed that there was an overall positive attitude of preschool teachers from the three cultures (Gulf, Asian, and African) toward inclusion education; however, I revealed the presence of significant statistical differences among teachers from different cultures. The main finding was that preschool teachers with Asian culture reported more positive attitudes than Gulf identity and African preschool teachers with a mean score of ($M = 58.01$, $SD = 9.078$), while there is no significant differences between Gulf and African preschool teachers scores ($M = 53.11$, $SD = 10.704$), and ($M = 53.96$, $SD = 13.48$).

In the literature, I revealed an agreement with this study finding through the attitudes of people from these three cultures toward the education of peoples with disabilities. Teachers from Asian cultural backgrounds had a better attitude than teachers from Gulf identity or African identity. Teachers with Asian cultures supported the rights of disabled people to have their chance in education and to be a vital member in the community (Sharmaa et al, 2006). Sharmaa, Forlinb, Joanne, and Yang (2013) performed a literature review of 13 studies about the inclusion education program related to teachers with Asian backgrounds. Teachers showed positive attitudes and agreement about inclusion education programs, and provided recommendations to improve the program

related to school and teacher preparation. Susan and Donna (2016) indicated positive attitudes toward inclusion education in some Asian cultures, and noted the factors that promoted success or barriers toward inclusion education.

From my Literature findings, I indicated the importance of teacher preparation, community preparation, and teacher training for improvement of inclusion education program. This related to teachers' cultural background, which affects their acceptance of students with disabilities enrolled in community public areas, such as schools. The significant attitudes related to teachers' experience in dealing with children with special healthcare needs in the schools of their countries before they moved to the UAE. The results showed an overall similar positive attitude with a mean score (> 50) toward inclusion education among Gulf as well as African cultures, although the findings were not significantly different between these two cultures. This reflects an improvement in teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education in comparison with the previous studies of both cultures. In previous studies, researchers reflected the negative attitudes of Gulf teachers toward inclusion education. These findings related to the community as well as family beliefs toward the enrollment of individuals with special healthcare needs into the public school system. Most of the families preferred specialized centers with personal assistance to improve their children's behavior (Gaad, 2001, 2004; Gaad & Khan, 2007).

I represented in the findings of the current study an improvement of teachers from Gulf backgrounds toward inclusion education. This finding may relate to this culture's emphasis on the education of disabled individuals to prepare them to be vital community members. The UAE government has provided support since 2006 by preparing schools to

accommodate these students and helping teaching staff to overcome associated problems with the new educational setting. For example, schools must provide the necessary equipment for these students' movement, behavior, and learning, as well as provide the necessary staff for helping children with special healthcare needs. Teachers should receive preparation and training to behave and teach in inclusive classrooms.

Previous researchers have recorded similar improvements in the attitudes of teachers with African backgrounds. Teachers from South Africa did not accept the new educational setting due to their beliefs about special healthcare needs children. Absences of any support from the South African government toward school preparation, staff preparation, and necessary equipment for inclusion settings;However Forlin, Loreman, and Sharma (2009) and Ahmed Bawa Kuyini (2011) reported positive attitudes toward inclusion education among teachers from Ghana and Botswana. The authors responded to these results by increasing community awareness about the education of special healthcare needs children in a public setting rather than an isolated setting. Governments should provide support to teachers in school preparation, and support to families for the education of their children. These authors posited that attitudes would improve through encouraging community understanding about the inclusion education setting.

RQ3

In data analysis of Research Question 3, I revealed that there was no interaction of teachers' specialty and cultural background to their attitudes toward inclusion education. In this finding, I represented that general and special education teachers' attitudes are similar among the three study cultures (Gulf, Asian, and African). One possible

explanation for this result could be that the improvement of inclusion education strategies and techniques among different cultures are the same for both general and special education teachers.

Interpretation of the Findings in Relation to Theoretical Framework

In the theory of planned behavior, Ajzen (1991) stated that three factors control people's behavior: subjective norms, perceived behavior control, and attitudes toward behavior. These factors produce people's intentions to behave in certain ways in different situations. Negative or positive attitudes toward a situation linked to the individual's beliefs of the outcome of a given behavior. This theory relates to the findings of the current study as discussed below.

RQ1

In data analysis for the first research question, I revealed no significant differences between general and special education teachers' attitude toward inclusion education, with an overall positive outcome toward the STATIC survey. According to the theory of planned behavior, people's attitudes determined by beliefs in expected outcomes. As I represented in the findings of this study that both general and special education teachers had similar attitudes toward inclusion education according to their beliefs and judgments about the expected outcomes of inclusion education program. Teachers made similar recommendations regarding school setting and environment, which reflected similar beliefs about inclusion education program.

RQ2

In data analysis of the second question I revealed that positive attitudes are better among teachers from Asian backgrounds, than among those of Gulf or African backgrounds. According to the theory of planned behavior, normative beliefs from culture, relatives, and families are important in modifying people's behavior. In this finding, I indicated that teachers with Asian backgrounds expected more educational benefits and outcomes when inclusion education program adopted in preschools due to their cultural beliefs. Teachers with Gulf or African background had similar levels of positive attitudes.

Limitations

I recognized several limitations of this study. The generalizability of the study findings was limited to preschools only in the UAE. Study findings cannot express teachers' attitudes in elementary, middle, or high schools. I mitigated threats to study validity through a thorough explanation of the survey goals, procedures, and any questions that the participants had.

Another limitation included teachers concerns regarding their opinion toward inclusion education in UAE. I explained to the participants that their answers would be secure and used for research purposes only; however, this obstacle may have affected the participation of few teachers in this study. I recommend that future researchers address these limitations when performing further studies in this area.

Recommendations

Since the application of inclusion education is new in the UAE, researchers

should conduct further studies to examine the vital factors related to inclusion education

in UAE preschools. Future researchers could conduct the following studies in response to

the study findings and limitations:

1. Examine the effect of related factors of inclusion education program on

teachers' attitudes, such as teachers' training, class size, type of student disability,

and school and class preparation.

2. Include direct feedback from teachers about more details regarding positive and

negative points toward inclusion education program.

3. Examine the attitude of other cultures rather than Gulf, Asian, and African

cultures toward the inclusion education program.

4. Examine parents' attitudes toward inclusion education program in UAE.

5. Explore the differences in teachers' attitudes among different educational levels

(preschool, elementary, middle, and high school) in each emirate.

Implications for Positive Social Change

From the results of this study, I may lead to practical applications for positive

social change.I underscored that teachers are the vital element in the education process.

Teachers' attitudes are an important element that shape student behavior in the

classroom, positively or negatively (Sze, 2009). I showed that both general and special

education preschool teachers had a positive attitude toward inclusion education programs, which reflects their intention to teach in inclusive classrooms. When teachers have a positive attitude, they are more likely to apply an inclusive education curriculum.

According to this study results I may prompt higher educational institutions to seek teachers' assistance in program evaluation, modification, and improvement. In addition, teachers may use these results to assist families of healthy and disabled students to overcome any difficulties and control the stress element in the classroom.

I showed in the results of the study that teachers from an Asian background had more positive attitudes toward inclusion education than those of Gulf and African backgrounds. This finding may prompt leaders of academic institutions to seek to improve the attitudes of teachers of Gulf and African backgrounds.

According to Ajzen's (1991) planned theory of behavior, attitudes are part of the establishment of behavior. Perceived behavioral control is another issue, which deals with teachers' preparation toward a specific behavior. In this study, I found that teachers showed positive attitudes toward inclusive education; however, while the scale of teachers' attitudes was toward the positive attitudes, it was only slightly above the mean. Which could indicate that the higher administration must deal with the barriers and obstacles teachers may still feel regarding inclusion education. Practically, the study findings indicate teachers' approval of the new inclusion education program, and provide a green light to the higher administration for program approval.

Conclusion

Inclusion education is an educational setting wherein students with and without special needs learn in the normal class setting, to prepare both groups to be vital community members. In 2006, the UAE launched an inclusion education program under the umbrella of "School for All." Elementary, middle, and high schools across the UAE have applied this inclusion education program, and recently adopted in preschools in 2010.

Through the application of planned theory of behavior (Ajzen,1991), I examined preschool teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education in relation to teacher specialty (general and special) and teacher cultural back ground (Gulf, Asian, or African). I selected participants from all over the UAE randomly to complete a demographic survey and the STATIC instrument to examine their attitudes toward inclusion education program. Findings revealed that both general and special education teachers had positive attitudes toward inclusion education, with teachers of Asian culture demonstrating better positive attitude than teachers of the other two cultures did. In this study, I explored teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education in the preschool setting to help administrators and educators to modify, change, and improve inclusion education programs in the UAE.

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Appendix A: Study Request Letter to Ministry of Education

1/9/2014

Ministry of Education

Department of Inclusion Education

Sir/Madam,

My name is Dr.Afraa Salah, Iam a lecturer in Ajman University and a PHD candidate in Walden University in Health Psychology. My thesis requirement for the PHD is to administer survey questionnaire to pre-school teachers (general and special education) in seven districts in United Arab Emirates to be my target participants for my research study entitled (UAE Pre-school teachers' attitudes toward inclusion education by specialty and cultural identity).In this connection, please grant me the permission to conduct the above research by provide me with a list of schools and teachers by specialty in seven Emirates to select study participants randomly and conduct my study.

Dr. AfraaSalah BDS , MSc (pediatric Dentistry)
Phd candidate in Health Psychology/Walden University.
Lecturer & clinical advisor / pediatric dentistry
Faculty of Dentistry ,AjmanUniversity of science and technology

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

1. Choose the option that best describes the location of your teaching assignment for this year.
1-Dubai
2-Sharjah
3-Ajman
4-Um-Alqeween
5-Ras-Alkhaimah
6-Al-Fujairah

2. Choose your gender
1-Male
2-Female

3. Choose the option that include your age
1-22-27
2-27-32
3-32-37
4-37-42
5-42-47
6-older than 47years

3. Identify the number of years' experience you have had in your current assignment.

---------Years

4. Choose the option that identifies the highest degree that you have earned.

1-High school
2-Diploma

3-Bachelor's Degree
4-Master's Degree
5-Educational Specialist Degree

5. Choose the option that best identifies your teaching assignment for this year.

1-Preschool – Special Education
2-Preschool – Regular Education

6. Choose the option that most closely identifies your cultural background.
(**Culture**. A complex system of behaviors, values, beliefs, and artifacts that transmit through generations).
1-Gulf
2-Asian
3-African

Appendix D: STATIC Scale
Scale of Teachers= Attitudes toward Inclusive Classrooms

H. Keith Cochran
1999

 The purpose of this instrument is to obtain information about your
attitude toward the inclusion of students with special needs in the regular
education classrooms. There are no correct or incorrect answers. Your
responses are completely autonomous and confidential.

 Instructions: A number of statements about teaching children with special needs are presented
below. Read each statement and think about your general perception of the statement. Circle the
number to the right of each statement that best fits your general perception.

1. I am confident in my ability to teach children with special needs.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

2. I have adequately trained to meet the needs of children with disabilities.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

3. I become easily frustrated when teaching students with special needs.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

4. I become anxious when I learn that a student with special needs will be in my
classroom.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree

3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

5. Although children differ intellectually, physically, and psychologically, I believe that all children can learn in most environments.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

6. I believe that academic progress is possible in children with special needs.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

7. I believe that children with special needs should be placed in special education classes.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

8. I am comfortable teaching a child that is moderately physically disabled.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

9. I have problems teaching a student with cognitive deficits.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree

4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

10. I can adequately handle students with mild to moderate behavioral problems.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

11. Student with special needs learn social skills that are modeled by regular education students.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

12. Students with special needs have higher academic achievements when included in the regular education classroom.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

13. It is difficult for children with special needs to make strides in academic achievements in the regular education classroom.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

14. Self-esteem of children with special needs is increased when included in the regular education classroom.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree

3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

15. Students with special needs in the regular education classroom hinder the academic
Progress of the regular education student.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

16. Special in service training in teaching special needs student should be required for all
regular education teachers.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

17. I do not mind making physical arrangements in my room to meet the needs of
students with special needs.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

18. Adaptive materials and equipment are easily acquired for meeting the needs of
Students with special needs.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

19. My principal is supportive in making needed accommodations for teaching children with special needs.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

20. Students with special needs should be included in regular education classrooms.
1-strongly disagree
2-Disagree
3-Not sure, but tend to disagree
4-Not sure, but tend to agree
5-Agree
6-strongly agree

Appendix E

cochran K (cochran_k█████████████████████
To: Afraa salah ⌄

Afraa,

you have my permission to reprint the scale of teacher's Attitudes Toward Inclusive classrooms (STATIC) in your dissertation.Just follow APA guidelines for citing me as the author.

sincerely,

H.Keith cochran, PH.D.