

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL**

**Training Needs of Teachers in Mainstream Primary Schools in Saudi Arabia in  
Relation to Pupils with SEN**

**Being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
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**by**

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## **Abstract**

This study explores perceptions of the competencies of Saudi primary school teachers, and their training needs, to teach pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes, in the light of the recent trend to inclusion. The research was carried out in the Madinah district in Western Saudi Arabia.

A questionnaire was developed by the researcher, based on an extensive review of the competency literature, to survey teachers' perceptions. Of 180 copies distributed to teachers in six boys' primary schools, with different kinds of inclusion arrangement (resource room, special programme for learning difficulties, and no special provision), 175 (97%) were returned. The questionnaire data were complemented by qualitative information obtained through semi-structured interviews with 19 teachers, selected from among the questionnaire respondents; 11 teacher trainers from Riyadh University – the only one in the Kingdom that provides courses in special education – and 11 educational supervisors responsible for inspecting and advising teachers in the Madinah district. The findings revealed that only 10 teachers had received any pre-service training in relation to SEN, and only 3 had received in-service training. Moreover, most educational supervisors had little or no training and experience in regard to SEN. Teachers generally lacked confidence in their competencies across all the dimensions investigated, with the exception of personal skills. They expressed needs for training to recognise children with SEN, and support and advice in practical aspects of teaching them. Their perceptions did not, in general, vary with their personal characteristics, or with school inclusion arrangements. Based on the findings, it is recommended that pre-service training programmes be modified to include knowledge and skills related to SEN; and that opportunities be made available for continuing professional development and on-going consultancy support, as necessary components of responsible inclusion.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1. Background and Statement of the Problem**

Special education in Saudi Arabia began in 1958 with individual, informal efforts to teach Braille to blind persons. Two years later, the first government supported training institute for male blind students was opened in Riyadh. During the next decade, institutions for the deaf and for mentally retarded children followed (Al-Saloom, 1995).

Currently, policy formulation and implementation of special educational programmes is overseen by the General Secretariat of Special Education, through three departments, for the blind, the deaf and mentally retarded. These categories of special needs are catered for in special institutions, and in special classes in some schools within the general education system (Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission to USA, 1991).

A policy document (General Secretariat of Special Education, 1999) sets out the government aim of providing appropriate education and training for all children with special educational needs to achieve their potential. As yet, there is no specific legislation requiring inclusion, although following world-wide trends and expressions of interest by Saudi educationalists and government, in recent years, an increasing number of pupils with milder forms of special educational needs have been included in mainstream schools, in special classes and programmes. As recently as 1992, the majority of children with special needs in Saudi Arabia attended special schools (Ministry of Education, 1992). Since then, beginning with a limited number of special classes attached to mainstream schools, for pupils with minor disorders in hearing and

speech (Al-Khashrami, 1995), the Saudi government has made concerted efforts to include an increasing number of children with SEN in mainstream schools.

According to Doctor Nasser Ben Ali Al-Mousa, the General Inspector for Special Education in the Ministry of Education, 74% of school-age children with special educational needs are now included in mainstream schools (Al-Mousa, 2000) under a variety of special programmes. In over half of these programmes, pupils with SEN are based in mainstream classes but are withdrawn to receive special tuition in resource room programmes, or from peripatetic teachers, according to need. In the remainder, pupils with SEN are taught in special classes attached to mainstream schools (Al-Mousa, 2000).

Such programmes tend to be confined to a particular category of SEN, e.g. visually impaired, hearing impaired or learning difficulties (see Chapter 2). Thus, pupils with categories of SEN not covered by the inclusion programme in their local mainstream school may receive segregated special education in a residential or day-time institute, may attend an evening institute, or may be educated in the mainstream school without special support, depending on the severity of their problems, and whether they are diagnosed. There is, however, an interest within the government in extending the categories of pupils with SEN for whom specific provision is made, and in making such provision as far as possible within mainstream schools as a socially desirable and cost-effective way of meeting SEN (Al-Mousa, 2000). It is likely, therefore, that in the coming years, pupils with a wider range of special educational needs will be included within normal classrooms.

An important pre-requisite for securing the appropriate education and psychological well-being of pupils with special needs is appropriate training of their teachers to ensure

that they have the basic core of relevant information, knowledge and skills, as well as positive attitudes to the education of such children in ordinary schools (Mittler, 1992).

However, to date, there is little or no research evidence as to whether or how far these requirements are met in Saudi Arabia. Most of the little writing on inclusion in Saudi Arabia has been purely descriptive.

Al-Sartawy (1987) used the term integration, rather than inclusion (see Chapter 3 in this thesis for a detailed discussion of terminology). In his study, he defined the concept and described various forms and types of integration, but he did not carry out any empirical work to evaluate these forms, or to assess their implications for teachers. Al-Hamdan and Al-Sartawy (1987) in another descriptive work, introduced the idea of the resource room as a way of providing support for children with mild SEN to enable them to be educated in mainstream schools and argued that such an approach was likely to produce better social and educational outcomes than traditional special schools, but again, provided no empirical evidence to support their claims.

Attitudes of teachers in both mainstream and special schools towards the idea of including children with SEN in mainstream schools were investigated by Al-Sartway and Jarrar (1988). They found that teachers thought residential and special day schools were the most suitable setting for education of mentally retarded children, though they were more willing to accept inclusion in the mainstream for children with auditory or visual impairment. Teachers in special schools and institutions were more positive than those in mainstream schools towards the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream schools.

Al-Khashrami (1995) conducted an empirical investigation of the educational attainment of kindergarten children participating in an experimental inclusion

programme, and investigated parents' perceptions of their children's progress. Although Al-Khashrami commented, in her conclusions, on the more favourable attitudes towards inclusion reported by teachers after the experiment – in which in-service training for participants was provided by Al-Khashrami herself – the formal investigation of teachers' attitudes was not part of the study.

None of these studies investigated the training needs of teachers as a result of inclusion of children with special educational needs. However, the researcher, based on extensive experience in the teaching of mainstream teachers, is concerned that the initial training currently provided, does not prepare them adequately to deal with special needs. If teachers are not adequately trained to deal with children with learning difficulties who may currently be in their classroom; it is even less likely that they will be able to cope if a policy of full inclusion is introduced. In such circumstances, the children are not likely to achieve their potential and may suffer psychologically.

## **1.2. Research Aims and Rationale**

The aim of the present research is to investigate the training needs of teachers in mainstream classrooms to enable them to deal with the range of SEN likely to be encountered there.

The researcher's reading and experience suggest that attitudes and training are key issues in any attempt at inclusion of children with special educational needs. In fact, the two issues are related, since training is one way to bring about attitude change; indeed, that may be considered one of the purposes of training. Since inclusion is a relatively recent trend in Saudi Arabia, there may be a need for development or modification of initial and in-service training programmes in Saudi Arabia, to take account of the need for teachers to be aware of and responsive to children with special needs. However,



such a programme, to be effective, would have to be based on investigation and understanding of the knowledge, skills and attitudes teachers need to acquire. This study attempts such an assessment, as a first step towards the development of suitable training programmes in the future.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

The overall aim of the study is to find out what competencies Saudi teachers need to be trained in, to equip them to deal with children with special educational needs.

In order to achieve the study's overall aim, an attempt will be made to answer the following specific questions:

1. What are the competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes) needed by teachers to enable them to meet special educational needs?
2. What training, either pre-service or in-service, have the teachers had in competencies related to special educational needs?
3. What kind of training and support is currently available?
4. What knowledge, skills and attitudes do teachers currently have, and not have, regarding dealing with children with special educational needs?
5. Are there significant relationships between teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes and their personal or professional characteristics, such as age, teaching experience, and previous SEN training?
6. Do participants perceive a need for teachers to receive further (or different) training in SEN? If so, in what particular aspects?

#### **1.4. Research Approach**

The research questions were addressed in two phases: The first was an exploratory phase to gain some preliminary insights into the current situation with regard to educational provision for children with special educational needs in Saudi Arabia. This initial exploration was necessary in order to identify key issues for the main investigation, refine the research aims and questions, identify available sources of information and develop an appropriate methodology. A detailed account of this exploratory phase of the research, and its outcomes, can be found in Chapter 5.

In the second (main) phase of the research, a survey was carried out of the attitudes and opinions of primary school teachers, in the education district of Medinah Al Monawarah, in Western Saudi Arabia, towards their competencies in relation to teaching children with special educational needs, and their need/wish for training in these areas: teacher trainers' perceptions of the special knowledge, skills and attitudes mainstream teachers needed to deal with children who have SEN and the current provisions in pre-service and in-service training to equip teachers with these competencies; and Educational Supervisors' perceptions of what is happening in relation to SEN in schools, teachers' ability to meet the needs of such children and the help and support available to teachers.

A detailed account of the research methodology, including instrument design and sampling issues, is given in Chapter 6.

#### **1.5. Significance of the Research**

The research is original, in that nothing of this kind has so far been attempted in the Saudi context. As indicated in Section 1.1., a few writers have written descriptively on



special needs (e.g. Al-Sartawy, 1987) and related concepts such as the resource room (Al-Hamdan and Al-Sartawy, 1988); and Al-Khashrami (1995) conducted a study of an integration experiment in a kindergarten, in which she provided training for the teachers, although it is not clear from her report what categories of special needs were involved. However, to date, there has been no systematic investigation of teachers' training needs in relation to children with learning difficulties of any kind in the Saudi context. This study will therefore make a useful contribution to knowledge. It will raise teachers' awareness and provide a base of information from which future policies and training programmes can be developed. It will be of interest to teachers, academicians and policy-makers. Eventually, it will benefit children with special educational needs, as it will help towards providing them with teachers who are able to develop their cognitive and social potential and support their psychological health.

## **1.6. Definition of Terms**

In this section, definitions are given of some key terms used in this thesis. Italicised words within these definitions represent terms for which a separate definition is provided.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Children have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them (DfES, 2001a). A recent Saudi definition, which lists categories of difference between the child with SEN and other children, is presented in Chapter Three, Section 3.2.

## Learning Difficulties

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority (DfES, 2001a, p. 6).

## Special Educational Provision

Special educational provision means educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age in schools maintained by the local education authority, other than special schools, in the area (DfES, 2001a). In Saudi Arabia, the most common types of special educational provision, both of which are represented among the schools in this study, are *special classes* and *resource room* programmes.

## Segregation

Segregation is education of pupils with SEN separately from their peers, in special residential or day schools. Such schools tend to have separate administrative structures, and to be staffed by *teachers* who have undergone different *training*, compared with mainstream schools.

## Inclusion

In the international literature, in general, inclusion is “a process by which schools, local education authorities and others develop their cultures, policies and practice to include pupils” (DfES, 2001b).

‘Full’ inclusion refers to a distinct kind of provision arrangement advocated by some inclusionists, whereby all children with special educational needs are educated in mainstream schools. This is the meaning conveyed in the Salamanca Statement

(UNESCO, 1994), where inclusion means ‘providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular educational system’ (Art. 1).

It should be noted that in Saudi Arabia, the term inclusion is used somewhat differently. There, inclusion is a general term for a variety of arrangements by which children with SEN are taught in mainstream schools. In Saudi Arabia, “full” inclusion means that children are placed in a mainstream class, though they may be withdrawn for special teaching for up to 50% of the school day (see ‘Resource room’). The arrangement whereby children are placed in a separate, *special class* attached to a mainstream school is referred to as ‘partial’ inclusion (see also Chapter Two, Section 2.3.3.).

### Special Class

A class, attached to the mainstream school, in which pupils with SEN are taught separately from their peers, integrating with their peers for meals and recreation, and in some cases for Art and PE lessons. The majority of special classes in Saudi Arabia are for pupils diagnosed as mentally retarded, although a few programmes exist for hearing-impaired and multi-impaired pupils.

### Resource Room

A designated room within the mainstream school containing specialist resources to facilitate teaching and learning for a particular category or categories of SEN. Pupils spend at least 50% of the school day in the mainstream classroom, visiting the resource room according to a time-table based on the child’s needs and the educational situation of both the Special Education teacher and the mainstream class teacher (Al-Mousa, 2000).

### Competencies

Criteria derived from the role of the practising professional, referring to the knowledge, skills and personal attributes associated with competent teaching (Benson, 1977).

## Training

In this study, training includes pre-service training programmes in universities or colleges, which qualify graduates to teach in a *primary school*, post-graduate courses in education, and in-service training related to special educational needs.

## Primary School

For the purposes of this research, primary school means a school under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, providing education for boys between the ages of 6 and 12 years. Private schools, and girls' schools (which are separately administered and, for cultural reasons, not directly accessible by a male researcher) are outside the scope of the study.

## Teacher

Teachers in this study are qualified full-time teachers in mainstream classrooms, *special classes* or *resource room* programmes, in mainstream *primary schools*.

## Teacher Trainer

A professor or lecturer in a university that provides *training* in special education, and who has some involvement in the development and delivery of such training, whether pre-service or in-service.

## Educational Supervisor

An Educational Supervisor, in Saudi Arabia, is an official who performs an inspectorial and, to a lesser extent, advisory role in relation to the teaching of one or more subjects, in schools within a particular education district.



## **1.7. Outline of the Thesis**

The remainder of this thesis is presented in seven chapters, as follows:

Chapter Two establishes the context of the research by overviewing the Saudi Arabian education system, with special reference to the education of children with special needs, and teacher training.

Chapter Three presents the theoretical framework of the research. First, the concept of special educational needs is explored, and the current Saudi understanding of the term is highlighted. In the second part of the chapter, ways of providing for pupils with SEN are discussed, including i) segregation, ii) inclusion. The rationale for inclusion is presented and approaches to implementing it are discussed, with special reference to the debate between “full” and “responsible” inclusion.

Chapter Four reviews the literature on competencies and teacher training in relation to SEN. The knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by teachers in order effectively to meet the needs of SEN are explored, and findings from previous studies of attitudes and competencies are reported. Ways of assessing training needs are discussed, and various existing training models are outlined.

Chapter Five contains an account of the exploratory phase of the research. The objectives of the exploration are explained, the methods adopted are described, and the outcomes are presented in detail. The chapter ends with a discussion of the implications derived for the main phase of the research.

Chapter Six is concerned with the methodology in the second (main) phase of the research.. The research questions are recapitulated and linked to the research design, and the target population is identified. The rationale underlying the choice of research instruments is explained and their development and piloting are reported. The data

collection procedures used in the main study are outlined, and the methods used to code and analyse the data are indicated.

In Chapter Seven, the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the researcher's questionnaire survey and interviews are reported.

Chapter Eight contains a discussion and interpretation of the research findings in the light of the theoretical framework and previous empirical studies. Recommendations are offered to improve training and support for mainstream teachers in Saudi Arabia to deal with children with SEN. Following a critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the research, suggestions are made for future research to build on the contribution of this thesis and explore further the issues it raises.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

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### THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

#### 2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, background information is presented on Saudi Arabia, and on those aspects of the education system which are of particular relevance to the current study, namely, primary education, special education, and teacher preparation for these areas.

The chapter is structured in three sections. The first sets the study in its geographical and cultural context, by providing brief information on the location and population of Saudi Arabia, and on certain economic and cultural factors that have shaped its educational provision.

The second section considers the education system in the country, beginning with an overview of the historical development of education, and of the scope and structure of current provision. More detailed consideration will then be given to the primary level, as the main focus of this study. Since, in Saudi Arabia, special needs are still to a large extent catered for outside the general education system, although an integration programme is underway, an indication will be given of the kinds of need currently provided for, and the way in which such provision is delivered.

The third part of this chapter will focus on teacher training. It will outline the teacher training system and development of teacher preparation, in order to identify to what extent teachers' initial training prepares them to meet special educational needs.

## **2.2. Saudi Arabia – General Background**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is situated in south-west Asia, in the Arabian Peninsula, of which it occupies almost four fifths. With an area of 2,240 km<sup>2</sup>, it is about nine times the size of the United Kingdom. Much of this area is uninhabited.

The country borders on Jordan, Iraq and Kuwait to the north, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates and the Arabian Gulf to the east, Oman and Yemen to the south, and the Red Sea to the west (Middle East and North Africa Yearbook, 1994).

The country of Saudi Arabia consists of five main regions: the Central region, Najd; the Eastern region, Al-Ahsa; the Southern region, Asir; the Western region, Al-Hijaz, and the Northern region. These are sub-divided into a total of 13 administrative divisions, each with its own Amir (governor) and capital city (Rashid and Shaheen, 1992).

Most of Saudi Arabia is desert. To the east is a plateau that runs from the great Nafud desert in the north, along the Arabian Gulf, to culminate in the world's largest sand desert, the Rub al-Khali (Empty Quarter) in the south. To the west of this plateau is the Central Province, in which the capital city, Riyadh, is located. Western Saudi Arabia is dominated by a chain of mountains that runs parallel to the Red Sea. It is in this region that the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, the port city of Jeddah, and the summer capital, Taif, are located.

Saudi Arabia is a founding member of the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) (SA Information Centre, 1996).

In the most recent census, in 1992, the population of Saudi Arabia was recorded as 16,929,294, of whom slightly more than a quarter were foreign nationals (Middle East and North Africa Yearbook, 1994). In June 1996, the Central Department of Statistics estimated the number of Saudi nationals at 17,000,000 (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 3.6.1996). The population is expected to reach 30.6 million by the year 2020 (Kurian, 1987). The high rate of population growth can be explained by a high birth rate, combined with a reduction in mortality attributable to improved socio-economic conditions and improved health services.

It is estimated (Al-Sweel, 1993) that three-quarters of Saudi Arabia's population are urban-dwellers, 22% are rural and 3% are nomadic.

Saudi Arabia is a traditional society which until comparatively recently was predominantly tribal. Kinship and family ties continue to be the basis of social organisation, and kin play a protective and supporting role in assisting each other. The other dominant influence on Saudi culture and social organisation is religion. Islam is the motivating force in most aspects of Arab culture and in Saudi Arabia, in particular, is the source of its constitution, its spiritual and moral code, and its institutionalised values and norms. Saudi Arabia is very conscious of its position as the birthplace and centre of Islam, and the home of Islam's holiest sites, the cities of Mecca and Medinah, which are visited by more than two million pilgrims every year (Al-Othaim, 1999).

All Saudis are Muslims. Islam pervades every aspect of life in the Kingdom, from the judiciary to the organisation of family relations (Al-Joudi, 2000) and, as will be seen, the education system.

Al-Othaim (1999) however, has argued that the conservatism of Saudi society is to a great extent a product of traditional social views rather than of the religion.



A major force for change in Saudi Arabia has been the discovery of oil in the Gulf in 1932 and in Saudi Arabia itself in 1938, although these discoveries were not fully exploited until after World War II. Oil exports and the ensuing boom in revenues led to various changes in the social structure and other aspects of life (Lipsky, 1959).

Before oil was discovered in the eastern part of the Kingdom, in 1938, Saudi Arabia had a simple, closed economy in which the main sources of revenue were livestock, small-scale crafts, and taxes on pilgrims, who visit Saudi Arabia in large numbers every year to visit the holy cities. Agriculture was limited in scale, due to the aridity of the country. Only Asir, in the south-west, received sufficient rainfall to support traditional farming. Other regions relied on wells and underground aquifers (Al-Ghamdi, 1994). As a result of the discovery of oil, however, Saudi Arabia has witnessed rapid modernisation over the past 50 years, in which two of the most important elements have been the settlement of most of the Bedouin population, and the building of a modern education system. The latter, in particular, has been described as largely responsible for transforming Saudi Arabia from a predominantly illiterate nation to a modern progressive society (Dewaidi, 1995).

The enormous increase in revenues, particularly after the oil price rises of the 1970s, enabled the Saudi government to embark on an ambitious series of five-year socio-economic development plans, in which education has played a prominent part. The development plans have also created abundant work opportunities, attracting workers from over 100 countries (Ministry of Planning) with a consequent infusion of new cultures and ideas.

## **2.3. Education**

This section begins with a general overview of the historical development and current structure of education in Saudi Arabia, after which more specific consideration will be given to primary and special education.

### **2.3.1. General Overview**

#### **2.3.1.1. Historical background**

Islam has attached considerable importance to teaching and learning, ever since the Prophet Mohammad ordered that prisoners of war should teach the children of the Muslims in Medinah, by way of ransom (Al-Bogdady, 1985). Even in early times, Islamic scholars wrote about the role of teachers in preparing children for their role in society and some of these early educationists, such as Ibn Khaldoon, are notable for their enlightened views on teaching methods, and on the teacher-pupil relationship (Kabli, 1999).

Despite the importance attached to education by Islam, there was no formal public education in most of Saudi Arabia until the unification of the Kingdom in the 1920s. Education was "entirely in the Islamic tradition of religious and classical learning and was available only to a tiny segment of the country's youth (Lipsky, 1959). The Western province (Hijaz) fared better than the rest of the area, as during the years of Turkish occupation, a rudimentary school system was introduced. In 1915, Hijaz had 78 state primary schools, as well as a few private schools sponsored by individual benefactors (Al-Othaim, 1999). At the time of the unification of the Kingdom, however, the only education generally available was in *Kutaab*, in which teaching focused on the memorisation and recitation of the Holy Quran, together with basic reading, writing and arithmetic (Al-Sonbul, Al-Katib, Motoally and Abd Al-Joud, 1992). Such schools were

widespread in most areas of Saudi Arabia (Al-Hugail, 1993) but were for boys only. A few girls were taught by female teachers, in private homes.

Formal public schooling began in 1924 with the formation of an Education Directorate to establish schools and recruit teachers from outside the country, particularly from Egypt (Kabli, 1999). The establishment of the Education Directorate totally changed the traditional *Kutaab* education, introducing a modern system of education which was designed to provide all Saudi citizens with at least basic education, equip students with the skills needed in a period of social and economic change, and educate students in Saudi and Islamic beliefs, practices and socio-cultural values (Al-Baadi, 1994). The Directorate produced the first national curriculum for primary education in 1935. In 1945, an extensive programme was initiated to establish schools in the Kingdom, and by 1951 there were 226 schools, mainly of elementary level, with almost 30,000 students (SA Information Centre, 1996).

As demand for education grew, the Directorate was in 1953 upgraded to a Ministry of Education. By this time, a number of modern schools in Saudi Arabia had reached 306, with a total of 39,920 students and 1472 teachers (Ministry of Education, 1985). The establishment of the Ministry of Education marked the start of a new era of quantitative and qualitative expansion. A further impetus to the rapid expansion of education was concern over illiteracy, raised when a 1950 UNESCO publication estimated the illiteracy rate in Saudi Arabia at 92-95% (Al-Saloom, 1995). The role of the Ministry of Education in the early years, therefore, was to initiate and supervise an education programme focusing predominantly on primary education and vocational training. Towards the end of the decade, the programme was expanded to cover secondary education. District Education offices were set up to supervise and administer education at the local level.

Because of the traditional perspective supported by some religious bodies, it was not until 1960 that education for girls was introduced. By this time, the government recognised that the economic, social and cultural development of Saudi society necessitated the participation of women, which could only be achieved through education. However, to allay the concerns of the religious bodies, girls' schools were put under their supervision, to ensure segregation was maintained.

The 1970s witnessed a huge and rapid increase in the number of schools and students, in line with the government strategy of developing the human resources needed for comprehensive economic development.

Quantitative development has continued, although at a more modest rate, up to the present, so that by 1997 the Deputy Minister of Education was able to claim that "there was no child in the country without education" (Ministry of Education, 1997a). Today, Saudi Arabia has over 17,500 educational institutions spread throughout the country (Al-Rasheed, 1996). By 1998, the illiteracy rate was estimated to have fallen to 14.78% for males and 25% for females, but the accuracy of these figures has been doubted (Al-Hosain, 1998). The Ministry has not so far conducted a detailed survey of illiteracy.

Although the quantitative development of education in Saudi Arabia has been a striking success, some researchers have suggested that it brought problems at the qualitative level, in terms of shortage of trained teachers, slow change from traditional curricula and teaching methods to modern ones, and inadequate capacity for supervision and educational instruction programmes (Al-Thubaiti, 1989). In recent years, however, with the quantitative provision virtually complete, attention has turned to qualitative improvements, including updating curricula and teaching methods.



### 2.3.1.2. Current Education Provision

In this section, the administrative responsibilities for education in Saudi Arabia are explained, and the objectives, structure and characteristics of current provision are set out.

#### **Administration**

The Ministry of Education sets overall standards for the country's education system (Zaid , 1990), but the organisation and supervision of education are divided among several organisations.

The Ministry of Education administers and supervises boys' education at the elementary, intermediate and secondary levels, and is also responsible for special education, adult education and Teachers' Colleges. Girls' education has its own supervisory body, the General Presidency of Girls' Education, while University education is administered by the Ministry of Higher Education. The General Organisation for Technical Education and Vocational training aims to supply qualified manpower for various technical fields (Al-Hajres, 1988).

These bodies are the dominant providers of education; state schools (called "public" schools) accounted for 95% of the elementary schools in the Kingdom in 1994 (Al-Saloom, 1995). There are, however, other institutes which, although supervised by the Ministry of Education, are sponsored either as private schools or by other governmental authorities. Nevertheless, these other schools must meet all the standards set by the Ministry of Education (Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission, 1991).

Educational principles and objectives in Saudi Arabia are derived from:

- a) Islamic belief, culture and attitudes;
- b) Arab nationalism;
- c) Social, economic and environmental conditions and development requirements;
- d) Advances in thought, science and technology which are adaptable to Islamic requirements;
- e) Saudi citizens' needs and requirements (Al-Rasheed, 1996).

The development of education in the Kingdom is still guided by a policy set out in 1970 (Kabli, 1999). Among the objectives of education stated in the policy document are:

- helping in the proper psychological development of children and enabling them to grow spiritually, emotionally and socially according to well-established Islamic traditions;
- studying individual differences among students in order to orient them properly and to help them grow in accordance with their abilities, capabilities and interests;
- providing special education to mentally and physically retarded students (Supreme Committee for Educational Policy, 1970).

As expressed in the third development plan, covering the period for 1980 to 1985:

*“The development of Saudi human resources stands at the heart of the development process. The national development plan aims at the formulation of policies necessary for the development of the nation’s human assets”* (Ministry of Planning, 1980, p. 287).

It goes on to state the intention to provide equal access to at least basic education for all citizens, and to improve education quality.

## Structure

According to the Ministry of Education (1996), educational planning and provision in the Kingdom take into account the physical and psychological characteristics of students in the different stages of their development.

General Education consists of four levels: kindergarten, six years of primary school and three years each of intermediate and secondary school (see Figure 2.1). Kindergarten is co-educational. The government has no specific commitment to offering kindergarten education for all students, so private foundations play an important role in provision at this stage.

Primary school, which is provided for children from the age of six years, is compulsory, and is regarded as the foundation of the whole educational programme (for more details of this stage, see section 2.3.2.).

Intermediate school consists of three grades serving students between the ages of 12 and 15. Upon completion of this level, a student may choose to enter either regular secondary education, or vocational and technical education. The latter, however, is outside the General Education system and is administered by a separate government department, as indicated previously. Other forms of education which fall outside the General Education system and are administered separately are adult education, which focuses on eradicating illiteracy and making education available to those who, for various reasons, were not able to benefit from it in their youth; Higher Education; and Special Education, which will be discussed in more details in section 2.3.3.

Education is open to every citizen, although it is not compulsory after the primary stage.

Figure 2.1

**General Education Stages in Saudi Arabia**

Age	Year (Grade)	Stage	Class
Under 4	Preliminary	Kindergarten	Infant
4-5			Nursery
5-6			Preliminary
6+	1	Primary	i
7+	2		ii
8+	3		iii
9+	4		iv
10+	5		v
11+	6		vi
12+	7	Intermediate	i
13+	8		ii
14+	9		iii
15+	10	Secondary	i
16+	11		ii
17+	12		iii

**Source: Al-Othaim (1999)**

**Characteristics**

The Saudi educational system is characterised by four distinctive features. The first is state support. No tuition fees are imposed at any level of the system, and all books and tuition materials are provided free of charge. The state's commitment to education is reflected in the substantial budgetary allocations to this sector: ST27.5 billion in the 1996 budget (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996).

The second feature is centralisation. All aspects of education in Saudi Arabia are subject to government supervision and control. The Higher Council on Education regulates policy matters. Curricula and syllabuses are uniform throughout the Kingdom and approved centrally.



The third distinctive feature of Saudi education is the maintenance of strict segregation of the sexes at all levels after kindergarten; pupils are, moreover, taught by staff of the same gender. The reason for this segregation has its roots in the Islamic religion. Under Islamic law, males and females must be separated to avoid temptation and sin (Al-Joudi, 2000). Both sexes study the same curriculum, except that only boys study physical education. In girls' schools, home economics is studied instead (Al-Saloom, 1995).

The importance of Islamic Studies is the other feature that distinguishes Saudi education. Islam, as the source of all Saudi norms and values, permeates the whole education system, as an academic subject in its own right, as a dimension in the teaching of all other subjects, and in the roles and attitudes displayed in relationships among pupils and teachers.

### **2.3.2. Primary Education**

Primary education is considered to be the cornerstone in the development of educated citizens (Kabli, 1999).

Students are promoted from one grade to another by passing examinations which they sit at the end of each semester. A student who fails a grade must repeat it. In the school year 1997-1998, however, the general rule of promotion through the grades based on examination was modified so that, in the first three years, students progress from one level to the next according to the teacher's evaluation (Al-Joudi, 2000). Students have to pass the sixth grade examination in order to obtain the Primary School Certificate which entitles them to proceed to the Intermediate level.

At the primary stage, the main emphasis in the curriculum is on religion, Arabic, social science and mathematics (see Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1**

**Primary (Boys') Curriculum in Periods per Week**

<b>Subject</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Religion:</b>	The Quran	7	7	7	6	3	4
	Recitation	-	-	-	1	1	-
	Islamic fundamentals	1	1	1	1	2	2
	Jurisprudence	1	1	1	1	2	2
	Prophet's Sayings	-	-	-	-	1	1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Arabic:</b>	Spelling and Writing	7	7	-	-	-	-
	Reading	-	-	3	2	2	2
	Songs and Memorised Material	2	2	2	2	1	1
	Dictation	-	-	2	2	1	1
	Composition	-	-	1	1	1	1
	Grammar	-	-	-	1	2	2
	Handwriting	-	-	1	1	1	1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Social</b>	Geography	-	-	-	1	1	1
<b>Science:</b>	History	-	-	-	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Others:</b>	Science & Hygiene	2	2	2	2	3	3
	Art and Craft	2	2	2	1	1	1
	Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

**Source: Kabli (1999)**

The aims of primary education as set out in the education policy (Al-Hakeel, 1986) are:

- To implant the Muslim faith;
- To train pupils to perform their prayers and observe the rules of good conduct;
- To develop basic skills, especially of language, arithmetic and physical fitness;
- To produce a suitable amount of information in all the various subjects;
- To nurture creative abilities;
- To develop the pupils' awareness of their duties and rights and to inculcate love of country and loyalty to authority;
- To generate the desire to seek useful knowledge and work, and to use leisure time constructively;
- To prepare the pupil for the phase of life which is to follow.

As the above objectives indicate, the school system seeks not only to provide academic education, but also to socialise pupils into cultural norms and values. An important role in this respect is played by the system of pastoral care and discipline. In almost every school, there is a School Counsellor to whom children with personal problems, those performing unsatisfactorily academically, and those exhibiting undesirable behaviours, may be referred for guidance. The guidance and counselling programme was initiated as a result of concerns about student drop-out (Administration of Education Research, 1997), problematic effects of educational expansion, such as overcrowding in schools, with attendant difficulties of adaptation for pupils (Al-Zahrani, 1990), and the increased incidence of personal and psychological problems, such as anger and low self-esteem (Al-Ghamdi, 1999). Pupils were perceived as needing help to develop appropriate coping behaviour (Abu-Rasain, 1998).

As part of their general role of providing social, moral and educational guidance to pupils to help them become useful citizens, school counsellors are expected, according to the official guidance (Ministry of Education, 1997b) to identify students with special educational needs and refer them to appropriate agencies.

Some school counsellors have MA degrees in guidance and counselling; three universities currently run such programmes, which include modules such as "Problems of Development" and "Psychology of Abnormal Children" (Al-Ghamdi, 1999), but generally, the area of SEN is not a major focus of these programmes, and in any case, most school counsellors do not have this qualification. To meet the need for counsellors, the General Administration of Guidance and Counselling has allowed unqualified personnel to perform this role and, in particular, to allow teachers to perform this role, their teaching duties being reduced accordingly (Al-Riyadh newspaper, 1996). Thus, few counsellors are trained psychologists; most are former subject teachers who have transferred to this role. They perform administrative and

disciplinary functions, and may carry out some home-school liaison in the case of a problem that cannot be resolved within the school.

### **2.3.3. Special Education**

Segregated special educational provision exists for mentally handicapped, deaf and blind citizens in Saudi Arabia. The objective of this education, according to the Special Education Administration in the Ministry of Education is “to make them productive and self-reliant members of society through education and training suited to their special circumstances, so that they are better able to participate in the social life and attain better standards of living consistent with their capability” (Al-Sonbul, et al., 1992, p. 393).

Two separate special education programmes are run; one for boys under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and the other for girls directed by the General Presidency for Girls' Education. The General Organisation of Technical Education and Vocational Training also provides some vocational training and rehabilitation for adults with special needs. In addition, care and education for some children with special needs are provided by charitable institutions.

Students with visual impairment follow the normal stages of learning, primary, intermediate and secondary, in special schools equipped with the appropriate facilities. On graduation from secondary school, they are awarded a certificate equivalent to that awarded to the graduates of non-special education. Special schools for the deaf are available, in which Arabic sign language is used. Students with physical handicap have the opportunity to enrol with other students in the same schools. For students with learning disability, special primary and intermediate schools are available, after which



special vocational programmes are organised for them. Special schools are available only in the main cities of the country (Al-Joudi, 2000).

Al-Khashrami (1995) suggests that, judging by the large increase in the number of special education institutions and in the number of pupils attending them, most children with special needs in Saudi Arabia receive segregated education.

Al-Mousa (2000), the General Inspector for Special Education, however, presents a somewhat different picture, claiming that currently 74% of all children with SEN are included in mainstream schools.

The education policy contains explicit commitments to educating what it calls “impaired” pupils, reflecting a belief that helping such categories will have a positive impact on education outputs generally. The educational strategy in relation to SEN is both to enhance the provision in mainstream schools and to expand the role of the special education institutes.

Al-Mousa (1993) notes that educational inclusion enables children with SEN to continue living at home with their families and so contributes to a balanced life in their communities. It gives them an opportunity to observe and learn from the behaviour of their peers, and also enables other children to understand and accept children with SEN.

The mainstreaming of children with SEN in Saudi Arabia is managed in two ways, called partial and complete inclusion. Partial inclusion refers to the enrolment of children with SEN in schools where they are taught in separate classes, integrating with their peers during break times and, perhaps, for lessons such as art and P.E. For other lessons, they may be taught the mainstream curriculum, with the aid of special methods and equipment (as in the case of impaired vision or hearing) or may follow a special curriculum such as is used in the special education institutes. In the case of complete

inclusion, pupils are educated alongside their peers, with the aid of resource room programmes, peripatetic teachers, counsellor teachers and special education programmes.

Table 2.2 shows the categories of special need catered for in school year 1421-22, with numbers of programmes and students, while Table 2.3 shows the types of service provided. It is noticeable that there is as yet no special provision for emotional and behavioural disorder or for communication disorder. Further development of provision for these categories is envisaged. As mainstream provision increases, Al-Mousa (2000) suggests that the role of the special institutes may change from direct service provision to the provision of support services, information and training.

Table 2.2

**Special Education Programmes and Institutes by Target Category**

Target Category	Institutes, Programmes and Centres	Number of Students
1) Audio-impaired a) deaf b) bad hearing c) multi-impaired	90 35 4	3085 1017 20
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>4122</b>
2) Visually impaired: a) blind b) bad eyesight c) multi-impaired	40 1 5	665 2000 29
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>2694</b>
3) Mentally retarded: a) Educable b) multi-impaired	17 6	5847 70
Autistic Learning difficulties Handicapped Gifted	14 277 1 6	120 3731 1642 1448
<b>Total</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>19674</b>

Source: Al-Mousa (2000)

**Table 2.3**

**Types of Service Provision**

<b>Service Type</b>	<b>Target Category</b>	<b>Number of Institutes/ Programmes</b>
1. Residential institutes	Deaf	11
	Blind	5
	Mentally retarded	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>
2. Daytime institutes	Deaf	9
	Blind	1
	Mentally retarded	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>
3. Support centres	Hearing and speech Learning difficulties Gifted Blind	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>
4. Classrooms attached to SE institutes	Adult deaf, illiteracy	10
	Autistic	13
	Multi-impaired	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>
5. Classrooms attached to mainstream schools	Deaf	2
	Bad hearing	17
	Mentally retarded	162
	Autistic	1
	Multi-impaired	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>187</b>
6. Resource rooms	Learning difficulties	270
	Visual impairment	33
	Audio impairment	7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>310</b>
7. Peripatetic teacher		4
8. Counsellor teacher		2

Source: Al-Mousa (2000)



## **2.4. Teacher Training**

Teacher training in Saudi Arabia has, like the rest of the education system, undergone enormous quantitative and qualitative development within a short period of time. Accounts of teacher training in the Kingdom can appear somewhat confusing and contradictory for a number of reasons: differences in the labels by which the various types of institutions are designated; the gradual phasing-in of changes, so that at times several different types and levels of institution existed side by side; and the separate development of women's colleges, some years behind the equivalent developments in men's training institutions. This section identifies the main phases of training for male primary school teachers, in order to give an indication of the various types of training the target population for this study may have had. A brief account is then given of teacher training for special educational needs.

### **2.4.1. Teacher training for primary teachers**

The first Saudi schools depended heavily on teachers from other Arabic and Islamic countries. To prepare native teachers in order to reduce this dependence, the first educational institute was established in 1926, with just 40 trainees, who needed only to have completed elementary schools in order to enrol. The programme of study was initially three years, later changed to five years to provide a course more appropriate to the requirements of professional teachers (Al-Saloom, 1991). The first College of Education was founded in Makkah in 1951 (Al-Sonbul et al., 1992), but the first systematic planning of efforts to prepare teachers for primary schools was initiated by the Ministry of Education on its formation in 1953 (Al-Sonbul et al., 1992). To face the critical shortage of teachers for a rapidly expanding education system, an immediate plan was set up to contract teachers from neighbouring Arabic speaking countries, such

as Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and Sudan (Al-Ghamdi, 1987) and a fast-track programme for preparing indigenous teachers was organised.

The preparation of primary school teachers has gone through four main stages, as follows:

- Intermediate Teacher Institutes, 1953-1965.
- Secondary Teacher Institutes, 1965-1976.
- Junior Colleges, 1976-1988.
- Teacher Colleges, 1989 to the present.

### **Intermediate Teacher Institutes**

The intermediate institutes accepted applicants aged between 15 and 20 years who had completed primary school. The programme of study was based on the intermediate school curriculum, except that foreign language studies were replaced with foundation courses in education and psychological concepts. Teaching practice was added as part of the requirement in the second and third years of study. Second year students were required to visit primary schools for one week and to teach for another week. Third year students were required to teach in primary schools for two weeks (Al-Sonbul et al., 1992).

The intermediate institute programme started with three institutes and only 70 students and reached a peak in terms of the number of institutes, in 1961, when there were 37 such establishments with over 4,000 students (Mosa, 1994). Although the number of students continued to increase, reaching 7,556 in 1964, by then the number of institutes had fallen to 30 due to the decision to phase out these schools in favour of upgraded, secondary level programmes (Ministry of Education, 1979).

## **Secondary Teacher Institutes**

This programme started in 1965 with seven institutes and by 1976 the number of institutes had reached 18 (Ministry of Education, 1982). Students needed to have obtained the intermediate school certificate in order to be admitted.

The curriculum was based mainly on the secondary school curriculum, with the addition of courses in teaching skills and an element of teaching practice (Mosa, 1994).

During the same period, to upgrade the knowledge and skills of serving teachers who had graduated from the intermediate-level institutes, two study centres were established, one in Riyadh to serve the east, centre and part of the northern region, and one in Taif to serve the western and southern and the remainder of the northern region. Trainees undertook an intensive course of two years' duration, equivalent to the secondary institute courses. By 1980, almost all serving teachers who qualified under the intermediate-level system had been retrained to secondary institute standard, and the upgrading centres were abolished (Ministry of Education, 1982).

Despite these efforts, the quality of indigenous teacher preparation was still inadequate. Therefore, once the quantitative demand for teachers was met, post-secondary programmes to prepare teachers for primary schools were introduced in 1976, under the name of Junior Colleges.

## **Junior Colleges**

The Junior Colleges were first introduced in two cities, Riyadh and Makkah, to serve two main aims: to provide in-service training to upgrade the knowledge and skills of teachers who had trained in the secondary institutes, and to prepare new teachers by enrolling graduates of secondary schools.

The programme of study was for six semesters of 17 weeks' duration and consisted of three elements; general requirements (a continuation of the student's general education in Islamic studies, mathematics, science, social science and language); educational requirements and specialist preparation, which gave students the opportunity to specialise in two subjects, one major and one minor (Al-Joudi, 2000).

Junior Colleges played a major role in preparing and upgrading primary school teachers until 1987-1988, when the Committee for Educational Policy decided to replace them with new colleges called Teacher Colleges offering a Bachelor degree, which henceforward would be the minimum requirement for entry to the teaching profession.

### **Teacher Colleges**

In line with the new plans to improve the quality of teacher preparation, the 17 Junior Colleges were upgraded to Teacher Colleges offering a four-year programme. The objectives of the colleges include preparing suitably qualified teachers for the elementary stage, providing in-service training, contributing to research on curriculum issues and other school problems, and exchanging knowledge and experience with other educational establishments inside the Kingdom and abroad (Ministry of Education, 1998a).

Teachers' subject specialisations vary according to the institution in which they were trained. Those who trained in the old Teachers' Institutes were trained as general subject teachers. In the Junior Colleges, trainees majored in two subjects, one main and one subsidiary. Graduates of the Teachers' Colleges specialise in a single subject at degree level, although they will have received training in all the subjects of the primary curriculum.



Teachers' College training programmes contain three major elements: 1) general preparation, which focuses on the trainee's academic education; 2) compulsory courses in aspects of educational theory and methodology; 3) professional preparation in the student's academic specialism (Kabli, 1999), see Table 2.4.

Each year in the programme of study is divided into two levels, lasting one semester each. Students progress through the levels based on attendance and achievement. To graduate with a Bachelor degree in primary education, students must pass every course with a grade average of at least 2 on a scale from 0-5.

**Table 2.4**  
**Teacher College Course Requirements**

Type of Requirements	Courses	Number of Units
General Requirements	Quranic	13
	Islamic	10
	Arabic Language	11
	Social studies	4
	Mathematics	12
	Science	13
	Physical Education	5
	Art	4
	Foreign Language	2
Educational Requirements	General Educational Courses	13
	Psychology and Counselling	9
	Curriculum	8
	Educational Technology	7
	Teaching Practice	8 (one semester)
Specialisation Requirements	Quranic	40
	Islamic	40
	Arabic	40
	Social Studies	40
	Mathematics	40
	Science	42
	Physical Education	40
	Art	40
	Computer Studies *	40

\*Available in three colleges only

Source: Ministry of Education, 1998b.

Despite the efforts made to develop teacher training, both quantitatively and qualitatively, two problems are commonly highlighted by educationists which are likely to affect the standard of elementary school teaching. One is the high proportion of non-Saudi teachers. Although the Ministry of Education attaches great importance to the production of well-qualified teachers, to avoid the need to import teachers from other Arab countries (the number of Saudi teachers at the elementary level increased from 85485 to 112086 between 1990 and 1994) the number of foreign teachers, after a brief period of reduction, started to rise again as more schools were opened, particularly in rural areas. In 1994, more than a fifth of the 142760 elementary school teachers were foreign (Ministry of Finance and National Economy: Central Department of Statistics, 1994). These teachers will have trained under a variety of different systems. Moreover, because of cultural and linguistic differences, such teachers may have difficulty in their interactions with Saudi pupils. The other general problem facing teachers in Saudi Arabia is the lack of in-service training (Al-Othaim, 1999). Although, in theory, provision for such training exists, in practice, some teachers receive it only once or twice during the whole of their teaching career, and some not at all.

#### **2.4.2. Teacher Preparation for Special Educational Needs**

As seen in the previous sub-section, there is no explicit element in the Teacher College curriculum related to dealing with Special Educational Needs, although some colleges may include lectures or optional modules in that field under the heading of educational requirements.

There is a Special Education Department in King Saud University in Riyadh, where students can qualify to work as teachers of pupils with special needs in special or mainstream schools. The Bachelor degree in Special Education is a four-year course, in which students can select a specialism from Mental Retardation, Learning Difficulties

and Clinical Psychology. Graduates may, in addition to teaching, also work in other related services such as social or administrative services (Al-Khashrami, 1995). Approval has been given for the establishment of another special education department, in Jeddah.

A Masters programme in Special Education is run by the Department of Psychology in the same university, and there are courses leading to a Diploma in Special Education for graduates of the general teacher preparation and serving teachers who wish to pursue an interest in this field (Al-Sonbul et al., 1992).

## **2.5. Summary**

Saudi Arabia is an Arab Islamic country in which traditional tribal values and Islam are the two main cultural forces. The country has undergone widespread and rapid modernisation, made possible by oil revenues, and the establishment and expansion of formal education have been a major feature of this development. Separate but parallel systems of education have developed for boys and girls. Although several bodies are involved in educational provision, consistency in standards and curricula is provided by the overall supervisory role of the Ministry of Education.

Education is permeated by Islamic values, and religion and Arabic dominate the elementary school curriculum. Special education is provided through a range of programmes, from residential institutions to mainstream schooling in an attached special classroom, or the support of a resource room programme. There are, however, some categories of special need that are not yet catered for in mainstream schools, and others that are not provided for at all.

Teacher training for elementary school teachers has undergone enormous development in the past 50 years, so that teachers currently serving may have qualified under any of several systems. Under the Teacher College system, teacher training has become a four-year, graduate level programme, which continues the trainee's general education, provides courses in teaching methods and theory, and prepares him in a specialist subject. Training for mainstream teachers generally contains little or no explicit preparation in meeting special educational needs. There is, however, a special education department in Riyadh which prepares teachers to work with pupils with special needs in special or mainstream schools.

This chapter has provided background information to set the study in context. The following chapter begins to lay down the theoretical basis for the study, by considering the concept of special needs and the various ways of providing for special educational needs, as reflected in the literature.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

# **EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR** **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR CHILDREN**

#### **WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

##### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter establishes the theoretical foundation for the present study. Literature is reviewed on the concept of special educational needs, and the ways in which these needs may be met within education systems. The chapter in this way sets out the background for the theoretical and empirical consideration of relevant teacher competencies in later chapters.

The field of special education has developed relatively recently and unevenly in different parts of the world (Ainscow, 1999). Over time, education systems have explored a variety of ways of responding to children with impairments, or who experience difficulties in learning. Special education may be provided as a supplement to general education provision, or through a separate system. It is, however, not easy to identify the numbers of children who receive special education in one form or another, because of differences in terminology and categorisation systems from country to country, not to mention the scarcity in many countries of reliable, up-to-date information. Nevertheless, some attempt must be made to clarify terms and to explore key issues and trends in the provision of education for children with SEN, which have implications for mainstream teachers.

The discussion in this chapter is presented in two main sections. In the first of these, definitions of Special Educational Needs are considered and alternative terms found in

the literature are noted. Attention is then drawn to the terminology in use in Saudi Arabia, with reference to official definitions.

The second part of the chapter provides an overview of ways of meeting special educational needs, beginning with a brief discussion of some models or paradigms which are often claimed to underlie different types of provision. Segregated provision is briefly considered; however, the main focus is on inclusion. The rationale for the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream settings is discussed, and information presented on the ways in which inclusion is implemented in the policy and practice of various countries. Since some authors use the terms integration and inclusion interchangeably, while others maintain that they differ in both their underlying philosophy and implications for practice, an attempt is made to unravel the terminology and relate it to the wide range of types of provision in existence. Research evidence on the academic and social effects of placing children with SEN in mainstream settings is considered. Finally, concerns currently being voiced about the recent trend in favour of 'full' inclusion, are highlighted and the concept of 'responsible' inclusion is introduced.

### **3.2. Terminology and Definitions**

The term special educational needs (SEN) is relatively recent, largely emanating from the language and philosophy of the Warnock Report (DES, 1978). It is an umbrella term, describing a wide range of difficulties which may impair children's ability to achieve during their time in school (Stakes and Hornby, 2000).

Writers on special needs often do not define the term. However, the term special needs is increasingly used to include all children who, for various reasons, have difficulty achieving their full potential in school, including not only those traditionally regarded as

in need of special education, such as those who are deaf, blind or mentally retarded, but also those who are dyslexic or gifted and those with emotional or behavioural difficulties (Hornby, 1998).

The Warnock Report (DES, 1978) suggested that the concept of SEN should include not only children with disabilities or those in special schools, but as many as 20% of all school age children, suggesting a very broad understanding of the concept.

From this broader perspective, special educational needs can be viewed as the results of a mismatch between the knowledge, skills and experiences students bring to the learning situation, and the demands made on them (Beveridge, 1993).

In the UK the Code of Practice (DfE, 1994) refers to eight different types of special educational need: learning difficulties (categorised from mild to profound); specific learning difficulties (problems with basic literacy or numeracy skills, which stand in contrast to the child's ability in other areas); hearing difficulties; visual difficulties; physical disabilities, resulting from a congenital condition or from injury; medical conditions such as epilepsy or asthma; speech and language difficulties; and emotional and behavioural difficulties which make it difficult for children to function effectively in school, or disrupt the education of other pupils.

More recently, the updated Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a) says that children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Learning difficulty is defined as meaning "significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age," or a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the kind of educational facilities "generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the LEA" (DfES, 2001a, p. 6).



Such definitions are, however, controversial. Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughn and Shaw (2000) reject the use of the term 'special educational needs', arguing that it is associated with an approach that can be a barrier to the development of inclusive practice in schools. In their view, it confers a label that can lead to lowered expectations; it focuses attention on certain categories of difficulties, thereby potentially deflecting attention away from others; it can encourage teachers to see the education of children with SEN as the responsibility of a specialist; and by attributing educational difficulties to student deficits, it poses the risk that barriers to learning emanating from school cultures, policies and practices may be overlooked.

Some of these arguments appear to be justified by, for example, the problems clearly manifested in the definition of Special Educational Needs offered by Okpanachi (1995). He says that children with SEN are those who "differ from the norm in mental characteristics, sensory abilities, communication abilities, social behaviour, or physical characteristics to the extent that special education services are required for the child to develop to maximum capacity" (p. iii). In this definition, the term 'differ from the norm' can be perceived as discriminatory, while the claim that 'special education services are required' may encourage the impression that children with SEN can only be taught by specialist teachers or in special facilities.

To overcome such difficulties, Booth et al. (2000) prefer the term 'barriers to learning and participation', a broader term which encompasses such issues as race, social class and gender, which do not fall within the concept of SEN as defined, for example, in the UK's Code of Practice (DfE, 1994).

The term SEN is also challenged by Mittler (2000) who argues that the word 'special' is anachronistic and discriminatory and asserts that many of the children who would be covered by current reconceptualisations, such as those living in poverty, are 'special'

only because, so far, the education system has not been able to meet their needs. Moreover, the word 'needs' is also open to challenge; Corbett (1996, cited in Mittler, 2000) suggests that it has connotations of dependency, inadequacy and unworthiness.

Nevertheless, as Mittler (2000) acknowledges, special educational needs terminology survives because it is not easy to find an acceptable substitute, and also because it is embodied in legislation.

As we have seen, even within the UK there are different understandings of the term 'special educational needs', and some controversy surrounding it, leading writers to offer alternative terms. The difficulty such differences of usage presents when reviewing literature or comparing practice is further compounded when provision for SEN is examined from an international perspective, because of the widely differing terms employed, from country to country. For example, people who in the UK would be said to have severe learning difficulties are called intellectually disabled in New Zealand, mentally challenged in Barbados and mentally retarded in the USA (Hornby, 1998). 'Mentally retarded' is also the term used in Saudi Arabia.

In the USA, Epstein (1984) uses the terms, 'special children' or 'children with special problems', and occasionally, 'people with disabilities' or 'people with retardation', without, however, defining any of these terms. Interestingly, the terminology she uses apparently reflects the deficit model, seeing problems as residing in the child, although the tenor of her book is rooted very much in the social model, focusing on the way problems can be created – or avoided – as a result of the attitudes and behaviours of teachers and other children.

Gearheart, Weishahn and Gearheart (1990) use the term 'exceptional students' to refer to "all students whose educational needs are not effectively met through the use of the

standard curriculum” (p. viii), i.e. putting the emphasis on the demands made by the school, rather than on any weakness or disability in the child. At the same time, they use terms such as ‘mental retardation’ to discuss specific categories of special need because “from a practical point of view, they remain the most efficient terms of reference” (p. 5).

Polloway and Patton (1997), introducing their text on strategies for teaching ‘learners with special needs’ identify as their target group “students who traditionally have been identified as mildly disabled or experiencing learning difficulties” including sub-groups such as “mentally retarded, learning disabled, educationally handicapped, emotionally disturbed [and] behaviourally disordered”. (p. 3). They note, however, that target populations and the terminology used to describe them vary from time to time and from state to state, depending on laws, policy decisions and other related developments, and that such labels are not very helpful in indicating precisely which teaching strategies should be used.

Again, in the USA, Osborne (1999) uses the term ‘Children with Disabilities’ to identify those children eligible to receive special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), defined as:

*“children . . . with mental retardation, hearing impairments including deafness, speech or language impairments, visual impairments including blindness, serious emotional disturbance, orthopaedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injuries, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and who, by reason thereof, need special education and related services.”* (Osborne, 1999, p. 8)

It is interesting to note that, in Saudi Arabia, although some research studies by Saudi academics have used the term ‘special needs’, government policy documents and other publications habitually employ the terms ‘disabilities’, ‘handicap’ and ‘mental retardation’.



Until very recently, no specific definition of special needs could be found in educational policy or research, though operational definitions can be inferred from the admission criteria of the three types of special educational institutions. Those for the blind/visually impaired specify vision in the range 6/24 – 6/60 in the strongest eye or both eyes with the aid of corrective lenses; those for the hearing impaired specify hearing loss of at least 80 decibels in the strongest ear or both ears, after treatment and use of hearing aids; those for mental retardation specify IQ in the range 50-75 (Al-Saloom, 1991).

In a more recent government document (Al-Mousa, 1999), children with special educational needs are defined as those who “are different from their peers in their cognitive, physical, emotional, sensory, behavioural, academic or communicative abilities” (p. 41). It goes on to note that “these differences entail necessary adaptations of the learning requirements and school equipment by using methods, techniques and programmes to enable these children to make use of the natural educational environment” (Al-Mousa, 1999, p. 41).

From these definitions, it seems that the concept of special educational needs in Saudi Arabia is not the same as in the one that is currently emerging in, for example the UK and US. The Saudi definition admits the need for adapted education, but it sees children’s difficulties with learning in terms of weaknesses or abnormalities in the children themselves. This is different from the definition of ‘special needs’ given by Beveridge (1993) and the one of ‘exceptional children’ given by Gearheart et al. (1990) in which learning difficulties are seen as the result of the interaction between the child and aspects of the school system, e.g. the curriculum.

In this section, an attempt has been made to establish some understanding of the connotations of the term ‘special educational needs’ and other terms used to denote the



same concept. Not only the terminology, but even the concept, has been shown to be problematic, and it has been suggested that different terms, definitions and interpretations may reflect differences in attitude and philosophy. This point will be further explored in the next section, where educational provision for children with SEN is considered.

### **3.3. Ways of Meeting Special Educational Needs**

For many years, there has been debate about how to provide appropriate education for all children. According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Child (Art. 2) children are not to “be discriminated against on any grounds, including disability”. Article 23 recognises that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy “a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance, and facilitate the child’s active participation in the community”. Children have a right to education “on the basis of equal opportunity” (Art. 28). The Convention does not, however, say how education must be provided.

Dyson (1998) sees a basic dilemma in special needs education, namely, how far children’s difficulties in learning should be seen as innate within the child, and how far they should be seen as the product of traditional forms of schooling. The answer obviously has important implications for educational provision.

Writers such as Mittler (2000) have seen attitudes towards and provision for students with SEN as reflections of two distinct models or paradigms, the defect or ‘within-child’ model, and the social model.

The defect or within-child model is based on the assumption that learning difficulties are attributable largely to factors within the child. According to this perspective,

helping the child necessitates assessment of his/her strengths and weaknesses to make a diagnosis, and the planning of a programme of intervention and support to help the child to fit into the system and benefit from what the school has to offer.

The social model, in contrast, is based on the view that society and its institutions are oppressive, discriminatory and disabling, and that the emphasis should therefore be on the removal of obstacles to participation and in changing institutions, regulations and attitudes that lead to exclusion (Campbell and Oliver, 1996). Dyson (1998) suggests that the first view is what led to special schools, remedial education and identification of 'new' disabilities like dyslexia and attention deficit disorder; the second view lies behind the integration and inclusion movements.

Mittler (2000) argues that the deficit model has been, and continues to be highly influential on policy, practice and attitudes, but that the movement from segregation to inclusion in methods of catering for students perceived as having special needs represents a paradigm shift, from the defect to the social model.

At the same time, he warns against polarising these two models as though they were mutually incompatible, and suggests, rather, that there is a constant and complex interaction between them. Clearly, some aspects of the within-child model are relevant, especially to children who have major impairments of sensory organs or the central nervous system. However, what the social model provides is an awareness that such impairments do not necessarily explain all the difficulties these children face, and a stimulus for environmental interventions to remove barriers at a variety of levels, in teaching, parenting, peer relations and the wider community.

From another perspective, different ways of meeting special educational needs have been considered as the result of two distinct theories of knowledge; the reductionist and the constructivist.

According to the reductionist view of education, presented by Poplin and Stone (1992)

- a) learning proceeds in sequence from part to whole;
- b) the whole is the sum of the parts;
- c) things are learned, not constructed;
- d) learning is regulated by the teacher and;
- e) errors are to be avoided.

Goldberg (1998) argues that the so-called deficit model of special education reflected reductionist thinking. This model saw special education students as impaired and in need of remediation. Testing was used to pinpoint deficits, which were used to shape individualised educational plans and students were placed in learning environments tailored to their disabilities.

The constructivist paradigm, in contrast, reflects an underlying holistic framework associated with merging systems and integrated settings. In the constructivist view

- a) learning takes place in spiral fashion;
- b) the whole is greater than the sum of its parts;
- c) learners actively search for and construct new meaning;
- d) learning is self-regulated and self-preserving;
- e) errors are critical to learning.

(Poplin and Stone, 1992)

Constructivist educators actively encourage learners to pursue their own learning objectives (Noddings, 1992). Such thinking is regarded as more compatible with

practices used to educate special needs students in inclusive settings, such as peer-mediated instruction (Udalvari-Solner and Thousands, 1995) and co-operative learning (Sapon-Shevin, 1990).

From these contrasting theoretical perspectives, a number of ways of providing education for children with SEN have been developed. The basic division is between segregated and non-segregated provision; the latter encompasses a broad spectrum of arrangements under which children with SEN receive part or all of their education alongside peers who do not have SEN. These arrangements go by various names, but for the purposes of this study are presented under the general heading of inclusion. In this section, these two types of provision are discussed in turn.

### **3.3.1. Segregation**

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the main form of response to children with SEN was a medical one, characterised by the establishment all over Europe of educational and residential institutes for 'the deaf', 'the blind' and, later, children with 'mental' and 'physical disabilities'. The first 'special schools' were established in France, Switzerland, Scotland and England between 1760 and 1800 (Potts, 1982). Although the establishment of special schools continued in line with the gradual development of state education, the rationale for special education was often linked to eugenics and the removal of unfit or uneducable children from mainstream provision (O'Hanlon, 1995).

When school attendance became compulsory in many Western countries around the end of the nineteenth century, one consequence was an increased awareness of pupils in ordinary schools who experienced considerable difficulties in learning. In the twentieth century, tests of individual ability (later known as IQ tests) were developed partly in an



attempt to identify such pupils. Subsequently, child psychologists were appointed to identify such children, and special classes and schools set up to provide education for them (Hornby, 1997).

Early developments were sporadic, resulting from particular local initiatives rather than from legislation. Over time, educational legislation moved from permitting special provision to requiring it. In the UK for example, in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such provision was charged as a duty on LEAs. The predominant means for discharging this duty was to provide special schools, leading to the further development of a separate system (Hegarty, Pocklington and Lucas, 1981).

Separate provision was in accord with the prevailing notion of handicap, dominated by the notion of defect. 'The handicapped' were seen as different in kind from other children and, moreover, likely in consequence of their 'deficiency' to continue to have juvenile status, irrespective of chronological age. From this perspective, it made sense to develop separate educational systems (Hegarty et al., 1981).

Thus, the field of special education gradually emerged as a response to those children seen as being outside the responsibility of teachers in mainstream schools. It perceived itself, and was perceived by others, as a separate service catering for a small and distinct population of children. The tendency to isolation from mainstream education was encouraged by the development of separate administrative structures, the existence of specialised teacher training arrangements; and the involvement of voluntary organisations in the provision of special education (Ainscow, 1999).

At the most extreme, segregated special education services are provided in residential schools, which has the effect of depriving children of opportunities of association with 'normal' peers. Such schools take care of the children for 24 hours a day, away from

home, and often at a long distance from their communities. Children may visit their homes weekly or at other intervals, depending on their circumstances (Hallahan and Kauffman, 1991).

Special day schools are usually organised for a specific type of special educational need. Such schools contain special materials and equipment to provide for the educational needs of their pupils, but as with residential schools, they raise the issue of social exclusion (Al-Khashrami, 1995).

Gearhart et al. (1992) characterise the first 60 – 70 years of the twentieth century as the ‘era of special classes’, noting that this was the predominant means by which students with SEN were served. Sometimes an intensive preliminary period of segregated education was seen as a possible precursor to mainstreaming. Students with visual impairment, for example, could be educated in special segregated classes for a number of years, in order to learn special skills such as Braille, and subsequently be integrated into ordinary classrooms.

In some countries, segregation is still the predominant form of special education provision. In Germany, for example, students who are declared eligible for special education must be placed in a special school. In the Netherlands, despite recent policy initiatives to change the emphasis on special school placement, 7.4% of 11-year olds, and 4% of all pupils aged 4-18 attend full-time special schools (Ainscow, 1999).

Currently, all countries in Europe, except for Italy, operate a parallel education system of mainstream and special schools, although there is wide divergence of national practice in the use of categorisation and placement of children with SEN (O'Hanlon, 1995). In the Netherlands, for example, the special school system is well resourced and financed, and has a reputation for quality, so parents have little reason to seek

alternative provision. Although national policy ostensibly supports mainstreaming of children with SEN at the earliest opportunity, the Netherlands has possibly the highest percentage of children in special schools in Europe. In other countries, notably the Scandinavian countries, parental pressure has resulted in a move away from segregated schooling; the proportion of school-age children in special education in Finland is approximately 2.5%, and in Norway, 0.7% (O'Hanlon, 1995).

Increasingly, however, segregated provision has come to have negative connotations and has been subjected to much criticism, because special units were too often misused as 'dumping grounds' for children with challenging behaviour, vehicles of segregation and, in some areas, ways of dealing with cultural and linguistic difference (Gearheart et al., 1992).

According to Lipsky and Gartner (1989), researchers have not been able to prove that pulling students out of ordinary classrooms for special education services produces significant benefits. Osborne (1999) goes so far as to say that, despite increases in spending and the growth of the special education bureaucracy, segregated programmes "have simply not worked".

Concerns about the perceived social and academic limitations imposed on children by segregated education settings led to a movement towards more inclusive settings. These are the focus of the rest of this chapter.

### 3.3.2. Inclusion

Before we embark on a discussion of the rationale for inclusion, and the ways in which it may be implemented, it would be useful to consider the term 'inclusion' and the reason for its use here.

As noted earlier, there is considerable terminological confusion in the field of SEN research. This confusion is not confined to the terms used to describe children with special needs, but extends also to discussion of provision arrangements. Until a decade or so ago, the term 'integration' was the one most commonly used to denote arrangements whereby children with SEN receive some or all of their education in mainstream settings. During the 1990s, however, the term 'inclusion' gained currency. Confusion arises because some writers (e.g. Hornby, 1997) use the terms more-or-less interchangeably, while others such as Ainscow (1997) make a distinction between them, insisting that they reflect different philosophies and, hence, practices.

The term integration, in its original sense, entails a process of making whole, of combining different elements into a unity. In the special education context, it should therefore mean a process whereby an ordinary school and a special group interact to form a new educational whole. Unfortunately, however, the term is often used in a narrower sense in which the idea of synthesis in a process of mutually adaptive interaction is lost; the focus is on the minority group and what needs to be done to or by them for assimilation into the mainstream. In its narrowest usage, integration may be used simply to mean association or the existence of links (Hegarty, Pocklington and Lucas, 1981).

The narrower sense of integration is implicit in the Warnock report's (DES, 1978) distinction between three kinds or levels of integration: locational (where special units or classes are set up in ordinary schools or where a special school and an ordinary school share the same campus); social, where children attending a special class or unit are joined with other children for meals, recreation and, perhaps, organised out of school activities; and functional, the fullest form of integration, where children with



special needs join, part-time or full-time, the regular classes of the school and make a full contribution to the activity of the school.

It is, perhaps, because of the impoverished sense in which the word integration is often used (Hegarty et al., 1981) that there is a trend in recent years to draw a distinction between the terms integration and inclusion; 'integration' is confined to the narrow senses noted above, while 'inclusion' is used to refer to a mutually adaptive process in which a new educational entity is formed. Mittler (2000) for example, maintains that

*"Inclusion involves a process of reform and restructuring of the school as a whole, with the aim of ensuring that all pupils can have access to the whole range of social and educational opportunities offered by the school" (p. 2).*

Thus, the term 'inclusion' as used by Mittler is actually consistent in meaning with the original, richer meaning of 'integration' and with the Warnock report's (DES, 1978) concept of functional integration.

As will be seen later in this chapter, some advocates of inclusion use the term to refer to a distinct kind of provision arrangement (referred to in this study as 'full' inclusion), whereby all children with special educational needs are educated in mainstream schools. However, according to Ballard (1995), Sebba and Ainscow (1996) and Booth et al. (2000) inclusion is not a state, but a never-ending set of processes. Similarly, the updated Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a) describes inclusion as "a process by which schools, local education authorities and others develop their cultures, policies and practice to include pupils" (p. 2). Thus, the term and the associated debate is relevant to all phases and types of schools. In this section, therefore, inclusion means not only so-called 'full inclusion', but the whole range of policies and practices by which efforts are made to enable children with SEN to participate alongside and to interact with peers who are not perceived as having SEN.

The discussion contains four elements: the rationale for inclusion; implementation; research evidence on the outcomes of inclusion; and concerns about the recent trend to 'full' inclusion, resulting in calls for 'responsible inclusion'.

### 3.3.2.1. The Rationale for Inclusion

Current concerns about integration and inclusion can be traced back to the 1960s, when increasing pressure for civil rights combined with evidence that special schools were not achieving the success expected in the light of the resources given to them (Thomas, 1997). Arguments for educating pupils with SEN in mainstream settings are made on humanistic, socio-political, educational and pragmatic grounds.

From a humanistic perspective, it is argued that discriminatory practices in education and elsewhere serve to perpetuate anti-humanistic values and behaviours. For example, if a child is made to feel worthless, he or she may need to assert the worthlessness of others. If children are taught to fear differences, their feelings become barriers that prevent the use of new ideas and accurate information, leading to stereotyping, scapegoating and exclusion (Epstein, 1984).

It is a humanitarian belief that every disabled person should have the opportunity to have an education and living environment that are as close as possible to what is considered to be 'normal' (Hallahan and Kauffman, 1991). This, it is argued, requires both physical (locational) and social integration.

Epstein (1984) asserts the importance of autonomy and self-actualisation to mental health. She argues that segregation engenders feelings of powerlessness and worthlessness. The segregated child becomes more dependent yet, paradoxically, more socially isolated, unable to attain the equal status necessary for mentally healthy interaction. From the perspective of humanistic psychology, she asserts the need to

respect, value and accept oneself, and the right to command the same from others, and argues that such values are fostered by inclusive settings where people are truly diverse and become aware of each others' unique needs, as well as their common needs and aspirations.

The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994) advocated inclusion on the ground that inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. Human differences, it is asserted, are normal. Regular schools with an inclusive orientation are said to be the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.

Inclusion is said to foster a sense of belonging, where classroom instruction meets the needs of all students (Osborne, 1999). Pearpoint and Forest (1992) describe the important basic values of the inclusive school as the ABCs (Acceptance, Belonging and Community), and argue that an inclusive school focuses on how to support the special gifts and needs of every student in the school community, so that they feel welcomed and secure, and can become successful.

From a socio-political perspective, the argument against segregation and in favour of inclusion is related to issues of power and control. Epstein (1984) draws attention to a growing realisation that a significant percentage of 'handicap' is externally caused by discriminatory behaviour, rather than intrinsic to the physical or mental impairment. This has stimulated a movement by disabled people and their advocates calling for the removal of discrimination; and demanding accountability for the educational and other services provided for people with special needs.



Some educationists have suggested that segregation perpetuates and even creates handicap by denying children the opportunity to observe and take part in the behaviours normal to their society. For example, Hegarty et al. (1982) quote a headteacher's view that

*"it is a negative situation in living terms. . . One slowly becomes abnormal. . . out of phase with community and behaviour patterns."*

(Hegarty et al., 1982, p. 78).

Other socio-political arguments reflect specific concerns and conditions in individual societies. For example, a criticism of special classes which emerged in the USA was that they promoted racial segregation, since ethnic minorities were often substantially over-represented in such classes (Hornby, Atkinson and Howard, 1997).

One of the concerns of those calling for more radical change (e.g. Ainscow, 1991; Ballard, 1995; Slee, 1996) is with the way pupils come to be designated as having special needs, which they see as a social process that needs to be continually challenged. Advocates of full inclusion argue that, since society artificially constructs the disability labels for children, a large part of the problem would be removed by removing the labels (Lerner, 1997). They also claim that the continued use of the so-called 'medical model' of assessment, by focusing solely on child deficits, distracts attention from wider problems related to the way schools are organised and teaching is provided. Skrtic (1991) goes so far as to claim that pupils with special needs are artefacts of the traditional curriculum. Such writers argue that the way forward is to reform schools and improve pedagogy in such a way that individual differences are viewed positively as opportunities for enriching learning.

Although not all educationists would agree with the extreme stance taken by Skrtic (1991), many have expressed concern about segregation, and advocated inclusion, on the grounds of educational philosophy. Epstein (1984), for example, argues that



teaching has become stuck in an ancient liberal arts pattern that conflicts with the humanist goals of education: to foster the mental, physical and emotional health of every individual. Too many children, she claims, are labelled hyperactive, maladjusted, or having behaviour problems, and moved into special classes, when the problems are rooted in inappropriate teaching methods and an excessive preoccupation with academic content at the expense of problem-solving and productive interaction. From this perspective, it is argued, not only that children with SEN could be educated alongside their peers who do not have SEN, if teaching objectives and methods were modified, but that the kind of teaching which is needed for children with SEN is actually better for all children

*“It is not only special children who need to think and to be; all young people need opportunities for optimum development as human beings, instead of occasions for functioning like limited and defective computer banks.”*  
(Epstein, 1984, p. 186)

Ainscow (1999) argues that developing new teaching responses that can stimulate and support the participation of all class members has the potential to bring about improvements that can enhance the learning of all pupils whilst at the same time reaching out to those who have been marginalised.

Gearheart et al. (1992) suggest that inclusion is beneficial for teachers, providing them with challenges that help them to grow, personally and professionally. They report that, often, teachers who are initially apprehensive at the prospect of a student with SEN being placed in their class, find the experience an exciting and rewarding one which they are keen to repeat.

Very often, the methods used for teaching students with SEN may be used with other students, and the challenge of working with students of different physical and/or mental ability may stimulate them to learn to serve as facilitators to provide each student with

opportunities to reach his/her fullest potential, rather than simply teaching at students (Gearheart et al., 1992).

At a practical level, calls for a move away from segregation have also been prompted by, at best, equivocal, and at worst, negative, findings about the efficacy of special classes and curricula (Hornby et al., 1997). For example, in one of the local authorities reviewed by Hegarty et al. (1981) the impetus for integration of severely and profoundly deaf pupils, came from an academic involved in the education of such pupils, whose surveys demonstrated the poor attainments and limited social interactions of pupils attending special units for partially hearing pupils.

Inclusion has also been advocated from a pragmatic standpoint. The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) claims that inclusive schools constitute a more efficient and cost-effective way of providing education than the maintenance of parallel systems. Ainscow (1999) extends this pragmatism to his views on the policies and practices to be adopted within the individual school. In Ainscow's view, individualised approaches whereby practices imported from earlier (segregated) experience in educational provision are transferred to integrated settings are not feasible and do not fit with the ways in which mainstream teachers plan and carry out their work. Practical considerations such as class size and teaching load make it inevitable that the planning frame has to be the whole class.

As can be seen from the foregoing discussion, the move to a more inclusive orientation to the education of children with SEN has been demanded and justified on a number of philosophical and practical grounds. Although general factors such as the movement to desegregate minority groups can be very pervasive, the particular reasons why a decision is taken to develop or expand integrated provision at a particular time and place vary, as Hegarty et al. (1981) found. Their study showed that one of the main reasons

for opting to educate pupils with SEN within the mainstream of education was an attempt to overcome existing inadequacies in the quantity or quality of provision. Whatever reasons weigh most heavily at a particular time and place, the provision of some or all of the education of pupils with SEN in non-segregated settings is now well established in many parts of the world. Ways in which inclusion has been implemented will now be considered.

#### 3.3.2.2. Implementation of Inclusion

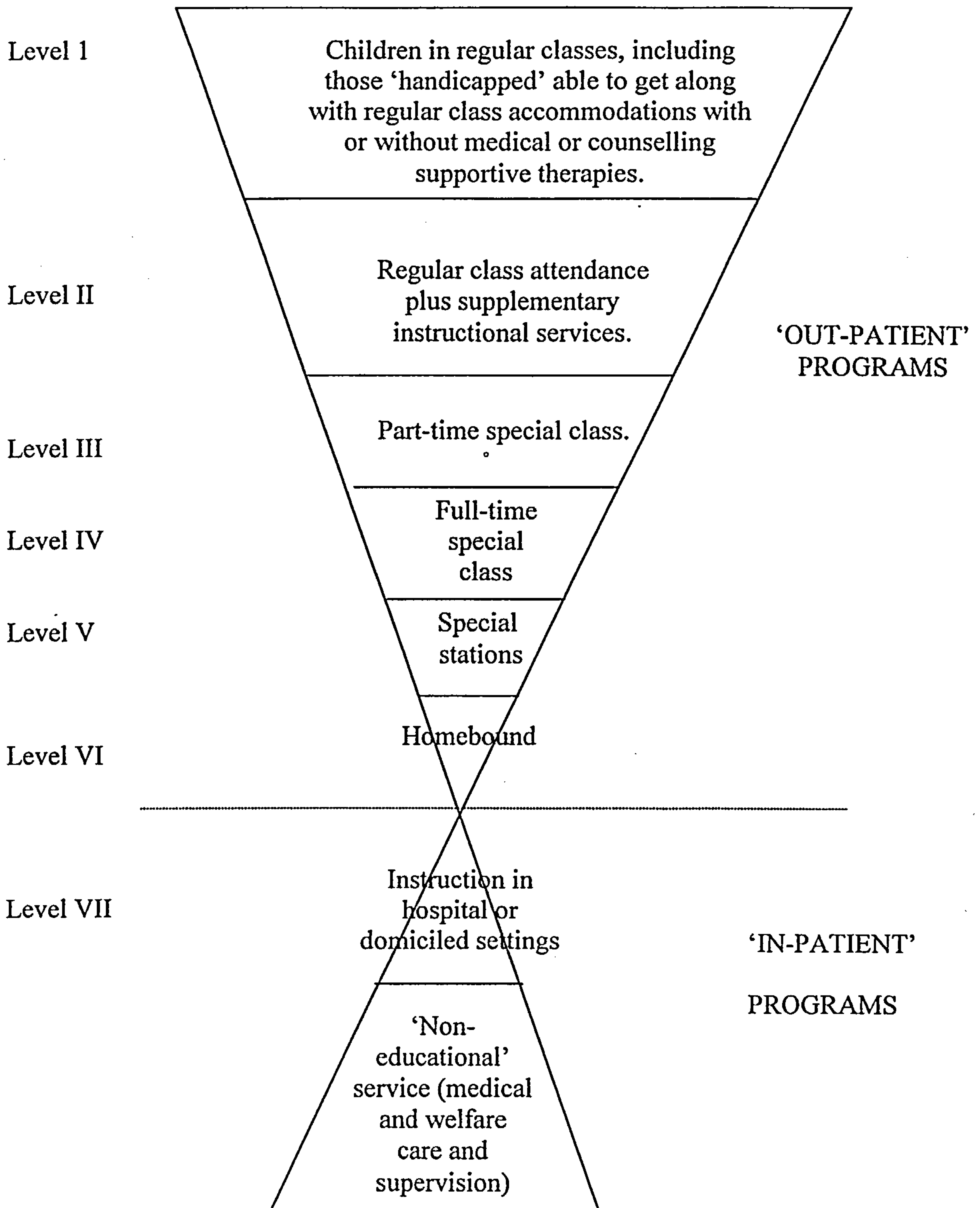
Inclusion does not refer to a single form of provision. The challenge of educating pupils with SEN in ordinary schools can be met in many different ways. Various writers have attempted to describe and categorise these possibilities.

One commonly cited model is that of Deno (1970), shown in Figure 3.1. Deno's cascade model was one of the first to embody the idea that organisational structure should be based on learning variables, rather than clinical labels; pupils are placed in a particular environment because of an identified need for, for example, extra teaching or a highly structured environment, not simply because they are visually impaired, or have learning difficulties.

Similar attempts to categorise provision for children with SEN in terms of educational arrangements instead of categories of handicap have been made by, *inter alia*, Cope and Anderson (1977), Hegarty et al. (1981) and Gearheart et al. (1997). The precise number of categories, and their content, differ from one model to another, reflecting the special educational provision available in the countries concerned at the time of writing. What those models have in common, however, is that they tend to be structured in terms of degree of separation from the mainstream, and to imply a continuum from total segregation to the absence of segregation.

**Figure 3.1**

**Range of special education provision (Deno)**



**Source: Hegarty et al. (1981)**

As an example of such a range of arrangements, in the USA, the New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC) envisages a continuum of services, whereby students may

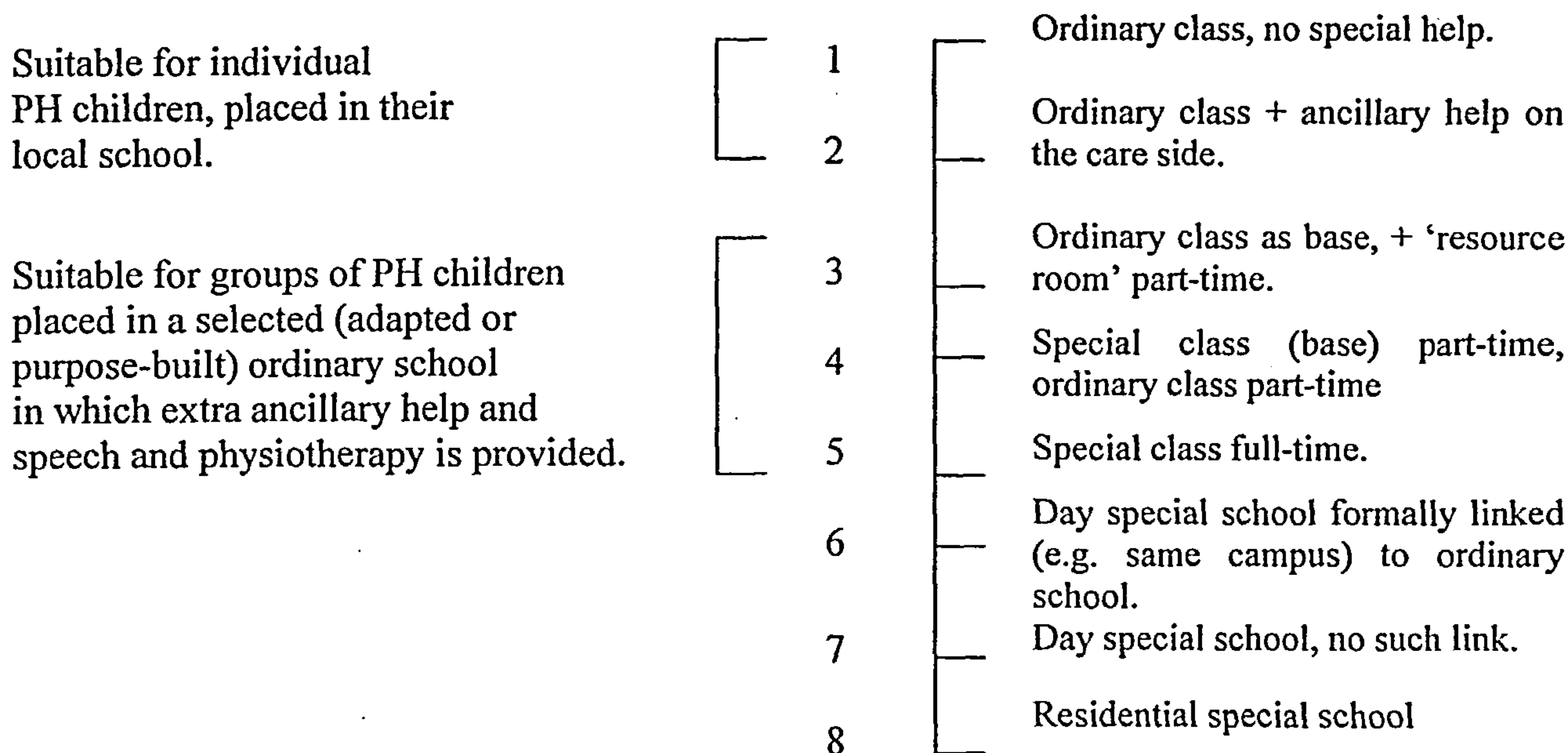


receive some or all of their individualised education programme in a range of placements, ranging from less restrictive to more restrictive: general classroom, general classroom with resource room; general classroom with special class (self-contained); full-time special class; special day school; residential treatment facility and limited educational placements other than school (home, hospital, detention centre (NJAC, 1998, Art. 4.2).

It should be pointed out, however, that the notion of a 'continuum' is not really accurate. The ordering of categories refers to a general trend, but in practice, the boundaries between individual categories may be blurred. Moreover, it is not easy to determine how some categories should be arranged in relation to each other. For example, referring to Cope and Anderson's model (Figure 3.2), a pupil in a special class full-time (level 5) may in practice be more segregated and receive more specialist resources than one who attends a special school with formal links, such as a shared campus, to an ordinary school.

**Figure 3.2.**

**Range of special educational provision (Cope and Anderson)**



Thus, it is not always easy to tell from the 'label' of a given arrangement, how inclusive it is in practice. Schnorr (1990) cited the case of a student with SEN who was mainstreamed part-time into a first-grade class. He was regarded by his peers as an outsider because of the limited time and activities he shared with them. In particular, the social membership of the student was not established because he was not in the mainstream classroom during the less structured social or free times of the day.

Another weakness of formal models is that, although they may offer good discrimination between levels in terms of the degree of specialist involvement, they tend to overlook ancillary involvement. Thus, the idea of a 'continuum' should be viewed with some caution. What is important for the purposes of this study is to recognise the complex and multifarious nature of provision.

Public policy in both the USA and the UK supports the principle of including as many children with SEN as possible in mainstream schools, but also requires education authorities to maintain a continuum of special education provision (Hornby, 1999).

In the UK, children with special needs in general come under the responsibility of the Local Education Authority and are entitled to receive specific educational provisions (Hegarty, 1990). Many children receive their education in special schools, while others attend special classes in ordinary schools or, more commonly, undergo mainstream education with certain modifications including the use of support services (Pijl and Meijer, 1991). Current practice is governed by the 1981 and 1996 Education Acts which embody the philosophy of the Warnock Report, guidance on the National Curriculum (DES 1989) which suggests that children with SEN should follow this curriculum to the maximum extent possible, and the Code of Practice for SEN (DfES, 2001a), which sets out the responsibilities of all those involved in the education of children with SEN, in schools, in the governing body and in the LEA. The new Code of Practice, compared

with its predecessor (DfE, 1994), incorporates a stronger right for children with SEN to be educated at a mainstream school. This provision is a reflection of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, which has amended the Education Act 1996 and transformed the statutory framework for inclusion into a positive endorsement of inclusion (DfES, 2001b). From September 2002, LEAs must not treat pupils less favourably, without justification, for a reason related to their disability; must take “reasonable steps” to ensure that disabled pupils are not disadvantaged, and must plan strategically for and make progress in improving the physical environment of schools for disabled children, increase their participation in the curriculum, and improve ways of providing information to disabled pupils. As a consequence, a child who has a statement of special educational needs must be included in a mainstream school, unless this is contrary to the wishes of the child’s parents, or would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education of other children. The latter argument is only admissible if there are no reasonable steps the school or LEA can take to prevent such incompatibility, and it is envisaged that it will apply in only a small minority of cases (DfES, 2001b).

In the USA, Public Law 94-142 promises free public education for children with special needs. School districts must provide placements in the least restrictive environment possible, depending on the nature and severity of their impairments (Berge and Berge, 1988). Great strides have been made in the integration of regular and special education. Integrated provision takes various forms, including self-contained classrooms, itinerant teachers and in-class support services. Recently, the Regular Education Initiative (REI) has sought to give full responsibility to the regular class teacher toward handicapped children integrated in their classes, and to make special education only serve as a resource for regular education (Pijl and Meijer, 1991).



In the 1990 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), enacted to update Public Law 94-142, inclusion is not defined, but according to Osborne (1999) is “generally understood as the placement of a child with a disability with his or her chronological age peers in a general education class” (p. 7).

In Australia and Canada, too, the local community school is often seen as the normal setting for pupils with SEN (Booth and Ainscow, 1998).

In Italy, school integration was established as a right for all children with SEN, as early as 1971. In the early days of integration there were criticisms of irresponsible removal of children from special schools to mainstream schools without adequate support provision (Ferro, 1981) and of a decline in education quality for the sake of radical change (Daunt, 1991). Gradually, however, as class sizes were reduced and regulated, support teachers and ancillary helpers were provided, and mainstream teachers learned to accept the new pupils and find ways of meeting their educational needs, Italy moved wholeheartedly towards a supportive single education system, rather than developing separate, parallel systems (O’Hanlon, 1995).

In Saudi Arabia, as noted in Chapter One, Section 1.1., in recent years, education for children with SEN has increasingly been provided in mainstream schools, although not always in mainstream classes. An indication of the number and types of special education programmes, both in special institutions (segregation) and in mainstream schools, was given in Chapter Two, Section 2.3.3.

Many governments, organisations and individuals have been influenced by the strong stance of international organisations on inclusive education, particularly the Jomtien Declaration and the Salamanca statement (Booth, Black-Hawkins, Vaughn and Shaw, 2000).



A firm commitment to inclusive education was given in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) in which delegates expressed “the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system” (Art. 1). Schools should provide a “child centred pedagogy” capable of meeting special needs. The Statement claims that this approach is more efficient and cost-effective than separate provision, and will break down discrimination (Art. 2). For all these reasons, governments are asked to adopt inclusive education in their law or policy, and to enrol all children in regular schools “unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise” (Art. 3). The last clause leaves the door open for some separate education, but it is not clear what would be acceptable as a ‘compelling reason’.

Some inclusionists, according to Hornby (1999) have taken the extreme view that SEN result wholly from social factors, and that mainstream schools should be able to adapt to cater for all children with SEN. They see inclusion as a ‘right’ of all children with SEN (Oliver, 1996). Booth (2000) argues that all learners have a right to an education in their locality and that achieving it requires cultures, policies and practices in schools to be restructured in such a way as to support the learning and participation of the diversity of learners in their community.

Whatever form or degree of inclusion is operated in a particular locality, the effective education of children with SEN in mainstream schools presents a number of challenges for teachers and administrators. Among these are:

- the existence of political will to initiate and sustain developments for pupils with SEN (Stakes and Hornby, 2000).

With inclusive education, as with other education reform initiatives, administrative leadership determines how or even whether change occurs (Hasazi, Johnson, Liggott and Schaltman, 1994).

- provision of adequate resources

Catlett (1999) identified resources as a major constraint on inclusion. She noted that in the past it was the practice of many states in the USA to tie their funding to eligibility and placement, e.g. allocating a given sum for each child with autism in a self-contained setting. Recent audits on behalf of the US Department of Education, however, have required that funding formulae be placement neutral. Inclusion, therefore, may necessitate changes in the basis of funding allocations, for example, basing funding on the numbers of children with SEN, rather than diagnosis and/or physical location.

- the development of positive societal attitudes

The main obstacle to inclusion lies in beliefs and attitudes and not in the absence of readiness in schools and teachers (Mittler, 2000).

- the provision of adequate training for teachers working with pupils with SEN. As Mittler (2000) argues.

*“Ensuring that newly qualified teachers have a basic understanding of inclusive teaching and inclusive schools is the best long-term investment that can be made.”* (Mittler, 2000, p. 137)

Various sources of guidance exist, which provide useful advice on the development of inclusive policies and practice. The UK’s Code of Practice (DfE, 1994) has already been mentioned. The Code was not without its critics. It has been suggested (Mittler, 2000) that the very title of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DfE, 1994) reflected a within-child model, as did its prescription of individual education plans (IEP). Ainscow (1999) criticises this device

as potentially leading to isolation and segregation. Nevertheless, the Code of Practice reflected a social model in its proposal of major environmental modifications and changes of professional role with the aim of enabling children with SEN to remain in ordinary schools.

Further guidance on implementation of inclusion has recently become available in the updated Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a) and the related guidance document (DfES, 2001b). The latter, for instance, cites several case studies illustrating measures that have been taken by some schools and LEAs to enable the inclusion of particular pupils with SEN. It also includes extensive illustrative lists of the sort of measures that may be considered, under the “reasonable steps” requirement, to facilitate the inclusion of children with various categories of special need: learning difficulties, temper tantrums, Downs syndrome, emotional and behavioural difficulties, attention deficit disorder and autism. Suggested measures include, for example, adjusting teaching styles to reflect pupils’ learning styles, flexible group-work arrangements, developing a partnership with parents, addressing within-class factors that may be contributing to a problem, agreeing a consistent behaviour management system in co-ordination with all staff who deal with the child, adjusting the balance of the curriculum, using visual prompts to support curriculum delivery, building self-esteem, and facilitating peer support. These and other suggestions offered in the guidance clearly assume particular competencies on the part of the teacher. This issue will be explored in detail in the next chapter.

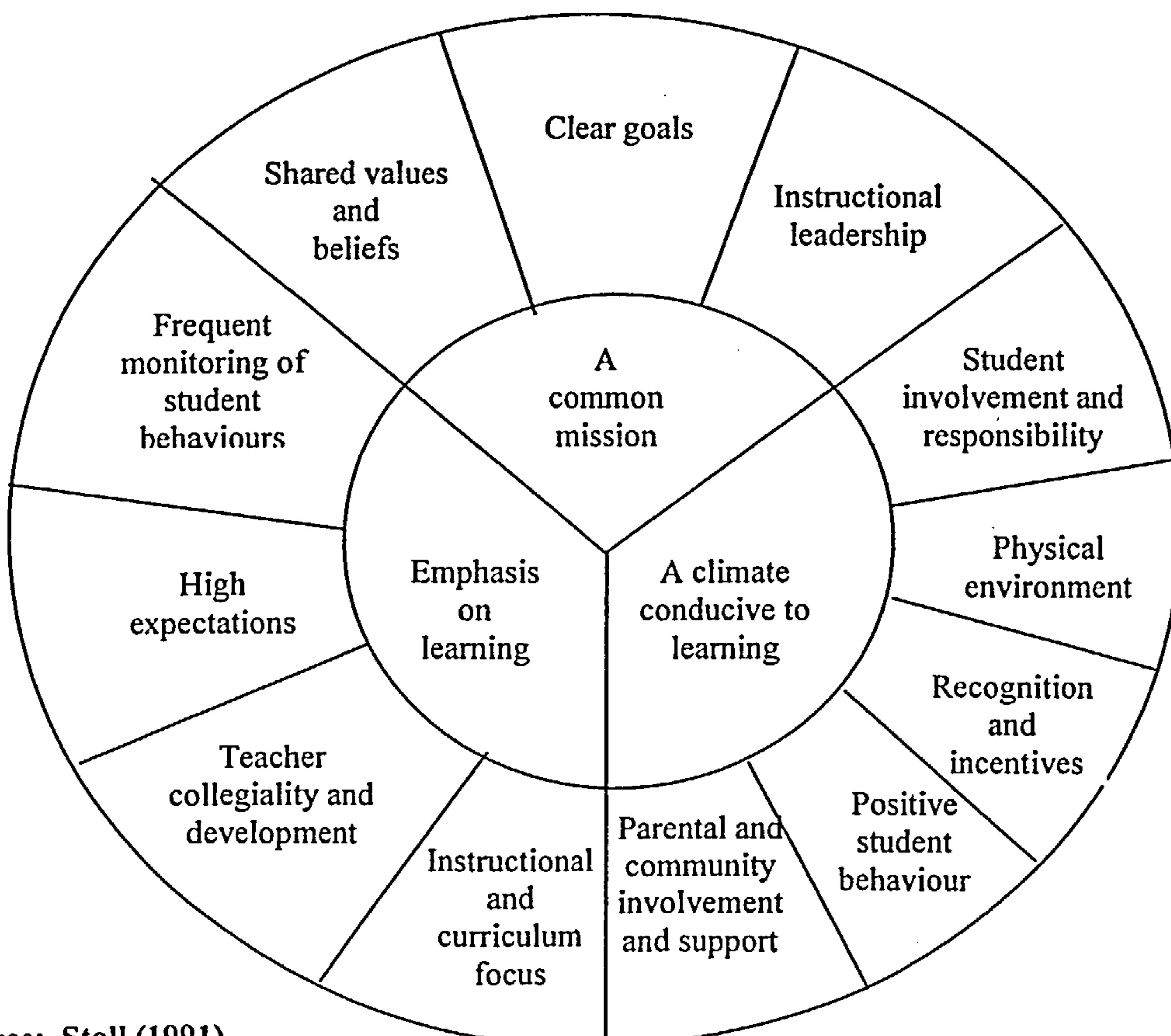
Other sources of guidance can be found in the writings of prominent inclusionists, such as Ainscow (1991, 1999) and Booth et al. (2000). Ainscow (1991) notes that schools structured in ways that encourage problem-solving processes tend to be more responsive to pupil diversity. It is also important to have an appropriate balance between collaboration among staff, and autonomy. On the one hand, there need to be agreed aims and missions, and effective sharing of information and resources. On the other



had, individual teachers need to have sufficient autonomy to make flexible decisions in response to the circumstances and interactions that arise in their classrooms.

Ainscow (1999) proposes that evidence from school effectiveness research can be used as a starting point for an internal review, the outcome of which may be used to guide improvement efforts. Stoll (1991) summarises evidence from such research in several countries, to identify three main characteristics of effective schools – a common mission, emphasis on learning and a climate conducive to learning – and a number of indicators that point to these features (see Figure 3.3). Ainscow (1999) invites school staff to consider whether these features are applicable to their own country, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their own school, and to design an action plan for development. Ainscow notes, however, that Stoll’s scheme is presented purely as a stimulus to discussion and internally-driven improvement, not as an imposed blueprint.

**Figure 3.3**  
**Characteristics of Effective Schools**



Source: Stoll (1991)



In an attempt to find ways of encouraging schools in the UK to move towards more inclusive ways of working, a group of researchers in the Centre for Educational Needs at the University of Manchester embarked on a project in partnership with the Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education, with the aim of developing an index that can be used to review and improve current practice. The aim of the Index for Inclusion (Booth et al., 2000) is to help schools to identify their position in terms of inclusion and exclusion, in order to move thinking and practice forward. Whilst concerned with processes of school and teacher development, it also takes account of wider contextual factors that are likely to affect the work of schools (Ainscow, 1999). The Index focuses on all aspects of school life and is concerned with the participation of all members of a school's communities. It provides a framework to guide critical examination of the ways in which a school may exclude or marginalise certain groups, and of what can be done to increase the learning and participation of diverse students within the school and its locality. The Index covers three dimensions:

- A. Creating inclusive cultures – “creating a secure, accepting, collaborating community in which everyone is valued;
- B. Producing inclusive policies – setting inclusion at the heart of school development and organising the support needed for the school to respond to student diversity;
- C. Evolving inclusive practices – integrating teaching and support, and mobilising school and community resources to encourage the participation of all students and sustain their active learning.

For each dimension, the Index provides a list of key indicators of achievement, and a series of questions to guide examination of whether those indicators are present in the school and the factors that may be constraining inclusion, which in turn will help in setting directions and priorities for development.

### 3.3.2.3. Research Evidence on Outcomes of Inclusion

Inclusion has attracted research interest since the 1970s. So-called 'efficacy' research predominates; researchers have examined the relative efficacy of special and ordinary classes, or have compared pupils in special and ordinary schools. A few examples are reviewed in chronological order here.

Early sociometric studies (Goodman, Gottlieb and Harrison, 1972; Gottlieb and Budoff, 1973; Scranton and Rychman, 1979) suggested that mildly handicapped children were less accepted, more isolated and more actively rejected than non-handicapped peers when educated in mainstream schools. In particular, children placed in special classes were reported as having lower self-esteem, lower achievement expectancies and restriction of social role models due to the stigma attached to special class placement.

Empirical support for integration was found in the results of various efficacy studies in the USA in the 1970s (Budoff and Gottlieb, 1976; Guerin and Szatlocky, 1974) which have attempted to compare the academic, behavioural and social performance of children with SEN before and after being mainstreamed in ordinary schools. The results of such studies show that children with disabilities can benefit from mainstream educational programmes.

Madden and Slavin (1983), in their review of research evidence on the academic and social outcome of integrated as compared with segregated placements, found that many studies were inconclusive in their results or contained methodological weaknesses. They reported, however, that some methodologically adequate studies provided evidence of the efficacy of integration, when mainstream teachers were trained special educators and provided individualised education.

Danby and Cullen (1988) found no research support for the assumptions that children in integrated settings would do better academically, have better social skills and suffer less stigma than those in segregated placements.

Support for the inclusive education movement has been provided by reported benefits resulting from inclusive practices, by York, Vandercook, Macdonald, Heise-Neff and Caughey, 1992), Peck and Helmstelter (1992) and Giangreco et al. (1992) who all reported significant benefits to non-disabled students, including increased understanding, acceptance of difference, and flexibility, and improved social and emotional benefit. Children with SEN are said to show improvements in self-concept (Peck and Helmstelter, 1992).

Hornby (1992), however, summarising previous reviews, concluded that there was little evidence that the goals of integration are being met: greater educational achievement, improved social skills, reduced stigma and increased self-esteem do not necessarily result from inclusion.

Hegarty (1993), similarly, in a summary of a major international review by the OECD concluded that the research evidence was not clear, either in support of or against inclusion, largely because of methodological weaknesses.

Zigmond (1995) and Roberts and Mather (1995) suggest that research does not support the effectiveness of full inclusion for students with learning disabilities, and claim that their intervention needs are often neglected.

In the first organised inclusion experiment in Saudi Arabia, Al-Khashrami (1995) investigated the effects of inclusion on the attainment and self-concept of children with special needs in Saudi Arabia, at the kindergarten level. Her study involved four groups of children with mild special needs, two in inclusive and two in segregated educational

settings. In-service training sessions were provided to give teachers information on how to deal with included children. However, the researcher pointed out that, because of the lack of any institutional framework or specific legislation supporting inclusion, and difficulties of sample selection, it was not possible to start inclusion in more than one school, and the study was based on small, non-random samples. The findings must, therefore, be viewed with some caution. Children were assessed on language, adaptive behaviour and self-concept over two different times spans, one and three years. The findings revealed greater improvement in children's language, adaptive behaviour and self-concept in the integrated than in the segregated setting. Moreover, Al-Khashrami noted that teachers, who had at the start of the experiment been opposed to inclusion, developed more favourable attitudes to it.

According to Hocutt (1996), students' academic and social success depends more on the instructional models employed and the classroom environment, than whether placement is in a general or special educational setting. However, the intensive interventions most effective with students with SEN were hard to find in typical classrooms, due to time and resource constraints.

Hegarty et al. (1991) note that many efficacy studies have been marred by biased or inadequate sampling procedures; failure to take account of variations in classroom ethos, the programmes that were followed and the way they were taught; and unsatisfactory or biased measures of academic and social development.

Manset and Semmel (1997) reviewed eight different models of inclusion for students with mild disabilities and concluded that inclusion was effective for some, but not all students. They found no evidence that any full inclusion model is superior to other models of special education provision.



Michael Federico reported favourably on his three-year action research project as a co-teacher in an inclusive class (Federico, Herrold and Venn, 1999). The experiment was reported to have brought beneficial changes in attitudes, academic performance and social relationships. As regards attitude, it was reported that pupils with SEN became less dependent and fearful of failure, and more positive in their attitudes to school. Average grades for the class were close to, or even exceeded, those of other classes in the same year-group, and there were dramatic improvements in the grades of some of the pupils with SEN. Socially, tolerance and mutual respect were demonstrated in, for example, peer tutoring activities (which included children with disabilities tutoring students without disabilities, in subjects like maths). It must be recognised that this is a qualitative account. Moreover, the project was confined to one particular class where responsibilities for planning, teaching and evaluating were shared between two teachers (one with previous experience in special education) and closely supported by two advisors.

The guidance document (DfES, 2001b) accompanying the new Code of Practice on special educational needs (DfES, 2001a) offers anecdotal evidence of successful inclusion, but this is confined to individual cases. Its purpose is primarily to illustrate how the school or LEA may fulfil its statutory responsibilities under the Code, and no details of outcomes are given to substantiate the claim that “the child was successfully included”.

This brief overview suggests that the research evidence for inclusion is inconclusive. Methodological weaknesses, differences of setting, and lack of detailed information on the types of provision and teaching investigated make it difficult to compare studies. It seems that there is some evidence for the academic and social benefits of inclusion, subject to two important provisos: inclusion is not necessarily beneficial for all children;

and the quality of inclusion outcomes depends on the availability of the requisite resourcing, teacher training and support, confirming the suggestions in Section 3.3.2.2.

#### 3.3.2.4. Full Inclusion or Responsible Inclusion?

In recent years, the concept of full inclusion, whereby all children with SEN would be educated in mainstream schools, has been advocated in the USA (Lipsky and Gartner, 1998) and in the UK (Ainscow, 1997 and Thomas, 1997).

While the majority of educationists favour inclusive schools, which include most children with SEN, some have serious reservations about full inclusion whereby all children with SEN would be educated in mainstream classes (Hornby, 2001).

Some of the concerns are related to the way the rhetoric of inclusion has been accepted, as some writers see it, without adequate critical forethought, or based on confused thinking. In this respect, Kauffman and Hallahan (1995) argue that inclusion in the USA was prompted by civil rights issues and budget considerations, and that the inclusion rhetoric has drawn attention away from research evidence and educational outcomes.

Challenges to the rationale for full inclusion have also been put forward by Hornby (2001). As indicated earlier, in the discussion of the rationale for inclusion, inclusion is sometimes advocated in human rights terms. As Hornby (2001) notes, however, there may be a conflict between human rights and moral rights; if, in some cases, educating children in the mainstream would deny them a benefit, or even cause harm, it may not be morally right to exercise the human right of inclusion. There is also a question of priorities; the right to be educated in the neighbourhood, alongside peers who do not have SEN, may be outweighed by the right to an appropriate education which meets students' specific needs.

Including children with SEN in mainstream schools, which in recent years have been under pressure to focus on raising academic achievement, may lead to the goals of education for many of these children being inappropriate. Academic achievement should be secondary to the broader goal of producing well-adjusted, productive individuals (Hornby, 2001).

In countries where the principle of inclusion has been accepted in public policy, such as the UK, it often faces problems in practice. Thomas (1992) found that a particular area of difficulty is in the relationship between support teachers and classroom teachers. Problems can arise because of lack of time for liaison, inadequate interpersonal skills, and the negative attitudes of many class teachers.

In the UK, also, there are concerns that the National Curriculum, which is supposed to ensure a broad and balanced education for all children, does not suit those with special needs. Hornby (1999) argues that the National Curriculum has actually been a backward step for most pupils with SEN, because its assessments, league tables etc. emphasise academic education and give less recognition to personal and social education. The National Curriculum has been criticised as too academic and inaccessible for children with special needs. Dyson (1997) accuses it of confining children “within a rigid and inappropriate hierarchy of knowledge” (p. 154). The effect, he argues, has been to segregate children with special needs, even though they may attend mainstream schools. Special education has not managed to transform mainstream education, so SENCOS, support teachers and so on are just reproducing traditional special education in the mainstream setting.

In the light of such considerations, concerns have been expressed that full inclusion could in fact lead to a deterioration in the education provided to many children with SEN (Kauffman and Hallahan, 1995). Hornby (1999) argues that although many

children with SEN can be catered for in mainstream schools, there are some with severe or complex needs who will need specialist provision. Indeed, this principle seems to be accepted within the UK's current Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a). The guidance on implementation of the Code (DfES, 2001b) accepts that "mainstream education will not always be right for every child all of the time" (p. 2).

Writers concerned for the preservation of diversity in provision and for the effectiveness of inclusion, such as Vaughn and Schumm (1995), advocate a concept of responsible inclusion, rather than automatic full inclusion. Responsible inclusion, according to these authors, depends on a number of pre-requisites:

- Mainstream placement should not be maintained automatically for all pupils; alternative interventions should be considered, based on students' academic and social progress.
- Teachers should be allowed to choose whether or not to be involved in teaching inclusive classes.
- Adequate human and physical resources must be provided.
- Schools should not have models of inclusion imposed on them, but should be encouraged to develop their own models, tailored to local needs and the expertise available.
- A continuum of services should be maintained.
- Provision should be continually evaluated to ensure students' needs are being met.
- Ongoing professional development should be available for all staff who need it.
- The development of alternative teaching strategies and curriculum adaptation should be encouraged.



- Philosophy and policy on inclusion should be developed in consultation with schools.

Most of these elements, such as the provision of adequate resources, professional development for teachers, a participative approach to policy-making and evaluation of provision and outcomes, are in fact consistent with the principles advocated by “full” inclusionists such as Ainscow and Mittler – and, indeed, might be considered prerequisites of good teaching for all children. Where they differ substantially is in the wide scope their recommendations leave for segregation. In particular, their recommendation regarding teacher choice is open to criticism as its implementation could mean that, in practice, inclusion could not be implemented at all in some schools. Not only may teacher choice not be practically feasible, but it may be undesirable since it would result in some teachers withdrawing from opportunities of experience which may lead to their misgivings being overcome, and to their developing positive attitudes and skills for effective and rewarding inclusive teaching (this point is discussed further in Chapter Four, Section 4.2). Another crucial prerequisite of responsible inclusion is adequate teacher preparation.

Garner (2000; 2001) criticises the apparent neglect of teacher training issues, both by government and in the inclusion literature. He argues that at present, newly qualified teachers in the UK are conceptually and practically unprepared for inclusion and that this lack of preparation lies at the root of other identified problems, such as the so-called “internal exclusion” within schools and “a continuing preoccupation with ‘labels’ for children with learning difficulties” (Garner, 2000, p. 111). Slee (1999) also criticises national frameworks for teacher training, specifically for their lack of attention to producing “the critically reflective practitioners. . . who ought to teach in inclusive schools” (p. 204). The answer, in Garner’s (2000) view, is for all trainee teachers to

receive “a substantial core input in SEN/inclusion”, which should be “planned and delivered at least in part, or in consultation with, tutors who have specific experience and qualifications in the field” and which should include “mandatory and structured opportunities to experience special/inclusive education in practice” (p. 114). Moreover, after graduation, there is a need for focused input to ensure that over time, serving teachers build a set of core skills.

Gains (2001) argues the need for inclusion to take place within an ordered and intelligent framework. He criticises the current pressures towards inclusion as based politically based and ideologically driven, rather than being based on critical, informed debate and consideration. He rightly expresses concern about the likely consequences. He, like Vaughn and Schrumm (1995) and Hornby (2001), focuses on teacher training, resourcing and inappropriate curricula as challenges that must be met if responsible inclusion is to be achieved.

Kidd (1993), reflecting on successful experience with mainstreaming children with moderate learning difficulties in the East Riding of Yorkshire, argues that success depends on teachers having the necessary expertise, good staff to pupil ratios, and extra money to buy special resources. In other words, ordinary schools must be supported with the same sort of facilities as special schools, if they are to cater properly for special needs.

Whatever form of educational provision is in question, the primary consideration must be the benefit to children. As Hornby, Atkinson and Howard (1997) note, any form of education for children with SEN is only defensible if it facilitates their rights to an appropriate education and to integration into society. Placements should be decided on the basis of this principle, in the light of the needs of the individual and the exigencies of the situation. As the UK Department for Education and Skills points out in its

guidance document on inclusion (DfES, 2001b), “all children should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential” (p. 2).

### **3.4. Conclusion**

This chapter has set out the theoretical background to the present study in terms of the definition of SEN and ways of arranging education for children with SEN. It was seen that the concept of SEN is a somewhat amorphous and confusing one, because of the wide variation in terminology and definitions found in the literature and in State practice. There is a broad distinction to be made between definitions which view SEN as within-child deficits or abnormalities, and those which present SEN more as the effect of the way impairments interact with social and educational contexts.

A similar dichotomy has been seen by many writers as underlying different types of educational provision. The so-called ‘within-child’ or ‘deficit’ model has been linked to a focus on testing and diagnosis, the identification of ‘new’ impairments such as dyslexia, and the provision of education through separate, segregated systems. The ‘social’ model, in contrast, has been associated with the integration/inclusion movements.

Historically, education for children with special educational needs originated as a result of private philanthropic initiatives, and even when local authorities took on the mandate for providing such education, the existence of parallel systems of education, ‘normal’ and ‘special’ was perpetuated. In many countries today, a significant proportion of children with SEN still receive their schooling in segregated settings.

The world-wide trend, however, is towards a more inclusive orientation whereby as many children as possible are educated in mainstream schools. Indeed, some



educationists currently advocate 'full' inclusion for all children. In practice, however, many different kinds of arrangement exist and it is not possible to make generalisations about the quality of education provided, or the extent to which it is experienced by the children themselves as inclusive, based solely on location or the label attached to a given arrangement for delivering education.

The review presented in this chapter, of the rationale for inclusion, ways of implementing it, research evidence on the outcomes, and the current 'full inclusion' versus 'responsible inclusion' debate, has shown that inclusion is still a confused and controversial field in which many issues are in need of further research and discussion.

There is still some confusion associated with the meaning of inclusion, both theoretically and in applications reflecting different attitudes and intentions (O'Brien, 2001). The current discourse on full inclusion has been considered by some writers as politically and ideologically driven, rather than based on clear research evidence as to its efficacy.

Inclusion is best seen as a process, rather than a particular state or type of provision. No single model appears able to ensure quality education for all. It cannot be guaranteed that because a pupil is included within a mainstream school, he/she is guaranteed successful learning. The success of inclusive education depends on why and how it is planned and implemented. Common themes emerging in the inclusion literature are the need for diverse types of arrangement, for adequate resourcing, and for an appropriate curriculum designed to serve the ultimate goal of inclusion within society.

Whatever types or level of inclusion is implemented at a particular time and place, a key role in the effectiveness of the education in meeting the child's social, emotional and functional needs will be played by the teacher. This implies the need for the relevant attitudes, knowledge and skills to be considered in the pre-service training of all



teachers, and for continuing professional development opportunities for serving teachers, to enable them to contribute effectively in formulating and implementing inclusive policies and practices. This raises the need to establish what competencies are needed by mainstream teachers working in inclusive settings, and how such competencies can be developed. These issues are explored in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

# **PREPARING TEACHERS TO MEET SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS : A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

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### **PREPARING TEACHERS TO MEET SPECIAL**

### **EDUCATIONAL NEEDS : A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature on the linked issues of teacher attitudes to teaching students with special educational needs, the competencies needed in teaching such students, and ways of assessing and meeting training needs.

According to standards for teacher preparation put forward by NCATE (1981) and adopted by the Council for Exceptional Children (1983), teacher education curricula should be based on explicit objectives that reflect the institution's conception of the teacher's role. This implies a need to consider what attitudes, knowledge and skills teachers should have in order to effectively meet the teaching requirements of children with special educational needs in their classes. Negative teacher attitudes towards teaching children with special needs may be related to a lack of confidence in their skills to cope with such pupils, and this may in turn be a result of lack of training in the requisite competencies.

The main body of this chapter is divided into four sections. The first reviews studies investigating the attitudes of teachers towards children with special educational needs, particularly in the mainstream classroom. The second examines the competency literature in an attempt to identify the knowledge, skills and attributes required by special needs teachers. There follows a consideration of ways in which teachers' possession of those competencies can be assessed, as a basis for the development of

relevant training programmes. Finally, an outline is given of various approaches to providing training, described in the literature.

#### **4.2. Teacher Attitudes towards Children with Special Educational Needs**

Attitudes have been defined as thoughts or ideas that reflect feelings which influence behaviours related to a particular object and are comprised of three major components: cognitive, affective and behavioural (Triandis, 1971).

Stoneman (1993) applied Triandis' theory to attitudes towards children with special needs in inclusive classrooms. The cognitive component relates to knowledge about special needs and the causes of the behaviour of children with special needs; the affective component concerns positive or negative feelings which may motivate people to get involved in working with a child who has special needs or, conversely, may cause a teacher to exclude such a child from typical activities; and the behavioural component pertains to a tendency to behave or respond in a particular way in relation to pupils with special needs.

A key factor in the successful assimilation of students with special educational needs into general education classes is likely to be the attitudes of teachers towards teaching students with such needs (Trent, 1993; Eichinger, Rizzo and Sirotnick, 1991; Beh-Payoh, 1992). Teachers' attitudes towards pupils with special needs are reflected in interactions between the teacher and pupils in the classroom (Leatherman, 1999). The inclusion of all children with special educational needs requires educators to have the beliefs, attitudes and skills to provide an enabling environment (Jacobsen and Sawatsky, 1993).



The measurement of attitudes is “a precarious and limited enterprise” (Hegarty et al., 1981), since basically it relies on asking people about their likely behaviour and responses in certain situations. Nevertheless, a number of studies have investigated the attitudes of persons within the school community towards students with special educational needs, and to their placement in mainstream education. Some of these studies have found teachers’ attitudes to be ambivalent. For example, Seigel (1992), in a study of general education teachers’ attitudes towards special needs students in their classes found that they often experienced feelings of frustration and failure. However, their concern about meeting special needs, in Seigel’s view, indicated that teachers would not mind teaching special needs students, if they had the skills, knowledge, competence and support to do so.

A review by Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) of surveys on teacher attitudes towards mainstreaming covering a period of almost 40 years, found that although a majority of teachers expressed support for the concept of mainstreaming/inclusion, fewer expressed a willingness to accept “an exceptional child” in their classrooms, and a significant minority thought that students with disabilities could have negative impacts in the classroom, or result in specific classroom problems for them. Overall, it was clear that, irrespective of the dates of the studies reviewed, many teachers had reservations or concerns about teaching students with special needs in regular classes and believed that substantial support was necessary to enable such efforts to succeed.

Other researchers reported distinctly negative attitudes, which constituted barriers to the success of inclusion. Such attitudinal barriers included what McLeskey, Waldron and Pacchiano, (1993) describe as “turf” issues, i.e. teachers’ concerns about areas of responsibility and perception of visits from special educators as intrusive or threatening.

One school principal in Catlett's (1999) study in Vermont claimed that teacher attitudes were the "biggest hurdle to overcome" (p. 138). One problem was the attitude of general education teachers that "they had received no training in special education, did not want to be a special educator, therefore, did not want to include students with disabilities in their classrooms" (Catlett, 1999a, p. 138). Lack of confidence was another hurdle; one principal reported that teachers in her school "did not realise they had the skills to be successful" (Ibid., p. 139). Older teachers were less flexible in their attitudes than those who had come out of more recent teacher training programmes.

An assistant school principal interviewed by Catlett (1999) made the interesting point that the failure of university training of general educators to provide any special education background allowed general educators to believe that they were not responsible for special needs students, that "it is someone else's job" (p. 90).

One issue that has been found to be a concern to teachers in relation to special needs students is discipline. In the U.S., Hartwig and Reusch (1994) note the absence of specific guidelines on this point in the regulations for implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Act, while Peterson (1995) reports the resulting uncertainty among teachers regarding proper procedures for disciplining students with special needs, and Henry (1997) reports anger over a perceived dual code of conduct, whereby special needs students are punished less severely than other students for the same misbehaviours.

Another issue that may be of concern to some teachers, regarding dealing with special educational needs, particularly in relation to emotionally disturbed students, is the possibility of having to deal with student aggression. Of the 178 Florida teachers who responded to a survey on this subject (Ruhl and Hughes, 1985), 84% expressed confidence in their ability to deal with aggressive behaviour from students with emotional difficulties. Their attitudes in this respect, however, were significantly



related to training or lack of it. Of those individuals indicating a lack of confidence, 53% had experienced no specific training in methods of coping with aggression; only 14% of those not trained expressed confidence in their ability to deal with aggression.

Teacher attitudes towards teaching special needs students have been found to vary as a function of demographic and professional factors, including age, gender, education, administrative support, grade level taught, experience and exposure to knowledge about teaching students with special needs (Larrivee, 1979, 1981).

There is evidence in some studies that teachers' attitudes towards students with special educational needs become more favourable over time, as they become more accustomed to dealing with such pupils. Hegarty et al. (1981) found that initial reactions to students with special educational needs were frequently negative. They included hesitance, over-protectiveness, even fear and hostility. Some teachers admitted feeling uncomfortable in the presence of such students. Generally, these attitudes slowly and gradually gave way to more positive ones as teachers became more used to the presence of students with special needs and had experience of interacting with them. A few saw the presence of these children as a welcome professional challenge, though others had low expectations of students with special needs and did not take them seriously for teaching purposes.

Catlett's (1999) exploration of issues in the inclusion of students with special educational needs in regular classrooms revealed a variety of responses and reactions from teachers. Some felt intimidated by the prospect of special educators coming into their classrooms; others, at least initially, saw the inclusion of students with special needs as a "burden" (p. 134) for which they were not prepared. In time, however, many teachers became "involved and committed" (p. 134), and once a few teachers volunteered to work with the special education teachers, their colleagues began to see

that “this could work” (p. 135). Others were determined that there was “nothing to be intimidated about or afraid of”. An assistant principal described teachers as having been able to create an understanding and accepting climate in their classrooms.

A common theme found throughout the literature on teacher attitudes is the importance of support and training. Thomas (1985) found an important interaction between class teachers’ lack of confidence in teaching children with special educational needs and the quality of support offered by contact special educators. An interesting finding in Thomas’ study was that teachers who had doubts about integration found it reassuring to have a colleague who shared their uncertainty; indeed, it served to reduce their opposition. This suggests that teachers find it useful to be able to discuss their worries openly, in a safe climate.

According to Jacobsen and Sawatsky (1993), teachers’ willingness to teach children with special educational needs depends on the availability of consultative support, and on in-service training and education opportunities.

Teacher attitudes towards the teaching of children with disabilities in Canada and the U.S.A. were explored by Villa, Thousand, Meyers and Nevin, (1996). The Heterogeneous Education Teacher Survey (HETS) was used to survey 690 respondents (578 general education teachers, 102 special education teachers and 10 unidentified respondents) in 32 school sites. The HETS explored attitudes to the various assumptions underlying inclusive education (for example, that all children belong in general education classrooms; that the needs of all students can be met in general education classrooms; that general educators and special educators share responsibility; that experience with children who present challenges leads educators to develop new skills; that everyone benefits from heterogeneous education). Overall, both general and special educators responded positively to the HETS items. Support for the items



increased as a function of the amount of in-service training, the degree of administrative support, and the extent to which general and special educators collaborated. Respondents who had experience working with various disabilities were in significantly greater agreement with the items than those without experience. Among the implications drawn from the findings, was a need for pre-service and in-service programmes to prepare educators in skills and expectations of collaboration. Further, the authors argued that training content must emphasise theory, practice and experience in team problem-solving and teaching.

Overall, the attitude literature supports the claim of Scruggs and Mastropieri that “teachers need systematic, intensive training, either as part of their certification courses, as intensive and well-planned in-services, or as an ongoing process with consultants” (Scruggs and Mastropieri, 1996, p. 72).

### **4.3. Competencies**

Proponents of competency-based teacher education view the task of becoming a teacher as performing a series of hierarchical tasks leading to behaviours that have been associated with competent teaching (Benson, 1977). Competency statements are derived from the role of the practising professional. Such competencies may include cognitive objectives (what the teacher knows) but the emphasis is on performance (what he/she can do) and consequences (the effect on clients). Within a CBE programme, assessment and instruction are derived from and linked to competencies (Hanston and Jones, 1974).

Finch (1964), in studying the relationship of teacher competencies to in-service education, adopted a three-fold classification of competence criteria, as follows:

Product criteria, defined based on the goals to which education is directed, and variously called student gains, student growth or student changes.

Process criteria, describing aspects of teacher behaviour which reinforce the ultimate educational goals. Examples include effective discipline, use of resources, and creation of an optimum classroom environment.

Presage criteria, referring to personal characteristics of the teacher which may affect pupil response, such as posture and grooming.

Whitten and Westling (1985), reviewing previous literature on competencies for teachers of severely and profoundly handicapped students, noted variation in writers' justification for suggesting that a particular competency or competency area was necessary. They distinguished four levels of validity, namely:

- Opinion – The author stated that the competency was necessary but offered no further validation.
- Supported opinion – The author supported the statement by citing other literature.
- Professional consensus – The competency statements were rated by a group of professionals as being important or necessary.
- Student gain – Demonstration of the competencies by teachers was found to be correlated with student learning.

Although student gain would seem to be the ultimate test of the value of specific competencies, it is difficult to demonstrate this relationship because of the time needed for gains to be shown, and the likelihood of student gains being influenced by a complex array of interacting actors, rather than specific discrete competencies. Therefore, professional consensus has usually been adopted as the means of validation.



The competency-based approach to teacher training is well established in the U.S.A. and has more recently become a focus for research and development in the U.K. (Hornby and Mwape, 1991). In the former, competencies have been developed for teachers in relation to several specific categories of special need.

Johnson (1978) surveyed professors of special education and special education administrators regarding their views of the relative importance of 180 teacher competencies, using the Special Education Teacher Competency Checklist (Herr, 1972). Thirty-nine competencies were perceived as being of most importance by administrators, the highest ranked being that pertaining to ability to utilise paraprofessionals, such as teacher aides. Six competencies related to the development of a curriculum based on individual needs and abilities. Other competencies regarded as important related to utilisation of resources, effective communication, referring problems, theoretical knowledge (e.g. distinctions among emotional disturbance, mental retardation and learning disabilities, adapting and using educational materials, relationships with other professionals, and behaviour modification. Of 35 items considered of 'least importance', 12 related to the administration and interpretation of various kinds of tests. Professors' responses were somewhat different. The competency they ranked highest was personalising classroom instruction, and 12 other competencies perceived as most important related to the selection, design and development of instructional programmes. Other high ranked competencies related to behaviour management, curriculum knowledge, and knowledge of the various categories of exceptional children. Competencies related to the use of diagnostic tests were regarded as more important by professors of special education than by administrators.

Sass-Lehrer and Wolk (1984) adopted the consensus model as an initial step in defining a set of competencies for teachers of hearing impaired students. Six behavioural domains comprising 110 statements describing the competency needs of elementary level hearing impaired students were derived from the literature and subjected to the judgement of professionals in teacher training, resulting in a final list of 45 competency statements. Some competencies were specific to hearing impairment, others applicable to special needs more generally. The six domains identified by Sass-Lehrer and Wolk were as follows.

Student assessment (for example, ability to analyse and interpret information from student records.

Organisation and management of instruction (for example, ability to develop and/or adapt instructional materials, ability to develop an Individualised Education Plan.

Instructional competencies (e.g. ability to teach students non-verbally through pictures, mime, role play etc.).

Family education and guidance (e.g. ability to motivate and instruct parents to provide reinforcement of programme goals at home).

Personal characteristics and traits (e.g. self-confidence, fairness, empathy, humour, enthusiasm, tact and sensitivity, open-mindedness).

Professional competencies (e.g. ability to interact with social workers, psychologists, counsellors and others, knowledge of ethical responsibilities regarding confidentiality, knowledge of current legislation affecting programmes and services).

Subsequent factor analysis of responses to the competency statements from teachers in integrated and non-integrated classes showed that items from the assessment,



organisation and instructional competencies sections grouped together into one overall factor, while certain items from the original professional competencies category grouped with the family education items to form a domain labelled “working with, guiding and educating others”.

In a later paper, Sass-Lehrer (1986) investigated which competencies educational supervisors believe are most critical for teacher effectiveness in working with hearing impaired students.

Participants in the study were 150 supervisors of teachers of elementary level, hearing impaired students from special schools and public school programmes, from all parts of the United States. Supervisors were asked to rate competencies derived from the literature on a 7-point scale from most to least critical. Confidence interval testing was performed to determine which competencies were most critical to the supervisors.

Regardless of educational setting, supervisors agreed on the importance of 10 competencies. Seven of these were in the broad area of instruction and instructional planning skills, including the ability to assess students’ academic abilities, interpret assessment results, develop a viable individualised education plan, and monitor students’ performance in a particular placement. Also regarded as most critical were the ability to provide language instruction, the ability to teach small groups of students with different levels of functioning, and the ability to develop and/or adapt instructional materials. Two competencies in the area of interpersonal skills were identified as most critical by the supervisors: the ability to establish good rapport with students and adults, and the ability to motivate and encourage others. The ability to guide students in the development of a positive self concept was identified as one of the most critical competencies; students who feel good about themselves are more likely to feel they can succeed.

Sass-Lehrer argued that supervisors' perceptions of competencies for effective teaching provide information on the skill areas on which the evaluation and in-service training of teachers should focus. She also recommended efforts to identify specific behavioural indicators of these competencies.

Competencies for teachers of severely and profoundly handicapped students were categorised by Whitten and Westling (1985). They classified teacher competencies into nine broad categories: general knowledge, planning, assessment, curriculum, behaviour management, instruction, physical, other personnel, and parents. Examples of specific competencies from each of these categories are:

#### General Knowledge

- Knowledge of child growth and development
- Knowledge of relevant legislation
- Knowledge of community resources

#### Planning

- Ability to write an individualised lesson plan
- Ability to write specific instructional or behavioural objectives
- Ability to develop or select instructional materials

#### Assessment

- Knowledge of instrumentation and procedures for screening, diagnosis and assessment
- Ability to construct a student profile based on observational data and formal and informal assessment

## Curriculum

- Ability to develop or use appropriate curriculum (various contents suggested, e.g. language development, self-help skills, social/recreational skills, academic skills, enrichment)

## Behaviour Management

- Ability to use appropriate behaviour management techniques (some literature supports specific techniques)

## Instruction

- Demonstrating flexibility in management of learning activities

## Physical

- Knowledge of basic anatomy and physiology
- Ability to assist student having a seizure

## Other Personnel

- Ability to communicate, engage in teamwork, and work effectively with other professionals
- Ability to supervise paraprofessional personnel

## Parents

- Ability to interact effectively with parents regarding student's ability, educational plan and progress
- Ability to provide parent counselling
- Ability to provide parent training (e.g. in using state, community, public and private services).



Hammel (1999), with the aim of developing a unit of instruction for music education students, sought to identify competencies needed by music teachers including special learners in their classrooms. She investigated 26 competencies (not necessarily specifically music-related) derived from a study by Williams (1988) of the relationship between teacher competencies and undergraduate preparation. The competencies covered eight broad areas, including general knowledge, legal aspects, assessment and evaluation, curriculum planning, classroom structure, classroom management, methods and materials, and communication skills. Based on surveys of elementary music educators and college teachers of education methods courses, interviews with practising educators, observations of inclusive classrooms and collection of teacher preparation syllabi, Hammel identified 14 of the 26 competencies as necessary for music educators when including special learners. They are:

1. Acquaintance with various handicapping conditions.
2. Knowledge of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
3. Knowledge of music teacher's role on evaluation team.
4. Ability to develop and use informal assessment procedures.
5. Ability to monitor the learning progress of all students.
6. Ability to evaluate programme effectiveness for special learners.
7. Ability to identify students' difficulties.
8. Ability to modify the programme, if necessary, to accommodate special learners.
9. Knowledge of how to modify the physical environment of the classroom for special learners.
10. Ability to encourage appropriate social interactions among all students.
11. Knowledge of effective classroom management techniques.
12. Knowledge of appropriate materials for diverse learning abilities.
13. Ability to adapt materials to provide for individual differences.



#### 14. Ability to communicate effectively with support personnel.

The competencies acknowledged by Hammel's respondents cover all eight of the categories covered by Williams (1988), the area most frequently acknowledged being assessment and evaluation, which both practising teachers and teacher educators considered of primary importance. Hammel related this to the emphasis on testing in schools, as a basis for funding and policy decisions, and as a tool for teacher accountability.

Proposed lists of competencies vary enormously in their scope and level of detail. Lerner (1997) divides the competencies needed by teachers of students with special needs into just two categories: a) professional knowledge and skills and b) human relations abilities. The first category encompasses the professional knowledge base that special needs teachers need. It involves technical competencies in assessment and diagnosis, curriculum, instructional practice, management of student behaviour, planning and managing the teaching and learning environment, and evaluation. The second category encompasses the interpersonal skills needed to deal, not only with students, but also with parents and with fellow professionals. These include care, respect, empathy, openness, enthusiasm, willingness to learn from others, and respect for divergent points of view.

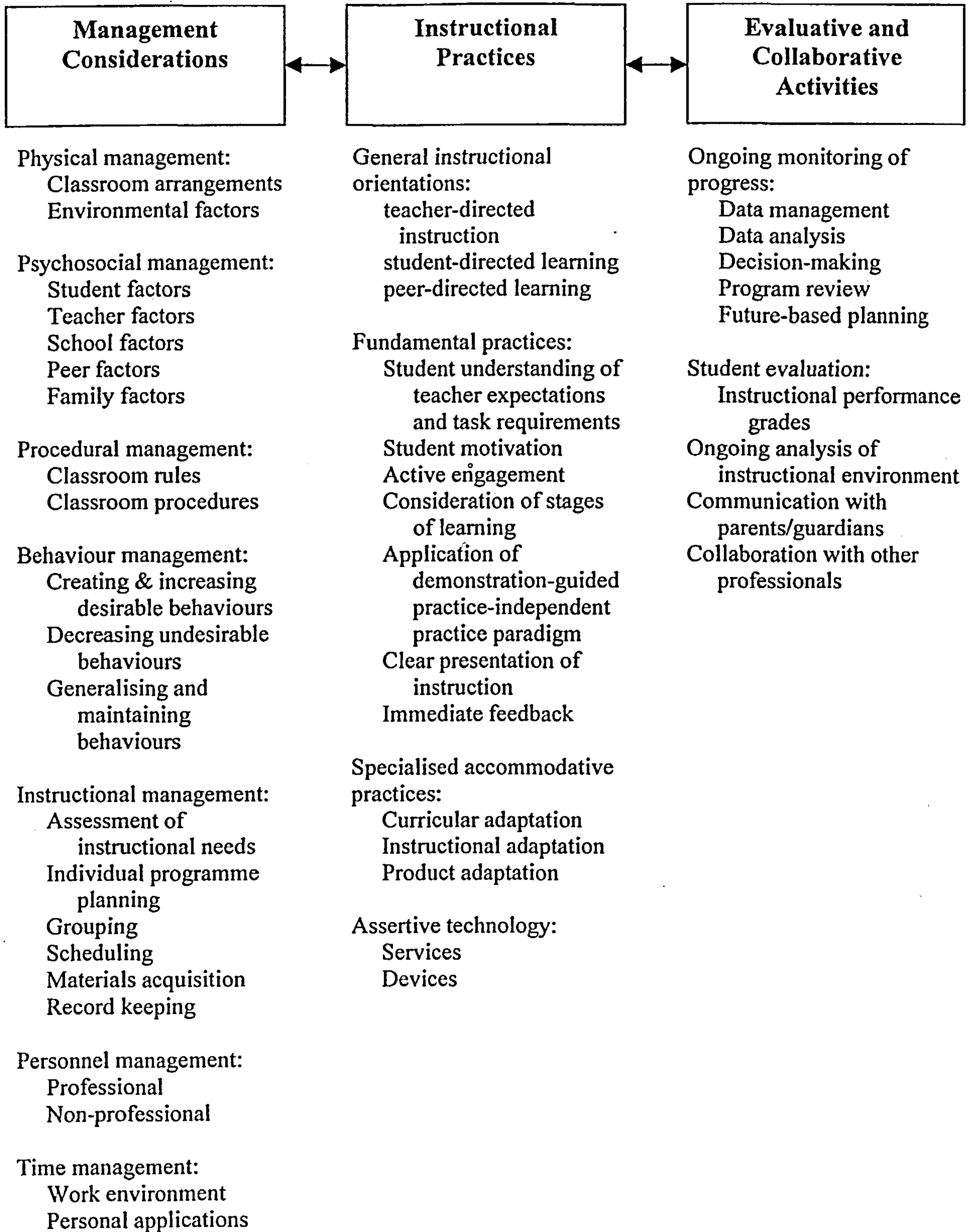
In contrast, one of the most extensive, developed and detailed lists of competencies appears to be that developed by the Council for Exceptional Children, reproduced by Polloway and Patton (1997). Their list contains 107 specific knowledge and skills statements groups into eight categories: 1) Philosophical, Historical and Legal Foundations of Special Education; 2) Characteristics of Learners; 3) Assessment, Diagnosis and Evaluation; 4) Instructional Content and Practice; 5) Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment; 6) Managing Student Behaviour

and Social Interaction Skills; 7) Communication and Collaborative Partnerships and 8) Professionalism and Ethical Practices.

Polloway and Patton (1997) take a somewhat different approach to the subject of teacher competencies. They present a model of effective teaching in which the total instructional process is divided into three major time-related areas: activities, events and concerns that precede teaching; behaviours performed during teaching; and actions taken by teachers subsequent to teaching. The first of these, labelled “Management-Considerations”, is concerned with measures taken to create a climate that is conducive to learning, in terms of physical comfort, the establishment of clear, consistent and systematic procedures, promoting desired behaviours, and lesson planning. The second category, “Instructional Practices” concerns the provision of engaging instruction and interactive contact between teacher and pupil. The third, “Evaluative and Collaborative Activities”, involves monitoring, assessment, feedback, and relations with parents and other professionals (see Figure 4.1). The three dimensions are obviously interrelated. The outcome of evaluation, for example, may lead to changes in management or instructional activities.

**Figure 4.1**

**Dimensions of effective practice**



Source: Polloway and Patton (1997), p. 19.



As the above examples demonstrate, there is a well-established tradition of competency research in the U.S.A. While it is a newer field in the U.K., a few studies have been carried out in that context.

Hornby, Wickham and Zielinski (1991) drew up, based on the literature, a set of 46 generic competencies for teachers of special educational needs, which they sought to validate through feedback from experienced professionals in the field of special education. The competencies covered seven content areas: orientation and attitude; assessment and identification; goal setting and objectives; teaching and learner facilitation; planning and implementation; evaluation and recording; counselling and consultation. The surveyed professionals rated each of the 46 competencies on a scale from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). All but four of the competencies received average ratings of at least 4.0, and none had a rating below 3, suggesting wide agreement amongst experienced professionals in special education, on the importance of these competencies. The following examples give a flavour of the kinds of competencies included within each of the seven domains.

### Orientation and Attitude

Demonstrate openness to new ideas in SE and be able to evaluate new materials and programmes.

Maintain co-operative consultative relationships with other professionals.

Exhibit and communicate positive but realistic attitudes to pupils with SEN.

### Assessment and Identification

Be able to identify potential SENs; sensory, physical, intellectual or behavioural.



Demonstrate a working knowledge of assessment and screening schedules and instruments for use with SEN pupils.

### Goal Setting and Objectives

Be able to use assessment material and gather relevant information to develop an individualised programme plan for children with SEN.

Be able to integrate information on the IPP to formulate a statement of abilities, needs and goals.

### Teaching and Learner Facilitation

Demonstrate an ability to apply behavioural teaching methods.

Be able to devise and implement strategies to promote social integration of pupils with SEN.

Be able to devise and implement strategic intervention programmes for behaviour problems.

### Planning and Implementation

Be able to undertake effective and appropriate classroom organisation for pupils with SEN.

Demonstrate a knowledge of, and the ability to acquire and use specialised and adapted materials and equipment for pupils with SEN.

Be able to effectively schedule pupil and staff access to other professionals.

## Evaluation and Recording

Be able to devise and use summative evaluation instruments for detailed and ongoing recording of pupils' progress and for reviewing pupils' achievements.

Be able to provide concise and pertinent information for the annual review of statemented pupils.

Be able to monitor and facilitate group interaction involving SEN pupils.

## Counselling and Consultation

Demonstrate the use of active listening skills in counselling children and adults.

Demonstrate the ability to establish an effective working partnership with parents.

Demonstrate the ability to give constructive feedback to colleagues.

Demonstrate the ability to develop two-way communication with pupils with SEN, on their performance.

Whereas the above studies have sought to develop or validate lists of competencies across a broad spectrum of teaching activities, others have focused on a specific area. Ruhl and Hughes (1985), for example, noted that teachers in settings serving emotionally handicapped students are frequently confronted with verbal and/or physical aggression directed to themselves or to other students. Commenting that it is teachers' responsibility to provide psychological and personal safety, they noted the need for teachers to have competence in appropriate preventive and intervening strategies.

Another study with competency implications is that of Riffle (1985) who examined the practice of regular classroom teachers in referring pupils suspected of having special educational needs. Riffle noted that, as primary referring agents, regular classroom

teachers have significant impact on the selection of the student population to receive special education services. Her survey of the referral practices of 186 teachers in 31 elementary schools revealed that 89% had referred students in the three year period investigated, but only 63% of referrals resulted in the provision of special services, supporting Riffle's assumption that teachers often referred students either with limited knowledge of eligibility requirements or without exhausting all possibilities for interviewing and correcting student difficulties within the regular classroom setting. Teachers' referral practices were significantly related to their experience of in-service training. On the basis of her findings, Riffle called for pre- and in-service teacher training to transmit information to teachers concerning efficient intervention strategies, as well as the skill of making justified and necessary referrals.

Sebba and Ainscow (1996), reporting on a UNESCO project in which educators are led, during a series of workshop sessions, to consider life in the classroom through the eyes of learners and to relate their experiences to their own practice in school, identified three factors or competencies as important to the creation of classrooms responsive to the needs of all learners. Teachers need to be able to plan for the class as a whole, with an emphasis on making all activities inclusive; they need to be able to recognise and use effectively, natural resources (including the experience of pupils themselves) that can help to support learning; and they need to be able to improvise, to modify plans and activities in response to the reactions of individuals within the class.

In the U.K., recent legislation provides other sources of explicit or implicit competency statements. The 1993 Education Act required the Secretary of State to issue a Code of Practice, giving practical guidance to local education authorities and the governing bodies of all maintained schools, on their responsibilities towards all children with special educational needs. Accordingly, the Code of Practice on the Identification and



Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DFE, 1994) came into effect on 1 September 1994. An updated Code has recently been issued (DES, 2001a). Under the Code, provision for pupils with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the school's head teacher, SEN co-ordinator or team and all other members of staff have important responsibilities. Although the exact division of responsibilities is left for individual schools to decide in the light of their size and circumstances, some general principles are laid down in the Code, which will have implications for staff competencies. Teachers, for example, are to be involved in the development of the school's SEN policy, and aware of procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with special educational needs. The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including SEN provision. Moreover, in all mainstream schools, a designated member of staff (or, depending on school circumstances, a team) should be responsible for day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy; liaising with and advising fellow teachers; co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs; overseeing the records on all pupils with special educational needs; liaising with the parents of children with special educational needs; contributing to the in-service training of staff; and liaising with external medical, social and other support agencies.

### The school based stages

The Code of Practice identifies three stages or levels of school support for children with special educational needs. Each stage entails specific roles and responsibilities for the teacher and SEN co-ordinator, which have implications for required competencies.

Stage 1 involves the initial identification and registration of the child's special educational needs, early action to meet the child's needs within his/her normal classroom work; and monitoring and reviewing his/her progress. At this stage, the main



responsibility is given to the child's class teacher or year tutor who, following expression of concern (from a teacher, a parent, or another professional such as a health visitor) is to gather information about the child and make an initial assessment of the child's needs. He/she provides special help within the normal curriculum framework, by increased differentiation of classroom work, and reviews the child's progress. The SEN co-ordinator ensures that the child is included in the school's SEN register, helps the teacher to gather information and assess the child's needs, and provides advice and support to the child's teachers.

Stage 2 involves more intensive action, where the SEN co-ordinator considers this necessary. At this stage, the SEN co-ordinator has the leading role in assessing the child's needs and planning, monitoring and reviewing the special educational provision. The child's teachers, however, remain responsible for working with the child in the classroom.

At Stage 3, the school calls upon external specialist support (e.g. teachers from a learning support service, educational psychologists, child health services and social services) to help the child make progress. The SEN co-ordinator will, however, continue to take a leading role, working closely with the child's teachers.

Clearly, these role expectations require classroom teachers to have a certain level of skill in assessment and diagnosis, competencies in planning, organising and delivering instruction (including ability to vary or adapt materials and methods), the ability to communicate and work collaboratively with others, and an understanding of how and when referral may be necessary. More specific and extensive competencies are, however, required of those teachers designated as special educational needs co-ordinators. Explicit guidance on these can be found in the national standards for Special Educational Needs co-ordinators, which set out the professional knowledge, skills and

attributes necessary to carry out effectively the key tasks of the role concerned. The idea is to set out clear expectations for teachers; help teachers plan and monitor their professional development; provide a basis for the professional recognition of teacher attainments; and help providers of professional development to provide relevant training which meets teachers' needs and contributes to improving the quality of education for pupils (Teacher Training Agency, 1998).

According to the National Standards, SENCOs are expected to have knowledge and understanding of:

- a) effective teaching and learning styles;
- b) ways of identifying, assessing and reviewing SEN;
- c) the role of individual education plans;
- d) available resources and their use;
- e) use of ICT as an aid to learning and communication for pupils with SEN;
- f) relevant legislation;
- g) relevant research;
- h) the requirements to communicate effectively with LEAs, external agencies and parents;
- i) the role of external agencies in supporting work with pupils with SEN;
- j) implications of information and guidance documents from local and national government and specialist bodies;
- k) how to contribute to the professional development of other staff in relation to pupils with SEN.

The Standards also lay down required skills in the broad areas of leadership, decision-making, communication, and self-management (both prioritising and managing time, and taking responsibility for their own professional development).

Certain attributes are expected of SENCOs which, however, the Standards make clear are expected of all successful and effective teachers. They include:

- i) personal impact and presence
- ii) adaptability
- iii) energy, vigour and perseverance
- iv) self-confidence
- v) enthusiasm
- vi) intellectual ability
- vii) reliability and integrity
- viii) commitment

Clearly, the subject of competencies for teachers dealing with students who have special educational needs is an extensive and complex one. Numerous sources of competency proposals exist, with varying levels of detail. Domain classifications vary in number from two to nine. Researchers differ in the names given to some categories, and on their decisions as to the classification of individual competency items. Despite those differences, there are certain competency domains on which a broad level of agreement can be found. Teachers with children with special educational needs need relevant theoretical knowledge, knowledge of applicable legislation, and an understanding of professional ethics. They need skills in assessment, diagnosis and evaluation; planning, organisation and management of instruction; instructional competencies; curriculum development and adaptation, behaviour management, and the use of resources (including material, human and experiential resources). They should have interpersonal



skills related to working with students, parents/families and other professionals, they should display positive yet realistic attitudes to their students, and they should have certain personal characteristics, such as enthusiasm, empathy and flexibility. Awareness of these competency domains, and formulation of specific competency statements within each, can provide a basis for the identification of training needs and the development of training courses.

#### **4.4. Training Needs Assessment**

The importance of carrying out a proper assessment of teachers' training needs is demonstrated by the qualitative findings of Catlett (1999) in U.S.A. In her interviews with school administrators about issues and experiences resulting from efforts to implement legislation on provision of the "least restrictive environment" for children with special needs, an issue frequently raised was teacher training. A special education director reported that teachers continually asked for more training but, when asked to be more specific, did not know what they needed. A school principal made the same point. Moreover, she indicated that she was afraid to accept the responsibility for training, because she did not know what was necessary either. Similar points were raised by administrators in more than one state. In the absence of proper training needs assessments, teachers were often relying on ad hoc exchange of information and experience with colleagues.

A starting point for training needs assessment would be a list of competencies such as those reviewed in section 4.3, which described the knowledge, skills and personal attributes considered necessary for effectiveness in meeting special educational needs. The difficulty is to identify to what extent prospective or serving teachers already possess these attributes, and so identify the areas that training needs to address.



One way of identifying the training needs posed by integration would be to analyse systematically the tasks carried out by the different people involved, relate them to the training they received, and note where further training specific to integration is required. An alternative to this formal approach is to ask participants to describe their perceived training needs, though a limitation of this approach is that the untrained may lack awareness of what they should know and be able to do (Hegarty et al., 1981). Hegarty et al. used open-ended interview questions to gain some indications of teachers' perceived training needs, but an approach more commonly found in the literature is the use of a questionnaire survey, in which respondents rate their perceived ability and/or training need in relation to a number of competency statements. An example of this type of survey is that of Howell (1999), who surveyed Industrial Technology Education teachers' perceptions of their knowledge, skills and attitudes related to working with mainstreamed special needs students by means of a questionnaire survey. The 50-item instrument consisted of four sections. Section I (items 1-7) generated data about formal training teachers have had to work with special populations. Section II (items 7-29) contained items concerning teachers' general skills and attitudes in relation to teaching special needs students, for example

7. I feel that I can adapt my teaching methods to meet the learning styles of special needs students.

25. I am comfortable in working with special needs students in my class.

Items were answered on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = disagree and 5 = agree. The third section of Howell's instrument collected information on future education opportunities teachers might want to improve their skills for teaching special needs students, asking them to rate the desirability of various training options on a scale of 1-5, from Not Acceptable to Highly Acceptable. The final section collected demographic

data about the respondents. A space left at the end of each of the first three sections, for additional comment, gave the survey a qualitative dimension. In the case of Howell's survey, teachers' qualitative comments raised such issues as time and funding constraints, and the difficulties of arranging cover for classes if the regular teacher attended in-service training during teaching hours.

A more complex, multi-dimensional approach to training needs assessment was taken by Hesse (1977) in the U.S.A. She asked 17 teachers, through a questionnaire, to evaluate their own competencies and indicate within which areas they felt the need for in-service training. These self-ratings were complemented by data from classroom observations and written exercises. The questionnaire contained 20 items, focusing on the areas of curriculum management and behaviour/classroom management. Teachers were asked to assume that a child with a mild to moderate learning difficulty or physical impairment was to be placed in their class, and to rate their need for training in each of the stated competencies on a 6-point Likert-type scale, using the categories: very extensive, extensive, somewhat extensive, little, very little, not needed. The direct observational instrument was a timed coding system which focused on teacher-student interactions. Five observations, each lasting 30 minutes, were conducted for each teacher, during their regularly scheduled reading period. In addition, teachers were asked to complete two written exercises. The first asked teachers to read a profile of a child with a reading deficit and answer questions about how they would manage the curriculum to address the child's needs. The second exercise measured teachers' knowledge of support services and their ability to interpret materials in student records. Responses to the written exercises were evaluated by experts in the relevant areas, using the categories: inadequate, almost adequate, adequate, excellent. Teachers perceived that they needed fairly extensive in-service training in both behaviour and curriculum management. Their perceptions on the former were not borne out by the observations,



which showed them to be highly skilled in the use of behaviour management techniques, but their perceptions regarding the latter were supported by the written exercises, where their answers were rated as less than adequate. It was concluded that most teachers need in-service training in the areas of curriculum management, lesson planning and the use of support services.

The same assessment procedure and instruments were subsequently used by Smith (1982) with a slightly larger sample of teachers ( $n = 36$ ), with very similar results.

In Nigeria, Igbalajobi (1982) also used a multi-dimensional approach. Self-ratings of training needs were derived from 80 teachers using a questionnaire similar to that used by Hesse (1977) and Smith (1982), but with a 5-point response scale: extensive, moderate, little, very little, not needed. A randomly selected sample of the questionnaire respondents ( $n = 20$ ) were later interviewed individually using a schedule of 14 semi-structured, open ended questions, for example:

- What are your problems in classroom management of mildly handicapped children?
- What do you think are the causes of your problems?
- How much training will you need to solve those problems?

The 20 teachers interviewed were also observed in the classroom, and completed four written exercises assessing their knowledge and skills in the areas of curriculum management, academic assessment and behaviour management. The results suggested a significant difference between expressed and observed needs of teachers in all the areas. They tended to ask for things they did not need and failed to ask for what they actually needed.

Clearly, all the approaches to training needs assessment found in the literature have both advantages and disadvantages (see Table 4.1) The most commonly used method, the self-rating questionnaire, is easy to administer and quick for respondents to answer. Several validated lists of competency items exist as a basis for such instruments. However, the questionnaire measures perceptions of needs, rather than actual knowledge or skills. Moreover, since most existing questionnaires and competency lists were developed in the U.S.A., some items may not be applicable in other educational systems.

Unstructured and semi-structured interviews have the advantage of flexibility; they do not constrain teachers' answers to particular themes or formats, so they may be able to obtain rich data about teachers' actual concerns and experiences. Teachers may, however, not know what they need. Moreover, it may be difficult to translate the qualitative information from interviews into clear statements of training needs.

Observations constitute a way of obtaining objective data on teacher's actual performance. They are, however, time consuming and trained assistants may be needed to cover a large sample. Moreover, some teachers, especially those with less experience and/or confidence, may perceive the presence of an observer in their classes as threatening. There are also validity questions raised by the fact that teachers and pupils may behave differently from usual, when they know they are being observed.

The other method employed in these studies, written exercises, again provides an objective measure of knowledge, but is very time consuming (each of the exercises used by Hesse, 1977 and Smith, 1982, took 2-3 hours to complete), is very demanding of teachers and depends on their being highly motivated to participate, and needs expert assessment.



Thus, no method of assessing training needs is ideal; training planners must make a choice of methods based on the information desired, the size of the area and target population, cultural factors and resource constraints.

**Table 4.1**  
**Comparison of Training Needs Assessment Methods**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Unstructured interview (e.g. Hegarty, et al., 1981)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flexible</li> <li>● No constraint on response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers may not know what they need</li> <li>● May be difficult to analyse</li> </ul>
Semi-structured interview (e.g. Igbalajobi, 1982)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flexible</li> <li>● Non constraint on response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teachers may not know what they need</li> <li>● May be difficult to analyse</li> </ul>
Self-rating questionnaire (e.g. Hesse, 1977; Smith, 1982; Howell, 1999)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Competency bases</li> <li>● Easy to administer</li> <li>● Comparable data</li> <li>● Non-threatening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Measures <u>perceptions</u> only</li> <li>● Items may be culture/systems specific</li> </ul>
Observation (e.g. Hesse, 1977; Smith, 1982; Igbalajobi, 1982)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Objective data on actual performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Time consuming</li> <li>● Need for trained assistants</li> <li>● Possible Hawthorne effect</li> <li>● May be seen as threatening</li> </ul>
Written exercises (e.g. Hesse, 1966; Smith, 1982; Igbalajobi, 1982)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Objective measure of knowledge</li> <li>● Comparable data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Time consuming</li> <li>● Heavy demand on respondents</li> <li>● Need for expert assessment</li> </ul>

#### **4.5. Training Teachers for Special Education**

As Mittler (1992) points out, the successful education of children with special educational needs in ordinary schools depends on all teachers having a basic core of relevant information, knowledge and skills, as well as positive attitudes to the education of such children in ordinary schools. The earlier sections of this chapter have considered what the required information, knowledge, skills and attitudes might be, and how teachers' needs for training in them may be identified. This section considers ways in which training relevant to teaching students with special educational needs, especially

in integrated/inclusive settings, may be provided, drawing on examples from the U.S.A. and U.K., as well as outlining the current provision in Saudi Arabia.

In the United States, following the coming into force of Public Law 94-142, a requirement was introduced that State and Local Education Agencies (SEAs, LEAs) specify how they would prepare teachers to meet their responsibilities under this law within a Comprehensive System of Personnel development (CSPD). Although the regulations are vague with regard to pre-service programmes, more explicit guidance is provided for in-service programmes. Regulations related to the planning and implementation of in-service training are based on the key concepts of relevance, job relatedness, participation, collaboration, needs-based planning, school based implementation, programme quality and parity in decision-making (Cline, 1984). Evidence of considerable variation in types of training is provided by Cline, who examined 99 in-service projects by SEAs, LEAs, Institutions of Higher Education, Intermediate Education Units and Non-profit Organisations. A total of 25 different strategies were identified, falling within five basic modes: the job-embedded mode (e.g. consultancy, team-teaching); the job-related mode (e.g. site visits, training packages); the credential-oriented mode (e.g. summer institutes); professional organisation-related (conventions, conferences, journals); and self-directed (independent study, travel). Most of the SEA and LEA projects were based on needs assessment, but almost half the other projects had omitted this step. It was noticeable that as projects became increasingly collaborative, they also became more field-based (i.e. taking place at or near the participant's place of work). Subject matter was similar across projects, but they varied with regard to depth; some provided training at the awareness or knowledge level only, while others provided opportunities for skill application.



The potential of in-service education is not always realised, because the necessary attributes and conditions are not incorporated into their design. Truesdell (1985) abstracted from the literature 10 characteristics of quality in-service education, as follows:

1. Integration, i.e. placement of programmes within the overall organisational structure and within a plan that co-ordinates training with the norms and goals of the system.
2. Collaboration of participants and interested parties in the planning and conduct of programmes.
3. Needs assessment of the information, strategies and skills required by participants.
4. Administrative support.
5. Accessibility to the target population; in terms of time, location etc.
6. Evaluation, including feedback to implementors during training and follow-up of the extent to which new learning is carried over into the school routine.
7. Continuity, i.e. the connection of training with participants' past education and experience, and with school programmes.
8. Comprehensiveness and complexity, including provision for skill acquisition as well as conveying information.
9. Teaching to improve or change instructional programmes and practices.
10. Training-changing behaviour through modelling, practice, feedback and coaching.

Truesdell found, however, that in-service training in special education provided by five New York City local districts failed to meet many of the criteria. They did not provide sufficient training to affect teaching quality; an extremely limited amount of time was devoted to training, and only a small number of teachers participated. One district gave

only a single day of training, while another gave just four after school workshops, even though supervisors had identified an extensive list of skills needed by most teachers. In other districts, training was limited to administrators and resource room teachers. Moreover, teachers who attended in-service programmes reported that administrative concerns such as completing IEPs and school records received more attention than strategies and skills for teaching. Truesdell noted that a limitation on the participation of teachers in in-service training was the prohibitive cost of hiring substitute staff to cover their duties, when training was held during the school day. One district alleviated this problem to some extent by repeating the training six times, so that one or two teachers from each special education unit could attend each day while their colleagues covered their duties. While this model worked for a one-day course, it may, however, be less feasible for a long-term training commitment. Truesdell's study clearly points to a need for a commitment that classroom teachers shall have access to training, and for ways to be found to involve them in a comprehensive programme of training with feedback and practice, integrated with the goals and structure of the educational system.

In the U.K., following the Warnock report (DES, 1978) Hegarty et al. (1981) based on an investigation of 17 integration programmes in 14 LEAs, described a number of different ways in which in-service training was provided to help teachers perform the new roles required of them. In one local authority, special classes in the schools were closed for one day each term, to allow teachers to attend a course of training at a local college. On these training days, a theme for the day, such as communication and attention skills, was chosen, and speakers invited to present relevant matter. Discussion groups were also held. Participants appreciated this innovative approach, though some thought there was not enough time to meet with others. Another authority ran a series of weekly lunchtime lectures for staff at a comprehensive school and the special school with which it shared a campus. In another authority, two experienced teachers were



seconded for one day a week to run "handicap awareness" courses. Each course ran for five consecutive Fridays: four consisting of lectures and discussions on different aspects of special education and support services available to teachers; the fifth taken up with site visits followed by a discussion session.

Courses of this kind raise a number of issues. One is the matter of location. A course organised within a single school or campus can be customised to its specific needs; on the other hand, the number of staff who benefit from the investment of time and resources is limited. Another issue is the need for a balance between formal presentation and less structured exchange of ideas with colleagues. There is also a question of timing (day courses, lunchtimes, evenings, etc.); courses need to be held at a time when teachers can conveniently attend them, without excessive interruption to the school's normal teaching routine.

The years since the Warnock report and the research of Hegarty and his colleagues have witnessed significant changes in the training and education of teachers in the U.K.

Since 1985, specialist initial teacher training for teachers of children with hearing or visual impairments or severe learning difficulties (mental handicap) has been phased out. Courses of this kind can now be taken only as in-service training, after a period of teaching in an ordinary school. Nevertheless, newly qualified teachers are eligible to take posts in special schools, though they are often advised to gain experience in ordinary schools first (Mittler, 1992).

In the United Kingdom, the initial training of teachers now includes compulsory elements concerned with teaching children with special educational needs. DES Circular 3/84, as criteria for accreditation of teacher training institutions and recognition of qualified teachers, required student teachers to be prepared to teach the full range of

pupils they are likely to encounter in schools, introduced to ways of identifying and helping children with special needs, and given some knowledge about the specialist help available. These criteria have been built on in several circulars in recent years. In addition to compulsory elements, courses generally provide a range of optional opportunities to study special needs in greater depth (Mittler, 1992). Focused courses are taught by special needs staff in the institution, sometimes with input from outside specialists. There may also be opportunities to gain direct experience of dealing with special needs through placement in a special school, class, support service or agency. Manchester University for example, requires all student teachers to complete a two-week placement of this kind (Mittler, 1992). Despite those efforts, Hornby (1999) notes that in practice, many teachers in mainstream schools do not feel able or willing to cope with the inclusion of children with SEN.

Booth (2000) outlines a number of different ways in which teachers can be prepared to cope with inclusion. For pre-service teachers, he argues a need for training to be revised so that inclusion is part of the approach to education in all courses, rather than being considered as a separate subject. For serving teachers, cascade models of training can maximise the benefit from limited training resources. Another way of helping mainstream schools towards inclusion, he suggests, is to arrange learning centres in clusters (which could include both special and mainstream institutions) to share knowledge and resources.

Johnson, Wright and Hornby (1995) described a flexible, modular approach to the in-service training of teachers to deal with SEN, which has for a time, in Humberside replaced the previous system of one-year university secondments. The course consisted of four different levels, leading to different degrees of award. The foundation level, leading to an LEA certificate, provided the basic level of training recommended by the



LEA for a SEN co-ordinator in a mainstream institution. The LEA target was for one teacher from every primary and three from every secondary school to take this training and become the SENCO for the school. About two thirds of trainees went on to the next level, consisting of two professional study modules, leading to the University of Hull's Certificate in SEN. The third level, leading to the University Advanced Diploma in SEN, was taken mainly by teachers in special schools or units, and learning support service members. Following completion of the Advanced Diploma, a small number of students moved on to the M.Ed. programme. This course demanded high commitment from students, who had to devote time at weekends or after a working day, but it was flexible enough to allow for personal circumstances, and enabled a much larger number to be trained each year than under the previous system.

In Saudi Arabia, as indicated in Chapter Two, special education teachers may have a first degree in special education, or may be recruited from qualified public school teachers who wish to specialise in this field and have a minimum of three years' regular teaching experience. First degree courses, provided in the Department of Special Education in the University of Riyadh (see Chapter Two, Section 2.4.2.) are four years in length, while diploma courses for qualified general education teachers are six months to two years in length. Special education teachers are also expected to take periodic short courses to keep abreast of new teaching methods. A number of specialists in the field are sponsored by the government to attend specialised programmes abroad (Al-Saloom, 1995). Teacher preparation for general education, which means elementary, intermediate and secondary schools that are not special schools, vocational schools, or religious institutes, includes some general courses on child psychology and development. It does not, however, give much attention to special needs (see Chapter Two).

#### 4.6. Conclusion

It is reported in the literature that some teachers have negative attitudes towards teaching students with special educational needs. Such attitudes, however, appear to a large extent to be related to lack of experience and training. Without appropriate training, teachers may lack the specific competencies necessary to address effectively the social and educational requirements of such students. There is a substantial body of opinion, particularly in the U.S.A., but also more recently in the U.K., that effective teacher training must be grounded on a proper needs assessment, based on the identification of required competencies, and several studies have attempted to identify relevant competencies of teachers of students without special educational needs. Differences have been found in the way competencies are stated and classified, but consensus can be found on broad domains in which teachers need competence. Competency lists can be related to teachers' training needs in various ways, for example, interviews, questionnaire surveys, observation of teachers' classroom behaviour, and written tests of their knowledge and understanding. Planners and educationists must then decide how to translate the information derived from training needs assessment into specific programmes, and how to deliver the training, in terms of location, timing, format and so on.

This review of issues in teacher preparation for teaching students with special educational needs has established a rationale and conceptual framework for this study, and informed its methodology. The procedures and research tools applied in carrying out the empirical survey in Saudi Arabia are described in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER FIVE

# THE EXPLORATORY PHASE OF THE RESEARCH

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE EXPLORATORY PHASE OF THE RESEARCH

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the first of the two research phases referred to in Chapter One.

It had been proposed to examine the needs and preparation of teachers for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. In order to assess the feasibility of the plan, refine the research questions and develop an appropriate methodology, it was necessary to carry out some exploratory research to investigate the current situation with regard to educational provision for children with learning difficulties in Saudi Arabia. The researcher, therefore, decided to visit Saudi Arabia, from 17/8/99, for approximately one month, in order to carry out a series of exploratory interviews and observations, and to collect relevant documents and data.

It should be noted that at this stage of the investigation, the researcher was using the term "learning difficulties" (in a general sense) rather than "special educational needs" because the latter term was relatively new in Saudi Arabia and it was thought teachers might not be familiar with it.

This phase of the research is reported in four main sections. First, the objectives of the visit are outlined. Then, the methods adopted, including the location of the visit, the interview sample and the data collection methods, are reported. There follows a detailed account of the outcome. The report ends with a discussion, in which attention

is drawn to the key issues identified in the exploratory phase, and the implications drawn from it for the second (main) phase of the research.

## **5.2. Objectives of the Exploratory Visit**

The objectives of this initial visit to Saudi Arabia were to:

- Interview a small number of teachers from selected primary, intermediate (junior secondary) and secondary schools, in order to tease out some information as regards provision for students with learning difficulties;
- Try to find out, from interviews, about the attitudes of teachers in Saudi Arabia towards pupils with learning difficulties;

## **5.3. Method**

### **5.3.1. Location of Study**

Since Saudi Arabia has a centralised education system, and policies and curricula are uniform across the country, it was considered that a visit to a single education district would be sufficient to obtain the required information. The Local Education Authority of Al-Madinah Al-Monwarah was chosen, as the researcher's position as a lecturer in the university there afforded him contacts with educationists and administrators which would facilitate the conduct of the study.

### **5.3.2. Instrument**

An interview schedule was developed to guide a series of semi-structured interviews. The schedule contained 10 questions. It began by asking whether the interviewee had to deal with students with learning difficulties and went on to ask about possible causes of such difficulties, support available within the school, action taken when children were



identified as having learning difficulties, and training of teachers to help these children (see Appendix 1). The schedule was prepared in English and was then translated into Arabic.

### **5.3.3. Sample**

In view of the exploratory nature of the study, the interviews were of the key-informant type. Interviewees were purposively chosen by the researcher based on their teaching experience. At this stage of the research, it was not clear which school stage would be the focus of the study; it was desired to explore the situation in all three stages. Therefore, two schools were selected for each stage: primary, intermediate and secondary. Within each primary and intermediate school, two or three teachers were selected, depending on their experience, availability and willingness to participate. In the case of the Intermediate schools, the school principals were also interviewed. Only one teacher was interviewed in each secondary school, as few teachers had time to participate, due to the demands of the examinations which were taking place at the time of the study.

### **5.3.4. Data Collection Procedure**

Administrative arrangements and contacts were made with local Educational Authority officials to obtain permission to carry out the study. Introductory visits were paid to the target personnel to explain the purpose of the study and seek their agreement to be interviewed. All interviewees were assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

Interviews were conducted at respondents' workplaces, by appointment. Permission was sought to tape record the discussion and all interviewees agreed to this. The tapes were later transcribed by the researcher.

### **5.3.5. Data Analysis**

The interview data were subjected to content analysis. Frequencies and percentages of interviewees giving a particular response were calculated for the sample overall since sub-groups (e.g. primary teachers) were too small for meaningful analysis at this level, and because the aim was to obtain a general overview of the situation, rather than to compare perceptions among different samples.

## **5.4. Results**

Respondents' comments in relation to each question in turn are presented and summarised in this section.

### **Question 1**

Do you have pupils (children) who experience learning difficulties? If yes, please specify the types of difficulties.

### **Primary Teachers (PT)**

All interviewees in this group claimed to have pupils who experience learning difficulties. Their comments as to the types of difficulties were as follows:

#### **Teacher 1**

The difficulties are related to genetic factors and environmental factors such as deprivation, which means that the child lives in an uneducated community.

## **Teacher 2**

There are some cases of short-sightedness and hearing impairment. There are no children who suffer from mental retardation as these are usually transferred to special schools or institutes in the region.

## **Teacher 3**

This teacher, too, reported cases of short-sightedness and deafness, and added that children with mental retardation go to special schools.

## **Teacher 4**

Some children have poor co-ordination to the extent of being unable to hold a pencil properly. Some can write the alphabet clearly, but write letters with no meaning.

## **Intermediate Teachers (IT)**

In this group, too, all interviewees reported contact with some children with learning difficulties. Their perceptions of these difficulties were as follows:

### **Teacher 1**

The difficulties are due to:

- Parents' neglect of their children inside the home.
- The children are not encouraged to go to bed early, and so they cannot concentrate in the classroom.
- The children dislike the subject matter because of its content or its teacher.
- Hearing impairment of which the teacher has not been notified.
- Repeated failure of some children because their mental age is less than their real age.



## **Teacher 2**

There are a few children with difficulties:

- Short-sightedness
- Weakness in hearing
- Low IQ
- Family circumstances and disorders

## **Teacher 3**

The difficulties are:

- The parents spoil their children because of excessive affection, so the child becomes careless about school.
- Children have to help in the family business, so they have no time for study.
- Children spend their time on TV, video and the entertainment tools inside the home and parents do not encourage their children to spend enough time on study.

## **Teacher 4**

The difficulties are related to:

- Difficulty in understanding.
- Difficulty in pronunciation.
- Family troubles affect the child's comprehension.

## **Teacher 5**

The difficulties are:

- Difficulty in reading.
- Difficulty in writing.

## **Intermediate Principals**

Both principals acknowledged the presence of a very small number of children with learning difficulties.

### **Principal 1**

There are a few children, not more than four in this school. Their difficulties are:

- Short-sightedness
- Weakness in hearing
- Low IQ
- Social deprivation/lack of family atmosphere. Some children are brought up in social welfare homes.

### **Principal 2**

There is a very low percentage of difficulties among the children. The difficulties are in:

- Short-sightedness
- Weakness in hearing

There are no mentally retarded children in the school. In fact, the children cannot be classified; we would need to administer tests to identify the children's difficulties.

## **Secondary Teachers**

Both secondary teachers had some pupils with learning difficulties. As regards the nature of these difficulties, they said:

### **Teacher 1**

There is no measure to identify the children with learning difficulties, but I would describe the difficulties as:

- Low IQ
- Illiterate parents
- Fathers married with multiple wives who don't look after their children

## Teacher 2

There are many children with difficulties, such as:

- Low IQ
- Psychological disorders

## Summary

The main categories of difficulties identified are summarised in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1**

**Summary table of the responses to Question 1**

<b>Type of Difficulty</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Family circumstances	7
Short-sightedness and weakness in hearing	6
Family disorders	3
Difficulty in reading and writing	3
Low IQ	3
Genetic and environmental factors	2

Respondents understood the term “learning difficulties” in many different ways. Almost a third of the interviewees cited unfavourable family circumstances as a source of their children’s learning difficulties. The most obvious difficulties that could be identified and noticed by the teachers were short-sightedness and weakness of hearing. Some referred to children’s low IQ (though it is not clear whether this had been tested) and others described low achievement without being more specific. Two respondents raised the point that precise classification of children’s difficulties was not possible due to lack of appropriate assessment instruments and procedures. Thus, some teachers saw



learning difficulties as resulting from weakness in the child, and some saw social reasons for learning problems. These views reflect the dilemma mentioned by Dyson (1998).

## **Question 2**

In your opinion, what are the reasons that might contribute to your students having learning difficulties, e.g. curriculum, IQ, teaching methods, time/pace?

## **Primary Teachers**

These teachers saw most learning difficulties as caused by family factors or inappropriate teaching, rather than any specific disability on the part of the child. The specific factors cited were:

### **Teacher 1**

- Family negligence
- Lack of children's motivation towards learning
- Teaching methods

### **Teacher 2**

- Shortage of time
- The curriculum is not implemented accurately
- Lack of teaching aids
- The inappropriateness of the classroom for educational purposes

### **Teacher 3**

- Children's carelessness
- Teaching methods

#### **Teacher 4**

- Family negligence
- Teaching methods
- Low IQ of children

#### **Intermediate Teachers**

One teacher in this group ascribed all learning difficulties to family factors, though the other three saw some weaknesses in curricula and teaching methods as contributing to children's difficulties. Their responses were:

#### **Teacher 1**

- Family negligence
- Family disorders
- Low IQ
- Teaching methods

#### **Teacher 2**

- Lack of integration between the curricula
- Teaching methods

#### **Teacher 3**

- Children being spoiled by their families over caring
- Children being involved in their parents' jobs
- Availability of entertainment tools inside the house
- Family carelessness

#### **Teacher 4**

- Family disorders inside the home
- Level of family education
- Lack of suitability of classrooms for learning
- Over-loaded curriculum

#### **Teacher 5**

- Teaching methods
- Level of family education

#### **Intermediate Principals**

Although one principal mentioned low IQ, the principals' main concern was with teaching-related difficulties:

#### **Principal 1**

- Shortage of time
- The curriculum
- Teaching methods
- Level of IQ

#### **Principal 2**

The reason is the teaching methods.

#### **Secondary Teachers**

The two secondary teachers had quite different views of the reasons for learning difficulties:



## Teacher 1

- Level of family education
- Polygamous families

## Teacher 2

The reasons are:

- The curriculum sequence
- Low level of IQ

## Summary

Reasons given for children's learning difficulties are summarised in the following table:

**Table 5.2**  
**Summary table of the responses to Question 2**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
Teaching methods	8
Low level of IQ	5
Curriculum	5
Family negligence	4
Shortage of time	3
Family education level	2
Family disorder	8
Inappropriateness of classrooms for teaching	2

Overall, a quarter of responses, representing more than half the interviewees, indicated that children's difficulties were due to inappropriate teaching methods. The respondents mentioned that the teaching methods do not consider the individual differences of the children's learning styles. There is no use of discovery or self-learning methods. Teachers do not adapt their teaching to the students' abilities. Supporters of inclusion,

like Ainscow (1997) however, argue that the school must adapt if it is to meet the needs of all children.

If, to teaching methods, are added curriculum, shortage of time and unsuitable classrooms, it can be seen that almost two-thirds of responses concerned school-related factors. A further quarter of responses attributed learning difficulties to family factors.

Interestingly, low IQ was the only child-related factor mentioned. This may be because of the situation whereby most children with special needs in Saudi Arabia attend special schools. The visual and hearing impairments referred to in answer to Question 1 were presumably not severe, or these children would not have been in mainstream schools. What emerges most clearly, however, is teachers' varied understandings of the term "learning difficulty", pointing to a problem of terminology.

### **Question 3**

What special help or support from teachers, counsellors, and/or the whole school do you believe these children require?

### **Primary Teachers**

All primary teachers saw a need for action on the part of the school to deal with children with learning difficulties, while one also suggested involving the parents, as follows:

#### **Teacher 1**

- Making a remedial plan for the children with learning difficulties

#### **Teacher 2**

- Giving supplementary classes to children with learning difficulties

### **Teacher 3**

- The counsellor should give other teachers the proper advice and guidance for treating these children in a more friendly manner to make them like their classes.

### **Teacher 4**

- Informing the parents about their children's achievement and behaviour to discuss the difficulties and find a suitable solution.
- Co-operation among the school staff to deal with this situation

### **Intermediate Teachers**

Intermediate teachers' responses emphasised that dealing with learning difficulties requires co-operation among the various people involved, including families:

#### **Teacher 1**

- Co-operation among the school staff to deal with these children.
- Providing the teacher with the necessary information about the difficulties of these children.

#### **Teacher 2**

- Co-operation between the counsellor, teacher and family of these children.

#### **Teacher 3**

- Co-operation with the teachers
- Following up the children's cases

#### **Teacher 4**

- Co-operation between the counsellor, school and family of the child.



## **Teacher 5**

- Counsellor's visits to the children's families.

## **Intermediate Principals**

Both principals, in answering this question, focused on the need for information about the children concerned.

### **Principal 1**

- Informing the school management staff about the children's cases.

### **Principal 2**

- Following up these children through questionnaires.
- Explaining the cases of these children to the teachers.

## **Secondary Teachers**

The two secondary teachers had quite different views. While Teacher 1 saw it as the counsellor's role to deal with these children, Teacher 2 favoured a more holistic approach:

### **Teacher 1**

- The counsellor identifies the children's difficulties and take note of their attendance or absence

### **Teacher 2**

- Co-operation between the counsellor, teachers and children's families.

## Summary

The main themes emerging in response to this question are summarised below.

**Table 5.3**

**Summary table of the responses to Question 3**

<b>The Help</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
Co-operation between the counsellor, school and children's families.	5
Co-operation between the counsellor and the teachers	4
Making remedial plans and supplementary classes	2
Counsellor's visits to the children's families	1
The counsellor puts the plans for these children	1

There was a strong emphasis on the need for co-operation, with around a third of the interviewees mentioning co-operation between the counsellor, teaching staff, management staff of the school, and family of the children with learning difficulties, and a similar proportion emphasising co-operation between the counsellor and the teacher. Generally, however, the responses focused on information provision and follow-up of cases; none of the respondents were specific about exactly what support was needed by the children. In countries like the U.K., the issue of support has received a lot of attention. Dyson (1998) for example sees the emphasis on in-class support and the development of the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator as contributions to breaking down the barriers between special needs and mainstream forms of schooling.

## **Question 4**

How/to what extent is the school able to provide this sort of support? If not, what are the problems?

### **Primary Teachers**

Primary teachers thought the school could help these children and suggested a number of approaches.

#### **Teacher 1**

- Implementing a programme for children with leaning difficulties by introducing treatment methods for these children.
- Co-operation between the school staff and a teacher specialising in learning difficulties by organising committees and activities to help this teacher serve the target children.

#### **Teacher 2**

- Assigning special time to deal with children with learning difficulties.
- Selecting experienced teachers to deal with these children.
- Getting the help from specialist teachers in the private schools.

#### **Teacher 3**

- The school may be able to encourage the teachers to pay special attention and care to these children.

#### **Teacher 4**

- The school may provide advice and guidance to these children to make their relations with teachers closer.



- Investigation of the reasons for the problems of these children.

## **Intermediate Teachers**

Intermediate teachers had conflicting views about the ability of the school to help these children. One was frankly pessimistic, while others seemed to suggest that help was possible, but additional efforts to those currently in place would be needed.

### **Teacher 1**

- Increasing the school staff efforts towards helping these children.

### **Teacher 2**

- The school is unable to help these children because their families do not respond to the school's efforts.

### **Teacher 3**

- The school may encourage the teachers to give special care to these children.

### **Teacher 4**

- The school can direct the teacher's efforts to focus on these children inside and outside the classroom.
- Increasing the role of the school counsellor to help these children.

### **Teacher 5**

- The school is able if it raises the co-operation between the teachers, counsellor, management staff, and the parents to discuss the children's difficulties and the reasons behind them and find the proper solution.

## **Intermediate Principals**

Principals focused on two main kinds of help: facilities and information exchange.

### **Principal 1**

- The school can help, provided it has all the required facilities to help these children.

### **Principal 2**

- The school can help through the counsellor's role to study and follow up the cases of the children with learning difficulties.
- Co-operation between the school and the child's parents if needed, to find a suitable solution for the child's difficulties.

## **Secondary Teachers**

As in the case of previous questions, Teacher 2 was more inclined than Teacher 1 to see a need for co-operative efforts.

### **Teacher 1**

- Organising supplementary classes after the end of the school day.

### **Teacher 2**

- Involving the child's family in solving the child's problems because the school cannot play this role alone.

## Summary

The responses to this question are summarised below.

**Table 5.4**

**Summary table of the responses to Question 4**

	<b>Frequencies</b>
Encouraging the teachers to pay special attention and care to the children.	4
Co-operation between the family and the school to study the problems and find the proper solutions.	4
Organising supplementary classes/special programmes.	3
The school counsellor's help in studying and following up the children's problems.	3
Lack of co-operation between the family of the children and the school.	1
Providing appropriate facilities.	1
Involving specialist teachers.	2

Several respondents emphasised that the school can play the role of encouraging the teachers to pay special attention and care to the children's difficulties, while a similar number suggested it was the school counsellor's role to study and follow up children with learning difficulties. Whilst five respondents referred to the role of the family, four did so in positive terms, seeing the family as working in co-operation with the school, whereas the fifth had a totally negative view, appearing to see education as something that is "done to" the child by the school, and a process which parents only impede, whether through ignorance or neglect. Moreover, although several possible helping interventions were suggested, the impression was that these were targets to aim for through additional efforts rather than actions that were currently taking place.



## **Question 5**

To what extent do you think these children are able to establish meaningful relationships with their peers in school? Please say how.

### **Primary Teachers**

Two teachers saw children with learning difficulties as withdrawn and lacking friends, whereas the other two suggested that with the teacher's help, this problem can be overcome:

#### **Teacher 1**

- The children can make friendships with each other through participatory programmes and activities.

#### **Teacher 2**

- The friendships between children with learning difficulties and others are too limited, and in general, they are withdrawn.

#### **Teacher 3**

- The teacher can play an active role in creating a spirit of intimacy and raising morale among the children by organising interactive activities.

#### **Teacher 4**

- The children with learning difficulties are unable to make friends and they are withdrawn because they repeatedly fail and stay in the same grade for many years.

## **Intermediate Teachers**

Intermediate teachers generally saw children with learning difficulties as withdrawn, though two thought they could be helped. Only one teacher recognised that children differed in their social skills.

### **Teacher 1**

- These children have limited ability in making friendships with their peers. The school should organise social activities to involve these children to raise their interactivity with their peers.

### **Teacher 2**

- The children with learning difficulties have different abilities in making relationships with their peers; some are socially active and others are withdrawn and unsociable because their families do not co-operate with the school to solve the problems of these withdrawn children.

### **Teacher 3**

- These children have low levels of relationships with their peers.

### **Teacher 4**

- These children are able to make relationships with others if they have the situations which are suitable for these relationships. The teachers, class co-ordinators, and the child's peers who are conscious of the child's difficulties, can play an active role in making the children with learning difficulties socially active with others.

### **Teacher 5**

- The children are withdrawn because of their constant low achievement.

## **Intermediate Principals**

Both principals linked social interaction with academic achievement.

### **Principal 1**

- Most of these children are withdrawn because they are low achievers.

### **Principal 2**

- These children have good relationships with other children with similar levels of achievement, and they have weak relationships with other children with high achievement.

## **Secondary Teachers**

Neither secondary teacher was aware of any problems with children's social relationships.

### **Teacher 1**

- In this stage, there are no very low achievers. From my experience, the students in this stage are socially active and have good relationships with each other.

### **Teacher 2**

- The students are able to make normal relationships with their peers but they need to raise their level of achievement



## Summary

The responses to this question are summarised below.

**Table 5.5**

**Summary table of the responses to Question 5**

<b>Ability to make Relationships</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
Unable to make relationships.	5
Able to make relationships under suitable circumstances.	6
Able to make relationships without conditions.	2

The responses reflected the strongly achievement-oriented ethos of the schools. Children with learning difficulties were perceived as “failures”, leading to low self-esteem, withdrawal and difficulty forming friendships with peers. Almost half the interviewees, however, acknowledged that these children could be helped to make friends with parental support (one respondent) or, even more, through involvement with their peers in participatory activities encouraged by the teacher. One of the principles underlying inclusion, and expressed in the Salamanca statement (1994) is the argument that it helps to remove prejudice and misunderstanding, and encourages social integration.

## Question 6

**How do you help them in this area?**

### Primary Teachers

Primary teachers noted two main kinds of help: modified teaching to overcome low achievement, and positive reinforcement and encouragement to raise self-esteem.

### **Teacher 1**

- Organising teaching plans for the remedy of the children's difficulties.
- Raising teachers' awareness of teaching methods suited to these children's abilities.

### **Teacher 2**

- Making intimate relationships between the teachers and these children.
- Giving such children more time in the school.
- Assigning special tasks to these children, according to their abilities.

### **Teacher 3**

- Teacher's encouragement of these children through raising their morale by appraisal and reinforcement in front of their colleagues.

### **Teacher 4**

- Explaining the lesson more than once and focusing on the children with learning difficulties.
- Decreasing the load of duties and home assignments and giving these children assignments suited to their abilities.

### **Intermediate Teachers**

Again, teachers saw remedial help and encouragement as the best way to help children socially.

### **Teacher 1**

- Identifying the children's difficulties by the help of the counsellor and the parents.

## **Teacher 2**

- Making closer, friendly relationships with such children to make these children trust their teacher and help them find a suitable solution for the problems.
- By teachers' appraising and reinforcing of these children to increase their achievement and progress.

## **Teacher 3**

- Explaining the lesson more than once to the children with learning difficulties. Asking other children about this lesson and then asking the former ones, so that they learn through repetition.

## **Teacher 4**

- The teacher should use encouragement and appraisal remarks to make such children feel they are noticed and help them improve.

## **Teacher 5**

- The teacher should use reinforcement and appraisal, verbally and in writing, e.g. comments in the child's workbook.
- Seating such children in the front desks in the classroom to give them more attention.
- Encouraging these children to write on the chalkboard before their classmates increase their self-confidence.

## **Intermediate Principals**

For principals, this was a matter of pastoral care, which they saw as appropriately dealt with through the Guidance and Counselling programme.



## **Principal 1**

- Giving every possible care to these children when they stay at the school. For those who may leave the school, we contact the counselling service to study the cases of these children who may be transferred to special schools.

## **Principal 2**

- This is more related to the role of the school counsellor than to my role. The school counsellor meets the child with learning difficulty in my presence and we both discuss this child's case to find a good solution.

## **Secondary Teachers**

Both secondary teachers viewed this issue purely in terms of helping to raise these pupils' academic achievement.

### **Teacher 1**

- More explanation of the lesson to the children inside the classroom
- Making remedial classes for the children with learning difficulties outside the classroom.

### **Teacher 2**

- Giving additional time, after the end of the school day, to these children.
- More explanation of the lesson inside the classroom.

## **Summary**

The main responses to this question are summarised in Table 5.6, below.

**Table 5.6**

**Summary table of the responses to Question 6**

<b>How to help children with learning difficulties</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
Raising the children's morale.	5
More explanation and focus on these children inside the classroom.	7
Solving the children's problem by the school counsellor.	3
Giving additional time to these children outside school, if necessary.	3
Modifying teaching approach/assignments.	2

Considering that the question was concerned with children's social interaction, it is interesting to note that all respondents saw the fundamental problem as one of low achievement. Most sought to remedy this by giving the children extra attention in class, and two suggested supplementary work with these children outside school time. Only two suggested that it might be necessary to modify teaching approaches or assignment requirements for these children.

**Question 7**

**What do you need to help them in this area?**

**Primary Teachers**

Two teachers thought specialist staff were needed to deal with these children, though several other kinds of support were mentioned:

### **Teacher 1**

- I need facilities, equipment and a special room.
- The teacher needs specialised staff in this field.
- Co-operation is needed between the teachers and the specialised staff to deal with the children's difficulties.

### **Teacher 2**

- I need enough time.
- There is a need for special classes for these children.
- There is a need for the specialised teachers to take the responsibility of teaching these children.

### **Teacher 3**

- I need the help of the parents to solve their child's problems.
- I need financial support to buy gifts for these children as a kind of incentive for them.

### **Teacher 4**

- I need teaching aids.
- The need for gifts to present to the children.

### **Intermediate Teachers**

Only one intermediate teacher felt capable of meeting all children's needs without additional support. The responses of this group were as follows:



### **Teacher 1**

- I need enough time to solve the children's problems

### **Teacher 2**

- I need the guidance and help of the school counsellor.
- I need the co-operation of the school to hold a meeting with the parents to discuss their child's difficulties.

### **Teacher 3**

- I need nothing, because I do my best to explain the lesson very well using the teaching aids to facilitate the child's understanding.

### **Teacher 4**

- I need the co-operation of the parents and the school staff.
- I need a well-planned curriculum.
- I emphasise the role of the school counsellor in raising the children's morale.

### **Teacher 5**

- I need to reduce the teaching load to give me more time to help these children.

### **Intermediate Principals**

Whilst one principal hoped that additional efforts would enable these children to succeed with the regular curriculum, the other thought they needed different, non-academic activities:

### **Principal 1**

- We need to have basic technical workshops to involve the children with learning difficulties in these workshops. These children may develop their hand crafts to compensate for their low achievement in school.

### **Principal 2**

- We need the teacher to increase his efforts in teaching these children.
- We need the co-operation of the child's family with the school.

### **Secondary Teachers**

Teaching load was the main concern for secondary teachers:

#### **Teacher 1**

- I need enough time to help the children.

#### **Teacher 2**

- I need to reduce the teaching load and I need to reduce the number of children in the class; not more than 25 children.

### **Summary**

The responses in this section are summarised below.

Table 5.7

Summary table of the responses to Question 7

The Needs	Frequencies
Enough time.	5
Co-operation between the family and the school.	4
Teaching aids and facilities.	3
The help of the school counsellor.	2
Specialised teachers.	2
Financial support and gifts for the children.	2
Reducing the number of children in the classroom.	1
A well-planned curriculum.	1
Nothing.	1

It may be concluded that time is seen as the main factor in teachers' ability to deal with children with learning difficulties. This was one of the issues raised by teachers in the attitude surveys analysed by Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996). The respondents suggested a reduction in their teaching load. Co-operation between the family and the school was also highlighted.

**Question 8**

What action do you take if you find a pupil has learning difficulties or repeatedly fails a grade? (For example, are they excluded from school? Does school call in the parents? Is there any mechanism for referring the child to medical, social or psychological services for further assessment/help?)

**Primary Teachers**

All primary teachers thought that the school will first try to identify and address learning facilities, but eventually, if there is no progress, the child will be referred elsewhere. The detailed responses were:



### **Teacher 1**

- To help the repeated failures, we organise a special programme to treat their weaknesses, so that after this yearly programme, the children's difficulties are overcome. There is a mechanism to transfer a few children to the school medical unit to check the cases.

### **Teacher 2**

- Identifying the reason for the difficulty or failure. If the school teacher can solve this problem, the child will stay in the school. Otherwise the child's difficulty will be studied by the counsellor to decide either to send him to hospital for medical check. As for repeated failures, a school committee will study their cases and decide to let them stay at the school or refer them to evening class centres. This mechanism is applied by the school.

### **Teacher 3**

- We study the children's failures or the difficulties to identify the reasons. We try to find the proper solutions for the children's problems. The school applies a mechanism to transfer children who need it to the school medical unit.

### **Teacher 4**

- The school management staff calls in the parents of repeatedly failing children and advises them to transfer their children to special evening class centres. There is a mechanism to refer children with difficulties to the school health unit.

### **Intermediate Teachers**

Intermediate teachers, in the main, described a similar procedure to that described by primary teachers:

### **Teacher 1**

- I don't agree with excluding repeated failures from the school. The school management staff, counsellor, and parents have to study the children's cases to find a suitable solution. The school applies a mechanism of referring children with learning difficulties to the school health unit.

### **Teacher 2**

- The school should not exclude repeated failures. The school management staff and the counsellor find an appropriate solution for these children. Yes, there is a mechanism to transfer these children to the special health unit.

### **Teacher 3**

- I report the children's difficulties to the school counsellor at first. Secondly, I report the cases to the school principal. Then, the school principal, counsellor, and teacher meet the parents to study the difficulties of the children. Repeated failure cases are not excluded but transferred to adult learning centres. The mechanism applied by the school is to refer the child with learning difficulty to the school health care unit.

### **Teacher 4**

- Repeated failures should be put in one classroom with the very good achievers to help them improve their level. The counsellor should study the cases of these children and find the proper solutions. If this action does not work, the school should transfer these children to vocational training centres. The school mechanism is to refer the child with any difficulty to the health unit at the school.

## **Teacher 5**

- The school counsellor studies the cases of the repeated failures and calls in the parents to discuss their children's cases. I do not advise excluding repeated failures from the school, without giving them an alternative. The school usually refers the children with difficulties to the health unit as a mechanism to help these children.

## **Intermediate Principals**

Both principals mentioned referral for health screening, but they differed in their views as to the appropriate alternative form of education.

### **Principal 1**

- The repeated failures for three years are transferred to vocational training centres. The mechanism the school applies is to refer the children to the health unit.

### **Principal 2**

- We call in the parents of the repeated failures to study their cases and identify the reasons and find a proper solution. If the school cannot provide the solution, then it is advised the children are transferred to adult learning centres. As for medical checks, the school mechanism is to refer the children to the special medical unit.

## **Secondary Teachers**

One secondary teacher mentioned regular monitoring of children with difficulties; both indicated that referral is made to the health unit.

### **Teacher 1**

- An annual and monthly follow-up is run by the School-Parents Council to study the children's difficulties. The parents are advised to arrange for their children to have



private remedial tuition outside the school. As for the children's difficulties, the school mechanism is to refer the children to the medical check at the health unit.

**Teacher 2**

- Identifying the reasons for the failure to find a suitable solution for the children's weaknesses. The school refers the children with difficulties to the health unit at the school.

**Summary**

The responses in this section are summarised below:

**Table 5.8**  
**Summary table of the responses to Question 8**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
Calling in the parents of the children to school to study their cases.	6
Investigation of the reasons for the repeated failures to find proper solutions.	5
Transferring the repeated failures to adult learning centres.	4
Transferring the repeated failures to vocational training centres.	2
Reporting the children's difficulties to the school counsellor.	3
Organising remedial programmes for the children's weaknesses.	1
Referring for health screening.	13

Six respondents, approximately half of the sample, reported that the parents of children with learning difficulties or repeated failures are called in to study their children's situations and agree on the proper solution. None of the interviewees thought repeated



failures should be excluded from the school, but they recommended transferring them to either adult learning centres or vocational training centres. Moreover, all the respondents confirmed that the school applies a mechanism of referring children with difficulties to the health unit at the schools. Presumably such screening would identify children with, for example, sight or hearing impairment, which depending on severity might result in their being transferred to special schools.

### **Question 9**

**What training have you had to help you provide for these children?**

- a) In pre-teacher training**
- b) In-service training**

### **Primary Teachers**

Only one of the primary teachers had specific training in relation to teaching pupils with special needs.

#### **Teacher 1**

- I have a First University Degree in Special Education from the University of King Saud. I have not received in-service training.

#### **Teacher 2**

- I have not received any training.

#### **Teacher 3**

- I have not received any training, but I have had long experience in teaching.

#### **Teacher 4**

- I have not received any training, but I studied some educational courses at the university.

#### **Intermediate Teachers**

None of the intermediate teachers had received any training specifically related to special needs.

#### **Teacher 1**

- I have not received any training.

#### **Teacher 2**

- I have not received any training.

#### **Teacher 3**

- I have not received any training.

#### **Teacher 4**

- I have not received any training, but have teaching experience.

#### **Teacher 5**

- I have not received any training, but I studied some educational psychology courses at the university.

## Intermediate Principals

Neither principal had been trained to deal with special educational needs.

### **Principal 1**

- There is no training.

### **Principal 2**

- I received an in-service training in school management, but there was no training programme on the special needs.

## Secondary Teachers

Neither secondary teacher had received pre-service or in-service training in this area.

### **Teacher 1**

- There is no training.

### **Teacher 2**

- I have not had any training.

## Summary

The responses to the question on training are summarised below:

**Table 5.9**

**Summary table of the responses to Question 9**

<b>Training in SEN</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
Pre-service training.	1
In-service training.	0

None of the respondents received in-service training in this area, and the only instance of pre-service training was one teacher who had a First Degree in Special Education from the University of King Saud. Some teachers' responses suggested that they thought lack of training was compensated by experience in teaching. Kidd (1993) however, emphasises the need for teachers to have appropriate expertise and Mittler (1992) argues that this comes from training. Al-Khashrami (1995) views lack of suitably qualified staff as one of the main barriers to integration in Saudi Arabia.

### **Question 10**

**What training would help you now to provide for these children?**

#### **Primary Teachers**

Only one primary teacher perceived a need for training to deal with children with learning difficulties.

##### **Teacher 1**

- I need to exchange the experience with my colleagues at the primary level.

##### **Teacher 2**

- Receiving training in the special education schools.

##### **Teacher 3**

- I need to be loyal to my job.

##### **Teacher 4**

- I need no training because the children with learning difficulties are transferred to special schools.



## **Intermediate Teachers**

Three of the intermediate teachers thought training would help them.

### **Teacher 1**

- We need to be close friends with the children who have learning difficulties.

### **Teacher 2**

- I need training on teaching methods.
- I need teaching aids and equipment.

### **Teacher 3**

- I just need patience with such children.

### **Teacher 4**

- I need training courses.
- I need to visit the special schools which help children with SEN.
- Exchange of experience with the teachers specialising in SEN.

### **Teacher 5**

- I need training in psychology of children and adolescents.

## **Intermediate Principals**

Both principals expressed needs for further training:

### **Principal 1**

- I need training in SEN.

### **Principal 2**

- There is need for training in psychology and health

## Secondary Teachers

The two secondary teachers differed in their opinions on this issue. Their comments were:

### Teacher 1

- There may be a need for training for primary teachers, but there is not any need at the secondary level.

### Teacher 2

- There is a need for training on using special equipment to facilitate helping children with SEN.

## Summary

The responses to this question are summarised in Table 5.10, below:

**Table 5.10**

**Summary table of the responses to Question 10**

<b>The Need for Training</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
Training in SEN, psychology and health.	4
Training in teaching methods, aids and equipment.	2
Exchange of experience and school visits.	3
The need for loyalty, patience and understanding with children with SEN.	3
No need.	2

It can be concluded from the summary Table 5.10 that half of the respondents perceived the need for training, either in SEN, psychology and health of children, or in teaching

methods and the use of special aids and equipment. These form a substantial part of initial teacher training in the U.K., while the value of shared experience and school visits is recognised in courses such as that described by Mittler (1992). Those who called for loyalty, patience and understanding were indirectly saying that they did not need specific training; rather, they appeared to assume that the ability to meet special educational needs was solely a matter of the personal qualities and dedication of the teacher.

## **5.5. Discussion**

This exploratory study revealed some ambiguity in the concept of “learning difficulties” and “special educational needs” in the Saudi context, resulting from the difference in terminology and practice between the Saudi and U.K. education systems. Although most of the interviewees claimed to have in their classes some children with learning difficulties, their further comments suggested that their use of this term was not necessarily consistent with or equivalent to the terms learning difficulties or special needs as defined in the U.K. (see Chapter 1, Section 1.6). They indicated that children with cognitive, sensory or physical impairment are normally transferred to special schools, or taught in special classes, if the school has a special programme for the particular category of special need concerned (see Chapter Two). This was apparently not the case in the schools visited. Thus, to the teachers interviewed, although the term “learning difficulties” might encompass some children with cognitive or physical difficulties that were not so severe as to meet the criteria for admission to special schools, in the main it meant children who were low achievers because of lack of attention, family problems etc. In this respect the teachers’ attitude was that someone or something outside school, usually the parents, is to blame. There was little recognition that modification of teaching methods might be needed to help these children, although



some teachers noted that the pressure to cover a crowded curriculum in a given time made it difficult to pay sufficient attention to less able children (as noted in Chapter Two, in Saudi Arabia, the curriculum and even the text-books are decided by the government. Set units have to be completed in a set time. There is very little, if any, scope for individual schools and teachers to adapt to pupils' ability levels).

Most of the teachers thought that children with learning difficulties also have problems socialising with their peers, but interestingly, they attributed this directly to the children's being low achievers, rather than to lack of social skills. It would not be surprising if, in a school system which values "achievement" as manifested in examination success, and which does not adapt flexibly to differing abilities, other children may disdain, pity or patronise lower achievers and the children with learning difficulties suffer low confidence and lack of self-esteem. Some teachers appeared to recognise that they have some responsibility to encourage these children and facilitate their involvement with their peers.

The conflicting opinions on how best to help children with learning difficulties reflected the broad (or, perhaps, confused) understanding of the term. Referral for health checks was the only action on which all respondents agreed. Those who suggested involving the parents and/or school counsellor may have regarded the children's difficulties as a "social work" issue, or even as a disciplinary matter; it is not common for Saudi parents to be involved with their children's schools except on matters of discipline, and even school counsellors are often treated as administrators who are expected to be involved in school discipline. Other approaches to dealing with learning difficulties included private tuition, or directing them to other forms of education.

Three teachers from intermediate schools suggested that children with learning difficulties should attend adult evening classes (referring to the classes set up in recent

years to combat literacy). It seems unlikely that classes designed for adults who for various reasons have not completed their formal education would be an appropriate environment in which to meet the academic and social needs of children with learning difficulties. The other alternative suggested (also by intermediate teachers) was vocational education, which is available at intermediate and secondary levels as an alternative to mainstream (general academic) education (see Chapter Two). This might be appropriate for some children, but as technical and vocational education is not highly regarded in Saudi society, might simply reinforce the branding of these children as “failures”. What is interesting about all these suggestions, is the implication that the teachers concerned did not, in general, seem to teach or anticipate teaching children with special needs in the sense intended by the researcher. If the child’s problem is a temporary personal or disciplinary matter, it will be sorted out with the parents; otherwise, the child will be directed to alternative education. Only one teacher suggested organising a special remedial programme within the school; interestingly the teacher who suggested that was the only one with SEN training.

Teachers’ perceptions regarding the number of pupils with special needs in mainstream schools appears inconsistent with the claim quoted earlier in this study, that as many as 74% of pupils with special educational needs are included (Al-Mousa, 2000). The discrepancy may arise from the fact that, in the Saudi model of inclusion, children with special educational needs may be placed in a mainstream school, without being taught in a mainstream class. Another explanation may be that teachers had difficulty recognising children with special educational needs, especially in the light of their lack of training in this area.

It was not entirely clear at this stage, how far children with special needs are included in mainstream schools and, if they are not, whether it is because there are few teachers



trained to deal with them; or whether teachers are not trained because there is no expectation that they will teach such children.

As far as the development of this study is concerned, it appeared from this exploratory phase that a re-thinking of terminology would be needed before any further survey, and that any terms used would have to be clearly defined for respondents, in order to be sure that they all answered with respect to the same category of children. It also seemed likely that there are children in mainstream schools who have mild mental retardation and other learning difficulties, but that teachers are not aware of them. Therefore it would be useful to try to obtain multiple perspectives on the extent of inclusion, the awareness of mainstream teachers towards special needs, and their competencies and training needs in relation to children with special educational needs who may be included in their school.

## **5.6. Summary**

In this chapter, the researcher's preliminary investigation of the situation in Saudi schools with regard to the inclusion of children with special educational needs has been reported. Primary, intermediate and secondary schools in Madinah were visited, and interviews held with a small sample of teachers in each. This exploratory phase of the investigation revealed ambiguities in terminology and left the position with regard to the extent of inclusion somewhat unclear. It did, however, confirm mainstream teachers' lack of training, whether pre-service or in-service, in relation to teaching children with special educational needs and, hence, the importance of identifying training needs for the future. Some lessons drawn from the exploratory investigation, which were taken into account in planning and conducting the second phase of the research, have been highlighted. The methods adopted in the second phase of the research, and the reasoning behind them, are explained in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **METHODOLOGY**



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter explains in detail the methods used in the field to explore mainstream elementary teachers' needs for training to deal with pupils with SEN, in order to answer the research questions set out in Chapter One.

The chapter begins by describing the research location and target populations. An outline of the overall research design, indicating the choice of methods and the rationale for their selection, is then presented. There follows an account of the development of the research instruments, and a report of a pilot study conducted in Saudi Arabia, in order to refine them in preparation for the main fieldwork. Procedures for administering the instruments in the main fieldwork, together with the approach adopted in coding and analysing the data are also explained.

#### **6.2. Research Setting: Location and Target Populations**

##### **6.2.1. Location**

The research was conducted in the education district of Medinah Al-Monawarah, in Hijaz, the western region of Saudi Arabia. Since Saudi Arabia has a centralised education system, where all schools follow the same curriculum and use the same textbooks, any region should be representative as far as those particular aspects are concerned. The Medinah area was chosen, because it has a large number of schools covering diverse districts with different socio-economic and demographic

characteristics. Also, the researcher's personal and professional links with the area facilitated gaining access for the research.

### **6.2.3. Target Population**

The populations of interest to this study are mainstream teachers in boys' elementary schools, teacher trainers and Educational Supervisors (whose role is somewhere between that of inspectors and advisors, though tending more to the former).

It was necessary to confine the investigation to boys' schools because in Saudi Arabia, for cultural and religious reasons, strict segregation between the sexes is preserved throughout the education system, apart from kindergarten, and pupils are taught only by teachers of their own sex (see Chapter Two). It would be culturally unacceptable for a male researcher to enter a girls' school and seek direct access to female respondents.

The decision to focus on elementary schools was based on certain special features of the Saudi education system, as a result of which the SEN issue is mainly applicable in these schools. Specifically:

- a) Education in Saudi Arabia is not compulsory beyond the elementary stage (ages 6-12 years).
- b) Progression to successive stages depends on passing examinations, e.g. a student must gain the elementary certificate before being allowed to enrol in Intermediate Education (ages 12-15) and so on.
- c) Pupils who progress beyond the elementary stage do not necessarily stay in "general" education, as there are intermediate and secondary level institutes which provide various kinds of vocational training. Students of lower ability are often directed to these institutes.

- d) General Secondary education (ages 15-18) in particular is basically regarded as preparation for university or college.
- e) The few experiments so far conducted in Saudi Arabia with integration of children with special needs into mainstream schools – although in separate classes – have only involved elementary schools.

For all those reasons, it is likely that most children with special educational needs will leave mainstream general education after the elementary stage.

In addition to teachers' perceptions and experiences, the research explored those of two other stakeholder groups who might be expected to provide insights into the issues of concern. The first was teacher trainers, who would be able to provide information on the current coverage of SEN-related matters in teacher training, and might be expected to have opinions on the competencies that teachers need to acquire to deal with mainstreamed pupils with SEN. The second group was Educational Supervisors (equivalent to school inspectors) who would be in a position to observe what is actually taking place in the schools with regard to SEN, and who might potentially be a source of information and advice for teachers.

### **6.3. Research Design**

A survey design was adopted for this research. A survey can be defined as:

*A method of gathering information from a number of individuals, a 'sample', in order to learn something about the larger population from which the sample is drawn." (Ferber, Sheatsley, Turner and Waksberg, 1980 : 3)*

Surveys are not concerned with individuals as individuals, but with providing information about prevailing conditions and trends (Verma and Mallick, 1999). Thus,



in this research, the concern was not to test or investigate the SEN-related competencies and training needs of individual teachers, but to build up a picture of the general situation of teacher competencies and training needs in what, for Saudi Arabia, is a largely new field. This is why the research is to a great extent descriptive. It is too early to intervene in the “natural” situation by experimenting with new training models and so on; what is needed is an understanding of the nature and degree of existing situations or conditions. The research is also analytical, in that comparisons are made between the perceptions of different stakeholder groups. Moreover, attempts are made to relate teachers’ perceptions of their competencies and training needs to such variables as age and experience.

In collecting the data, a triangulation approach was applied. Triangulation means examining the same data through different strategies, in order to strengthen the validity of the research results. Methodological triangulation refers not only to using different research techniques, but also to the use of different forms of the same technique (Kane, 1984, p. 52).

Bell (1993) defines triangulation as

*cross checking the existence of certain phenomena and the veracity of individual accounts by gathering data from a number of informants and a number of sources and subsequently comparing and contrasting one account with another in order to produce as full and balanced a study as possible. (p. 64)*

Cohen and Manion (1994) consider the use of multiple methods to be particularly appropriate where a controversial aspect of education needs to be evaluated more fully. In the Saudi context, the inclusion of pupils with SEN and related issues is such a matter. Inclusion is a new idea in Saudi Arabia, raising many issues in relation to teaching approaches, teacher competencies and teacher preparation which need to be



explored in depth and from multiple perspectives. The results from one form of data will help to inform and refine the other data, so that the conclusions drawn are meaningful, precise and representative (Verma and Mallick, 1999).

Two methods were used to gather information; a questionnaire survey and a small number of stakeholder interviews with teachers, teacher trainers and school inspectors.

Questionnaires can cover a large sample over a wide area at minimum time and cost (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996), provide data in a standardised form which facilitates analysis and, in the educational context, can be administered with minimal disruption to the normal daily routine of the institution (Al-Sef, 1981).

Self-completed questionnaires provide people with a medium for the anonymous expression of strongly-held views (May, 1997) which can be valuable when a sensitive topic is being researched. In the present research, for example, teachers' attitudes towards pupils with SEN is a potentially sensitive issue, especially if they oppose trends towards inclusion or are critical of school or national policy. Teachers may also feel more able to admit to weakness in some competencies, if their replies are anonymous. A disadvantage, however, is that questionnaires cannot probe deeply into respondents' opinions and feelings (Gall et al., 1996).

Interviews are a useful supplement to questionnaires because they allow greater depth than other methods of data collection (Cohen and Manion, 1997). The interviewer can probe respondents' thoughts, to yield rich insights into people's experiences, opinions, aspirations, attitudes and feelings (May, 1997).

The major advantage of interviews is their adaptability. Skilled interviewers can follow up a respondent's answers to obtain more information and clarify vague statements. They can also build trust and rapport with the respondents, thus making it possible to

obtain information that the individual may be unwilling to reveal by any other data-collection method (Gall et al., 1996).

A major problem with interviews, however, is that they are heavy consumers of resources (Verma and Mallick, 1999). Another limitation of the interview method is the difficulty of standardising the interview situation to avoid influence by the researcher (Gall et al., 1996).

In the light of these considerations, the use of both methods allowed the researcher to tap the strengths of each source and overcome their limitations. The questionnaire allowed a large volume of standardised, comparable data to be collected from teachers, while a comparatively small number of interviews provided depth and richness, and enabled the researcher to tap the special knowledge and perceptions of key informants.

The relationship between the research questions and the selected methods is shown in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1**

**Research Questions and Methods of Investigation**

	<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>How Answered</b>
1	What competencies are needed by teachers to enable them to meet SEN?	a) Review of competency literature. b) Interviews with educationists (teacher trainers and educational supervisors)
2	What training have teachers had in the competencies.	Questionnaire.
3	What training/support is currently available?	Interviews with teacher trainers and educational supervisors.
4	What knowledge, skills and attitudes do teachers currently have, in dealing with SEN?	Questionnaire. Interviews with teachers.
5	Relationships between teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes and personal and professional characteristics.	Questionnaire.
6	Perceived need for further training.	a) Questionnaire. b) Interviews with teachers, teacher trainers and educational supervisors.

The development of the research instruments is described in the following sections.



## **6.4. Development of the Questionnaire**

This section describes the questionnaire developed to explore teachers' perceptions of their competence and training needs in relation to dealing with special educational needs within the mainstream classroom. The sources of questionnaire items and the rationale for their selection are explained, validity issues are discussed and the translation of the questionnaire is described.

### **6.4.1. Content and Sources**

The general format and layout of the questionnaire were modelled on an instrument used by Howell (1999). It consisted of four main sections, as follows:

- Section I - Formal training related to SEN
- Section II - General skills related to SEN
- Section III - Future training opportunities
- Section IV - Personal data

These were preceded by a note defining special educational needs, which was included in an attempt to ensure consistency of understanding among all questionnaire respondents and, hence, maximise the validity, reliability and comparability of the responses. The text of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.2.2. The following paragraphs describe each component.

#### **Definition**

The definition of special educational needs provided in the note has been chosen because it is a specifically Saudi definition, the only one currently available. It appears in a recent government publication (Al-Mousa, 1999) on the development of special education in the Kingdom. The definition used in the model for this questionnaire (Howell, 1999) was not adopted because it included categories that do not fall within



the Saudi understanding of special needs (e.g. economically disadvantaged) and/or are culturally inappropriate (e.g. individuals who are in programmes that are non-traditional to their gender).

### **Section I:**

Preliminary indications from the researcher's exploratory survey suggest a general lack of in-service training, and that teachers may have had little or no pre-service training directly related to special needs. It is important to clarify the training status of the respondents, as the literature review has suggested that training is one of the factors that can affect attitudes and competencies in relation to pupils with SEN. This section therefore contained two closed questions asking how much pre-service training teachers had had, directly related to special needs, and whether they had received in-service training related to special needs within the past two years. Teachers who had attended in-service training were asked to describe briefly the theme, type and duration of the training.

### **Section II:**

This section contained 40 statements reflecting 10 domains of knowledge, skills and attitudes in relation to special needs. Teachers were asked to respond to each statement on two 5-point Likert-type scales. The first scale, expressing level of agreement with the statement (from 1, Disagree, to 5, Agree) was intended to explore teachers' perceptions of their knowledge and ability in relation to each of the 40 competencies. On the second scale, teachers were asked to indicate their need/wish for training in each of the competency areas, on a scale from 1 (Low) to 5 (High). In addition, an open question was included for each domain, inviting teachers to comment further on their knowledge/training needs, if they so wished.

Closed questions facilitate quantification and analysis of the results, while open questions have the advantages of freedom and spontaneity of the answers, and are useful for exploring ideas and awareness.

Items in this section were taken from a variety of sources: Hesse (1977); Whitten and Westling (1985); Sass-Lehrer and Wolk (1984); Hornby et al. (1991); Howell (1999); and Hornby et al. (1991); though similar items are found in other sources.

As mentioned in the literature review, a difficulty arises because of the variation in category headings and classification of individual items between authors. Some categories related to the planning, management and implementation of instruction are obviously closely related and are categorised differently in different frameworks. Sass-Lehrer and Wolk (1984) in fact found from factor analysis that three categories could be subsumed into one. The categorisation in the questionnaire is, therefore, only one of several possibilities that would be consistent with the frameworks reviewed.

### **Section III:**

This section contained 12 statements related to the teacher's interest in future educational opportunities. Items were expressed in the general form, "I would like. . ." followed by a description of a particular training format. Teachers were asked to express their opinions on a 5-point, Likert-type scale, from 1 (= Strongly Agree) to 5 (= Strongly Disagree), with 3 representing "Not Sure".

This section was adapted from Howell (1999). Howell's instrument was developed in USA and reflects the sort of training options available there. Most of these could be applicable to Saudi teachers, even if they are not currently available. One of Howell's items, related to training in the mornings before school, however, has been omitted as it was thought not to be feasible in Saudi Arabia, where the school day starts at about 8 a.m.



## **Section IV:**

Items in this section were formulated by the researcher. This section is intended to gather information on demographic variables which the literature has suggested are associated with differences in teachers' attitudes to SEN, namely, age, qualification, teaching experience, experience in teaching children with special educational needs, and administrative support.

One variable, gender, however, was deliberately omitted because, as noted earlier, Saudi Arabia observes strict gender segregation for religious and cultural reasons. For this reason, the survey was carried out in boys' schools, and all the teachers surveyed were male. It is recognised that this constitutes a limitation of the present study, and it will be suggested in a later chapter that similar research needs to be conducted by female researchers, to cover girls' schools.

In line with the advice of Borg and Gall (1983) the questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter (Appendix A.2.1.) explaining the purpose of the research, the value of respondents' co-operation, and arrangements for the questionnaire's return, as well as giving assurances of anonymity and confidentiality.

### **6.4.2. Validity**

To provide content validity, all items in Section II were based on previously validated instruments and/or competencies on which there is consensus among educationists. Care was taken to ensure that all major domains found in the literature were covered. Items from other instruments which clearly relate to other (e.g. US or UK) education systems and are not relevant to Saudi Arabia (e.g. related to specific legislation, statementing procedures etc.) were discarded.



Table 6.2 shows the key themes covered, with their relationships to the literature review and to issues raised in the initial exploratory survey conducted by the researcher, referred to in Chapter One.

**Table 6.2**  
**Themes and Sources of Questionnaire Items**

Theme	Other category names used for similar items	Key authors	Related issues from exploratory study
Knowledge (Items 1-4)	General Knowledge	Whitten and Westling (1985), Williams (1988), Hammel (1994).	
	Legal	As above, + CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997).	
	Characteristics of Learners	CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)	
	Professionalism and Ethical Practices	CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)	
Attitudes (items 5-7)	Orientation and Attitude	Hornby et al. (1991) Howell (1999)	Negative attitudes from many teachers and they did not expect to teach SEN.
Assessment, Evaluation and Recording (items 8-12)	Pupil Assessment	Sass-Lehrer and Wolk (1984). Whitten and Westling (1985)	Teachers had limited awareness of SEN and difficulty recognising that they may have had such pupils in their classes.
	Assessment and Evaluation	Williams (1988) Hammel (1994)	
	Assessment, Diagnosis and Evaluation	CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)	
	Assessment and Identification	Hornby et al. (1991)	
	Evaluation and Re-wording	Hornby et al. (1991)	

Theme	Other category names used for similar items	Key authors	Related issues from exploratory study
Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction (items 13-20)	Organisation and Management of Instruction  Planning  Classroom Mgt.  Instructional Content and Practice  Planning and Managing Teaching Env.  Goal-setting and Objectives  Planning and Implementation	Sass-Lehrer and Wolk (1984)  Whitten & Westling (1985)  Williams (1988) Hemmell (1994), Hesse (1977)  CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)  CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)  Howell (1999); Hornby et al. (1991)  Hornby et al. (1991)	Inappropriate / inadequate facilities.
Curriculum Adaptation (items 21, 22)	Instructional Content and Practice  Curriculum	Hesse (1997)  CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)  Whitten & Westling (1985) Williams (1988) Hemmell (1994)	Complaints of rigid, overcrowded curriculum.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Other category names used for similar items</b>	<b>Key authors</b>	<b>Related issues from exploratory study</b>
<b>Instructional Competencies</b> (Items 23 – 26)	Instructional Content and Practice  Planning and Managing Teaching Env.  Goal Setting and Objectives  Planning and Implementation	Sass-Lehrer and Wolk (1984)  CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)  CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)  Hornby et al. (1991) Howell (1999) Hesse (1997)  Hornby et al. (1991)	Inappropriate teaching methods cited by some teachers as a cause of learning difficulties.
<b>Management of Behaviour</b> (Items 27-30)	Behaviour Mgt.  Teaching and Learning Facilitation	Whitten & Westling (1985); Hesse (1977) CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)  Hornby et al. (1991)	Pupils with SEN have difficulty making relationships with peers. Some teachers thought they could promote social integration.
<b>Use of Resources</b> (Items 31, 32)		Howell (1999)	Pupils with difficulties referred to medical unit but no other support mentioned. Negative attitude to parents.
<b>Counselling, Communication and Collaboration</b> (Items 33-37)	Family Education and Guidance  Professional Competencies  Communication and Collaborative Partnerships  Counselling / Consultation	Sass-Lehrer & Wolk (1984)  Sass-Lehrer & Wolk (1984)  CEC / Polloway and Patton (1997)  Hornby et al. (1991)	Culture of blame.  Negative attitude to parents.  Possible involvement of school counsellor.
<b>Personal Skills</b> (Items 38-40)	Personal Characteristics and Traits	Hornby et al. (2000) Sass-Lehrer & Wolk (1984)	Some teachers seemed to rely on these (e.g. patience, dedication).



In addition, face validity was assessed by submitting the questionnaire to expert judges for examination of its relevance and clarity.

### **6.4.3. Translation**

The questionnaire was translated into Arabic by an expert in English-Arabic translation, and the translation checked by experts in the English department of King Abdulaziz University College of Education, in Medina, Saudi Arabia.

## **6.5. Interview Schedules**

To obtain additional, qualitative information from a small number of teachers in the surveyed schools, and to explore the perceptions and opinions of teacher trainers and educational supervisors, semi-structured interviews were used. In the semi-structured interview, questions are normally specified on a schedule, but the interviewer is more free to probe beyond the answers, to obtain both clarification and elaboration, entering into a dialogue with the interviewee. Such interviews allow people to answer more on their own terms than the standardised interview permits, but still provide a greater structure for comparability compared with the focused or unstructured interview (May, 1997).

The three interview schedules were prepared as follows.

### **6.5.1. Educational Supervisors (Inspectors)**

This schedule consisted of 15 open-ended questions. The first three questions were to elicit information about respondents' background experience, in education in general, and as supervisors. Four questions sought to establish the supervisors' current workload: the subjects supervised, number of schools and teachers visited, and frequency of visits. These were explored as factors that might have a bearing on respondents'

opportunity to observe SEN-related practice, as well as to advise teachers. Questions 8-10 concerned supervisors' observations of teachers' competencies and difficulties in dealing with pupils with SEN. Three questions were then directed to the availability and effectiveness of support and advice for teachers in relation to SEN – whether from supervisors themselves or from other sources. The last two questions dealt with supervisors' perceptions of teachers' pre-service and in-service training needs (see Appendix A.3.1.).

### **6.5.2. Teacher Trainers**

The schedule for teacher trainers consisted of eight open-ended questions with supplementaries. Again, the schedule began by explaining respondents' background and experience; in this case, as teacher trainers, in SEN, and in the design, delivery and evaluation of SEN-related courses. They were then asked what special knowledge, skills and attitudes they thought teachers would need to deal with pupils with SEN in the mainstream classroom. Trainers' perceptions of the role of current in-service and pre-service training programmes in enabling teachers to develop these competencies were then explored. In the next two questions, trainers were asked how they thought current provisions could be improved, and what factors, if any, might constrain the provision of appropriate training. Specific suggestions for what pre-service and in-service training should be provided, and how, were sought in the last two questions (see Appendix A.3.3.).

### **6.5.3. Teachers**

The purpose of the teacher interviews was to complement the questionnaire data with in-depth data from a small proportion of the teachers participating in the survey, to explore what is actually happening in the schools in respect of children with SEN. The

schedule contained 10 questions. The first question was to ascertain whether teachers were currently teaching or had previously taught, in the mainstream classroom, children with SEN and, if so, what types of special needs they encountered. Questions 2 and 3 concerned teachers' difficulties in dealing with these children. Question 4 asked teachers about the methods or approaches they used in teaching pupils with SEN. There followed three questions exploring teachers' experience of pre-service and in-service training in relation to SEN, and a question about sources of information to which teachers might have recourse if they had a problem in relation to a child with SEN. The last two questions concerned teachers' perceptions as to training needs in relation to SEN (see Appendix A.3.4.).

## **6.6. Pilot Study**

A pilot study was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of writers on research methods such as Gall, Borg and Gall (1996), Bell (1993) and Oppenheim (2000) in order to check the clarity, validity and reliability of the research instruments, and to test the proposed administration procedures, in order to identify and correct possible ambiguities or weaknesses before the main fieldwork.

Oppenheim (2000) recommends that in principle, any aspect of a social survey can and should be piloted, from the method of drawing the sample to the type of paper on which the interviewer makes his notes.

Piloting aims to see how the survey works and whether changes are necessary before the start of the full-scale study. It provides an opportunity to catch and solve unforeseen problems in the instrument content and administration procedures (Kidder, 1981). It provides an opportunity to determine whether individuals in the sample have sufficient knowledge and understanding to express a meaningful opinion about the topic being



researched (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996) and to identify and remove any items that do not yield usable data (Bell, 1993).

This section is divided into two main sub-sections, the first concerned with the questionnaire, and the second with the interviews. Within each sub-section, the sampling and administrative procedures are explained and the pilot outcomes reported.

### **6.6.1. Teachers' Questionnaire**

This section discusses the validation of the Arabic version of the questionnaire, the selection of a pilot sample of primary school teachers, and the reliability testing of their responses.

#### **6.6.1.1. Questionnaire Validation**

Since the questionnaire has been developed in English, it had to be translated into Arabic, the mother tongue of the target population. Accordingly, a further validation procedure was carried out in Saudi Arabia, to check the content validity of the Arabic form of the questionnaire, the clarity of its wording, and its suitability to the Saudi cultural context.

The content validity of the questionnaire was established by a panel of 10 judges who were asked to revise the items to ensure their accuracy, clarity and suitability for use in the Saudi culture. The judges were selected from among Education and Educational Psychology specialists from the College of Education, King Abdul Aziz University at Madena Al-Monawarah. These judges were chosen for their research expertise, and also because these would be the people involved in any implementation of training in relation to SEN. At the same time, they were independent of the sample with whom the questionnaire was to be used. The researcher collected the judges' remarks on the

questionnaire items and modified some items according to their remarks. Table 6.3 shows the modified items.

**Table 6.3**  
**Questionnaire Items before and after Modification**

<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	
<b>Item before modification</b>	<b>Item after modification</b>
4. I am aware of my ethical responsibilities towards pupils and colleagues.	I am aware of my ethical responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs.
<b>ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND RECORDING</b>	
15. I feel able to informally assess the child's instructional needs.	I feel able to informally assess the pupil's learning needs.
18. I am able to construct a student profile based on observational data and formal and informal assessment.	I am able to construct a pupil profile based on observational data (formal and informal assessment).
<b>MANAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR</b>	
33. I can establish and maintain the attention of the child.	I can use teaching methods suitable to attract the attention of my pupils.
37. I know about and could assess community resources relevant to SEN.	I can access community resources relevant to SEN using my social skills.
<b>PERSONAL SKILLS</b>	
44. I exhibit a high degree of maturity and self confidence	I have self confidence because I exhibit a high degree of maturity.

## SECTION II

<b>FUTURE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES</b>	
<b>Items before modification</b>	<b>Item after modification</b>
51. I would like to attend workshops (1-3 days).	I would like to attend workshops (1-3 days) in the area of SEN.
52. I would like in-service seminars (less than once a week).	I would like to attend in-service seminars (less than once a week) in the area of SEN.
54. I would like professional days (at school with no students).	I would like to attend professional days with my colleagues and specialists in SEN.

The advisory committee also suggested the addition of several new items, as follows:

8. I feel happy to deal with pupils with special learning needs.
  
9. It is important to deal with pupils with special learning needs in order to develop their learning skills.
  
10. I prefer working with pupils with special learning needs than working with pupils who do not have SEN.
  
11. I do not feel happy when I work with pupils with special educational needs.
  
12. Work with pupils with special educational needs is a waste of my time.
  
13. Teaching pupils with special educational needs is a complex task.

It is noticeable that item 11 is the reverse of item 8 and as such would be redundant.

Moreover, three of the items suggested are negatively worded, unlike the remainder of



the instrument and would therefore need reverse scoring. However, the researcher accepted provisionally the judges' suggestions, pending the outcome of piloting.

It is noteworthy that all the additional items suggested by the judges were attitudinal items. The strengthening of this aspect of the questionnaire is important in the cultural context of the study, where SEN is a relatively new concept.

In order to ensure the questionnaire's content validity, the researcher asked the members of the advisory committee to express their agreement or disagreement on the relevance of each items of the teachers' questionnaire. The outcome is shown in Table 6.4.

**Table 6.4.**

**The numbers and percentages of the judges' agreement with the questionnaire items**

Item No	Agree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
1	9	90	1	10
2	8	80	2	20
3	10	100	0	0
4	8	80	2	20
5	9	90	1	10
6	8	80	2	20
7	10	100	-	-
8	9	90	1	10
9	8	80	2	20
10	8	80	2	20
11	9	90	1	10
12	9	90	1	10

13	8	80	2	20
14	9	90	1	-
15	10	100	-	-
16	10	100	-	-
17	8	80	2	20
18	8	80	2	20
19	9	90	1	10
20	9	90	1	10
21	8	80	2	20
22	8	80	2	20
23	10	100	-	-
24	9	90	1	10
25	10	100	-	-
26	10	100	-	-
27	8	80	2	20
28	9	90	1	10
29	9	90	1	10
30	9	90	1	10
31	8	80	2	20
32	8	80	2	20
33	9	90	1	10
34	9	90	1	10
35	9	90	1	10
36	8	80	2	20
37	8	80	2	20
38	9	90	-	10
39	10	100	-	-
40	10	100	-	-
41	8	80	2	20
42	8	80	2	20
43	8	80	2	20
44	8	80	2	20

45	9	90	1	10
46	9	90	1	10
47	9	90	1	10
48	9	90	1	10
49	10	100	-	-
50	10	100	-	-
51	10	100	-	-
52	10	100	-	-
53	9	90	1	10
54	8	80	2	20
55	8	80	2	20
56	9	90	1	10
57	8	80	2	20
58	9	90	1	10

From Table 5.4 it can be seen that the level of agreement of the advisory committee on the teachers' questionnaire items ranged between 80% and 100%. This result shows that the questionnaire has acceptable validity. The panel of advisors also recommended moving the personal background questions (originally section iv) to the beginning of the questionnaire, to gain teachers' confidence by presenting them with easy questions first. This suggestion was accepted, and the necessary changes made before piloting the questionnaire with the teacher sample.

#### 6.6.1.2. The Pilot Sample

A list of all primary schools within the Madinah education district was obtained from the district education authority, as a sampling frame.

Five primary schools were selected at random, one from each district in Madena Al-Monwwarah, to represent the pilot sample.



The researcher distributed the questionnaires to head teachers in each school, and enlisted their co-operation in distributing them to 15 teachers in each school. A few days were allowed for teachers to complete the questionnaire, after which the researcher returned to the school to collect the responses in person.

Table 6.5 indicates the distribution of the teachers' pilot sample according to schools and the response rate in each school.

**Table 6.5.**

**The distribution of questionnaires in primary schools and response rates**

<b>School</b>	<b>Number of Questionnaires Distributed</b>	<b>Number of Questionnaires Returned</b>
1) Abo Ayyob Al Ansari	15	8
2) Aby Nasr Al Tammar	15	11
3) Hassan Ben Thapet	15	9
4) Abdulla Ben Omar	15	9
5) El Nagah Al Namozageia	15	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>50</b>

It can be seen from the table that the overall response was 50 out of the 75 questionnaires distributed, i.e. 67%. This is not a high level of response, and in some schools, the response rate was little more than 50%. In the light of this outcome, it was decided that it would be preferable, in the main study, for the researcher to distribute the questionnaires in person, preferably arranging a session during which they could be completed in his presence, in order to maximise the response rate.

The following sequence of tables shows the demographic characteristics of the sample, based on their responses to the questionnaire.

Table 6.6 shows the distribution of the teachers' pilot sample according to their age.

**Table 6.6**

**Distribution of primary school teachers' sample according to age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
a) under 30	10	20
b) 30 – 39	22	44
c) 40 – 49	13	26
d) 50 and over	5	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6.7 shows the distribution of teachers' pilot sample according to general teaching experience.

**Table 6.7**

**The distribution of teachers according to their experience in teaching**

<b>Period of experience</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
a) Less than 5 years	9	18
b) From 5 – 10 years	33	66
c) More than 10 years	8	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6.8 shows the distribution of primary school teachers' pilot sample according to their qualifications.

**Table 6.8****The distribution of primary school teachers by qualification**

<b>Teachers' qualifications</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
a) Bachelor in Elementary Education	19	38
b) Bachelor in Education	12	24
c) Diploma in Education (1 year study after obtaining university degree)	8	16
d) Other qualification*	11	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

\*Such as the Diploma in Education (3 years after obtaining intermediate school certificate.

Table 6.9 shows the distribution of the pilot sample of primary school teachers according to the grade levels of the pupils they taught (some teachers taught more than one grade).

**Table 6.9****The distribution of the pilot sample of teachers according to grade level taught**

<b>Grade level taught</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
1	20	40
2	30	60
3	22	44
4	32	64
5	20	40
6	15	30



Table 6.10 shows the distribution of primary school teachers according to their experience in teaching pupils with special educational needs.

**Table 6.10**

**The distribution of primary school teachers according to experience in teaching pupils with special educational needs**

Kind of school	No.	%	Period by years
Special school	-	0	-
Special class within mainstream school	4	8	From 1 – 3 years
Ordinary class in mainstream school	46	92	From 1 – more than 10 years
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table 6.11 shows the distribution of the pilot sample of teachers according to the support they perceive themselves as receiving.

**Table 6.11**

**The distribution of the pilot sample of teachers according to the support they receive**

Received support	Yes		To a limited extent		No	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
a) From outside agencies	-	0	-	0	50	100
b) From school administration	10	20	2	4	38	76
c) From parents and guardians	4	8	6	16	40	80

The demographic information shows that responding teachers covered a wide age range.

They included teachers with general degree level or elementary teaching qualifications, or post graduate diplomas, as well as older teachers who had qualified via college

diploma courses which have subsequently been abolished. They covered the full range of grade levels taught in elementary schools. The majority had at least five years' teaching experience. In these respects, the researcher considers that adequate coverage of the target population was achieved and that respondents had sufficient teaching experience to be able to answer the questionnaire. It was recognised, however, that random sampling procedures, if feasible in the main study, would increase confidence in the representativeness of the sample.

The administration of the questionnaire went smoothly and teachers found the items and response format clear and easy to understand. No problems were raised. A few teachers made comments about SEN issues in the open spaces provided, but none commented on the research instrument.

#### 6.6.1.3. Questionnaire Reliability

The consistency over time of respondents' answers was measured by the test-retest, for each item and each dimension, with a two-week interval. Since, however, there is a possibility with measures of attitude and opinion that there may be a change in the opinions being measured, from one administration to another, a stability measure such as test-retest is not the only (or even most appropriate) measure of reliability. For this reason, internal consistency was also measured.

Internal consistency, the most widely used estimate of reliability, indicates the degree of homogeneity of the items in an instrument. Of the various internal consistency measures available, the one selected for this study was coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1990) which is the appropriate type of reliability for attitude instruments and other measures that contain a range of possible answers for each item, such as agree-disagree (McMillan, 1996).

Full details of the reliability values for each item, by dimension, as well as the test retest and Cronbach's alpha reliabilities for each dimension, are shown in Appendix A.2.4.

The test retest correlations for individual items ranged from 0.382 – 0.726 for level of agreement, and from 0.400–0.671 for training need. All correlations were significant at  $p = 0.01$ . Reliability values for each dimension taken as a whole were, however, much higher. Test-retest reliabilities for level of Agreement ranged from 0.63 (for Management of Behaviour) to 0.86 (for Knowledge). Those for Training Need ranged from 0.63 (for Attitude) to 0.79 (for Knowledge). Using Cronbach's Alpha, reliabilities for Level of Agreement ranged from 0.57 (for Curriculum Adaptation) to 0.96 (for Knowledge). Those for Training Need ranged from 0.58 (for Assessment/Evaluation/Recording) to 0.89 (for Instructional Competencies).

Reliability can be affected by several factors, such as the heterogeneity of the group being tested. It is also a function of the trait being measured. According to McMillan (1996) a reliability of .80 or above is generally expected for achievement tests, whereas estimates of .65 are acceptable for measuring personality traits and attitudes. Studies of groups (as opposed to those where the results will be used to make decisions about individuals) can tolerate a lower reliability, sometimes as low as .50 in exploratory research. In the light of these comments, the reliability values for the dimensions can be regarded as satisfactory, showing a good level of both stability and internal consistency. Regarding the item values, a lower level of item reliability is acceptable when the data are to be analysed and reported at the group level, than at the level of individual respondents (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996). Nevertheless, some item values were considered unacceptably low, and their wording and translation were reviewed with a view to improving clarity. Appendix A.2.3. shows the back translations of sections ii and iii of the questionnaire produced during this review process.



#### 6.6.1.4. Decisions made following the Pilot Study

In the light of the pilot experience, modifications were made to the instrument content and administration procedure, as follows:

##### Content

Item 11, which is simply the reverse of item 8, was deleted. The two other negatively worded items suggested by the Saudi judges were changed to positively worded ones to facilitate coding and analysis, as follows:

Item 12 was changed to: Work with pupils with special needs is a worthwhile use of my time.

Item 13 was changed to: Teaching pupils with special educational needs is straightforward.

The revised version of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.2.5. A further change made to the format of the Arabic version, to increase clarity, was to write the Likert scale responses (Strongly Agree, etc.) in full at the head of the respective columns, rather than relying on abbreviations which might be unfamiliar in Arabic.

##### Administration Procedure

The reliance on headteachers for the questionnaire distribution may have adversely affected reliability, since it cannot be guaranteed that the conditions under which data were collected were the same for all schools, or between the two administrations of the instrument. As indicated earlier, this method of distribution may also have contributed to the relatively low response rate. For these reasons, it was decided that, in the main study, the questionnaire should be administered by the researcher in person. Preferably, all respondents at a given school should answer the questionnaire at a single sitting, with the researcher on hand to clarify any ambiguities.

## **6.6.2. Interviews**

In this section, the piloting of the three interview schedules is reported and the revisions to the schedules made in consequence of the pilot outcomes are explained.

### **6.6.2.1. Educational Supervisors' Interviews**

To gain access to respondents, the researcher visited the offices of the district education authority and explained his purpose. He was referred to three supervisors who were currently available and willing to co-operate. Because of the small number involved, to save time, the three supervisors were interviewed as a group.

The interviews were conducted in November 2000. All interviewees gave permission for their responses to be recorded.

Responses were subjected to Content Analysis. Answers were grouped according to their similarity and use as illustrative evidence.

A summary of the responses gathered from the interviews is given question by question.

#### **Question 1: How long have you been working in the general education field?**

The responses of the three supervisors to question 1 showed that their periods of experience in working in general education ranged between 10 and 15 years.

#### **Question 2: How long have you been an educational supervisor?**

The responses of the three supervisors to question 2 showed that their experience as educational inspectors ranged from 3 to 8 years.

#### **Question 3: What subjects did you specialise in at college/university?**

Two of the three educational supervisors were specialists in teaching Arabic language and the third was a specialist in mathematics.

**Question 4: What subject(s) do you currently supervise in the school?**

The two Arabic language specialists worked in supervising teaching Arabic language in primary schools at Madena, while the mathematics supervisor supervised the teaching of mathematics by primary school teachers in the same area.

**Question 5: How many schools do you inspect?**

The responses of the three supervisors to question 5 showed that the number of schools they inspect ranged between 15 and 20.

**Question 6: How many teachers does that involve?**

The number of teachers involved in their inspection ranged between 15 to 60 teachers.

**Question 7: How often do you visit each school?**

The number of visits to each school was 3 to 5 visits per term.

**Question 8: On your visits to school, to what extent have you noticed teachers trying to assist pupils who have SEN?**

None of the primary school supervisors had noticed any teachers trying to assist pupils who have SEN in their classrooms.

**Question 9: How well prepared do you think teachers are in general to deal with SEN?**

The three educational supervisors agreed that none of the teachers they supervised were prepared to deal with SEN.



**Question 10: What sort of difficulties do you think mainstream teachers face in dealing with pupils with SEN?**

The three supervisors agreed that the most common difficulties facing mainstream teachers in dealing with pupils with SEN were as follows:

There are no pre-service courses in Special Education for mainstream teachers as part of their college studies.

The programme of in-service training for primary school teachers concentrates only on teaching for normal pupils.

There is insufficient awareness among educational administrators of the problems of pupils with SEN.

Teachers do not have suitable tools to assess and evaluate pupils with SEN.

There are insufficient periodicals related to special education in general and pupils with SEN in particular.

**Question 11: To what extent are you and your colleagues, as inspectors, able to advise and support such teachers?**

The three supervisors thought that they had the ability to advise and support teachers in dealing with pupils with SEN but they added that they lacked information and knowledge related to SEN, gained from their working experience.

**Question 12: What other sources of advice and support are available to teachers to help them to deal with SEN?**

There is a special education sector in the Saudi Ministry of Education which can help and support teachers in dealing with SEN. There are also some non-governmental

organisations (NGOs) dealing with handicapped persons, such as Prince Salman Ben Abdul Aziz and Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz agencies.

**Question 13: How accessible and effective are those sources?**

The three supervisors doubted the availability of advice and support to teachers to help them in dealing with SEN. They thought that these sources were not sufficiently comprehensive to cover the majority of primary school teachers and not effective enough to achieve the desired aims in teacher training.

**Question 14: Do you think there is a need for teachers to have more pre-service preparation to deal with SEN? If so, in what way?**

The respondents suggested that there is a need to include some courses in special education in pre-service teacher training programmes at Colleges of Education in Saudi Arabia. These courses must be sufficient to produce capable teachers who in their turn can deal with pupils with SEN effectively.

**Question 15: Do you think there is a need for more training advice or support for in-service teachers in dealing with SEN? If so, in what way?**

The three supervisors thought that there is a great need for more training, advice or support for in-service teachers in dealing with pupils with SEN. They suggested establishing regular and compulsory in-service training programmes. They also suggested establishing programmes discussing new trends in teaching pupils with SEN, as well as the use of aids which could help teachers to teach those pupils effectively.

Finally, concerning the in-service training of teachers who are prepared to deal with SEN, it was felt that there was a need for higher quality of training at home and abroad and this meant that there was a need for new programmes to be designed. These should cover all teachers who deal with SEN. These programmes should take into

consideration new techniques and methods of teaching pupils with SEN. It should be borne in mind that teacher training should be of high quality and relevant to the primary school teacher's work. Facilities, financial and professional support should be provided for by the decision-making authorities at the Ministry of Education level.

From the pilot interviews, it was recognised that a possible ambiguity existed in relation to Q8. Had inspectors not noticed efforts to assist pupils with SEN because no such efforts were made, or because there were no SEN pupils in the classes? It was decided, therefore to ask two questions in the main study:

1. Are there pupils with SEN in any of the classes you visit?
2. From your observations in the schools, to what extent do you think teachers try to give special help to such pupils?

The responses to Q11 seem somewhat contradictory; on the one hand, the inspectors claimed to be able to advise teachers on SEN, but on the other, they admitted to lack of experience in this field. This may mean that there was some ambiguity in inspectors' understanding of the question. "Are able to . . ." could mean "have the knowledge and experience to . . ." or simply "are in an appropriate official position to . ..". To avoid this potential ambiguity and extract more meaningful information in the main study, it was decided to substitute this question with three new ones, as follows:

1. What training and/or experience have you had in the area of SEN?
2. Is your current level of knowledge about SEN sufficient to enable you to advise and support teachers in dealing with SEN?
3. Are you ever asked for such advice, or do you ever volunteer it?

In addition to these changes, it was decided to add another question to the schedule, namely: What do you see as the priorities for training in SEN? This would, it was



hoped, yield more focused answers which would help in formulating recommendations for the future. For the revised version of the educational supervisors' interview schedule, see Appendix A.3.2.

#### 6.6.2.2. Teacher Trainers' Interviews

Because of the small number of potential interviewees available, and the constraints of their work schedules, a single pilot interview was conducted with a senior member of staff at the University in Madinah. The responses were as follows:

**Question 1: How long have you been a teacher trainer?**

About 25 years.

**Question 2: How long have you worked in the field of SEN?**

Around the same period.

**Question 3: Can you tell me about your involvement with the preparation and delivery of courses related to SEN, whether as a designer, a teacher, or an evaluator?**

I am involved in all three of them, planning, teaching and evaluating.

Regarding the planning, it is necessary to know: 1) the nature of the group whom the teachers are going to deal with, students with SEN, 2) the skills and qualifications that need to be taught by the trainees which should match the nature of the target group, 3) how to apply the skills and qualifications to the children concerned, and 4) the activities and experiences needed to help with gaining the skills and qualifications and to undertake a continuous evaluation of the four steps mentioned above.

As for the training, it depends mainly on the implementation of the designed plan. The plan is usually prepared in detail and it contains the aims, activities, skills, experiences,

follow-up, evaluation and revision and modification in the light of the follow-up and evaluation.

As far as the evaluation stage is concerned, it is of course a continuous procedure that takes place at the same time as the implementation of the plan, going on from the beginning and throughout the different stages, including the follow-up. This will help in the implementation of any necessary changes or modification, depending on the outcome of the evaluation.

**Question 4: There is an increasing trend world-wide to include pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools and classrooms, and it seems likely that at some stage, Saudi Arabia will follow suit. Even without integration or inclusion, it is likely that mainstream schools already contain some pupils with SEN – perhaps those with a mild to moderate mental or physical impairment who do not qualify for admission to a special school, or pupils with emotional or behavioural problems. With this in mind, can you tell me what special knowledge, skills and attitudes mainstream teachers need to deal with such children?**

The teachers of normal classes need to know about the psychology of children with special educational needs. It is necessary to know about the nature of the child's disability and its psychological and mental consequences. Also, it is necessary to provide the essential technical aids and to be aware of the social demands needed to tackle the consequences of disability.

It is important for teachers to have the basic knowledge and skills which help them to undertake their jobs in dealing with children with special needs. Some of these skills are inter-communication, understanding, knowledge, acceptance, careful listening, love and patience.

The positive acceptance of children with special needs is needed, to give them the chance to be involved in society. Moreover, it is necessary to understand and to follow-up what is going on world-wide regarding these matters, dealing with education needs of children with special needs. However, since every local society has its own characteristics, it is necessary to use the knowledge according to the nature of every individual local society.

**Question 5: To what extent do you think current pre-service training programmes prepare mainstream teachers to meet SEN?**

The pre-service training programmes can play a very important role in training teachers to work with children with special needs. Through these programmes, it is possible to select qualified people who are suitable to work in the area of children with special needs. Then the next step is to equip those selected teachers with the needed skills and knowledge which will help them to undertake their jobs in accordance with the traditions and customs of their local society.

**Question 6: What role is played by in-service training in equipping mainstream teachers to deal with SEN?**

Training helps with the accuracy of the job. It helps in following-up knowledge relating to the psychological communication dealing with children who have special needs. By so doing, teachers can gain any new knowledge in this area for the benefit of the children.

**Question 7: In your opinion, could teacher training institutions and agencies do more to prepare teachers to help pupils with SEN? If so, how?**

To do more in preparing the teachers, some points should be considered:

1. good selection of the teachers,
2. preparation and qualification needed for the teachers,



3. good training,
4. evaluation and follow-up.

**Question 8: Are there any particular problems or constraints in the way of providing such training? Can you elaborate?**

There are no problems as long as the job is given to a qualified and well trained teacher who keeps up-to-date with new knowledge in this area.

**Question 9: What should be done pre-service to prepare teachers for teaching SEN?**

- good selection of the teachers,
- good qualifications,
- willingness to work in this area,
- the readiness to follow-up new knowledge in this area.

**Question 10: What should be done in-service to prepare teachers for teaching SEN?**

- to provide teachers with a chance to gain qualifications,
- follow-up to make sure that teachers are still competent to do their job,
- continuous evaluation and applying the principles of reward and punishment rules.

The interviewee found the questions clear, understandable and relevant to the purpose of the study as explained to him beforehand. It was interesting to note in his answers to Q4 the emphasis on attitudinal competencies and personal skills. His answers throughout also reflected an emphasis on the processes of candidate selection, training and evaluation, without, however, specifying particular instructional competencies required.

### 6.6.2.3. Teacher Interviews

Three pilot interviews were carried out with teachers, with the following outcomes.

**Question 1: Do you currently teach, or have you ever taught, in the mainstream classroom, any pupils whom you think have special educational needs? Can you give any examples of the sorts of special needs you have encountered?**

All three teachers had taught or were currently teaching children with SEN. Two specifically mentioned lack of understanding, one mentioned children with hearing and speech difficulties, and one noted that children with special needs may be socially isolated, lacking confidence to interact with their peers.

**Question 2: What particular difficulties or challenges do you face in dealing with these children? e.g. in relation to their learning needs, their behaviour, their psychological/emotional needs.**

All three interviewees noted the demands on their time made by pupils with SEN; two noted that this sometimes raised the difficulty of maintaining a balance between the needs of these children and others who do not have SEN.

**Question 3: Which aspect of teaching or interacting with children with SEN do you find the most difficult? Can you suggest any reason for that?**

All three teachers found children with limited understanding the most difficult to deal with.

**Question 4: Can you give examples of any particular methods or approaches you use in teaching children with special educational needs?**

The three teachers had different approaches to dealing with pupils with SEN. One tried to allocate extra time for them; another emphasised the importance of involving them in

class activities such as discussion; the third had no particular approach but expressed the hope that in the future, modern technology aids might be used to benefit those children.

**Question 5: Do you think your pre-service training prepared you adequately to deal with children with SEN. If yes, in what way? If not, why not? What were the deficiencies?**

All respondents answered in the negative, and one commented that before the interview, he had not even properly known what was meant by the term, thinking it simply meant “pupils who understand nothing”.

**Question 6: What in-service training opportunities are available to mainstream teachers to help them to teach children with SEN in the mainstream classroom?**

Again, all three teachers said no, though one thought that information about individual differences, in teaching methods courses, might be applicable to teaching pupils with SEN.

**Question 7: Have you ever attended any sort of in-service training in relation to SEN? If no, is that because you have not been given an opportunity or for some other reason? If yes, can you tell me a bit about that training? (where, when, content). How satisfied were you with the course? To what extent did it meet your needs?**

None of the three had attended such courses and two had not heard of any taking place.

**Question 8: If you have a problem in relation to a child with SEN, what do you do? Is there anyone you can ask for advice? Would you look for ideas in books and journals? Or do you try to work out a solution yourself?**



One of the teachers said he would try to solve the problem himself. Two mentioned consulting more experienced colleagues, and reading relevant references. One suggested that he might discuss the problem with the child's parents.

**Question 9: Is there any kind of information that you need, or any skills that you would like to develop, to help you in dealing with children with SEN?**

One teacher said that information was available in libraries and had himself made use of it; another said it was available, but he had not felt the need to use it; the third indicated a lack of resources in the school, and the fact that relevant books and articles were often in English.

**Question 10: What do you think are the priorities in training teachers to deal with SEN? In other words, what should the training most concentrate on?**

All three teachers thought attention should be paid to training teachers in recognising SEN. One called for more research in the field of SEN and another thought it was still necessary to establish exactly what was meant by the term.

The teachers' responses highlighted the possibility that some teachers may not be familiar with the concept of SEN and the consequent need to ensure that a clear definition was given to each interviewee in the main study. In other respects, they found the questions clear and understandable, though it was evident that their lack of prior experience and awareness made it difficult for them to identify specific problems and training needs. Rather, they expressed a generalised need for basic information and training in recognising and responding to individual differences.

An interesting feature of the interviews was the evidence that the interview process would not only provide information for the researcher but would provide information for interviewees and raise their awareness of SEN. For example, as indicated above,

one interviewee said that until asked to participate in the pilot study, he had not known what SEN meant. As a result of his participation, he was beginning to perceive for the first time that learning difficulties did not reside solely within the child, but that the teacher needed to make special efforts to meet the needs of such a child. He also indicated that as a result, he was motivated to seek out reading matter on the subject. This experience confirmed the value of the present work and the usefulness of asking these questions in the main study.

### **6.7. Conduct of the Main Fieldwork**

After the pilot study and consequent amendments to the survey instruments, the Arabic versions of the questionnaire and interview schedules were administered to the sample groups of the main study.

To administer the questionnaire and interview schedule, the researcher travelled to Saudi Arabia on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2001. In Saudi Arabia, a formal letter was provided by the Faculty of Education in Madina to the Authority of Education to explain the purpose of the study and ask permission to carry out the empirical survey. Another letter was provided by the Authority of Education in Madina to head teachers of schools in Madina, indicating the purpose of the study and the importance of their co-operation for the success of the study. A letter was sent by the Faculty of Education in Madina to the Faculty of Education in Riyadh, to enlist co-operation in the form of permission to carry out interviews with teacher trainers in the Department of Special Educational Needs. The specific administration procedures for each instrument were as follows.

## 6.7.1. The Questionnaire

### 6.7.1.1. Sample Selection

A cluster-sampling procedure was used to select respondents for the questionnaire survey. As in the pilot study, a list of primary schools in the Madinah district, supplied by the district education authority, was used as the sampling frame (for the rationale for concentrating on primary schools, given the characteristics of the Saudi education system, see section 6.2.2.). Madinah is the largest district in Saudi Arabia, with 114 primary schools and 2,312 primary teachers (Madinah District Education Authority, 2000) scattered over a very wide geographical area. Given the constraints of time and resources, it was not feasible to visit a large number of schools, especially as some are in remote desert locations. It was therefore decided to focus on the city of Madinah itself, where the majority of the district's schools are located, to group the schools (north, south, east, west and central) and to select one school from each of the north, south, west and central areas, and two from the east, which is an exceptionally large and populous area. The researcher selected the sample schools randomly. This was done by giving each school a number, shuffling these numbers, then drawing out the required sample. This process was carried out for each area separately. The resulting sample contained five inner-urban schools and one at the city limits, in a modern suburb. Since the Madinah Education District is predominantly urban, and since educational and other facilities in Saudi Arabia are heavily concentrated in the urban areas, such a sample can be considered representative of both the district and the Kingdom, especially as all schools must, by law, follow the same curriculum (see Chapter Two).

Two of the selected schools had a resource room programme in which children identified as having special educational needs were withdrawn from regular classes to receive one-to-one tuition with a specialist teacher. A further two schools each had a

special class for children with SEN. These children were integrated with their peers for Art and P.E., and during recreation periods, but taught separately, by a specialist teacher, for all other subjects. The remaining two schools had no specific SEN programmes. Thus, the surveyed schools can be considered to reflect the variety of situations with regard to inclusion of pupils with SEN, currently existing in Saudi schools (see Chapter 2).

Questionnaires were distributed to every teacher in each of the selected schools. By surveying all the teachers in each school, it was ensured that teachers of differing teaching subjects and grade levels were represented. Moreover, in schools that practised some form of inclusion, the few teachers who actually taught children with SEN would be included, as well as the majority who did not teach them regularly but may have referred such children for special help or had dealings with them while supervising recreation.

#### 6.7.1.2. Data Collection

All questionnaires were delivered to respondents in the sample personally. The researcher asked every respondent to read the covering letter and answer the questions in the questionnaire. All questionnaires were collected personally. The researcher distributed 180 questionnaires, of which 175 were returned, as shown in the following table.



**Table 6.12. Questionnaire Response Rate**

Schools	Distributed Questionnaires	Collected Questionnaires	
		No.	%
1. Talha Bn Obied Allah	20	20	100
2. Alazeezia	20	20	100
3. Saad Bn Ubada                      Integrated classes	35	33	94
4. Al-Baraa Bn Malik                      Resource Room	35	35	100
5. Ahmed Bn Hambal                      Resource Room	35	34	97
6. Mohammed Bn Maslama                      Integrated Classes	35	33	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>97</b>

### 6.7.1.3. Reliability

Because the reliability values obtained in the pilot study had been unacceptably low, and a second pilot study was not possible due to time and resource constraints, it was considered particularly important to check the reliability of the amended questionnaire in the main fieldwork. The large sample size and limited time available did not allow use of the test-retest method adopted in the pilot study. Reliability was therefore tested by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each dimension. Cronbach's alpha is a reflection of all possible split-half combinations, and is a widely used and accepted measure of reliability. These calculations were performed on a sample of 40 questionnaires taken at random from the 175 returned. The full outcomes can be seen in Appendix A.2.6.

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for level of Agreement ranged from 0.83 for Use of Resources to 0.97 for Personal Skills. The alpha coefficients for Training Need ranged from 0.84 for Use of Resources to 0.98 for Organisation and Management of Instruction. Thus, all the Competency dimensions showed a high level of reliability. The same was true of the items on future training opportunities, with a Cronbach's

Alpha coefficient of 0.95. These improvements in reliability can be attributed to the changes made to both the questionnaire content and the data collection procedures following the pilot study.

## **6.7.2. Interviews**

### **6.7.2.1. Sample Selection**

Interviews were conducted with teachers and primary school supervisors in Madina, and teacher trainers in the Department of Special Educational Needs in Faculty in Education in King Saud University in Riyadh. All teachers interviewed were from the six surveyed schools and had completed the questionnaire. The teachers constituted a purposive sample drawn from those who, in response to a question at the end of the questionnaire, expressed willingness to participate. From this pool of potential respondents, the researcher selected 3 or 4 teachers from each school to include a range of experience, both generally and in relation to SEN, including two who were involved in the inclusion projects (special classes) mentioned in section 6.7.1.1. Details of the characteristics of the interviewed teachers, in terms of their ages, experience and grade levels taught are presented in Chapter Seven, section 7.3.1. Given the nature of the school supervisors and teacher trainers as key informants, the limited number of people occupying these positions, and the demands of their official responsibilities (especially as the fieldwork cut across the examination period) these samples were selected purposively from those of the target populations who were willing to participate and could spare the time to do so. All the supervisors had responsibility for the Madinah district education authority in which the six sampled schools were surveyed; one supervisor, in particular, supervised special education programmes for pupils with learning difficulties. Two of the sampled schools ran such programmes, which were under his supervision. Access to supervisors was obtained via the district education

authority. The teacher trainer sample was confined to Riyadh University because this is, to date, the only institution in the Kingdom that provides teacher training in relation to SEN (see Chapter Two). Such training, so far, is confined to students intending to teach in special institutions, special classes and resource room programmes. Training in relation to SEN is not currently part of pre-service training for mainstream teachers. All members of this sample lectured on SEN while some, additionally, were involved in course planning and/or administration. The sample of interviewees included 19 teachers, 11 supervisors and 11 teacher trainers, as shown in the following table.

**Table 6.13. Interview Sample**

<b>Sample category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Place</b>
1. Teachers	19	Madina
2. Supervisors	11	Madina
3. Teacher trainers	11	Riyadh
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	

### **6.7.3. Interview Procedure**

At the beginning of each interview, the researcher explained to the interviewee the aims of the interview. Then, the researcher informed the interviewee that all the information would be confidential and would be used only for the purpose of the present research. Questions were asked according to the interview schedule, the respondents being allowed to give a full and considered answer before moving on to the next question.

### **6.8. Data Analysis Procedures**

The questionnaire data were coded and input onto computer for analysis using the SPSS program. Teachers' background data were analysed descriptively using frequencies and percentages. For the sections on Competencies and Future Educational Opportunities, in addition to frequencies and percentages, mean scores were calculated for each item.

For each dimension of competencies/training needs, the overall mean score was calculated by dividing the sum of the mean scores for the individual items by the number of items in the dimension. For example, for the first dimension, knowledge, the dimension mean was calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{item 1 mean} + \text{item 2 mean} + \text{item 3 mean} + \text{item 4 mean}}{\text{number of items}} \\ = \frac{3.37 + 2.84 + 2.50 + 3.93}{4} = 3.16$$

These mean scores were ranked in order to give a simple indicator of teachers' relative levels of agreement with the competency statements and training need for the various dimensions. ANOVA was used to test for significant differences in responses from teachers of different age, qualification, experience, and type of school in terms of arrangement for inclusion of pupils with SEN. Although it is sometimes argued that parametric tests should only be used when the data are of the interval or ratio type, scores are normally distributed and variances are homogeneous, Bryman and Cramer (2001) note that the need to meet these criteria has been strongly questioned. They suggest, for instance, that parametric tests can be used with ordinal data, since tests apply to numbers and not what the numbers signify, and they note that in practice, parametric tests are routinely applied to the analysis of attitude scales. Moreover, they cite evidence of the robustness of parametric tests to moderate violations of the assumptions of normal distribution and homogeneity of variances. In the present study, the data, though strictly ordinal, were of the Likert scale type that are often treated as interval; responses were reasonably normally distributed and the means and standard deviations of the various groups were similar. It was therefore considered acceptable to use a parametric test. Where ANOVA revealed the existence of significant differences, it was followed up by Bonferroni's post hoc test to identify the location of such differences. When comparing teachers who had experience of teaching pupils with



SEN, with those who did not, however, a parametric test (the t-test) was not appropriate, because the great difference in size between the two samples (7 teachers who had experience of teaching pupils with SEN, and 168 teachers who did not) is a serious violation of the conditions for the t-test (Kinnear and Gray, 1999). In this case, the equivalent non-parametric test, the Mann-Whitney, was selected.

In addition to tests of statistically significant difference, tests of correlation were carried out, in order to examine possible associations between mean scores on the competency items.

The interview information was analysed using content analysis. In so doing, an attempt was made to obtain both an idea of the number of people who responded in a particular way, and the richness of individual variations in experience and opinions.

## **6.9. Summary**

The questionnaire and supervisors' interviews were piloted in Saudi Arabia between October and December 2000, using small samples similar to those targeted by the main fieldwork.

The questionnaire was translated into Arabic and minor amendments made before piloting in 5 schools in Madinah. Head teachers in the schools concerned co-operated in the questionnaire distribution and a 67% response rate was obtained. A number of changes were made to some items in the Attitudes section, to eliminate redundancy and facilitate the coding and analysis of responses. Regarding administration, it was decided in the main study to have the questionnaires distributed personally by the researcher, rather than through headteachers, in the hope of improving response rate and removing a possible threat to reliability.

Semi-structured interviews were held with three supervisors. The outcome suggested that the interview schedule is understandable and relevant to the target group. Some changes were, however, made to increase the precision and value of the information that could be obtained.

Following these changes, the main fieldwork was conducted in Madinah. Responses were received from 175 teachers from 6 primary schools for the questionnaire survey, while 19 teachers, 11 supervisors and 11 teacher trainers were interviewed. The results are presented in the next chapter.

**CHAPTER SEVEN**

**THE RESULTS OF**

**THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH**

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

#### **7.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings from the questionnaire survey as well as the responses obtained in interviews conducted to collect data from educational supervisors, teacher trainers and primary school teachers who currently deal or may in the future deal with pupils with SEN.

The chapter is divided into two main parts. The first is concerned with the questionnaire data. Information is presented on the surveyed teachers' demographic characteristics, and on their experience and training in relation to SEN. Their perceptions of their competencies and training needs are described and analysed in relation to their background characteristics. Finally, the preferences expressed by teachers in relation to future training opportunities are reported.

In the second part of the chapter, the qualitative data obtained from the interviews are presented for each group in turn.

#### **7.2. The Questionnaire Survey**

As indicated in Chapter Five, the questionnaire contained four sections. For convenience in this chapter, however, the results are presented in three sections, beginning with the background and training data combined, to present a composite portrait of the survey sample.



### 7.2.1. Teachers' Background Data

This section presents information on the survey respondents' ages, teaching experience, qualifications, grades taught, experience and support in teaching pupils with SEN, and training received in relation to SEN.

Table 7.1 shows the distribution of the sample by age.

**Table 7.1.**  
**Distribution of the respondents by age**

Age	No. of Teachers	%
Under 30	28	16.00
30 – 39	83	47.40
40 – 49	50	28.60
50 and over	14	8.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100.00</b>

It can be seen that almost half the teachers were in the 30-39 age group and more than a quarter were aged 40-49. The smaller number in the youngest (<30) age group is to be expected, since Saudi teachers graduate from university or college at age 22 or older. The low representation in the 50+ age group is also unsurprising, because teachers of this age are likely to have qualified at a time when there were far fewer teacher training institutes in Saudi Arabia, and fewer teachers trained, than in later years. Also, there will have been losses to the profession from early retirement.

**Table 7.2.**  
**Distribution of the respondents by years of teaching experience**

Experience in teaching	No. of Teachers	%
Less than 5 years	15	8.6
5 to less than 10 years	44	25.1
More than 10 years	116	66.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The survey respondents were, for the most part, experienced teachers, two-thirds of whom had taught for over 10 years. Thus, they will have trained before Saudi Arabia was influenced by the trend towards inclusion of pupils with SEN. At the same time, they will have had ample opportunity to gain practical experience of developments in the classroom.

The various teaching qualifications attained by the respondents are shown in Table 7.3.

**Table 7.3.**

**Distribution of respondents by qualification**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Bachelor in Elementary Education	40	22.9
Bachelor in Education	22	12.6
Post-graduate Diploma in Education (2 years)	5	2.9
Post-graduate Diploma in Teaching (1 year)	66	37.7
Bachelor in Special Education	3	1.7
Diploma in Teaching	21	12.0
Diploma in Special Education	2	1.1
Bachelor Degree (non-education)	13	7.4
Secondary School Diploma in Education	3	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It was found that more than three-quarters of the respondents had a graduate-level or post-graduate teaching qualification in education. As expected, there were also some older teachers who had entered the profession with lower-level qualifications under the old Junior College or earlier systems (see Chapter Two). Only 5 teachers had a qualification specifically related to SEN, while 13 respondents did not have a specific teaching qualification of any kind.

The year(s)/grade level(s) taught by the sample are indicated in Table 7.4.

**Table 7.4.**

**Grade levels taught**

Level	No. of Teachers*	Percentage*
1	48	14.7
2	46	14.1
3	49	15.0
4	60	18.4
5	66	20.3
6	57	17.5

**Note:** Frequencies and percentages total more than 175 (100%), as some teachers taught at more than one level.

The table shows that all six primary school grades were well represented in the samples, reflecting the high response rate from all levels of the participating schools. The table was compiled on a multiple response basis; the detailed returns showed that about half the teachers taught a single grade, 43 taught two grades, 22 taught three grades, 8 taught four grades and 10 taught five grades.

As shown in Table 7.5, only 7 respondents (4%) had experience of teaching pupils with SEN. All of these had taught pupils with SEN in ordinary classes within mainstream schools. In addition, 6 had done so in special schools and 5 in special classes within mainstream schools, as indicated in Table 7.5.

**Table 7.5.**

**Experience of Teaching Pupils with SEN**

No.	In Special Schools	Special Classes within Mainstream Schools	In Ordinary Classes within Mainstream Schools	Total
1	1 year, 2 months	9 months	9 months	2 years, 8 months
2	1 year	1 year	1 year	3 years
3	6 years	0	7 years, 7 months	13 years, 7 months
4	10 years	2 years	2 years	14 years
5	2 years	1 year	3 years	6 years
6	2 months	6 months	6 months	1 year, 2 months
7	0	0	1 year	1 year

The small number of teachers reporting experience of SEN pupils can be attributed to the situation described in Chapter 2, and in Chapter 6, section 6.7.1.1., whereby, even in schools which operate some level of inclusion, pupils with SEN are not normally taught in mainstream classes. The only teachers who teach these children are the teachers (brought in from special schools) responsible for resource room programmes and special classes, or teachers of Art and P.E., in which some schools are beginning to hold integrated lessons.

As the table shows, these teachers' cumulative experience of teaching pupils with SEN in various contexts ranged from 1-14 years.

Teachers were asked for their perceptions of the support available to them from outside agencies, the school administration and parents. Their responses were as shown in Table 7.6.

**Table 7.6.**  
**Sources of support for teaching for pupils with SEN**

Source	Yes		To a limited extent		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Societies	12	7	07	4	156	89	175
Schools	23	13	09	5	143	82	175
Parents	15	9	14	8	146	83	175

It can be seen from the table that most of the teachers were of the opinion that no support was available from any source. The main source of support in the view of these teachers was perceived to be the school administration.

As indicated earlier in relation to teacher qualifications, only 5 teachers, all of whom were among the 7 with experience of teaching pupils with SEN, had a specific SEN



qualification, and very few others reported any kind of pre-service training in relation to SEN. The frequency and types of pre-service training reported are shown in Tables 7.7(a) and (b).

**Table 7.7.**

**Pre-service Training in SEN**

**(a) Number of respondents reporting training**

<b>Pre-service Training</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	10	5.7%
No	165	94.3%
Total	175	100%

**(b) Types of pre-service training**

<b>Number of Teachers</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Training Period</b>	<b>Hours per Week</b>
1	Recreation for Disabled	1 semester	2
2	Preparing Teachers of Special Education	1 year	2
2	Special Education	4 years	
1	Special Education (Responsibilities, Techniques and Teaching Methods)	4 weeks	
1	Sport for Disabled	3 months	3
1	Learning Disabilities	1 week	12
1	Education for Mentally Retarded	4 years	
1	Special Education	1 semester	2

It can be seen that training varied greatly in duration. The teachers with specific SEN qualifications had done either a 4-year degree course or a 1-year post-graduate course. The other five teachers who reported some pre-service training in SEN reported short courses lasting, at most, one semester.

Even fewer teachers (3, 2%) had attended in-service training related to SEN.

Table 7.8.

**In-service Training in SEN**

**(a) Number of respondents reporting training**

<b>In-service Training</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	3	2
No	172	98
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>

Details of the courses they reported are shown in Table 7.8b.

**(b) Training Courses and Duration**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Training Course</b>	<b>Kind of Training</b>	<b>Training Period</b>
1	Special Education	Academic Study	One Semester
1	A. Preparing Lessons for Students with Special Educational Needs. B. Teaching Mathematics for Students with Special Education Needs.	Seminar Workshop	One Day One Day
1	A. Resource Room for Students with Special Education Needs. B. Teaching Techniques for Students with Special Education Needs.	Lectures and Workshop Lecture and Workshop	Two Months One Semester

It can be seen that in-service training consisted largely of workshops, and could be as little as one day's duration.

**7.2.2. Teacher Competencies and Training Needs**

The main part of the teacher questionnaire asked teachers to respond on a Likert-type scale to rate their ability in relation to 10 competency dimensions, and to indicate their wish/desire for training in relation to each item. It is worth noting that although the questionnaire provided an opportunity for teachers to make additional comments on

each dimension if they so wished, none of them availed themselves of this provision. This may have been due to a number of reasons: the length of the questionnaire, teachers' unfamiliarity with survey research, and their lack of experience with SEN. It is worth noting that Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) state that open questions in questionnaires tend to do poorly. This section, therefore, presents quantitative findings only. First, an overview is presented of teachers' responses to the 10 dimensions as a whole. Then, responses to individual items within each dimension are considered in more detail. Finally, discussion is presented of the relationship between teachers' background characteristics and their responses on competencies and training needs.

#### 7.2.2.1. General Overview

Teachers' mean scores for the 10 competency dimensions are shown in Table 7.9 and in Figures 7.1 and 7.2, together with rankings produced by the researcher based on the size of the mean, from 1 for the dimension with the highest score to 10 for the dimension with the lowest score. It can be seen that for competencies, mean scores range from 2.56 for curriculum adaptation, to 3.93 for personal skills. For attitudes, planning, curriculum adaptation and instructional competencies, the mean scores were between 2 and 3, equivalent to "disagree", and "not sure". Thus, teachers' perceptions as to whether they possessed the competencies concerned were somewhat negative; they clearly lacked confidence in these areas. Indeed, only for one competency dimension, personal skills, did the mean score fall close to 4, the point on the Likert scale denoting agreement. Teachers were, thus, more confident of having the personal skills to deal with children with SEN, than they were of any of the other knowledge, attitude and skill dimensions. Curriculum adaptation was the skill in which they felt least competent, which is not surprising, since the centralised, highly structured national curriculum gives teachers no margin of freedom in this respect.

Table 7.9.

**Means and ranks for each dimension of competencies, needed for perceived  
competence and training needs**

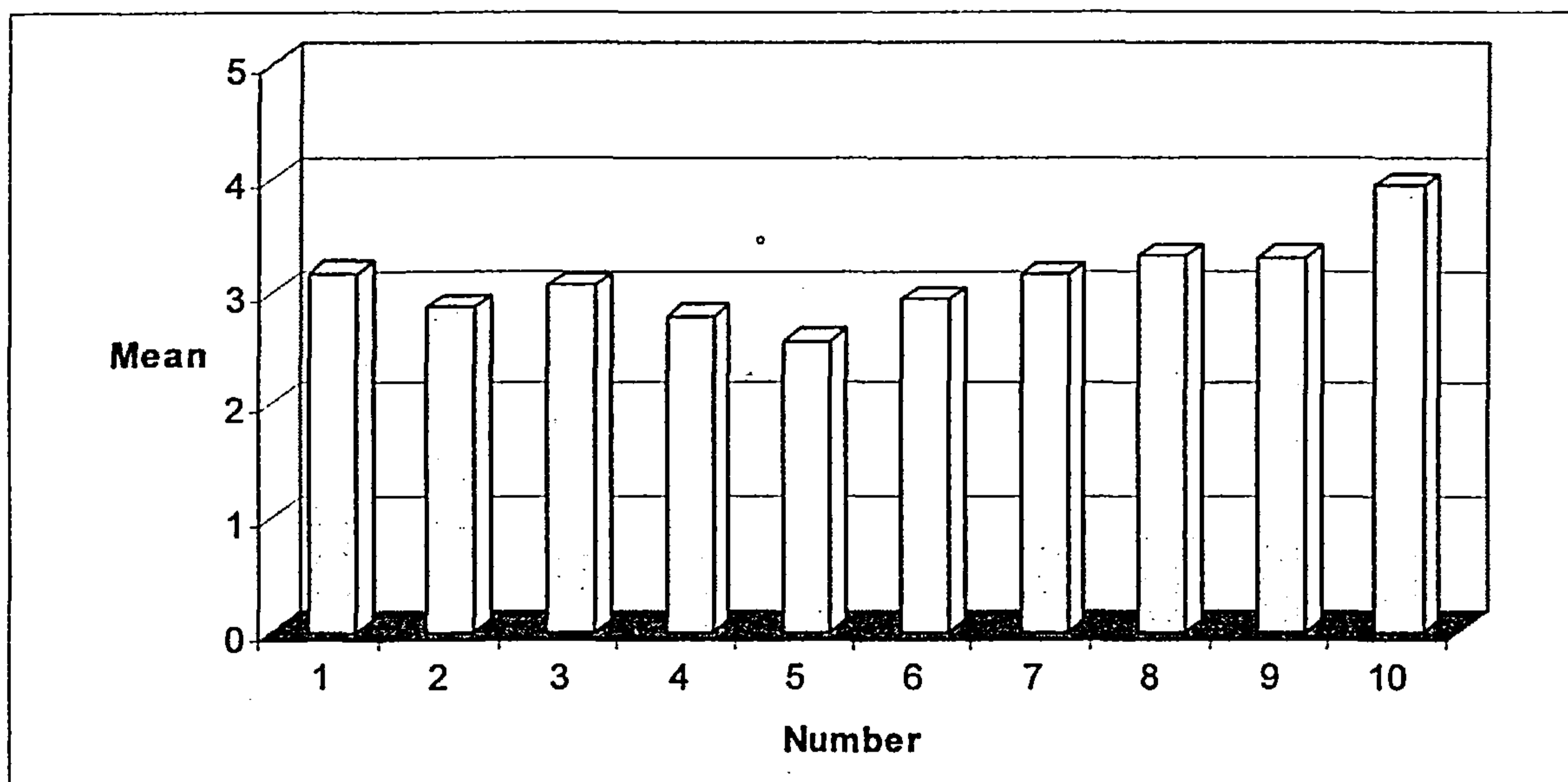
No.	Dimensions	Competencies		Training Needs	
		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
1	Knowledge	3.16	5	3.29	1
2	Attitudes	2.86	8	3.05	7
3	Assessment, evaluation and recording	3.05	6	3.16	2
4	Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction	2.78	9	3.07	4
5	Curriculum Adaptation	2.56	10	3.05	6
6	Instructional Competencies	2.93	7	3.02	9
7	Management of Behaviour	3.24	4	3.04	8
8	Use of Resources (Materials and Human)	3.31	2	3.05	5
9	Counselling, Communication and Collaboration	3.30	3	3.09	3
10	Personal Skills	3.93	1	2.82	10

Regarding teachers' expression of training needs, the mean scores ranged from 2.82, for personal skills, to 3.29 for knowledge. In other words, teachers' rating of their need for training in regard to personal skills, fell between "do not need" and "not sure", but their opinions for all other dimensions fell between "not sure" and "do need". Although the mean scores were close for all dimensions, the areas in which teachers perceived greatest need for training in terms of the rank ordering of items were not necessarily those in which they expressed least confidence in their competencies (see Figure 7.3). The dimensions ranked 7, 8, 9 and 10 in terms of teachers' perceptions of their competence were ranked 9, 7, 4 and 6 respectively, in terms of their training needs. This suggests that, even for the competencies in which teachers felt weakest, they were not necessarily more desirous of training. Table 7.9 shows that they expressed most need for training regarding knowledge and assessment, and were less desirous of



training related to the management of behaviour, instructional competencies and personal skills. This may reflect a general lack of awareness of the importance of these competencies in teaching children with SEN, or may be related to a general lack of expectation in the education system as a whole that such adjustments need to be made by individual teachers.

**Figure 7.1.**  
**Mean scores for competency dimensions**

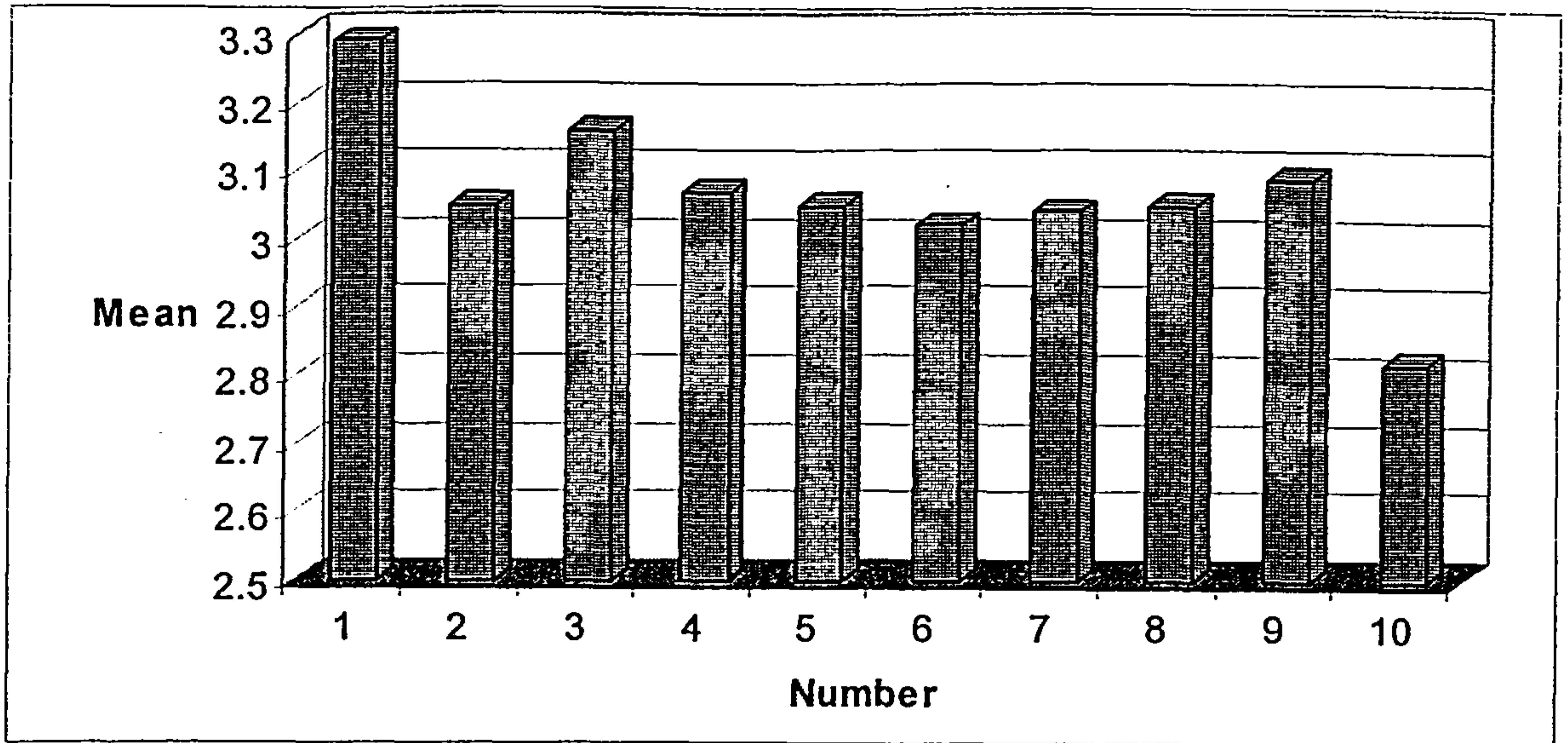


**Key:**

No.	Dimensions
1	Knowledge
2	Attitudes
3	Assessment, evaluation and recording
4	Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction
5	Curriculum Adaptation
6	Instructional Competencies
7	Management of Behaviour
8	Use of Resources (Materials and Human)
9	Counselling, Communication and Collaboration
10	Personal Skills

Figure 7.2.

Mean scores for training needs

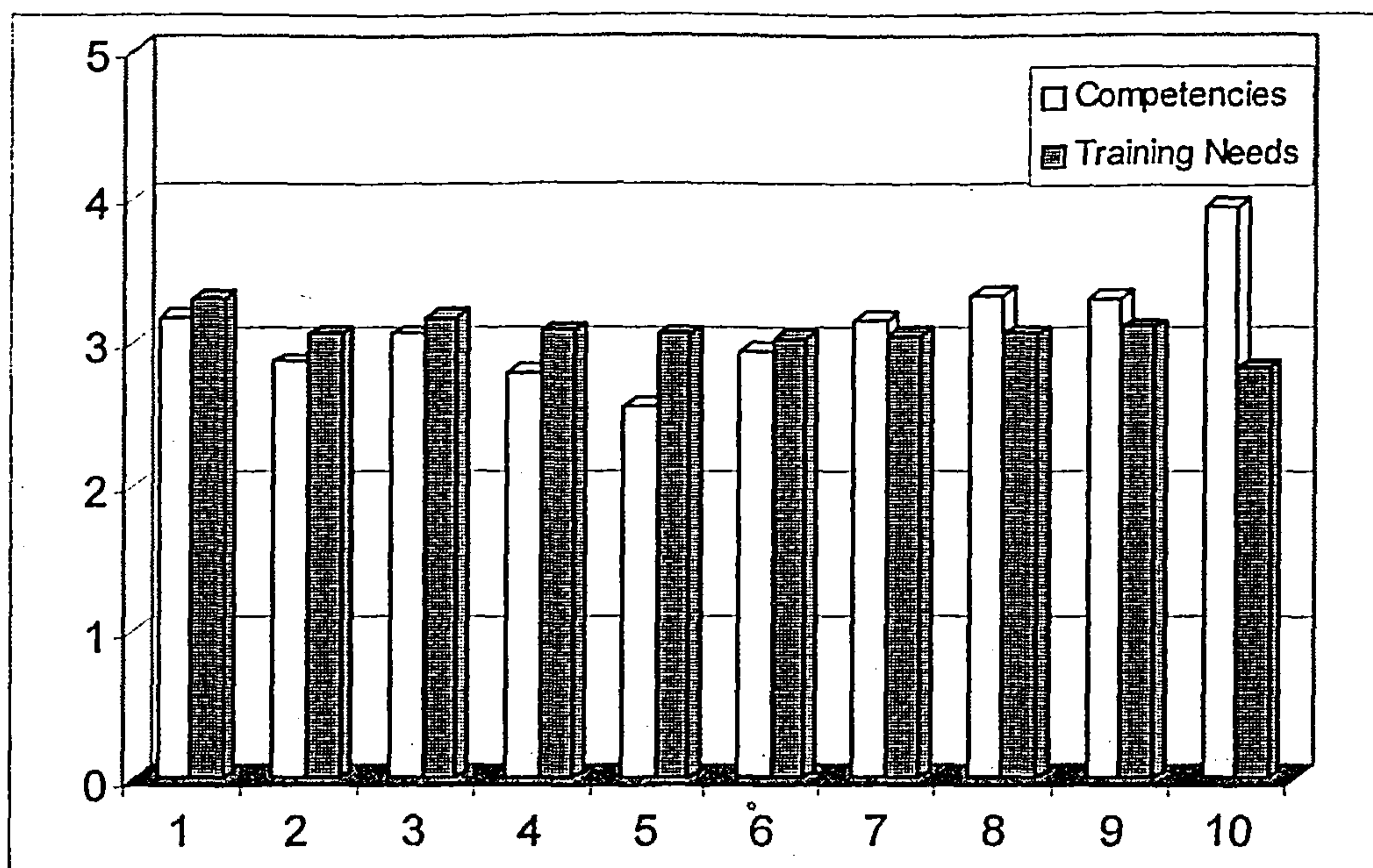


**Key:**

No.	Dimensions
1	Knowledge
2	Attitudes
3	Assessment, evaluation and recording
4	Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction
5	Curriculum Adaptation
6	Instructional Competencies
7	Management of Behaviour
8	Use of Resources (Materials and Human)
9	Counselling, Communication and Collaboration
10	Personal Skills

Figure 7.3.

Comparison between Competencies needed by teacher and Training Needs



Key:

No.	Dimensions
1	Knowledge
2	Attitudes
3	Assessment, evaluation and recording
4	Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction
5	Curriculum Adaptation
6	Instructional Competencies
7	Management of Behaviour
8	Use of Resources (Materials and Human)
9	Counselling, Communication and Collaboration
10	Personal Skills

7.2.2.2. Specific Competency Dimensions

In this section, a more detailed analysis is presented for each dimension in turn. In each case, the author will comment, first, on Agreement with the competency statements, which reflects teachers' perceived competencies on the items in the dimension. Points

made on the pattern of responses will be supported with comments on the ranking of the means for the items within the dimension. Comments will then be made on the response pattern and ranking of items for Training Needs. The findings for perceived competence and training need will then be compared.

### Knowledge dimension

Table 7.10 shows the responses for the Knowledge dimension. There was a wide spread of responses for each item. It can be seen that, regarding Agreement, teachers were most confident of item 4, their awareness of their ethical responsibilities. More than half the teachers agreed with the item and a further 18% strongly agreed. This was the item on which fewest teachers expressed disagreement or uncertainty. These responses led to this item being given the highest ranking of the items in this dimension. Teachers were less confident of their knowledge in relation to legislation and policy (item 3), and theories of learning (item 2). More than a third of the teachers answered "Disagree" to each of these items and, in the case of item 3, almost a quarter expressed strong disagreement. As regards training need, teachers expressed greatest need for training in relation to learning theories and their application (110 or 62.8% answered Need or Strongly Need for Item 2), and least in relation to ethical responsibilities, although here, too, a majority expressed some level of need for training. Comparing the Agreement and Training Needs scores, it can be seen that item 4, which had the highest mean for Agreement, denoting the highest level of perceived competence, was the item which had the lowest score for Training Need.



Table 7.10.

Responses for Competencies in the Knowledge Dimension

a) Agreement

	Item 1		Item 2		Item 3		Item 4	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	12	6.9	20	11.4	40	22.9	5	2.9
2. Disagree	37	21.1	65	37.1	65	37.1	18	10.3
3. I am not sure	18	10.3	23	13.1	17	9.7	11	6.3
4. Agree	90	51.4	57	32.6	48	27.4	92	52.6
5. Strongly Agree	18	10.3	10	5.7	5	2.9	49	18.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.37</b>		<b>2.84</b>		<b>2.50</b>		<b>3.93</b>	
<b>Rank within Dimension</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>	

b) Training Needs

	Item 1		Item 2		Item 3		Item 4	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. I do not need at all	19	10.9	17	9.7	20	11.4	24	13.7
2. I do not need	33	18.9	30	17.1	30	17.1	35	20.0
3. I am not sure	16	9.1	18	10.3	20	11.4	16	9.1
4. I do need	96	54.9	87	49.7	87	49.7	80	45.7
5. I strongly need	11	6.3	23	13.1	18	10.3	20	11.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.27</b>		<b>3.39</b>		<b>3.30</b>		<b>3.21</b>	
<b>Rank within Dimension</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>4</b>	

Attitude dimension

Table 7.11 shows teachers' responses to the Attitude competencies. It can be seen that teachers acknowledged the value and importance of working with pupils who have SEN (items 9 and 11 where almost half the teachers answered "Agree"), but many felt it was not straightforward (item 12), were uncomfortable about it (item 7), and were doubtful whether such pupils should be included in the mainstream class (item 5), as shown by the high levels of "Disagree" responses. It is particularly noticeable that item 5 on inclusion in mainstream classes, and item 10 on teachers' own preference for working with pupils with SEN, received the highest numbers of "Strongly Disagree" responses,

around a quarter of the sample in each case. Large numbers of teachers answered “Do not need” to the items in this dimension, although responses to items 6, 9, 11 and 12 indicated the perceived need/wish of about half the teachers, in each case, to receive training in relation to this dimension.

It is interesting to note that the competencies ranked in first and second positions in terms of their mean scores for Agreement (items 11 and 9) were similarly ranked for Training Needs. In other words, teachers expressed an attitude that it is important to and worthwhile to deal with pupils with special educational needs and they also perceived more need for training in these than other competencies. This suggests that they attached more importance to these competencies than to others in the dimension.

**Table 7.11.**

**Responses for Competencies in the Attitude Dimension**

**a) Agreement**

	Item 5		Item 6		Item 7		Item 8		Item 9		Item 10		Item 11		Item 12	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	40	22.9	26	14.9	30	17.1	29	16.6	15	8.6	44	25.1	17	9.7	26	14.9
2. Disagree	58	33.1	49	28	68	38.9	59	33.7	22	12.6	74	42.3	19	10.9	79	45.1
3. I am not sure	17	9.7	22	12.6	28	16	33	18.9	16	9.1	21	12	16	9.1	32	18.3
4. Agree	55	31.4	67	38.3	42	24	48	27.4	87	49.7	29	16.6	79	45.1	33	18.9
5. Strongly Agree	5	2.9	11	6.3	7	4	6	3.4	35	20	7	4	44	25.1	5	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.58</b>		<b>2.93</b>		<b>2.59</b>		<b>2.67</b>		<b>3.60</b>		<b>2.32</b>		<b>3.65</b>		<b>2.50</b>	
<b>Rank within Dimension</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>7</b>	

## b) Training Needs

	Item 5		Item 6		Item 7		Item 8		Item 9		Item 10		Item 11		Item 12	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Do not need at all	26	14.9	20	11.4	23	13.1	20	11.4	14	8.0	31	17.7	14	8.0	19	10.9
2. I do not need	51	29.1	54	30.9	53	30.3	49	28.0	45	25.7	47	26.9	41	23.4	36	20.6
3. I am not sure	23	13.1	21	12.0	32	18.3	38	21.7	23	13.1	29	16.6	27	15.4	26	14.9
4. I do need	63	36.0	60	34.3	47	26.9	55	31.4	72	41.1	52	29.7	66	37.7	75	42.9
5. I strongly need	12	6.9	20	11.4	20	11.4	13	7.4	21	12.0	16	9.1	27	15.4	19	10.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.91</b>		<b>3.03</b>		<b>2.93</b>		<b>2.95</b>		<b>3.23</b>		<b>2.86</b>		<b>3.29</b>		<b>3.22</b>	
<b>Rank within Dimension</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>3</b>	

### Assessment, Evaluation and Recording dimension

Teachers' perceptions of their competencies and training needs in relation to Assessment, Evaluation and Recording are shown in Table 7.12. It can be seen that in the Agreement responses, there were comparatively high levels of not sure responses in relation to each of these competencies and a particularly high level of disagreement with item 15 on evaluating academic performance in the light of goals and objectives, leading to its being ranked lowest in the dimension. The highest level of agreement was for constructing a pupil profile (item 17), for which 46.9% of teachers answered "Agree" and a further 8%, "Strongly Agree", giving this item the highest ranking in the dimension in terms of mean score.

As regards training needs, teachers' main concern was to be able to identify potential SEN (item 13). There was a relatively high level of uncertainty about perceived training needs in respect of item 15, evaluation of performance, in relation to objectives (16%), while item 16, ability to fairly and accurately assess the progress of all pupils, including those with SEN was the item which received the highest proportion of "Do

not need” and “Do not need at all” responses. This may reflect the second ranking of this item in terms of perceived competencies.

Comparison shows no clear relationship between the rankings for Agreement and Training Need. In some cases, e.g. items 13 and 14, teachers perceived higher training needs in areas where they perceived their competencies as lower. On the other hand, item 15, which was ranked lowest on perceptions of competence, was also ranked low as a training need.

**Table 7.12.**

**Responses for Competencies in the Assessment Dimension**

**a) Agreement**

	Item 13		Item 14		Item 15		Item 16		Item 17	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	15	8.6	18	10.3	20	11.4	16	9.1	12	6.9
2. Disagree	53	30.3	46	26.3	55	31.4	49	28	41	23.4
3. I am not sure	25	14.3	36	20.6	34	19.4	30	17.1	26	14.9
4. Agree	75	42.9	67	38.3	60	34.3	68	38.9	82	46.9
5. Strongly Agree	7	4	8	4.6	6	3.4	12	6.9	14	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.03</b>		<b>3.01</b>		<b>2.87</b>		<b>3.06</b>		<b>3.26</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	

**b) Training Needs**

	Item 13		Item 14		Item 15		Item 16		Item 17	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. I do not need at all	13	7.4	17	9.7	16	9.1	17	9.7	13	7.4
2. I do not need	49	28.0	43	24.6	44	25.1	50	28.6	49	28.0
3. I am not sure	18	10.3	22	12.6	28	16.0	24	13.7	22	12.6
4. I do need	79	45.1	75	42.9	76	43.4	69	39.4	77	44.0
5. I strongly need	16	9.1	18	10.3	11	6.3	15	8.6	14	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.21</b>		<b>3.19</b>		<b>3.13</b>		<b>3.09</b>		<b>3.17</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>3</b>	



### Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction dimension

Responses to items in Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction are shown in Table 7.13. The highest frequency of agree responses was for item 20, ability to organise the classroom to facilitate instruction of all pupils, where 42.3% answered “Agree” and 6.3% answered “Strongly Agree”, giving this the highest ranking among items in the dimension. For all the other items, the proportion of “Agree” responses was low, in most cases around a quarter of the respondents. Organising a flexible programme of instruction (item 19), planning and preparing specialised materials and lessons (item 23) and assessing the effectiveness of materials and activities (item 24) elicited high levels of “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” responses; these skills were ranked lowest within the dimension.

Teachers’ perceptions of their competencies were generally reflected in their expressions of training need; item 20 was the one which they expressed least training need (40.9% did not think they needed training) and item 24 the one for which they expressed most training need; this item received the highest numbers of both “Need” and “Strongly Need” responses. Interestingly, however, the item related to using evaluation outcomes for setting and altering objectives (25) came in seventh place among training needs, in terms of mean score, despite being ranked joint 4<sup>th</sup> among the competencies, suggesting that teachers thought they had low training need in this competency.

Table 7.13.

**Responses for Competencies in the Planning/Organisation/Management of  
Instruction Dimension**

## a) Agreement

	Item 18		Item 19		Item 20		Item 21		Item 22		Item 23		Item 24		Item 25	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	23	13.1	24	13.7	17	9.7	18	10.3	27	15.4	25	14.3	27	15.4	24	13.7
2. Disagree	64	36.6	65	37.1	40	22.9	47	26.9	51	29.1	64	36.6	77	44	62	35.4
3. I am not sure	30	17.1	33	18.9	33	18.9	41	23.4	33	18.9	36	20.6	36	20.6	34	19.4
4. Agree	52	29.7	45	25.7	74	42.3	60	34.3	56	32	44	25.1	29	16.6	45	25.7
5. Strongly Agree	6	3.4	8	2.6	11	6.3	9	5.1	8	4.6	6	3.4	6	3.4	10	5.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.74</b>		<b>2.70</b>		<b>3.13</b>		<b>2.97</b>		<b>2.81</b>		<b>2.67</b>		<b>2.49</b>		<b>2.74</b>	
<b>Rank within Dimension</b>	<b>=4</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>7</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>=4</b>	

## b) Training Needs

	Item 18		Item 19		Item 20		Item 21		Item 22		Item 23		Item 24		Item 25	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. I do not need at all	14	8.0	18	10.3	18	10.0	15	8.6	16	9.1	14	8.0	15	8.6	14	8.0
2. I do not need	58	33.1	49	28.0	54	30.9	54	30.9	54	30.9	54	30.9	53	30.3	57	32.6
3. I am not sure	19	10.9	23	13.1	28	16.0	29	16.6	22	12.6	21	12.0	18	10.3	23	13.1
4. I do need	70	40.0	67	38.3	66	37.7	59	33.7	64	36.6	74	42.3	67	38.3	69	39.4
5. I strongly need	14	8.0	18	10.3	9	5.1	18	10.3	19	10.9	12	6.9	22	12.6	12	6.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.07</b>		<b>3.10</b>		<b>2.97</b>		<b>3.06</b>		<b>3.09</b>		<b>3.09</b>		<b>3.16</b>		<b>3.05</b>	
<b>Rank within Dimension</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>=3</b>		<b>=3</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>7</b>	

Curriculum adaptation dimension

Only two items in the questionnaire related to Curriculum Adaptation (see Table 7.14).

The majority of teachers did not think they had competence in these areas, and the majority but fewer of them expressed a need or wish for training, suggesting that some did not regard this area as a high priority for training.

Table 7.14.

Responses for Competencies in the Curriculum Adaptation Dimension

## a) Agreement

	Item 26		Item 27	
	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	23	13.1	25	14.3
2. Disagree	74	42.3	84	48.0
3. I am not sure	26	14.9	33	18.9
4. Agree	45	25.7	26	14.9
5. Strongly Agree	7	4.0	7	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.65</b>		<b>2.46</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	

## b) Training Needs

	Item 26		Item 27	
	N	%	N	%
1. Do not need at all	22	12.6	23	13.1
2. I do not need	56	32.0	42	24.0
3. I am not sure	19	10.9	23	13.1
4. Agree	60	34.3	66	37.7
5. Strongly agree	18	10.3	21	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.98</b>		<b>3.11</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	

Instructional Competencies dimension

Table 7.15 shows teachers' responses to the items related to instructional competencies.

The highest number of responses (52.6% in total) was with item 29, denoting the ability



to analyse the concepts for the topic being taught. In contrast, only 20.6% agreed or strongly agreed that they could develop an appropriate instructional sequence based on analysis of tasks and competencies (item 30).

For training needs, the highest frequency of “need” and “strongly need” responses was for item 28, referring to the ability to perform an analysis of the instructional steps for the tasks taught to pupils; this item ranked highest in the dimension in terms of the size of mean score, even though it was one in which teachers perceived their competence as high. Teachers rated lowest their competence in developing an appropriate instructional sequence based on task analysis, yet this was the item that ranked lowest as a training need.

**Table 7.15.**  
**Responses for the Instructional Competencies Dimension**

**a) Agreement**

	Item 28		Item 29		Item 30		Item 31	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	14	8.0	9	5.1	23	13.1	19	10.9
2. Disagree	47	26.9	38	21.7	83	47.4	58	33.1
3. I am not sure	35	20.0	36	20.6	33	18.9	28	16.0
4. Agree	72	41.1	85	48.6	32	18.3	59	33.7
5. Strongly Agree	7	4.0	7	4.0	4	2.3	11	6.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.06</b>		<b>3.25</b>		<b>2.49</b>		<b>2.91</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>3</b>	



## b) Training Needs

	Item 28		Item 29		Item 30		Item 31	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. I do not need at all	13	7.4	9	5.1	17	9.7	20	11.4
2. I do not need	55	31.4	61	34.9	55	31.4	52	29.7
3. I am not sure	18	10.3	32	18.3	28	16.0	24	13.7
4. I do need	77	44.0	66	37.7	65	37.1	68	38.9
5. I strongly need	12	6.9	7	4.0	10	5.7	11	6.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.11</b>		<b>3.01</b>		<b>2.98</b>		<b>2.99</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>3</b>	

### Behaviour Management dimension

The questionnaire outcomes in relation to behaviour management are summarised in Table 7.16. It can be seen that teachers were most confident of their ability to attract pupils' attention (item 32, where 76% expressed some level of agreement) and least confident of their ability to promote the social integration of pupils with SEN (item 35). For each of the items, almost half the teachers expressed a need/wish for training. For this dimension, the ranking of items resulting from mean scores for training needs is exactly the reverse of that for competencies. In other words, there is a clear relationship between teachers' perception of themselves as having or not having the indicated behaviour management competencies, and their expressed desire for training.

Table 7.16.

Responses for the Behaviour Management Dimension

## a) Agreement

	Item 32		Item 33		Item 34		Item 35	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	7	4.0	9	5.1	10	5.7	24	13.7
2. Disagree	19	10.9	28	16.0	48	27.4	68	38.9
3. I am not sure	16	9.1	40	22.9	23	13.1	32	18.3
4. Agree	108	61.7	93	53.1	79	45.1	44	25.1
5. Strongly Agree	25	14.3	5	2.9	15	8.6	7	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.71</b>		<b>3.33</b>		<b>3.23</b>		<b>2.67</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>	

## b) Training Needs

	Item 32		Item 33		Item 34		Item 35	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. I do not need at all	15	8.6	13	7.4	16	9.1	17	9.7
2. I do not need	64	36.6	53	30.3	53	30.3	47	26.9
3. I am not sure	16	9.1	34	19.4	24	13.7	24	13.7
4. I do need	73	41.7	68	38.9	71	40.6	72	41.1
5. I strongly need	7	4.0	7	4.0	11	6.3	15	8.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.96</b>		<b>3.02</b>		<b>3.05</b>		<b>3.12</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	

Use of Resources dimension

Table 7.17 concerns the questionnaire items related to use of resources. There was a particularly high level of agreement for item 37, regarding the importance of involving parents or guardians as partners in instructional efforts; 34.3% answered "Strongly

Agree” and 50.3% answered “Agree”. This was the only item in the whole questionnaire for which the mean competency score was higher than 4. Teachers were much less sure of their ability to access community resources related to SEN (item 36). Almost half the teachers expressed interest in training in relation to each of the competencies in this dimension. In relation to item 37 this suggests that teachers agreed that it is important to involve parents, and some felt they needed further training to do so in practice.

**Table 7.17.**

**Responses for Competencies in the Use of Resources Dimension**

**a) Agreement**

	Item 36		Item 37	
	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	23	13.1	7	4.0
2. Disagree	81	46.3	9	5.1
3. I am not sure	26	14.9	11	6.3
4. Agree	41	23.4	88	50.3
5. Strongly Agree	4	2.3	60	34.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.55</b>		<b>4.06</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	



## b) Training Needs

	Item 36		Item 37	
	N	%	N	%
1. I do not need at all	18	10.3	14	8.0
2. I do not need	56	32.0	67	38.3
3. I am not sure	20	11.4	10	5.7
4. I do need	67	38.3	60	34.3
5. I strongly need	14	8.0	24	13.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.02</b>		<b>3.07</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	

### Counselling, Communication and Collaboration dimension

As shown in Table 7.18, regarding the competencies of Counselling, Communication and Collaboration, the highest numbers of Agree and Strongly Agree responses were for competence in communication with parents (items 40 and 42); the lowest were for communication with colleagues (item 38), which had the lowest competence ranking. Fewer than half perceived a clear need for training in communication with colleagues regarding pupils with SEN; perhaps some teachers did not see it as necessary, because very few of them actually taught pupils with SEN at the time of the research. The greatest training need was expressed in relation to communication with other professionals (item 39). Comparing the responses for agreement and training need, it can be seen that teachers expressed least training need in the area in which they felt most confident of their competence, namely, advising parents, (item 40) while the area in which they indicated most training need was one which ranked low within the dimension in terms of agreement with the competency statements, that of communication with professionals.



**Table 7.18.**

**Responses for Competencies in the Counselling/Communication/ Collaboration**

**Dimension**

**a) Agreement**

	Item 38		Item 39		Item 40		Item 41		Item 42	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Agree	23	13.1	12	6.9	7	4.0	14	8.0	12	6.9
2. Disagree	64	36.6	47	26.9	18	10.3	36	20.6	27	15.4
3. I am not sure	24	13.7	22	12.6	20	11.4	35	20.0	25	14.3
4. Agree	57	32.6	75	42.9	99	56.6	72	41.1	82	46.9
5. Strongly Agree	7	4.0	19	10.9	31	17.7	18	10.3	29	16.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.78</b>		<b>3.24</b>		<b>3.74</b>		<b>3.25</b>		<b>3.51</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>2</b>	

**b) Training Needs**

	Item 38		Item 39		Item 40		Item 41		Item 42	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. I do not need at all	16	9.1	16	9.1	18	10.3	13	7.4	15	8.6
2. I do not need	50	28.6	50	28.6	62	35.4	58	33.1	54	30.9
3. I am not sure	24	13.7	17	9.7	19	10.9	22	12.6	20	11.4
4. I do need	71	40.6	76	43.4	56	32.0	61	34.9	66	37.7
5. I strongly need	14	8.0	16	9.1	20	11.4	21	12.0	20	11.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.10</b>		<b>3.15</b>		<b>2.99</b>		<b>3.11</b>		<b>3.13</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>2</b>	

**Personal Skills dimension**

The last dimension of the competency section of the questionnaire concerned teachers' personal skills (Table 7.19). The competencies in this dimension obtained the highest levels of "Strongly Agree" responses on the questionnaire, the highest number of

“strongly agree” responses being for item 45, the ability to be flexible and willing to learn from experience. The large number of teachers agreeing with this competency statement resulted in the item being ranked highest in the dimension in terms of mean score. The high level of positive responses for all three items suggests that most teachers perceived themselves as having these competencies. The responses for training needs indicate that many teachers felt training was unnecessary in these areas; the highest level of “do not need” responses was for item 43, concerning self-confidence and maturity; in terms of mean score, this item was ranked lowest within the dimension.

**Table 7.19.**

**Responses for the Competencies in the Personal Skills Dimension**

**a) Agreement**

	Item 43		Item 44		Item 45	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Strongly Disagree	8	4.6	8	4.6	7	4.0
2. Disagree	7	4.0	7	4.0	12	6.9
3. I am not sure	16	9.1	13	7.4	13	7.4
4. Agree	108	61.7	107	61.1	93	53.1
5. Strongly Agree	36	20.6	40	22.9	50	28.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.90</b>		<b>3.94</b>		<b>3.95</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	

## b) Training Needs

	Item 43		Item 44		Item 45	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. I do not need at all	31	17.7	27	15.4	25	14.3
2. I do not need	66	37.7	63	36.0	57	32.6
3. I am not sure	12	6.9	16	9.1	15	8.6
4. I do need	53	30.3	56	32.0	58	33.1
5. I strongly need	13	7.4	13	7.4	20	11.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.72</b>		<b>2.80</b>		<b>2.95</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	

### 7.2.2.3. Relationship between Competencies and Other Characteristics

In addition to the descriptive statistics, correlation coefficients were calculated to see if teachers' perceptions of their competencies and of their training needs were significantly related. The outcome is shown in Table 7.20.

**Table 7.20**

**Pearson Correlation coefficients between teachers' perceptions of their competencies and their corresponding training needs**

No.	Competencies	Correlation coefficients
1	Knowledge	0.259**
2	Attitudes	0.466**
3	Assessment, Evaluation and Recording	0.304**
4	Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction	0.220**
5	Curriculum Adaptation	0.320**
6	Instructional Competencies	0.301**
7	Management of Behaviour	0.237**
8	Use of Resources (Materials and Human)	0.367**
9	Counselling Communication and Collaboration	0.221**
10	Personal Skills	0.016

\*\* Significant at 0.01

The table shows that for all except one of the competency dimensions, scores for perceptions of competence were significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) correlated with those for perceptions of the need/wish for training. The exception was Personal Skills. The lack of a significant correlation in this respect may have arisen because this was the dimension in which teachers expressed least need for training. Although the majority of correlations were significant, however, the values are not large. The highest, for Attitude, was only moderate (0.466) while the other correlations were weak. Thus, although the 0.01 significance level gives us a high degree of confidence that these correlations are not attributable to chance, it appears that teachers' perceptions of their competencies were not strongly reflected in their interest in training.

Statistical tests were also carried out to see if there were any significant differences in teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes, in relation to their personal or professional characteristics: age, teaching experience, qualification, experience of teaching pupils with SEN, and type of inclusion provision (if any) in their school. ANOVA was used for tests relating to age, teaching experience, qualification, and type of school, where there were three or more groups, while the Mann-Whitney test was used to compare the perceived competencies of teachers who had experience of teaching pupils with SEN ( $n = 7$ ) and those who did not ( $n = 168$ ), as explained in the Methodology chapter.

Age means and standard deviations of teachers' scores are shown by age group, in Table 7.21. It is noticeable that for all dimensions except Counselling, the under 30 age group had the highest competency (level of agreement) scores. In the Counselling dimension, the over 50 age group had the highest mean score. For training needs, the youngest and oldest age groups tended to be lower than the 30-39 and 40-49 age groups. These differences, however, did not reach the level of statistical significance, as can be seen from Table 7.22. As that table shows, the only statistically significant difference in



scores between the age groups was in the Use of Resources dimension, for competencies. A Bonferroni post hoc test was carried out to locate the difference. The outcome is shown in Table 7.23. It can be seen that the significant difference is between the under 30 and the over 50 age groups. The youngest teachers have greater confidence in their competencies in this area.

Table 7.21

Mean and standard deviation of the scores of each of the four age groups on dimensions of competencies and training needs

Dimension	Age Groups	N	Competencies		Training Needs	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge	Less than 30 years	28	3.17	.80	3.07	.89
	30 – 39 years	83	3.17	.89	3.35	1.01
	40 – 49 years	50	3.16	.86	3.37	.94
	50 years or higher	14	3.02	.79	3.07	1.00
Attitudes	Less than 30 years	28	3.05	.74	2.89	.92
	30 – 39 years	83	2.84	.89	3.12	1.02
	40 – 49 years	50	2.79	.80	3.15	1.08
	50 years or higher	14	2.82	.88	2.58	1.07
Assessment, evaluation and recording	Less than 30 years	28	3.15	.75	2.96	.94
	30 – 39 years	83	2.99	.86	3.25	1.04
	40 – 49 years	50	3.14	.98	3.24	1.00
	50 years or higher	14	2.83	.80	2.67	1.16
Planning organisation and management of instruction	Less than 30 years	28	3.00	.86	2.84	.97
	30 – 39 years	83	2.68	.92	3.13	1.08
	40 – 49 years	50	2.82	.92	3.16	.99
	50 years or higher	14	2.79	.85	2.84	1.10
Curriculum adaptation	Less than 30 years	28	2.71	1.04	2.78	1.15
	30 – 39 years	83	2.46	.92	3.14	1.17
	40 – 49 years	50	2.57	1.04	3.16	1.18
	50 years or higher	14	2.75	1.07	2.57	1.24
Instructional competencies	Less than 30 years	28	3.04	.97	2.83	.87
	30 – 39 years	83	2.94	.85	3.09	.98
	40 – 49 years	50	2.92	.88	3.11	1.03
	50 years or higher	14	2.68	.64	2.64	1.06
Management of behaviour	Less than 30 years	28	3.39	.72	3.05	.91
	30 – 39 years	83	3.21	.87	3.11	.98
	40 – 49 years	50	3.19	.90	3.03	1.04
	50 years or higher	14	3.21	.87	2.55	.84
Use of resources (materials and human)	Less than 30 years	28	3.63	.60	3.12	1.01
	30 – 39 years	83	3.33	.78	3.12	1.04
	40 – 49 years	50	3.25	.86	3.05	1.00
	50 years or higher	14	2.75	.78	2.42	.87
Counselling, communication and collaboration	Less than 30 years	28	3.34	1.03	3.00	1.03
	30 – 39 years	83	3.25	.90	3.13	1.05
	40 – 49 years	50	3.32	.84	3.20	1.02
	50 years or higher	14	3.46	1.18	2.62	1.19
Personal skills	Less than 30 years	28	4.11	.62	2.94	1.25
	30 – 39 years	83	3.93	.87	2.91	1.20
	40 – 49 years	50	3.82	.87	2.78	1.07
	50 years or higher	14	3.95	1.14	2.21	.95

Table 7.22

**One-way analysis of variance, competencies and training needs with age of teachers**

Dimension	Competencies		Training Needs	
	F-ratio	Sig.	F-ratio	Sig.
Knowledge	.145	.933	.969	.409
Attitudes	.651	.583	1.453	.229
Assessment, evaluation and recording	.725	.538	1.726	.163
Planning organisation and management of instruction	.918	.433	.873	.456
Curriculum adaptation	.663	.576	1.571	.198
Instructional competencies	.538	.657	1.332	.266
Management of behaviour	.383	.766	1.320	.269
Use of resources (materials and human)	4.035	.008*	1.949	.124
Counselling, communication and collaboration	.231	.875	1.232	.300
Personal skills	.670	.572	1.578	.197

Table 7.23

**Bonferroni's test (post-hoc test) for bivariate differences between mean of the four age groups in the dimension of the Use of Resources**

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std Error	Sig.
Less than 30 years	30 – 39 years	.299	.170	.483
	40 – 49 years	.375	.184	.259
	50 years or higher	.875	.255	.005*
30 – 39 years	Less than 30 years	-.299	.170	.483
	40 – 49 years	.075	.139	1.000
	50 years or higher	.575	.225	.069
40 – 49 years	Less than 30 years	-.375	.184	.259
	30 - 39 years	-.075	.139	1.000
	50 years or higher	.500	.235	.213
50 years or higher	Less than 30 years	-.875	.255	.005*
	30 – 39 years	-.575	.225	.069
	40 – 49 years	-.500	.235	.213

## Teaching Experience

The mean scores for teachers with differing amounts of teaching experience are shown in Table 7.24. For competencies, it can be seen from the table that in every dimension, the mean score of the least experienced group (under 5 years) is higher than those of the other two groups. The difference is particularly large in the dimension of Curriculum Adaptation. The table generally shows less difference between the groups for training needs than for competencies but there is a tendency except in the dimension of Personal Skills, for the teachers with less than 5 years' teaching experience to express less wish for training.

To see if these apparent differences were statistically significant, ANOVA was carried out. The results, in Table 7.25, show that there is only one statistically significant difference, between the scores of the three experience groups, in the Curriculum Adaptation dimension. A Bonferroni post-hoc test (Table 7.26) revealed that there are statistically significant differences between the teachers with less than 5 years' teaching experience, and both the other two experience groups, possibly reflecting differences in teacher preparation in this area. With this exception, it can be concluded that there was no difference in teachers' confidence that they had the competencies to teach pupils with SEN, and their perceived need/desire for training, between groups with different amounts of teaching experience.



Table 7.24

Mean and standard deviation of the score of each of the three groups of teaching experience on dimensions of competencies and training needs

Dimension	Groups of teaching experience	N	Competencies		Training Needs	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge	Less than 5 years	15	3.28	.81	3.23	.71
	5-10 years	44	3.13	.84	3.36	.91
	More than 10 years	116	3.16	.87	3.28	1.03
Attitudes	Less than 5 years	15	3.20	.63	2.93	.67
	5-10 years	44	2.77	.79	3.14	1.03
	More than 10 years	116	2.85	.87	3.04	1.08
Assessment, evaluation and recording	Less than 5 years	15	3.19	.76	3.01	.87
	5-10 years	44	2.96	.71	3.12	1.03
	More than 10 years	116	3.06	.94	3.19	1.06
Planning organisation and management of instruction	Less than 5 years	15	3.18	.86	2.91	.89
	5-10 years	44	2.62	.77	3.12	1.04
	More than 10 years	116	2.79	.95	3.08	1.06
Curriculum adaptation	Less than 5 years	15	3.23	1.05	2.97	1.03
	5-10 years	44	2.24	.75	3.10	1.18
	More than 10 years	116	2.59	1.01	3.03	1.21
Instructional competencies	Less than 5 years	15	3.23	.98	1.18	.09
	5-10 years	44	2.89	.76	2.92	.95
	More than 10 years	116	2.91	.88	3.02	.87
Management of behaviour	Less than 5 years	15	3.73	.47	3.03	1.04
	5-10 years	44	3.16	.69	3.15	.96
	More than 10 years	116	3.20	.92	3.16	.89
Use of resources (materials and human)	Less than 5 years	15	3.70	.53	2.98	1.02
	5-10 years	44	3.25	.63	3.17	1.01
	More than 10 years	116	3.28	.87	3.08	1.02
Counselling, communication and collaboration	Less than 5 years	15	3.48	.94	3.02	1.03
	5-10 years	44	3.16	.87	3.05	.95
	More than 10 years	116	3.33	.94	3.00	1.03
Personal skills	Less than 5 years	15	4.16	.47	3.13	1.08
	5-10 years	44	4.02	.73	2.98	1.32
	More than 10 years	116	3.87	.94	2.77	1.22

Table 7.25

**One-way analysis of variance, competencies and training needs with teaching experience**

Dimension	Competencies		Training Needs	
	F-ratio	Sig.	F-ratio	Sig.
Knowledge	.193	.824	.138	.871
Attitudes	1.456	.236	.276	.759
Assessment, evaluation and recording	.454	.636	.232	.793
Planning organisation and management of instruction	2.185	.116	.237	.789
Curriculum adaptation	6.254	.002*	.088	.915
Instructional competencies	1.033	.358	.093	.911
Management of behaviour	2.886	.058	.678	.509
Use of resources (materials and human)	2.032	.134	.174	.841
Counselling, communication and collaboration	.875	.419	.247	.781
Personal skills	1.038	.356	.186	.830

Table 7.26

**Bonferroni's test (post hoc test) for bivariate differences between means of the three groups of experiences of teachers in the dimension of Curriculum adaptation**

(I) Experience in teaching	(J) Experience in teaching	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std Error	Sig.
Less than 5 years	5 – 10 years	.9947	.28609	.002*
	More than 10 years	.6428	.26255	.046*
5-10 years	Less than 5 years	-.9947	.28609	.002*
	More than 10 years	-.3519	.16941	.118
More than 10 years	Less than 5 years	-.6428	.26255	.046*
	5-10 years	.3519	.16941	.118

## Qualification

Since teacher preparation in Saudi Arabia has undergone several changes in the last 20 or 30 years, teachers in the survey sample had trained in different types of institutes and gained a variety of qualifications. ANOVA was carried out to see if teachers with different qualifications were significantly different in their perceptions of their competencies and training needs. Teachers' mean scores and the ANOVA results are shown in Tables 7.27 and 7.28 respectively.

Table 7.27 shows that for 8 out of the 10 dimensions, teachers with a Bachelor degree in primary education (i.e. trained in a Teachers' College rather than a university) had lower mean scores than their colleagues with a university degree (Bachelor in Education) or post-graduate diploma, for competencies. However, for all dimensions except Personal Skills, it was the teachers with a Bachelor in Education who expressed most need/wish for training. Despite these apparent differences between the groups, ANOVA revealed that they are not statistically significant (see Table 7.28). It can be concluded, therefore, that teachers with different types of qualification are not significantly different in their perceptions of their competencies to teach pupils with SEN, or in their expressed need/wish for training in this area.



Table 7.27

**Mean and standard deviation of the score of each of the five groups of the qualifications of teachers on dimensions of competencies and training needs**

Dimension	Qualification groups	N	Competencies		Training Needs	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge	Bachelor in primary education	40	2.93	.855	3.17	1.000
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	3.30	.891	3.00	1.369
	Bachelor in education	22	3.51	.683	3.48	.783
	Two year middle diploma	66	3.13	.816	3.21	1.050
	Other	42	3.21	.939	3.48	.845
Attitudes	Bachelor in primary education	40	2.57	.705	3.03	.969
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	3.00	1.031	2.88	1.244
	Bachelor in education	22	3.15	.542	3.41	.707
	Two year middle diploma	66	2.82	.812	2.98	1.132
	Other	42	3.00	1.026	3.03	1.065
Assessment, evaluation and recording	Bachelor in primary education	40	2.92	.793	3.14	1.032
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	3.00	1.068	3.08	1.154
	Bachelor in education	22	3.02	.536	3.38	.869
	Two year middle diploma	66	3.07	.897	3.13	1.074
	Other	42	3.12	1.037	3.11	1.066
Planning organisation and management of instruction	Bachelor in primary education	40	2.60	.804	3.09	.994
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	3.10	1.137	2.85	1.109
	Bachelor in education	22	2.93	.707	3.45	.874
	Two year middle diploma	66	2.77	.909	2.99	1.116
	Other	42	2.83	1.060	3.02	1.022
Curriculum adaptation	Bachelor in primary education	40	2.36	.809	3.05	.992
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	2.50	1.225	2.80	1.643
	Bachelor in education	22	2.63	.819	3.50	1.069
	Two year middle diploma	66	2.55	.985	2.90	1.270
	Other	42	2.71	1.185	3.07	1.192
Instructional competencies	Bachelor in primary education	40	2.83	.802	2.96	.884
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	2.80	.991	2.80	.891
	Bachelor in education	22	2.85	.823	3.32	.920
	Two year middle diploma	66	2.88	.857	2.96	1.108
	Other	42	3.14	.934	3.05	.942
Management of behaviour	Bachelor in primary education	40	3.17	.777	3.14	.935
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	3.60	.675	3.10	1.069
	Bachelor in education	22	3.18	.678	3.38	.9345
	Two year middle diploma	66	3.18	.882	2.93	1.037
	Other	42	3.36	.974	2.92	.935
Use of resources (materials and human)	Bachelor in primary education	40	3.36	.620	3.08	1.047
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	3.50	.935	3.30	1.204
	Bachelor in education	22	3.47	.566	3.41	.908
	Two year middle diploma	66	3.25	.887	2.93	1.070
	Other	42	3.22	.905	2.98	.937
Counselling, communication and collaboration	Bachelor in primary education	40	3.17	.845	3.22	.980
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	3.60	1.257	3.24	1.417
	Bachelor in education	22	3.39	.967	3.41	.935
	Two year middle diploma	66	3.26	.915	3.01	1.116
	Other	42	3.40	.969	2.93	1.024
Personal skills	Bachelor in primary education	40	4.02	.789	2.95	1.269
	One year postgraduate diploma	5	4.13	.298	3.53	1.043
	Bachelor in education	22	4.01	.498	2.89	1.203
	Two year middle diploma	66	3.72	.924	2.79	1.096
	Other	42	4.09	.966	2.63	1.147



Table 7.28

**One-way analysis of variance, competencies and training needs with qualifications  
of teachers**

Dimension	Competencies		Training Needs	
	F-ratio	Sig.	F-ratio	Sig.
Knowledge	1.781	.135	.984	.418
Attitudes	2.288	.062	.781	.539
Assessment, evaluation and recording	.300	.877	.278	.892
Planning organisation and management of instruction	.743	.564	.912	.458
Curriculum adaptation	.692	.598	1.150	.335
Instructional competencies	.875	.480	.663	.619
Management of behaviour	.597	.665	1.115	.351
Use of resources (materials and human)	.555	.696	1.042	.387
Counselling, communication and collaboration	.522	.719	1.038	.389
Personal skills	1.624	.170	.896	.468

**Experience of teaching pupils with SEN**

Table 7.29 presents the outcome of a comparative analysis of competency scores between teachers who had experience of teaching pupils with SEN, and those who did not. As might be expected, the experienced group had higher mean scores for ratings on competence than their colleagues on all dimensions. These differences were quite large for all dimensions except Personal Skills, and significantly different for two dimensions, Attitudes and Instructional Competencies. It is interesting to note from the mean scores that there was less difference between the two groups in their perceptions of their personal skills in relation to pupils with SEN, than in any other dimension.

Table 7.29

Numbers of teachers, mean rank Mann Whitney test and its significant level for comparison of competencies between teachers with and without experience in teaching pupils with SEN

	Experience in teaching for pupils with SEN	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Significant
Knowledge	Yes	7	120.07	363.5	-1.72	.085
	No	168	86.66			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Attitude	Yes	7	136.00	252.0	-2.56	.010*
	No	168	86.00			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Assessment, evaluation and recording	Yes	7	118.07	377.5	-1.608	.108
	No	168	86.75			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Planning, organisation and management of instruction	Yes	7	124.50	332.5	-1.940	.051
	No	168	86.48			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Curriculum adaptation	Yes	7	116.43	389.0	-1.555	.120
	No	168	86.82			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Instructional competencies	Yes	7	126.79	316.5	-2.079	.038*
	No	168	86.38			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Management of behaviour	Yes	7	115.50	395.5	-1.475	.140
	No	168	86.85			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Use of resources	Yes	7	101.57	493.0	-0.743	.475
	No	168	87.43			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Counselling, communication and collaboration	Yes	7	104.21	474.5	-0.867	.386
	No	168	87.32			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Personal skills	Yes	7	99.36	508.5	-0.635	.526
	No	168	87.53			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				

\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table 7.30 shows the comparable data for training needs. For all dimensions, the mean scores of the teachers with experience in teaching pupils with SEN are lower than those of teachers without such experience, suggesting less perceived need for training. However, those differences between the groups were statistically significant for the dimensions of Assessment, Evaluation and Recording, and Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction.



Table 7.30

Number of teachers' mean rank Mann Whitney test and its significant level for comparison of training needs between teachers with and without experience in teaching pupils with SEN

	Experience in teaching for pupils with SEN	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Significant
Knowledge	Yes	7	59.21	386.5	-1.558	00.119
	No	168	89.20			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Attitude	Yes	7	54.36	352.5	-1.799	00.072
	No	168	89.40			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Assessment, evaluation and recording	Yes	7	42.79	271.5	-2.427	00.015*
	No	168	89.88			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Planning, organisation and management of instruction	Yes	7	45.64	291.5	-2.271	00.023*
	No	168	89.76			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Curriculum adaptation	Yes	7	73.86	489.0	-0.767	00.442
	No	168	88.59			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Instructional competencies	Yes	7	63.21	414.5	-1.385	00.182
	No	168	89.03			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Management of behaviour	Yes	7	63.29	415.0	-1.332	00.183
	No	168	89.03			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Use of resources	Yes	7	59.57	389.0	-1.542	00.123
	No	168	89.18			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Counselling, communication and collaboration	Yes	7	58.36	380.5	-1.591	00.112
	No	168	89.24			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				
Personal skills	Yes	7	63.93	419.5	-1.305	00.192
	No	168	89.00			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>				

Significant at  $p < 0.05$

### Type of school

Since the surveyed schools represented three different types of practice with regard to inclusion, analysis was carried out to see if there were any differences between teachers in the different types of school, with regard to their perceived competencies and training needs. The mean scores for each dimension are shown in Table 7.31. It can be seen that for each dimension, the mean scores of the three sample groups are close. The ANOVA outcome, shown in Table 7.32, showed that there are no statistically

significant differences in the three groups' mean scores, for any dimension. In other words, teachers in ordinary primary schools, teachers in schools with resource room programmes and teachers in schools which had integrated classes in some subjects, were similar in the way they perceived their competencies for dealing with pupils with SEN, and their training needs in this regard.

**Table 7.31.**

**Mean and standard deviation of the score of each of the three groups of schools on dimensions of competencies and training needs.**

Dimension	Qualification groups	N	Competencies		Training Needs	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge	Normal school	40	3.16	0.93	3.46	0.87
	With integrated classes	66	3.02	0.82	3.20	1.03
	With centres with Resource Room	69	3.29	0.82	3.29	0.98
Attitudes	Normal school	40	2.95	1.02	2.99	0.97
	With integrated classes	66	2.71	0.81	3.13	1.07
	With centres with Resource Room	69	2.94	0.73	3.02	1.08
Assessment, evaluation and recording	Normal school	40	3.06	1.02	3.07	0.99
	With integrated classes	66	3.08	0.88	3.19	1.03
	With centres with Resource Room	69	3.01	0.78	3.18	1.08
Planning, organisation and management of instruction	Normal school	40	2.77	1.04	3.04	1.08
	With integrated classes	66	2.74	0.92	3.11	0.97
	With centres with Resource Room	69	2.83	0.82	3.06	1.03
Curriculum adaptation	Normal school	40	2.68	1.19	3.06	1.04
	With integrated classes	66	2.45	0.92	3.05	1.11
	With centres with Resource Room	69	2.59	0.91	3.04	0.98
Instructional competencies	Normal school	40	3.11	0.95	3.06	1.04
	With integrated classes	66	2.93	0.83	2.99	1.22
	With centres with Resource Room	69	2.82	0.83	3.03	1.15
Management of behaviour	Normal school	40	3.32	0.98	2.97	1.21
	With integrated classes	66	3.17	0.82	3.11	1.18
	With centres with Resource Room	69	3.25	0.81	3.00	0.96
Use of resources (materials and human)	Normal school	40	3.21	0.92	3.00	1.03
	With integrated classes	66	3.36	0.70	3.08	0.98
	With centres with Resource Room	69	3.30	0.82	3.04	0.99
Counselling, communication and collaboration	Normal school	40	3.37	0.96	2.97	0.91
	With integrated classes	66	3.27	0.93	3.09	1.03
	With centres with Resource Room	69	3.30	0.89	3.17	0.98
Personal skills	Normal school	40	4.08	0.98	2.68	0.98
	With integrated classes	66	3.98	0.77	2.81	0.95
	With centres with Resource Room	69	3.79	0.86	2.92	1.07



Table 7.32.

One-way analysis of variance, competencies and training needs with the three groups of schools

Dimension	Competencies		Training Needs	
	F-ratio	Sig.	F-ratio	Sig.
Knowledge	1.675	.19	.904	.41
Attitudes	1.655	.19	.299	.74
Assessment, evaluation and recording	.106	.90	.183	.83
Planning organisation and management of instruction	.180	.84	.076	.93
Curriculum adaptation	.745	.48	.006	.99
Instructional competencies	1.477	.23	.063	.94
Management of behaviour	.419	.66	.317	.73
Use of resources (materials and human)	.442	.64	.087	.92
Counselling, communication and collaboration	.140	.87	.499	.61
Personal skills	1.603	.20	.555	.58

**7.2.3. Interest in and preferences for future training opportunities**

Section III (items 46-57 of the questionnaire) asked teachers whether they would be interested in participating in additional training in the area of SEN, and to indicate the level of their interest in specific training formats. The outcomes are shown in Table 7.33.

Table 7.33

**Responses for Interest in Future Educational Opportunities**

		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Not Sure	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Total	M	R
Item 46	N	27	49	21	63	15	175	2.94	9
	%	15.4	28.0	12.0	36.0	8.6	100		
Item 47	N	9	19	6	105	36	175	3.80	1
	%	5.1	10.9	3.4	60.0	20.6	100		
Item 48	N	12	19	10	100	34	175	3.79	3
	%	6.9	10.9	5.7	57.1	19.4	100		
Item 49	N	10	16	14	95	40	175	3.79	2
	%	5.7	9.1	8.0	54.3	22.9	100		
Item 50	N	18	33	18	71	35	175	3.41	5
	%	10.3	18.9	10.3	40.6	20.0	100		
Item 51	N	15	30	15	84	31	175	3.49	4
	%	8.6	17.1	8.6	48.0	17.7	100		
Item 52	N	14	44	15	73	29	175	3.34	6
	%	8.0	25.1	8.6	41.7	16.6	100		
Item 53	N	18	43	22	79	18	175	3.26	8
	%	10.3	24.6	12.6	45.1	10.3	100		
Item 54	N	33	73	20	38	11	175	2.55	10
	%	18.9	41.7	11.4	21.7	6.3	100		
Item 55	N	36	86	17	25	11	175	2.37	11
	%	20.6	49.1	9.7	14.3	6.3	100		
Item 56	N	20	39	11	71	34	175	3.34	=6
	%	11.4	22.3	6.3	40.6	19.4	100		
Item 57	N	46	82	14	25	8	175	2.24	12
	%	26.3	46.9	8.0	14.3	4.6	100		

The types of training in which teachers expressed most interest were individual advice from consultants/specialists (item 47), observing experienced teachers (item 49), and receiving training materials such as books and videos (item 45). They showed less interest in courses that would require a longer-term commitment, or that would impinge on their professional and family responsibilities, for example items 54 (weekends), 55 (summer holidays) and 57 (after school).

### 7.3. Interview Data

The three target populations for the interviews, and the sample selection procedures, were explained in the previous chapter, section 6.7.2. In this section, the responses are reported for each sample in turn.

### 7.3.1. Interviews with Teachers (N = 19)

1) Do you currently teach, or have you ever taught, in the mainstream classroom, any pupils whom you think have special educational needs? Can you give any examples of the sorts of special needs you have encountered?

All interviewees were aware of the presence of pupils with SEN in ordinary schools. One interviewee commented: *"There are a few of those pupils here in ordinary schools and we might meet one or two of them"*, while another claimed that *"There are such pupils in every school"*. However, only seven had actually taught such pupils. Two of the interviewees mentioned specific projects in their schools, whereby pupils had been transferred from special schools to mainstream, being taught in a separate class for most subjects, but integrated with their peers for art and P.E. lessons. Two interviewees taught in resource room programmes.

Three teachers commented that there are only a few children with SEN in their schools, and one specifically reported that there were 4 children with SEN in his school.

Various types of SEN were reported, as shown in Table 7.34.

**Table 7.34**

#### **Categories of SEN Reported in Interviewees' Schools**

<b>Category</b>	<b>No. of teachers</b>
Learning difficulties	3
Mental retardation	6
Visually impaired	8
Hearing impaired	9
Speech impairment	5
Poor memory	1
Difficulty writing	2
Low level of understanding	5
Muscle weakness	1
Physical handicap	1



The most frequently reported types of SEN were hearing impairment and visual impairment. Learning difficulties and mental retardation were reported by teachers in the schools with resource room programmes or special classes focusing specifically on the needs of those pupils.

One of the interviewees in a school with a designated class for pupils with SEN was at pains to point out how successfully these pupils were integrated into ordinary art and P.E. lessons: *“In such classes it’s difficult to distinguish the pupils with SEN from the others”*. Moreover, he pointed out, the pupils benefited from the social interaction of the mainstream environment in developing life skills: *“... those with mental problems can go to the buffet, buy food, pay money and take the change, unlike their situation in the special education institute where they get free meals”*.

**2) What particular difficulties or challenges do you face in dealing with these children? e.g. in relation to their learning needs, their behaviour, their psychological/emotional needs.**

Several difficulties were faced by teachers when they were dealing with pupils with SEN (see Table 7.35).

**Table 7.35**

**Difficulties Faced in Relation to Pupils with SEN**

<b>Category</b>	<b>No. of teachers</b>
Lack of parental co-operation	5
Lack of time	9
Lack of experience/training	7
Large class size	2
Unsuitable building	2
Demanding syllabus	1
Teaching workload	1
Pupil’s nervousness	1



The most widely reported problem, mentioned by half the teachers, was lack of time since, as these teachers pointed out, pupils with SEN require extra attention in class. This problem is likely in some cases to be related to other problems mentioned, of large class sizes (one teacher mentioned classes of 39 or more pupils), and the pressure to cover a lengthy syllabus.

Several teachers claimed to have insufficient experience to help pupils with SEN. Indeed, the lack of relevant teacher preparation to deal with pupils with SEN was one of the most commonly reported problems (7 teachers) and the teachers in question called for training programmes in this field.

Five teachers said that parents do not understand what is meant by “learning difficulties”, especially as the “learning difficulties” programme began only two and a half years ago. They claimed that parents do not help teachers, since they do not visit the school and do not follow-up their sons’ progress. It was said that some families ignore their sons with SEN and do nothing to try to improve their case.

Two teachers said buildings were unsuitable for the education of pupils with SEN. There were not enough facilities for dealing with these pupils and classes were poorly organised and cramped. In both cases, the schools concerned were in rented buildings not originally designed for use as schools.

**3) Which aspect of teaching or interacting with children with SEN do you find the most difficult? Can you suggest any reason for that?**

When asked what they found most difficult when dealing with pupils with SEN, teachers gave responses that can be summarised into two main categories: 1) difficulties in dealing with pupils who have cognitive problems (memory, comprehension,

recognition) (10 teachers); 2) teachers' lack of training in this field (6 teachers); - see Table 7.36.

**Table 7.36**  
**Aspects of Greatest Difficulty**

<b>Difficulty</b>	<b>No. of teachers</b>
Pupils with poor academic skills	1
Cognitive deficiencies	10
Lack of experience/training	6
Pupils with hearing impairment	3
Difficulty with family	1
Suitable learning strategies	1

Most (15) teachers expressed their difficulties in general terms, such as “pupils’ low understanding” but three reported specific difficulties in dealing with hearing-impaired pupils. One said, *“I have no idea about the methods used to deal with them”*, while another cited a specific case which illustrates the frustration caused to both pupil and teacher when teachers lack needed competencies: *“A pupil stayed for two years in grade three, without any progress, because he only understands sign language, which was so difficult for me, as I haven’t had any training in this field.”*

**4) Can you give examples of any particular methods or approaches you use in teaching children with special educational needs?**

The strategies employed in teaching pupils with SEN are shown in Table 7.37.

Table 7.37

Categories of SEN reported in interviewees' schools

Strategy	No. of teachers
Visual and tactile aids	9
Audio-visual aids	1
Show respect/build self-esteem	2
Extra time	4
Games	1
Less homework	1
Treat all the same	2
Sit child at front of class	2
Refer to resource room	1

By far the most common strategy adopted was the use of simple teaching aids designed to appeal to the senses of sight and touch (9 teachers). Notably, all but one of the teachers reporting this method came from schools with special programmes. The main strategy adopted by teachers in mainstream schools was to try to devote extra time to pupils with SEN.

Only one teacher mentioned giving individual attention to children with SEN during lessons, but others tried to spare additional time for them after the lesson or during the break.

Some teachers, however, seemed unaware that children with SEN might need special attention, or were unsure how to direct their efforts. One said *"There are no special methods"*, while another commented: *"Since I am not experienced in that field, I am not able to recognise these pupils, so I treat all pupils the same, the pupils with SEN and the ordinary ones."*

5) Do you think your pre-service training prepared you adequately to deal with children with SEN. If yes, in what way? If not, why not? What were the deficiencies?

Regarding teachers' initial preparation for teaching, 15 teachers, did not have any pre-service training related to SEN because they said there were no training programmes in that area in their courses. Consequently they were not prepared to deal with pupils with SEN. In some cases, this was because, at the time the teachers in question qualified, pupils with SEN were all placed in special institutions and there was no perceived need to prepare mainstream teachers to deal with them. Another teacher remarked: *"I think there was an optional subject in college about special education, but it was not available every semester."* Only 4 teachers had received pre-service training in this area – they were all specialist teachers in schools with special classes. One of these said the training was not enough, and all highlighted the need for continuing professional development (see Table 7.38).

**Table 7.38**

**Adequacy of pre-service training related to SEN**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>No. of teachers</b>
None received	15
Training received, insufficient	1
Training adequate, supplemented by experience and CPD	3

6) What in-service training opportunities are available to mainstream teachers to help them to teach children with SEN in the mainstream classroom?

Regarding in-service training opportunities, four teachers said that there were a few training courses for learning difficulties teachers only, and that other teachers did not attend these courses. One teacher mentioned that 10-day courses in special education



for non-specialists are held in the capital city, Riyadh, but clearly these would not be readily accessible for teachers in other regions. Most (15) teachers, however, thought that no training courses or programmes existed, but they recommended organising training courses for primary grade teachers, with a special emphasis on SEN (see Table 7.39).

**Table 7.39**

**Availability of In-Service Training on SEN**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>No. of teachers</b>
Training available for specialists	4
Training available for non-specialists	1
No training available	15

**7) Have you ever attended any sort of in-service training in relation to SEN? If no, is that because you have not been given an opportunity or for some other reason? If yes, can you tell me a bit about that training? (where, when, content).**

**How satisfied were you with the course? To what extent did it meet your needs?**

Teachers' responses regarding their own experience (if any) of in-service training in relation to SEN are summarised in Table 7.40.

**Table 7.40**

**Attendance of In-Service Training**

<b>Course</b>	<b>No. of teachers</b>
Training centre (1 week)	2
Lecture (1 hour)	4
Seminar	1
None	12

The majority of teachers (12 teachers) had never attended training programmes in the field of SEN. Two said this was because there were no compulsory training programmes in this field. Lack of information also appeared to play a part in non-attendance, according to two interviewees, one of whom commented, *“I wasn’t notified of any of these courses; I would attend such courses if they were organised.”*

Two teachers had attended training courses about learning difficulties in schools, and subject-specific teaching methods, and four had attended lectures about learning difficulties, and the responsibilities of special education. These lectures were purely theoretical and there were no practical cases. They were held in Al-Madina Al-Monawara. Two teachers mentioned that the lecture or seminar they had attended had been useful in raising their awareness of the SEN issue, but others complained that courses were too short to meet their needs; no-one had attended a course of any more than a week’s duration. It was also notable that only teachers involved in special classes and resource room programmes had attended training.

**8) If you have a problem in relation to a child with SEN, what do you do? Is there anyone you can ask for advice? Would you look for ideas in books and journals? Or do you try to work out a solution yourself?**

Teachers’ responses to this question are summarised in Table 7.41.

Table 7.41

Methods of solving problems in relation to pupils with SEN

Method	No. of teachers
Consult specialist	16
Journals/books	4
Work out solution by self	9
Contact parents	4
Refer to school counsellor	2
Inform admin	1

The majority of teachers (16) said that they asked advice from more experienced teachers, such as the resource room teacher, if they had a problem in relation to a pupil with SEN, and some (4) tried to find answers through reading. If a problem was easy, some teachers (9) felt they could deal with it themselves while other problems required consultation with specialists in this field. Most teachers, however, felt unable to attempt to solve problems in relation to SEN themselves. As one teacher said: *“I don’t try solving the problem myself because I don’t have experience in this field, but I inform the school administration about it.”*

**9) Is there any kind of information that you need, or any skills that you would like to develop, to help you in dealing with children with SEN?**

When asked about information and skills required for dealing with pupils with SEN, most teachers did not identify specific issues or topics, but commented on the difficulty of getting access to information generally (see Table 7.42).

**Table 7.42**

**Information needs in relation to SEN**

<b>Response</b>	<b>No. of teachers</b>
Training	6
Books/journals	10
Guidance on how to use available info	1
Teaching aids	3
Teaching methods	2
Learning difficulties	1

Most teachers (11 teachers) wanted to see their school library expanded with specialist references, such as books and journals. One commented that although information is to be found in books and journals, *“there’s no guidance on how to make use of it.”*

Six teachers asked for training programmes to be held, for example, *“We need training courses about teaching skills to children and another about using teaching aids.”*

Of the few teachers who mentioned specific topics or skills, three mentioned teaching aids and two mentioned teaching methods – in one case, with specific reference to the teaching of reading.

**10) What do you think are the priorities in training teachers to deal with SEN? In other words, what should the training most concentrate on?**

The following table (7.43) shows teachers’ responses in relation to this question.



Table 7.43

Priorities in Training

Topic	No. of teachers
Awareness of meaning of SEN	2
How to deal with children with SEN	15
Transmitting information	2
Making/using teaching aids	2
How to identify children with SEN	10
Evaluation	1
How to motivate pupils with SEN	1

Teachers' main concerns were how to identify pupils with SEN (10) and how to deal with them (15). Two teachers specifically mentioned a need for advice on how to make and use teaching aids, and one wanted training in evaluation. In general, however, teachers' responses were very broad and vague, such as "*ways to deal with these pupils*", which suggests that teachers perhaps had too little information and experience to pinpoint specific needs and priorities. In this connection, it is interesting that the teachers who suggested specific topics were from schools with special classes.

**7.3.2. Interviews with School Supervisors (N = 11)**

**1. How long have you been working in the general education field?**

The responses are summarised in Table 7.44.

Table 7.44

Supervisors' experience in General Education

Years	Number
1 – 10	4
11 – 20	5
21 – 30	1
Over 30	1

All the interviewees were experienced educationists; the two with least experience had been in the field for six years, while one interviewee had been in general education for 39 years. The average length of experience was 16 years.

**2. How long have you been a supervisor?**

Interviewees' supervisory experience is summarised in Table 7.45.

**Table 7.45**

**Experience as a Supervisor**

Years	Number
1 – 5	6
6 – 10	2
11 – 15	1
16 – 20	2

Interviewees had been working as supervisors for periods ranging from one to 20 years, the average being seven years.

**3. What subjects did you specialise in at college/university?**

Table 7.46 shows supervisors' college/university specialisms.

**Table 7.46**

**Specialisation in University/College**

Level	Subject	Number
BA	Social Studies	3
	Islamic Law/Islamic Studies	4
	Arabic	2
	Arabic/Islamic Studies (joint)	1
	Special Education	1
MA	Islamic Education	1
	Education Psychology	1
PhD	Educational Psychology	1

Half the interviewees had specialised in either Islamic Studies or Islamic Law, three had specialised in Arabic and three in social sciences. Only one had specialised from the outset in the field of special education. Two interviewees mentioned post graduate qualifications – one in Islamic Studies and one in Educational Psychology; the latter was the supervisor whose first degree was in Special Education.

#### 4. What subject(s) do you currently supervise?

The subjects currently supervised are shown in Table 7.47.

**Table 7.47**  
**Subject(s) Supervised**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number</b>
Social Science	2
Islamic Education	7
Arabic	5
Learning difficulties programme	1
School administration	1
Special education	1
Maths	2
Science	2

For the most part, supervisors were supervising the same subjects in which they had specialised at college/university, but there were some exceptions. Two who had specialised in Arabic and/or Islamic Studies found themselves supervising not only these subjects but also mathematics and science. One of the social science graduates was currently supervising school administration and special education. The supervisor who had specialised in Special Education was supervising the learning difficulties programmes (special classes) run in 13 schools in the region.

**5. How many schools do you inspect?**

Table 7.48 shows the number of schools for which each supervisor was responsible.

**Table 7.48**  
**Number of Schools Supervised**

<b>Number of schools</b>	<b>Number</b>
Fewer than 10	1
11 – 20	5
21 – 30	2
31 – 40	1
More than 40	2
Not specified	1

The number of schools supervised varied widely; one supervisor supervised only five schools, while two visited more than 40. The average number of schools which a supervisor visited was 22.

**6. How many teachers does that involve?**

Table 7.49 shows the number of teachers supervised.

**Table 7.49**  
**Number of Teachers Supervised**

<b>Number of teachers</b>	<b>Number</b>
Fewer than 50	1
51 – 75	2
76 – 100	7
More than 100	1

The number of teachers supervised ranged from 13 to 127, with an average of 81. There was no direct correspondence between the number of schools and the number of teachers, as the sizes of school varied considerably; for example, the supervisor who visited only five schools supervised a total of 92 teachers – more than were supervised



by some supervisors who visited more than 40 schools. The supervisor who supervised only 13 teachers was an exception to the general pattern, because he supervised special education programmes for pupils with learning difficulties, which involved just one teacher in each school.

**7. How often do you visit each school?**

The number of visits per school, per semester, is shown in Table 7.50

**Table 7.50**

**Number of Visits per School, per Semester**

<b>Visits per semester</b>	<b>Number</b>
1 – 3	2
4 – 6	3
More than 6	1
Not specified/variable	5

The number of visits paid to each school varied from one to six or more per semester. Four supervisors said it depended on the size of school and number of teachers to be seen in each school; one said that his practice varied according to the needs of the teacher, i.e. depending on differences in competence and experience.

**8. Are there pupils with SEN in any of the schools you visit?**

Table 7.51 summarises the responses regarding the presence of pupils with SEN in the supervised schools.

Table 7.51

Presence of Pupils with SEN

Type of SEN	Number
Speech impediment	5
Visual impairment	2
Hearing impairment	2
Learning difficulties	4
Absentmindedness	1
Physical disability	1

All supervisors had encountered pupils with SEN, the most common difficulties being speech impediment and “low understanding level” (learning difficulties). Four supervisors commented that there were very few such children. In contrast, the supervisor of learning difficulties programmes reported that the 13 programmes in the district currently serve about 157 pupils. He also mentioned that some pupils attending schools that did not have their own special education programmes attended a “Night Centre for Learning Difficulties” on two evenings per week, in addition to their normal day-school attendance. Supervisors’ experience or awareness of the presence of pupils with SEN varied according to the educational stage(s), and the types of schools they supervised. One supervisor with responsibilities across all stages of general education, for example, claimed that pupils with SEN are rarely encountered in intermediate and secondary schools, but are more often found in primary schools. This situation may be explained by the comment of another interviewee, that pupils with SEN often drop out of school “because they cannot adapt to the school environment or because of social conditions”.

**9. To what extent do teachers try to give special help to pupils with SEN?**

The various ways of responding to pupils with SEN, observed by supervisors, are summarised in Table 7.52.

**Table 7.52**

**Help for Pupils with SEN**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Little/no help	7
Help by mainstream teacher	3
Special classes/programmes	2
Inform school counsellor	1

Three supervisors said that some teachers do their best to help pupils with SEN, but there are individual differences among them. A problem arises because of the increasing number of pupils in class; it is supposed not to exceed 15 pupils, but in practice may reach 35 or more, due to the population density in some areas. Teachers' ability to deal with special needs is reduced by such classes, and by their heavy teaching load (24 hours weekly).

Most supervisors (7 supervisors) said that some teachers give little or no help to such pupils. As one said, *"They only inform the student counsellor but they do not try to help them in education, discussion and answering questions. These teachers usually blame the health unit for accepting such students in mainstream school"*. One supervisor commented that some teachers are impatient with such pupils and blame them for their inability to understand.

Two supervisors thought that pupils with SEN received help, but in special programmes. One of these described sustained efforts to assess students' needs and, if necessary, help them by setting up a remedial class, or changing classes, on the basis that some pupils might respond better to another teacher's teaching approach.

**10. How well prepared are teachers, in general, to deal with pupils with SEN?**

Supervisors' perceptions of the ability of mainstream teachers to cope with pupils with SEN is summarised in Table 7.52.

**Table 7.53**

**Ability of teachers to help pupils with SEN**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
No – lack of experience/training	6
No – time/resource constraints	3
Yes	1
Yes – in special programmes	2
Depends on the teacher	2

The situation was well summed up by the supervisor who commented, *“They are willing, but not trained or experienced to identify these pupils or to deal with them”*.

Supervisors had also received complaints that there are too many pupils in schools and there is not enough time to deal with these pupils, since pupils with SEN need special attention and the time available in class is not sufficient even for students who do not have SEN. Two supervisors thought that teachers were able to help pupils with SEN, but their comments indicated that they envisaged this help being provided in special programmes, rather than as part of the regular mainstream teaching.

The majority of supervisors (9) did not think that mainstream teachers were currently able to meet special educational needs. Six of them saw lack of experience and training as the reason for this.

**11. What sort of difficulties do mainstream teachers face in dealing with pupils with SEN?**

The types of difficulty faced by teachers, as perceived by supervisors, are shown in Table 7.54.



Table 7.54

Difficulties Encountered

Types of difficulty	Number of responses
Lack of knowledge/training	4
Lack of support from parents	2
Time/resource constraints	5
Lack of social awareness	1
Students' deficits	3

Three supervisors, in answering this question, focused on the pupils' physical and emotional problems, rather than the specific difficulties these pose for teachers.

The problems mentioned include:

- Problems with vision or hearing.
- Defect in pronunciation.
- Difficulties in playing with other pupils.
- Talking out of turn when questions are put in class.
- Isolation and lack of participation in activities.
- Being slow in learning writing and inability to distinguish and use letters and numbers.
- Being ashamed and embarrassed in the presence of their peers.
- Being aggressive towards their peers.
- Hesitation in answering questions.

Four interviewees noted that it was especially difficult for teachers to cope with learning difficulties due to lack of training in this field. As one said, *“Teachers can deal with ordinary pupils who are moderately intelligent or above, but they do not know how to deal with pupils with SEN because they do not have the basics for dealing with them”*.

About half the supervisors, in addition, mentioned time and resource constraints. These included difficulties related to organisational issues, summed up in the comment, “*too many lessons and not enough time*”, or to lack of suitable educational aids. Three supervisors mentioned the environment outside the school; it was suggested by two supervisors that the teacher’s job is made more difficult by lack of co-operation from children’s parents, while one interviewee complained that “*there is no social awareness [of how] to deal with these pupils*”.

## 12. What training and/or experience have you had in the area of SEN?

Supervisors’ training and experience in relation to SEN is summarised in Table 7.55.

**Table 7.55**

**Supervisors’ Training/Experience in SEN**

<b>Experience/training</b>	<b>Number</b>
None	8
Books/films	1
University – degree	1
In-service courses	2
Experience as school counsellor	1

The majority of supervisors (8) had no training or experience in the field of SEN and they expressed a strong need for training courses to be able to assist and guide teachers in this field.

Two supervisors thought they had acquired some knowledge in this field, one from reading some specialised books and watching some educational films concerning pupils with SEN, and the other from working as a school counsellor (though untrained) but their experience, as they acknowledged, was very limited.

Only two supervisors, the two with supervisory responsibilities in special education, had received specific training in this field. The supervisor of learning difficulties programmes, in addition to his degree in Special Education, had taken two, two-week courses in diagnosis and dealing with learning difficulties, held in Bahrain. Each course included lectures and workshops at schools which covered how to identify such pupils and deal with them using suitable teaching methods. The other supervisor with responsibility for special education had attended a short course in SEN, attended several conferences and participated in research in the field of SEN.

**13. Is your current level of knowledge about SEN sufficient to enable you to advise and support teachers?**

Supervisors' perceptions of the adequacy of their knowledge in relation to SEN are shown in Table 7.56.

**Table 7.56**

**Is knowledge/experience adequate to advise teachers?**

<b>Ability to advise teachers</b>	<b>Number</b>
Yes	1
Limited – based on experience	2
Limited – based on reading	2
Not at all	6

All except one of the supervisors considered that they had insufficient knowledge in this field. Even the supervisor with most training in the field, i.e. the one who had a degree in special education, admitted that the complexity of the field is such that he still did not know enough about it, and had a need for continuing professional development in this area. In the absence of formal training, some supervisors tried to fulfil what they saw as their responsibility to guide and direct teachers, by relying on their previous teaching and supervisory experience, or by looking for information in books and journals. As

one commented, *Of course it is not enough, but it is the nature of my work to direct teachers to take care of such pupils. I think that reading will help me. . .*"

**14. Are you ever asked for such advice, or do you volunteer it?**

Supervisors' experience of being asked for, or volunteering, advice is summarised in Table 7.57.

**Table 7.57**

**Supervisors' advice to teachers**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Asked	4
Volunteer	5
Other	2

Four supervisors were asked by parents or teachers to deal with problems related to pupils with SEN. As one of them commented, *"I think teachers have the desire to help pupils with SEN, but they don't have enough information"*. Other supervisors gave advice voluntarily based on their observations of the problems of pupils with SEN. On the other hand, two supervisors did not give such advice at all. One of these said that he was only asked about "ordinary" pupils; the other said he was not asked about pupils with SEN but became aware of students with difficulties when he examined records of student achievement.

**15. What other sources of advice and support are available to help teachers to deal with pupils with SEN?**

Sources of advice, other than themselves, suggested by supervisors, are shown in Table 7.58.



**Table 7.58**

**Other sources of advice available to teachers**

Source	Number
None	3
Specialists	3
TV	2
Publications	4
Training	5

Supervisors suggested various sources of advice and support to help teachers to deal with pupils with SEN, including:

- Training courses, conferences, seminars and workshops (5 supervisors).
- Specialised references such as books and journals (3 supervisors).
- Pamphlets that are published regularly about pupils with SEN (one supervisor).
- Special programmes on TV regarding pupils with SEN (2 supervisors).

Three supervisors suggested specialist personnel who could advise teachers, namely, specialist supervisors (such as the one who supervised learning difficulties programmes); special education teachers, such as those teaching in special classes and resource room programmes; and staff of the peripatetic counsellor teacher programmes (see Chapter Two) – although so far, there are very few such programmes.

**16. How effective and accessible are these sources?**

Perceptions on the effectiveness and accessibility of resources are shown in Table 7.59.

**Table 7.59**

**Effectiveness and Accessibility of Sources**

Response	Number
Not available/accessible	4
Limited accessibility/effectiveness	4
Yes, accessible and effective	3

The existing resources were generally said to be effective, but supervisors differed in their perceptions of the accessibility of resources. One interviewee complained that relevant books and journals are not available in public libraries and another suggested they are normally only available in special education institutions. Access to specialist personnel was said to be limited, since not all schools have a special education teacher; one supervisor said he would like to see such a teacher in every school. Four interviewees suggested that training courses would be the most effective source of help, but that at present there is a lack of such courses directed at mainstream teachers. The impression that emerged was that the onus would be on the teacher to seek out sources of information; as one supervisor commented, *“It depends on the teacher; if he wants to learn, he will find books and references in that field available”*.

**17. Do you think there is a need for more pre-service preparation for teachers to deal with pupils with SEN?**

Supervisors’ suggestions regarding pre-service training are shown in Table 7.60.

**Table 7.60**

**Need for more pre-service preparation**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
As a special subject in university	4
Additional modules in existing courses	5
Setting up special departments	2
Practical application	2
“Study” (type unspecified)	1

All supervisors replied in the affirmative. Two suggested setting up special education departments in universities and teacher training colleges and four thought teachers needed to study special education as a specialist subject at university, but the most popular suggestion was inserting special education modules into the existing teacher

training courses. Two interviewees remarked that theoretical study should be accompanied by practical application.

**18. Do you think there is a need for more training, advice or support for teachers to deal with pupils with SEN?**

In-service training needs identified by supervisors are shown in Table 7.61.

**Table 7.61**

**Training/advice/support needed for serving teachers**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Training courses	10
Meetings	2
Workshops	2
Pamphlets	4
Visits	2
Training for directors	1

All supervisors except one emphasised that mainstream teachers need training courses, while others mentioned workshops, seminars, educational pamphlets and exchange visits in this field to develop teachers' knowledge and skills to deal with pupils with SEN properly, but several said that unfortunately these sources do not currently exist. One attributed this deficiency to the lack of specialists to teach such courses. An interesting observation by one supervisor was that it is not only teachers who need training; "directors" (i.e. head teachers and administrators) also need training, in order to support teachers adequately in their efforts to teach pupils with SEN.

**19. What are the priorities for training in SEN?**

Suggested training priorities are shown in Table 7.62.

**Table 7.62****Training Priorities**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Teaching competencies (in general)	1
Psychology for SEN	1
Identifying pupils with SEN	4
Teaching methods	8
Social integration	3
Testing	1
Medical/support facilities available	2
Providing information to families	1
“Helping pupils with SEN”	1

Supervisors emphasised that the first priority is to train teachers in how to identify pupils with SEN (4 responses) and how to teach them (8 responses). Other supervisors were more specific, suggesting that teachers need to be taught how to carry out diagnostic tests of understanding, sight, hearing and so on, to identify pupils' problems. Other competencies mentioned (each by one interviewee) were knowledge of medical facilities available for children with SEN, and the ability to provide information to families. Three supervisors made reference to facilitating the social integration of children with SEN alongside their peers.

**7.3.3. Interviews with teacher trainers (N = 11)****1. How long have you worked as a teacher trainer?**

Interviewees' experience as teacher trainers is summarised in Table 7.63.

**Table 7.63****Experience as Teacher Trainer**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Number*</b>
Up to 10	3
11 – 15	4
16 – 20	3

\* Missing responses = 1



The experience of the interviewees as teacher trainers ranged from 3 to 20 years, with an average of 12.2 years.

## 2. How long have you worked in the field of SEN?

Interviewee's experience in the field of SEN is summarised in Table 7.64.

**Table 7.64**  
**Experience in SEN**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Number</b>
None, directly	1
Up to 10	4
11 – 15	2
16 - 20	4

One respondent said that he had never worked directly with pupils with SEN, but had been involved in supervising student teachers on their teaching practice placements and had gained experience of pupils with SEN in this way. Other interviewees reported from 3 to 20 years of experience, with an average of 2.2 years. Although the range and the average were the same as given for experience as a teacher trainer (Question 1, above), only five interviewees reported exactly the same number of years experience in SEN as in teacher training. Three interviewees reported involvement in SEN that predated their experience as teacher trainers. One, for example, reported 14 years' experience in the field of SEN, first as a teacher, then as a supervisor; only in the last 8 years had he been a teacher trainer. Two others had been involved in the SEN field for 17 years; 2 years as teachers and 15 years as teacher trainers. Conversely, there were two respondents who reported more years' experience as teacher trainers than in the field of SEN. One had been a teacher trainer for 12 years, but had been involved in the SEN field for 10 years. The other had been a teacher trainer for 6 years, and had been involved in special education for 3 years.

### 3. Involvement with preparation and delivery of courses

The responses in relation to the nature of involvement with courses related to teaching pupils with SEN are shown in Table 7.65.

**Table 7.65**  
**Nature of Involvement in SEN**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number</b>
Supervision/administration	4
Planning	5
Lecturing	11
In-service training	2
Public lectures/media	1
Committees	3
Research/writing	1

All trainers interviewed were lecturers in programmes for the preparation of special education teachers, who would be preparing to teach either in special institutions or in special classes and programmes within mainstream schools. Normally, although not always, these would be post-graduates who already had some experience as mainstream teachers (see Chapter Two). Depending on their specialisation, some teacher trainers might additionally have input into mainstream teacher preparation through, for example, Educational Psychology modules. Others, however, specialised in such areas as learning difficulties or mental retardation, and, since pupils diagnosed in these categories are taught in special programmes by specialist teachers, these lecturers were not involved in mainstream teacher preparation.

In addition to their lecturing in the Special Education Department, 5 interviewees had input into programme planning and curriculum development and 3 were members of various committees on special education. Four had responsibilities in technical and

administrative supervision of schools and institutions and SE. One interviewee was the author of several books and articles on the field of SEN.

#### 4. Special knowledge, skills and attitudes for mainstream teachers to deal with pupils with SEN:

Five interviewees asserted that Saudi Arabia has already embarked on a policy of inclusion of children with SEN, though they differed in their perceptions as to how long this policy had existed or how extensively it was implemented. They all agreed, however, that mainstream teachers need special knowledge, attitudes and skills to cope with these developments. One went so far as to say that *“teachers are in bad need of the required competencies”* and suggested that *“inclusion will lead to negative results if mainstream teachers do not receive training beforehand”*. The actual requirements mentioned by the interviewees are summarised in Table 7.66. To facilitate comparison and later discussion, these are grouped, where possible, using the same categories as were used in the Teachers’ Questionnaire.

**Table 7.66**

**Knowledge/skills/attitudes needed by teachers**

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Number</b>
Knowledge	7
Positive attitudes	4
Assessment	3
Plan/organise/management of teaching	2
Teaching competencies	4
Behaviour management	4
General competencies	1
Advice from specialist teachers	4

Seven supervisors mentioned Knowledge requirements. Of these, 4 said that teachers need theoretical knowledge about the nature of pupils with SEN and related aspects, so

they can recognise their features and their needs. For example, one interviewee suggested that teachers need knowledge of *“the nature of every impairment. . . and the effect. . . on psychological, social, health, emotional and educational status [of the pupil]”*. Other kinds of knowledge mentioned (by one interviewee in each case) were knowledge of psychology, of the concept of inclusion, and of the facilities and services for children with SEN available in the Kingdom.

The need to develop positive attitudes towards pupils with SEN was mentioned by 4 interviewees. For example, one trainer called for teachers to have *“faith in their abilities and rights to have appropriate services”*. Another asserted that *“the teacher should accept the pupil with his problems and deal positively with [difficult] behaviour to change it”*, bearing in mind that *“his reactions affect students’ feelings and emotions”*.

Specific skills mentioned included diagnosis of special needs, the ability to prepare individualised learning plans, ability to use a wide range of teaching strategies and methods as needed to help the child’s academic progress and social adaptation, and behaviour management techniques.

Four interviewees suggested that the required competencies could be developed by exchange visits and co-operation among teachers, including advice from specialist teachers, to share relevant knowledge and experience.

##### **5. To what extent current pre-service training programmes prepare mainstream teachers to meet the requirements of pupils with SEN:**

Teacher trainers’ views on the adequacy of pre-service training programmes are summarised in Table 7.67.



Table 7.67

To what extent do current pre-service programmes prepare mainstream teachers to meet SEN?

Response	Number
Yes	3
Somewhat	2
No	6

This question elicited conflicting opinions, from *“current pre-service training programmes do not play any role at all”* to *“a student acquires all the needed skills and competencies”*. The diversity of opinion can be explained by differing interpretations of the term *“mainstream teachers”* since, as explained earlier, the pre-service programme provided by the Special Education Department prepares teachers to work, not only in special institutes, but also in special classes and programmes in mainstream schools. Those interviewees who suggested that current training is satisfactory appeared to have these special education programmes in mind; two of them referred explicitly to their department’s success in this area.

There is a difference, however, between the training provided for those intending to teach in special programmes in mainstream schools, and the general education degree that prepares teachers for mainstream classes. Speaking of this preparation, two interviewees thought that the course went some way towards preparing mainstream teachers to teach pupils with SEN, but the majority thought the course was not satisfactory at all. One commented, *“For mainstream teachers, we are asking to provide them with curricula which give them general skills sufficient for dealing with pupils with SEN in their classrooms. But there are restrictions of other departments which prevent achieving this aim”*.

**6. To what extent current in-service training programmes prepare mainstream teachers to meet the requirements of pupils with SEN:**

Teacher trainers' responses to this question are summarised in Table 7.68.

**Table 7.68**

**To what extent do in-service programmes prepare mainstream teachers to meet SEN?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number*</b>
Yes	3
Somewhat	2
No	2

\* missing responses = 3

Two respondents said that in-service training programmes have a weak role in equipping mainstream teachers to deal with pupils with SEN. They added that information technology in the field of education may help in this field.

Three respondents said that in-service training programmes could play an important role if they were prepared and used well to rehabilitate teachers and supply them with information and experience. For this reason, they advised presenting in-service educational courses in different fields to provide teachers with an individual base to deal with special needs. These courses could include identifying pupils with special needs, preparing individual educational plans, and evaluation.

Two respondents said that there are no programmes which play a specific role during in-service training in equipping mainstream teachers to deal with pupils with SEN. They emphasised, rather the role of teachers trained in special education, as sources of help for mainstream teachers. Some suggested that a diploma course in Special Education be set up, covering different disabilities (auditory, optical, learning difficulties, mental

retardation and behavioural disorders) for mainstream teachers. Sometimes there are short training courses which are held for those who are interested in this field.

**7. What more can be done by teacher training institutions and agencies to prepare teachers to deal with pupils with SEN?**

The responses to this question are summarised in Table 7.69.

**Table 7.69**

**Potential role of teacher trainer institutions/agencies**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Training in special department	4
Planning programmes	2
Introducing new curriculum topics	3
Preparing teachers to understand the concept of inclusion	1
Seminars for parents and teachers	3
Co-ordination/co-operation between agencies	2

All respondents said that teacher training institutions and agencies can do more to prepare teachers to deal with pupils with SEN. They can play an important role by:

- Establishing new sections for special education in faculties of education in Saudi universities (4 respondents); indeed, one interviewee asserted that there is already an important trend in this direction, with a new department to be opened next year.
- Applying suitable and comprehensive plans in the field of SEN (2 respondents).
- Carrying out seminars related to special education, which include parents and teachers (3 respondents).
- Increasing training programmes in the field of dealing with pupils with SEN (one respondent).
- Adding new curriculum topics to existing training (3 respondents).

However, in the view of one respondent, *“the teacher of SE is the basis of the special educational process”* so the role of teacher training institutions, in his perception, was initially in the training of specialist teachers who would support mainstream teachers.

**8. Problems and constraints in the way of providing training programmes in the field of SEN:**

The problems and constraints identified by respondents are summarised in Table 7.70.

**Table 7.70**  
**Problems and constraints**

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Number</b>
Shortage of specialist staff	2
Lack of interest in training in this area	2
Teachers' inability to attend courses	1
Narrow-mindedness, re. specialisation	2
Providing adequate follow-up/evaluation	1
No constraints	3

Eight respondents identified a variety of problems and constraints in the way of providing training programmes in the field of SEN. These problems include:

- Insufficient commitment of money and effort (one respondent).
- Lack of specialists able to prepare and carry out training programmes on SEN (2 respondents). In this respect, one interviewee claimed, *“There is a world-wide problem”*.
- Inability or unwillingness of some teachers to attend training courses in the field of Special Education (3 respondents).

Two interviewees ascribed such problems to narrow-mindedness about specialisation.

As one interviewee argued, *“Every teacher thinks that he is a professional in his field*



*and does not need to acquire a new knowledge, as a result, he does nothing". In addition, the Saudi system of employment (and in the Arabian world generally) does not follow the principle of integration between educational programmes and services. As a result, "everyone works individually and people are unwilling to increase their educational responsibility". According to another interviewee, this kind of narrow-mindedness extends even to some teacher trainers: "There are people who object to giving SE subjects to mainstream teachers. They think that they do not need these subjects".*

Three respondents, however, claimed that there are no problems or constraints in the way of providing training programmes in the field of SEN.

#### **9. What should be done pre-service to prepare teachers for teaching SEN?**

Teacher trainers' suggestions in this regard are summarised in Table 7.71.

**Table 7.71**

**What more could be done, pre-service**

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Number</b>
Open new department of Special Education	4
Improve existing curricula	5
Survey	1
Nothing needed	2

All respondents but two highlighted a need to prepare training programmes to prepare teachers to deal with pupils with SEN. This can be done by increasing the capability of special education departments to play their role in this field properly. Four respondents emphasised the desirability of establishing departments of Special Education in all Saudi universities to allow students to study for BA degrees in the fields of SEN. Five

respondents suggested enhancing existing curricula by adding new subjects in the field of SEN, or including a more practical orientation.

The two respondents who thought nothing more need be done, pre-service, to prepare teachers for teaching pupils with SEN held this view for different reasons. One thought the present training was adequate. The other clearly favoured a continuation of the present approach, where explicit training related to pupils with SEN is reserved to the Special Education programme, and thought it was not feasible or desirable to include such preparation in the general programme followed by intending mainstream class teachers. After emphasising the kinds of individualised and intensive intervention needed by pupils with SEN, he argued that *“the general programme cannot present these elements”* because it would need many course units and make the course too long. He further suggested that it is impractical for teachers in a mainstream class of 30 or more pupils to provide pupils with SEN with the sort of intensive, specialised intervention needed, even if they were trained to do so, so he thought in practice, pupils with SEN would receive the help they needed from a specialist teacher, rather than from the mainstream teacher.

#### **10. What should be done in-service to prepare teachers for teaching SEN?**

The responses to this question are summarised in Table 7.72.

**Table 7.72**

**What more could be done, in-service?**

<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Number</b>
Training courses/workshops/lectures in relevant competencies	7
Diploma programmes in Special Education	2
Supervision/evaluation	3

Interviewees identified several themes for teacher development in this area. Two said that teachers need specialised training programmes to deal with pupils with SEN, leading to professional diplomas or certificates in the field of SEN. Others called for courses, workshops and lectures covering such matters as methods of teaching and ways of modifying behaviour (6 respondents). Three emphasised the need for supervision of teachers, and evaluation of training outcomes.

It was noticeable, however, that some interviewees did not clearly differentiate between questions 9 and 10 and there was a tendency to speak in terms of a generalised need for training, without identifying specific training needs. Only one respondent made a specific suggestion that teachers should be trained to use up-to-date instruments and measurements in the field of special education, for example, hearing education, and learn about diagnosis in the field of learning difficulties.

Interestingly, another interviewee suggested that before more could be done in the way of in-service training, there should be “*a survey concerning teachers’ opinions about suitable times and places for training courses*” – one of the objectives that will be served by the present study.

#### **7.4. Summary**

The foregoing report shows that the teachers who participated in the questionnaire survey varied widely in age and experience, and had obtained a variety of qualifications, though just under 10% did not have a specific education qualification and only five teachers (2.9%) had an SEN qualification. Very few teachers other than these recalled receiving any pre-service training in teaching pupils with SEN, and only three respondents had received in-service training in this area.

Mean scores on the dimensions of competencies and related training needs were generally moderate, reflecting a wide range of opinions on teachers' part, as to their preparedness to cope with SEN, and the kinds of training they would need. In general, teachers were most confident of their personal skills (in which they saw little need for training) and least confident in their curriculum adaptation abilities. Some had negative attitudes towards teaching pupils with SEN in mainstream schools; they felt uncomfortable about it, perceived it as not straightforward, and doubted whether it was appropriate.

Teachers' perceptions of their competencies and training needs generally did not differ significantly with differences in age or teaching experience, the only exceptions being competencies in use of resources (for age) and curriculum adaptation (for teaching experience). However, there appeared to be no differences related to teachers' qualification. In the two dimensions of Attitudes and Instructional Competencies, there was a significant difference in agreement with the competency statements between teachers who had experience of teaching pupils with SEN and those who did not, while for training need, significant difference was found in the dimensions of Assessment and Evaluation, and Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction. There were no significant differences in either Agreement or Training Needs, between teachers from schools with different inclusion provision.

Teachers expressed interest in being given training opportunities. The mean scores were highest for consultation, observation of peers, and provision of training materials.

In interviews, supervisors, teacher trainers and teachers expressed opinions that teachers are generally inadequately prepared to teach pupils with SEN in an inclusive setting. Although some supervisors and teacher trainers asserted that in-service training in this area was available, most teachers said they were unaware of it, or considered it



inadequate. Pre-service training in this area was reported to be largely available only to those student teachers intending to specialise in this field, although all supervisors and teachers said they had encountered pupils with SEN in mainstream schools. Interviewees in all three groups called for more training in relation to dealing with SEN.

These findings will be discussed and interpreted in more detail, in relation to previous research and relevant literature, in the next chapter, where the research questions will be answered.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### **8.1. Introduction**

In the previous chapter, the competencies and training needs of Saudi mainstream primary teachers to deal with pupils with SEN were explored, from the perceptions of teachers, educational supervisors and teacher trainers. The purpose of this chapter is to draw together and discuss the information obtained from the questionnaire survey and key informant interviews, in the light of theory and previous empirical work, in order to draw out the implications, both for practice and for future research.

The main body of the chapter is divided into four sections, as follows. First, in section 8.2. a discussion of the findings in relation to the literature is presented, in which each of the research questions posed in Chapter One is addressed in turn. Recommendations for strategies to enhance the training and support available to mainstream teachers, to help them to cope with the demands made on them by the current trend to inclusion of pupils with SEN, will be presented in section 8.3. A critical evaluation of the strengths and limitations of this study is presented in section 8.4. In the light of the limitations of the current study and other issues raised during the course of the research, section 8.5 contains suggestions for future research, to build on the contribution of this thesis.

### **8.2. Discussion**

In this section, findings from the various elements of this research, both theoretical and empirical, are brought together in order to answer the research questions set out at the beginning of the thesis.

Before addressing specific research questions, however, it may be appropriate at this point to draw attention to two issues which have a bearing on several of the results from the study, namely, the model of inclusion adopted in Saudi Arabia, and the philosophy underlying educational practice.

As regards the model of inclusion, it is not the “full” inclusion envisaged by, for example, Ainscow (1997). Two levels of inclusion were found among the participating schools: in two schools, pupils with SEN were taught in regular classes with the provision of supporting services in the form of a resource room, corresponding to level II in Deno’s (1970) model and level 3 in Cope and Anderson’s (1977) model, referred to in Chapter Three (section 3.3.2.2.). In a further two schools, pupils were taught in a full-time special class, except for Art and PE, where they were taught alongside their peers without SEN. These arrangements correspond to levels III/IV in Deno’s model and 4/5 in Cope and Anderson’s model. The other two schools had no special facilities or programmes for pupils with SEN, implying that if they contained pupils with SEN, such pupils would be fully included in the mainstream class, without additional support. In such an arrangement, ideally, the needs of pupils with SEN would be met through flexible work arrangements, curriculum adaptation, varied teaching strategies, peer support, and a problem solving approach (DfES, 2001b; Ainscow, 1999). In fact, it is not possible to know with any certainty whether there were any pupils with SEN in these schools, because of teachers’ acknowledged difficulty in identifying when a child has SEN. For these two schools, then, it is not possible to comment on what level or kind of inclusion was achieved by pupils with SEN. In those schools with special programmes, it can be said that in terms of Warnock’s (DES, 1978) classification, pupils with SEN had locational and social, but not functional integration, and there was certainly no indication in any of the schools of reform and restructuring of the school as a whole, as advocated by Mittler (2000).



The result of the particular models of inclusion adopted was that very few of the surveyed teachers had taught children with SEN – or perhaps it would be more accurate to say few were aware of having done so. In this respect it is interesting to note that the Saudi definition of SEN (Al-Mousa, 1999) may lead teachers to assume that children with SEN are by definition those placed in special classes; such an effect, as noted in Chapter Three (section 3.2.), is one of the reasons why Booth et al. (2000) reject the use of ‘special needs’ terminology.

Related to this attitude is an educational philosophy which, despite the rhetoric of policy (Al-Hakeel, 1986) remains in practice preoccupied with the memorisation of academic content (see Chapter Two). Such an orientation, according to Epstein (1984) disadvantages some children and leads to their being labelled as having SEN. It may be that the academic preoccupations of educational philosophy lead to some children being placed in a special class (or, as revealed in the researcher’s exploratory inquiries and indicated in Chapter One, withdrawn from mainstream schools in favour of other forms of education) who might otherwise have been fully included in the mainstream.

These issues, as will be seen, have wide implications and may help to explain the research findings in relation to almost all of the research questions. They are likely to have a bearing on perceptions of which competencies are needed by teachers (Q1); the amount and kind of training given to both pre-service and serving teachers (Q2); the amount and kind of support provided (Q3); the attitudes of teachers towards pupils with SEN and the skills they perceive themselves as having, to deal with such children (Q4); and the components of the training needs that teachers express (Q6).

The issues of diagnosis and definition, and their implications for teachers’ areas of actual or perceived responsibility, then, underlie the whole of the research findings.

These, and other issues that emerged through the study, will now be explored in relation to each research question in turn.

### 8.2.1. What are the competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) needed by teachers to enable them to meet special educational needs?

As noted in Chapter Six (Methodology), this question was addressed largely through a review of the competency literature, since the aim in asking this question was to establish a list of competency dimensions and items as a basis for subsequent investigation of teachers' perceived competence and training needs. The competency literature was discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

As indicated in Chapter Four, the competency literature identifies a wide range of competency dimensions and specific knowledge/skills/attributes that are needed for effective teaching of pupils with SEN (though inclusionists such as Ainscow (1999) and Epstein (1984) argue that the same competencies are needed for good teaching for all pupils). The Council for Exceptional Children list quoted by Polloway and Patton (1997) contains 107 separate items; other lists reviewed in Chapter Four typically contain from 30 to 50 items (see, for example, Johnson, 1978; Sass-Lehrer and Wolk, 1984 and Hornby et al., 1991).

Some information about the special knowledge, attitudes and skills needed by teachers to cope with pupils with SEN as perceived in the Saudi context was obtained from educational supervisors and teacher trainers, although, since only a small number of people were interviewed, the information obtained from these sources is limited. The more extensive information from the teacher questionnaire survey did not ask teachers to identify needed competencies, but asked how they perceived their own competencies. The results are discussed in Section 8.2.4. In asking teachers to identify training needs

(discussed in depth in 8.2.6.), however, the questionnaire to some extent explored their views of what was needed. As will be seen, they attached importance to knowledge of learning theories and their application to pupils with SEN (Table 7.10) and to the ability to identify potential special educational needs (Table 7.12). In the area of Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction (Table 7.13) the responses show a perceived need to be able to assess the effectiveness of materials and activities, to organise a flexible programme of instruction and to plan/prepare special materials and lessons. A particular concern was the need to facilitate the social integration of pupils with SEN, an issue that was also raised by teachers in the exploratory phase of the research (see Chapter Five). Teachers also expressed a strong need for training in the area of communication with other professionals (Table 7.18), suggesting that they saw this as an important competency.

Teachers' perceptions of needed competencies, as reflected in their expressed training needs, were supported by the interview responses of educational supervisors (Table 7.62) and teacher trainers (Table 7.66), all of whom thought teachers needed special knowledge, attitudes and skills to teach pupils with SEN in mainstream classes.

Educational supervisors suggested seven knowledge areas and skills: the ability to use a range of teaching methods, ability to identify SEN, knowledge of medical facilities, ability to provide information to families, psychological knowledge, testing ability, and ability to facilitate social inclusion. Each of these is consistent with elements contained in previous competency lists. Ability to use appropriate teaching methods flexibly was listed by Whitten and Westling (1985) and is emphasised by Ainscow (1991); diagnosis was identified by Johnson (1978); Hornby et al. (1991) and Hammel (1994); knowledge of medical facilities is consistent with Whitten and Westling's (1985) category of knowledge of community resources; ability to provide information to families is



mentioned by, for example, Sass-Lehrer and Wolk (1984) and Polloway and Patton (1997) while Hammel (1994) noted the need for teachers to facilitate social inclusion of children with SEN.

Similar competencies were mentioned by teacher trainers who particularly focused on the need for knowledge about SEN. Moreover, half of them highlighted the need for positive attitudes towards pupils with SEN. The importance of attitude was similarly asserted by Trent (1993) while Sass-Lehrer (1986) gave more specific examples of positive teacher attitudes: ability to develop a rapport with pupils with SEN, and ability to promote their positive self-concept. Both these abilities could be seen as part of the 'enabling environment' with which attitude is linked by Jacobsen and Sawatsky (1993).

Several other dimensions of required competencies, identified in the literature, were, however, either not mentioned at all, or mentioned by only one or two interviewees: Assessment (Whitten and Westling, 1985); Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction (Sass-Lehrer, 1986); Personal Characteristics (DfE, 1994; Lerner, 1997); Behaviour Management (Whitten and Westling, 1985); and Curriculum Adaptation (Hammel, 1994). All of these dimensions are implied by the role expectations of class teachers in the U.K. Code of Practice (DfE, 1994).

The fact that so few competencies were mentioned by interviewees compared to the many found in the literature, and so many major competency dimensions omitted, may partly be seen as a reflection of the centralised education system which gives teachers little or no autonomy in relation to curriculum and the planning, organisation and management of instruction. It also reflects a situation where, because inclusion is relatively recent in Saudi Arabia, training and administration for 'regular' and 'special' education were developed separately, so that even educational supervisors have little knowledge and experience in this field, as they themselves acknowledge.



### 8.2.2. What training, either pre-service or in-service, have the teachers had in competencies related to SEN?

Only 10 teachers out of 175 surveyed reported any kind of pre-service training in SEN, and five of these were teachers who had qualified specifically in this field. Moreover, three-quarters of teachers interviewed in the main study, and all those interviewed in the exploratory phase, had received no pre-service preparation in relation to SEN. Non-specialists who, in the questionnaire, reported having some SEN training had received at best a semester, and in some cases as little as one week. This situation is in sharp contrast to that in the U.K., for example, where preparation to teach all children, including those with SEN, is a requirement for qualification (DES, 1984).

Despite the trend towards inclusion, moreover, few teachers reported any in-service training in SEN-related competencies; in interviews it was suggested that teachers may not attend training, even if it is available, either because of lack of information, or because of its non-compulsory status. It appears that Truesdell's (1985) criteria for quality INSET (such as accessibility, continuity, comprehensiveness and integration into the overall educational structure) are not being met.

The research revealed some contradictions of perspective, within and between groups on the availability and efficacy of training. Teacher trainers, for example, disagreed as to whether the pre-service and in-service training currently available is adequate to equip teachers with necessary competencies. Moreover, they had very different views as to how long and how extensively inclusion has been practised; such uncertainty would be likely to affect adversely their ability to provide relevant training.

There were also contradictions between teachers' perspectives and those of educational supervisors and teacher trainers, particularly regarding the availability of in-service

training. This could suggest that training opportunities are not adequately communicated to teachers (some, in interview, said they had ‘not been informed’ or ‘not heard of’ any training). Another explanation may be that, because of a narrow-minded approach to specialisation – asserted by one of the teacher trainers – training may not be offered to all who may desire or need it. This possibility may be related to the definition issue mentioned earlier. Warnock (DES, 1978) estimated that 20% of all pupils have SEN, and educational supervisors’ observations suggest the presence in Saudi schools of all the categories of SEN mentioned in the U.K. Code of Practice (DfE, 1994). Yet, as indicated earlier, the Saudi definition perhaps leads to thinking solely in terms of specialist provision for SEN; certainly some teachers in this study “blame the health unit” for allowing children with SEN into the mainstream. The Saudi definition of SEN admits the need for adapted education, but it is not necessarily expected that the adaptation will be made by the class teacher (similarly, Dyson, 1998, links the deficit model with special schools and remedial education). Thus, it may be that teachers have not been offered training in the past because it was thought they did not need it, as children with SEN would be catered for in special programmes taught by specialists. At the same time, as Catlett (1999) observes, the absence of training may perpetuate attitudes among teachers that teaching pupils with SEN is “someone else’s job”.

### **8.2.3. What kind of training and support is currently available?**

According to Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996), in order to teach pupils with SEN, teachers need systematic, intensive training in the form of a) courses related to SEN as a requirement of pre-service certification; b) in-service programmes and c) on-going consultancy. Jacobsen and Sawatsky (1993) went so far as to consider the availability of INSET and consultative support as determinants of teachers’ willingness to teach

pupils with SEN. From the research findings, however, it appears that none of these sources is sufficiently, reliably and effectively available to Saudi primary teachers.

Regarding pre-service training, it was indicated in Chapter Two that only one of Saudi Arabia's eight universities currently has a department of special education. Moreover, the research interviews revealed that the teaching of pupils with SEN was not covered regularly or systematically in general preparation programmes; it might not be covered at all; if the topic is available, it is not compulsory; and usually little time is given to it. In-service training was said by educational supervisors and teacher trainers to be available, but many of the teachers interviewed were not aware of it.

As far as on-going consultancy is concerned, two potential sources may be identified: specialist teachers (i.e. qualified special education teachers, whether in special units in the mainstream school, in special schools or in the counsellor teacher programme (Chapter Two, Section 2.4.2.) and educational supervisors. Some of the teachers interviewed indicated that if they faced a problem in relation to a pupil with SEN, they consulted specialist teachers; responses to the last section of the questionnaire, on preferred kinds of training, also indicated that this was a popular option. This tendency for expertise to be seen as the preserve of a few qualified special education teachers is consistent with the pattern of separate training which Ainscow (1999) suggests is typical of segregated provision – which was the norm in Saudi Arabia, as in many other countries, until a few years ago. Such teachers may indeed be a valuable source of information and support, but whether this potential is realised will depend on the amount and quality of communication among colleagues. In this respect, the finding that, in the Counselling, Communication and Collaboration section of the questionnaire, almost two-thirds of respondents were unsure of, or perceived they lacked the ability to communicate with colleagues (item 38), suggests this source of support may not be as



well-used as could be desired. Teachers rated slightly more highly their ability to communicate with other professionals, and it may be that they view specialist teachers in this category, rather than as colleagues, because of their separate role within the school. Nevertheless, almost half the teachers lacked confidence in their ability to communicate with other professionals. These findings suggest that collegial links within and between schools would need to be strengthened, to enable teachers to obtain consultative support from more experienced colleagues.

The other potential source of consultancy is educational supervisors. However, the majority of supervisors interviewed had themselves not had SEN-related training or experience and thought they had insufficient knowledge to support teachers. As an added difficulty, some were not supervising their own subject specialisms. The weak role that supervisors can play in supporting inclusive practices in schools, in the Saudi context, is in sharp contrast to the situation in the USA described by Federico et al. (1999) whose inclusion project was closely supported by two experienced educational supervisors.

Lack of support and training is identified by Thomas (1985) as an important factor in teachers' lack of confidence to teach pupils with SEN. Given the obstacles currently facing Saudi primary teachers in this respect, it is not surprising that the questionnaire responses revealed teachers' low levels of confidence in their competencies. This issue is discussed next.

#### **8.2.4. What knowledge, skills and attitudes do teachers currently have – and not have – regarding dealing with children with special educational needs?**

This question was answered mainly through asking teachers in the survey questionnaire to rate their knowledge, attitudes and skills. There was no independent observation of



such competencies, because of the difficulties of constructing and implementing an objective measure of competencies (see Chapter 4), particularly as this is a newly explored area in Saudi Arabia. Nor were educational supervisors asked directly about teacher competencies. Very few supervisors were interviewed, and they varied greatly in their spheres of expertise (two, for example, had specific training and experience in relation to SEN but the rest had not); and in the number and types of schools they visited (some supervised intermediate and secondary schools as well as primary schools for example). They might therefore be expected to have very varying perceptions of teacher competencies, depending on their own knowledge in relation to SEN, and on the different contexts of their observations. Thus, this research has focused on competencies as perceived by teachers themselves, in the light of their day-to-day experience.

Of the ten competency dimensions explored, the one in which teachers were most confident was Personal Skills such as self-confidence, maturity, flexibility and willingness to learn from experience. It may be that this was, in part, because these are general personality traits. A teacher might, for example, perceive himself as a generally self-confident person, irrespective whether he had ever been called upon to demonstrate that in a situation involving pupils with SEN. Similarly, in the UK the Standards for SENCOs list personal qualities which are said to be attributes of all effective teachers (Teacher Training Agency, 1998). In contrast, teachers might be expected to have less confidence in competencies more closely connected with teaching children with SEN, especially if they have not taught such children (most of the sample said they had not) and/or see teaching such children as a “special” area.

Another explanation for the high level of confidence in Personal Skills, however, may be the influence of Islam, which places strong emphasis on the development of

desirable personal qualities. This emphasis permeates the whole of the education system (see, for example, the educational objectives set out by the Supreme Committee on Educational Policy (1974), quoted in Chapter Two of this thesis). Islamic Studies is part of the preparation of all teachers, irrespective of their teaching specialism (Ministry of Education, 1998b). In this respect it is interesting to note that the area of Knowledge in which teachers rated their competence most highly was awareness of their ethical responsibilities, which may, similarly, be an outcome of the Islamic emphasis in their training and in educational policy.

Islamic values may also have contributed to the very positive personal attitudes towards pupils with SEN expressed by the teachers; the highest ranking items in the Attitude dimension were those indicating that it is worthwhile and important to work with pupils with SEN. The lowest ranking in this dimension was the more policy-related one concerning the appropriateness of including pupils with SEN in the mainstream classroom. Although almost 70% of the teachers surveyed considered it important to work with pupils with SEN, just over half felt uncomfortable doing so. Moreover, seven out of the ten educational supervisors interviewed suggested that teachers do not help pupils with SEN and display attitudes of impatience and frustration towards them. Such attitudes are consistent with those found in previous research: teachers who are new to the idea of inclusion are reported to be apprehensive (Gearheart et al., 1992); to show frustration (Seigel, 1992), and to have reservations about including children with SEN in the mainstream (Scruggs and Mastropieri, 1996). These negative attitudes, however, according to these authors, are related to lack of experience, exposure and confidence in relation to pupils with SEN. Hegarty et al. (1981) report that attitudes become more positive over time; similarly, Al-Khashrami (1995) reported that Saudi kindergarten teachers developed better attitudes towards pupils with SEN once they had experience of inclusion. Positive attitudes to all children, including those with SEN, are

important contributors to effective inclusion (Stoll, 1991; Ainscow, 1999; Booth et al., 2000). The positive personal attitudes found in this study constitute a good foundation that can be built on through experience and training as the inclusion programme progresses.

The Assessment, Evaluation and Recording dimension was one in which there were comparatively high levels of “not sure” responses. Particularly important in this dimension is the response related to identifying need (item 13), which was ranked third in the dimension. Fewer than half the teachers (about 46%) were sure that they could identify potential special educational needs. In the UK’s new Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a) the first principle is that “a child with special educational needs should have their needs met” (p. 7). Clearly, before this can be achieved, the need must be identified. Teachers’ need for this important competency of identification of SEN was endorsed in the interviews, by all three groups.

Regarding the more detailed assessment of the needs of pupils with SEN, teachers had confidence in their ability to construct a pupil profile generally – this was the item ranked highest in the dimension. Moreover, a high proportion considered they had the ability to assess the progress of all children, including those with SEN (item 16). This was the second ranked competency. These responses are encouraging in relation to an inclusive view of education, in which the learning needs of all children are met.

In the area of Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction, teachers rated most highly their competencies in overall classroom organisation. This is helpful for inclusion; as noted by Stakes and Hornby (2000), good classroom management strategies “are a pre-requisite for a teacher in any situation, and for those working with SEN they cannot be emphasised too much” (p. 66). On the other hand, teachers expressed lower competency in the skills to plan and instruct flexibly. Flexibility is an



important competency for inclusion, as highlighted by Ainscow (1995), who emphasises the need for teachers to improvise and modify plans and activities to stimulate the participation of all pupils and personalise the experience of the lesson for pupils. Flexibility is also a key theme in the Index for Inclusion (Booth et al., 2000); for example in Dimension C.1, Orchestrating Learning, the first indicator is “lessons are responsive to student diversity”.

Teachers had particularly low perceptions of their abilities in relation to curriculum adaptation; only about 30% felt able to assess the suitability of curriculum materials, and fewer, about 20%, felt able to develop appropriate curriculum materials.

This may be a reflection of the low level of opportunity and encouragement, within the Saudi education system, for teachers to use such skills, even in relation to children who do not have SEN (see Chapter Two). The tendency in developing countries for curriculum planning to be centralised to a degree that inhibits teachers from taking personal risks by experimenting with what is possible in the classroom, has been noted by Heywood (1987). He comments that, if the general expectation among teachers is for all change to be generated from the centre, they are likely to play safe and wait to be told what to do.

Nevertheless, even within the framework of a national curriculum – perhaps especially so – there is a need for individual adaptation. One of the principles of the Code of Practice (DfES 2001a) is giving all pupils full access to the curriculum, while in the Index for Inclusion (Booth et al., 2000), indicator C.1.2. is “Lessons are made accessible to all students”. One of the concerns expressed by, for example, Hornby (1997) and Dyson (1998) is that children with SEN who are included in mainstream classes are forced to follow an inappropriate curriculum, which undermines their perceptions of self-efficacy and effectively segregates them.



In this connection, it is interesting to note that, in the dimension of Instructional Competencies, although teachers felt able to analyse concepts, they saw themselves as having lower competence in developing an instructional sequence. This finding, together with those in previous dimensions related to Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction, and Curriculum adaptation, may all be seen to be underlain by the issue of flexibility. Since, in the Personal Skills dimension, teachers saw themselves as flexible and willing to learn, it is interesting to reflect on how far any lack of flexibility in response to SEN is a personal attribute, how far it is a matter of learning specific skills and techniques, and how far it is a policy issue regarding the extent of teacher autonomy. Ainscow (1991) highlights the need for teachers in an inclusive setting to have sufficient autonomy to make flexible decisions as circumstances require.

The characteristics of the Saudi education system may also go some way towards explaining teachers' perceptions of difficulty with the social integration of children with SEN (item 36). A similar difficulty was observed in the exploratory phase of the study (Chapter 5). The reductionist paradigm (Poplin and Stone, 1992) tends to promote an individualistic learning structure where success depends on one's own efforts, motivation is extrinsic, based on achieving criteria and receiving rewards, and people who are perceived to be different are disliked (Johnson and Johnson, 1991). These features have been said to characterise teaching and learning in Saudi Arabia (Al-Agla, 2000). A co-operative learning environment (Sapon-Shevin, 1990) is said to be more conducive to social integration.

Social integration is central to inclusion, and a major part of its rationale, as expressed, for example, in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1996), and in the emphasis by Pearpoint and Forest (1992) on the 'ABC' of Acceptance, Belonging and Community. There is evidence from the interviews that some success with social integration of

pupils with SEN is being achieved in the schools that have special programmes, by the inclusion of children with SEN with their peers, at recreation and mealtimes. This finding is in line with the assertion of Hegarty et al. (1981) regarding the importance of children with SEN being given opportunities to join in normal behaviour patterns. Effective inclusion would need to build on such successes and find ways of encouraging the social integration of pupils with SEN, in the classroom as well as during recreation.

In relation to Use of Resources, it is a very positive sign for inclusion that teachers recorded such a high level of recognition of the importance of involving parents. One of the characteristics of effective schools, according to Stoll (1991) is the involvement and support of parents and the local community. Similarly positive is teachers' perception of their competence in communication with parents. Fewer teachers, however, were confident of their skills in communicating with colleagues (item 38) and other professionals (item 39). These are competencies that are important in support for inclusion, as highlighted in the Index for Inclusion (Booth et al., 2000) and need to be developed further.

**8.2.5. Are there significant relationships between teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes and their personal or professional characteristics, such as age, teaching experience, and previous SEN training?**

Previous research contains little analysis of relationships between personal/professional variables and competencies. Some differences have, however, been reported in relation to attitudes. Catlett (1989) in the USA found older teachers to be less flexible than younger ones in attitudes towards pupils with SEN. Also in the USA, Larrivee (1979; 1981) found evidence of significant differences in teacher attitudes in relation to a number of variables including age, gender, qualification and experience. There is also

qualitative evidence of more favourable attitudes following experience of teaching pupils with SEN (e.g. Al-Khashrami, 1995).

In contrast, few such relationships were found in this study. Teachers aged under 30 years had the highest competency (level of agreement) scores for all dimensions except Counselling, but the difference reached the level of statistical significance only for Use of Resources. Despite the fact that teachers in this study had qualified under a variety of different systems, many of them having trained before teaching was made a graduate profession, no significant difference was found, among teachers of different qualifications, in their perceptions of their competencies. This suggests that despite successive initiatives to modernise and upgrade teacher training, there has been no impact on preparedness to teach pupils with SEN. This finding is consistent with teachers' reports of their training background in the questionnaires, and with the comments made in interview by all three groups of respondents.

Consistent with previous research, the variable found in this study to be most strongly associated with differences in perceived competencies and training needs was experience of teaching children with SEN. This was significant in relation to teachers' perceptions of their attitudes and instructional competencies and to their perceptions of their training needs in Assessment, and Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction. In each case, teachers who had experience of teaching pupils with SEN had more favourable perceptions. This finding supports the qualitative evidence of positive effects of experience with pupils with SEN reported by Al-Khashrami (1995). Hegarty et al. (1981) and Catlett (1999) similarly reported teachers' development of more positive attitudes to pupils with SEN over time, as they gained experience of interacting with them and their initial feelings of intimidation were overcome.



The fact that experience with SEN emerges as the factor that has most impact on teachers' perceptions of their competencies suggests the importance of teachers having opportunities to gain such experience, perhaps through "shadowing" colleagues, and through appropriate placements as part of teacher preparation programmes. Collaboration with experienced special educators was one of the factors mentioned by Catlett (1999) as contributing to teachers' increasing confidence in their ability to work with children with SEN, and would be consistent with the expressed preference of teachers (Table 7.33) for individual help from specialist teachers. As regards pre-service placements, Garner (2000) has, as indicated in Chapter Three, drawn attention to the need for trainee teachers to have mandatory and structured opportunities to experience special/inclusive education in practice, and Mittler (1992) describes a teacher preparation course in which all students complete a two-week placement of this kind. It seems likely, moreover, that simply through having children with SEN in ordinary classrooms, teachers will over time develop confidence in teaching them (Catlett, 1999); however, experience alone should not be regarded as a substitute for ongoing, structured, supported opportunities to acquire and develop core skills (Garner, 2000).

**8.2.6. Do participants perceive a need for teachers to receive further (or different) training in relation to SEN? If so, in what particular aspects?**

With Saudi Arabia's increasing progress in implementing more inclusive education (Al-Mousa, 2000), teachers will need to be prepared for more and wider ranging SEN in the classroom. Not surprisingly, then, all three groups surveyed expressed a strong need for mainstream teachers to receive more training, both pre-service and in-service, related to SEN. Such training is an essential pre-requisite for "responsible inclusion" (Vaughn and Schumm, 1995; Gains, 2001; Hornby, 2001).



Regarding the specific aspects in which training is needed, certain dimensions emerged from the questionnaire responses as being of particular concern to teachers.

They expressed most need for training in relation to the Knowledge dimension. Within that dimension, the item scores show that teachers perceived most training need in relation to learning theories and their application (matching their low perception of competence, see 8.2.4.). Although they have studied learning theories as part of their pre-service training, they lack confidence in their ability to apply them in relation to SEN. Previous researchers on teacher preparation in a Saudi context (Al-Sadan, 1997; Kabli, 1999) have criticised it for being overly theoretical in orientation, and suggested that student teachers need more guidance on and opportunities for the practical application of theory. The present finding is in line with such reports. It is also consistent with the point made in the previous section, regarding the importance of teachers' having practical experience with children who have SEN, a point emphasised by Garner (2000). Interestingly, in interviews, Knowledge needs were the priorities most frequently identified by teacher trainers (Table 7.6.6.), but their suggestions focused more on theory, "Knowledge of the concept of SEN", whereas 15 of the 19 teachers interviewed wanted to know how to apply knowledge "to deal with" pupils with SEN.

The dimension that ranked second in terms of teachers' perceptions of training need was Assessment, Evaluation and Recording. Within Assessment, the greatest need was expressed for training to be able to identify SEN; a similar concern was raised in interviews, where half the teachers identified this as a training priority.

As indicated previously (section 8.2.4.) the ability to identify children's needs is fundamental to inclusion. In the UK's 1994 Code of Practice (DfES, 1994), for example, identification of need was the first stage in a three-stage process of

arrangements for meeting SEN, and it was a stage where the class teacher was given the main responsibility. Assessment activities have a number of applications in relation to meeting SEN, for example, as an input to programme planning and placement decisions (Stakes and Hornby, 2000). In this respect it is notable that teachers' second ranked training need in this dimension was constructing a pupil profile. The fact that they wanted more training on this, even though it was one of the items in the dimension in which they already felt more competent, suggests that they regarded this as an important activity.

In the area of Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction, teachers expressed training needs mainly in relation to three items: assessing the effectiveness of materials and activities, organising a flexible programme of instruction, and planning and preparing special materials and lessons. The second of these items received some support from two teacher trainers interviewed, who specifically referred to the need for teachers to be able to construct an Individual Education Plan, while the importance of teachers' acquiring and developing the third skill is reflected in the major role played by the use of visual and tactile teaching aids among the strategies reported in interview (Table 7.43), particularly by teachers who had received training in relation to SEN. All of these skills are important for implementing the philosophy of inclusion, which highlights the necessity of responding to student diversity (Ainscow, 1991).

There were, however, other skills in relation to response to diversity, in which teachers perceived their training needs much lower. They ranked lowest in the Assessment dimension their training need in relation to using evaluation outcomes to set and modify objectives. They also perceived themselves as having low need for training in relation to Curriculum Adaptation, even though as indicated previously, they did not rate highly their competence in this area. Moreover, in the Instructional Competencies dimension

they rated low (4<sup>th</sup> in the dimension) the item, “develop an appropriate instructional sequence”. It is not clear why these activities were rated as low training needs. It was not the case that teachers perceived themselves as highly competent in these skills, as we have seen. This raises the question whether teachers think the prescribed curriculum and text books leave them no need or scope for carrying out these activities themselves. Educational supervisors and teacher trainers, however, both identified the flexible use of teaching strategies and methods as training priorities for teachers.

Although the questionnaire showed Instructional Competencies generally to be perceived as an area where there was low training need, teachers perceived themselves as needing guidance on task analysis (questionnaire item 28). Pupils with learning difficulties need learning to be broken down into short steps (Stakes and Hornby, 2000). However, the difference in priority attached by teachers to training in this item and the one on development of instructional sequence suggests that they may not have fully understood the reason for performing task analysis, and the link between analysis of the task and development of an instructional sequence on the basis of that analysis.

Little training need was expressed in relation to Management of Behaviour, overall. However, both questionnaire and interview responses indicated training need in facilitating the social integration of children with SEN. The importance attached to social integration within the inclusion philosophy is reflected in a number of indicators in the Index for Inclusion (Booth et al., 2000): for example, the Culture dimension of “Building Community”, which includes making all pupils feel welcome, pupils helping each other, and relations of mutual respect; and the Policy element of arranging groups in a way that promotes social cohesion. Garner (2001), however, deplors what he considers the consistent failure of teacher preparation to provide significant input into the so-called “pastoral curriculum”. He asserts the need for teacher training to cover



this area by quoting Laslett's (1977) argument that any academic progression the pupils achieve "come about through achievements the children make in forming and sustaining successful relationships with others" (p. 111). Clearly, Saudi teachers recognise this importance, and feel a need to learn more about how they can promote satisfying relationships and self-esteem among pupils with SEN.

Almost half the teachers expressed needs for training in relation to each of the items in the Use of Resources dimension. Their need in relation to the item on parental involvement confirms the importance they attached to this activity in their Level of Agreement responses, and is consistent with the vital role envisaged for parents, as partners in the educational process, within an inclusive philosophy (DfES, 2001a). Access to community resources is also a key feature of inclusion, which sees educational inclusion as an aspect of wider social inclusion. Thus, one of the indicators proposed by Booth et al. (2000) is "Community resources are known and drawn upon". Teachers' need for help in this respect is consistent with concerns raised in the exploratory phase of the study, regarding both resources and social attitudes to pupils with learning difficulties.

Training needs were also expressed in relation to Counselling, Communication and Collaboration and specifically communication with other professionals. Skills in this area are needed for the multi-agency approach to meeting SEN advocated in, for example, the new Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a). Teachers' interest in this matter is confirmed by the interview finding that 16 of the 19 teachers favoured consulting a relevant specialist, either as a sole solution, or in conjunction with other strategies, if they had a problem in relation to a pupil with SEN.

Teachers expressed lower training needs, however, in relation to communication with colleagues. This is a skill that is frequently emphasised in the inclusion literature; Stoll



(1991) considers teacher collegiality and development to be a characteristic of effective schools, while Booth et al. (2000) propose the indicator, “Teachers plan, teach and review in partnership”. Teachers’ low rating of training need in this area was not linked with a high rating for their competence. This raises the question why they did not perceive this as a training need, and whether there may be a lack of awareness of the potentially valuable role of relationships with colleagues as a source of support for inclusion.

Overall, the findings in relation to training need suggest that teachers need training in relation to several dimensions of teaching children with SEN, with particular attention to the identification of such children, and to practical ways of applying teaching theory to respond flexibly to the diverse needs they may encounter.

### **8.3. Recommendations for Practice**

The findings of this study have highlighted the need of mainstream primary teachers in Saudi Arabia, of competencies to deal with children in their classes who have SEN. There is a need for a range of training and advice to be available and known about, so teachers can avail themselves of it as and when they need it, and in the form that is most convenient and acceptable to them. With this consideration in mind, the following recommendations are offered:

- 1. Modules related to teaching pupils with SEN should be introduced more widely in the pre-service programmes of colleges and university departments of education.**

Only Riyadh University currently has a department of special education, which is concerned primarily with the preparation of specialist teachers to teach in special

schools, classes and programmes (see Chapter Two). Training for mainstream teachers may make little or no mention of SEN. Only 10 of the teachers surveyed had received pre-service training related to SEN, and of those, 5 were specialists. Moreover, more than half the educational supervisors interviewed thought teachers were unable to help pupils with SEN due to lack of training (Table 7.53). Those teachers whose pre-service training included elements related to SEN reported various short courses, of durations ranging from one week to one semester (Table 7.7). According to the Declaration on Education for All (European Association of Special Education, 1995), teacher training should be comprehensive and include the basic principles of the education of children with SEN in order to allow inclusive education. Similarly, Garner (2000) expresses concerns regarding the conceptual and practical preparation of teachers to teach children with SEN in inclusive settings.

Rather than introduce a completely new course, it is recommended that appropriate material be inserted into the present training programme. This would be consistent with the recommendations made in interview by both educational supervisors and teacher trainers that existing curricula be improved/expanded (Tables 7.60 and 7.71). Such an approach is favoured by Booth (2000), who argues that inclusion should be part of the approach to education in all courses, rather than a separate subject. This would also be consistent with the principle that competencies for teaching pupils with SEN are competencies that are beneficial in teaching all students (Ainscow, 1999).

Regarding the content of the proposed new input into pre-service courses, three areas, in particular, stand out from the findings, which are recognised as training needs by teachers, educational supervisors and teacher trainers, and which are important in the inclusion literature. The first is training to identify potential special needs. Noticing when a pupil is experiencing difficulties at school and identifying his/her needs is the

first step towards teaching to meet those needs (Stakes and Hornby, 2000) and teachers acknowledged a strong need for training in this area, which was supported by the comments of educational supervisors (Table 7.62) and teacher trainers (Table 7.66). For example, teachers can be taught that unclear speech, confusion and withdrawal may be signs of conductive hearing loss, and that clumsiness, frowning and frequent headaches may indicate a visual difficulty.

The second main area that should be emphasised is the key issue of classroom pedagogy (Garner, 2001). Teachers surveyed in this study expressed needs in relation to the practical application of learning theories to pupils with SEN (Table 7.10), the ability to organise a flexible programme of instruction (Table 7.13) and the ability to prepare special materials and lessons (Table 7.13). Supervisors and teacher trainers drew attention to the importance of teachers' being able to use a variety of teaching strategies, while specialist teachers' responses in Table 7.34 revealed their use of visual and tactile aids to help students with SEN. By highlighting and giving practical experience in such skills, teaching methods courses can help trainee teachers to develop teaching competencies to respond flexibly to all students.

The other main issue to which special attention should be paid in pre-service courses is social integration. The ability to facilitate the social integration of pupils with SEN was the strongest priority expressed by teachers in the Behaviour Management section of the survey (Table 7.16) and was raised by all three groups in interview. As noted earlier, social integration is central to inclusion and part of its rationale, both for reasons of human dignity (Epstein, 1984) and as a facilitator of academic success (Laslett, 1977). The Index for Inclusion (Booth et al., 2000) offers some stimulating ideas for discussion and reflection, which trainee teachers might be encouraged to consider; for example, in Dimension A, Creating inclusive cultures, contains a sub-division, A.1. Building



community, in which one of the indicators is “students help each other”; there follow a series of questions exploring this theme. Similarly, under Dimension C, Evolving inclusive practices, are ideas on the theme of collaborative learning. While such ideas can help trainee and practising teachers to explore issues in inclusion, more concrete strategies for fostering social integration can be found in, for example, Epstein (1984).

It is not only the content of training that is important, however, but how it is delivered. Since teachers tend to teach as they themselves were taught (Al-Agla, 2000) it is important that teacher preparation should provide models of good practice. Co-operative learning methods are appropriate in inclusive settings (see Chapter Three) and help to facilitate social integration. It would therefore be desirable to model such methods to trainee teachers by incorporating them in the training process. It is also important that training incorporate sufficient practical work, in view of Al-Sadan’s (1997) criticisms of overly theoretical teacher preparation and teachers’ perceived need to know how to apply theories in practice (Table 7.10). Above all, teacher training should encourage critical reflection (Slee, 1999) as the stimulus to ongoing development of more inclusive cultures, policies and practices.

- 2. In-service training programmes of varying length and format should be made available as part of a programme of professional development, to enhance teachers’ skills and confidence in dealing with pupils with SEN, in the light of the trend to inclusion.**

Teachers’ willingness to teach pupils with SEN in mainstream classes has been linked to the availability of training (Jacobsen and Sawatsky, 1993), while the importance of ongoing professional development in relation to inclusion has been highlighted by, among others, Vaughn and Schumm (1995) and Garner (2000). The teacher survey in this study revealed that only 3 teachers had received in-service training (Table 7.8), yet



they expressed needs for training in almost all the competency areas, and a general willingness to receive training (Table 7.33). Both supervisors (Table 7.61) and Teacher Trainers (Table 7.72) drew attention to the importance and need of training in relation to SEN for serving teachers.

A basic distinction can be made between short and long-term programmes. Short-term programmes could consist of one-day workshops, short series of weekly sessions, or intensive programmes of, say, one to three weeks' duration, each covering topics, identified as training needs by teachers, supervisors and teacher trainers.

1. Identification of pupils with SEN
2. Theories of learning and their application to pupils with SEN
3. Adaptive teaching strategies
4. Planning and preparing special materials
5. Multi-agency communication and collaboration for pupils with SEN

The rationale underlying most of these topics has already been discussed in relation to pre-service training, and will not be repeated here. They are listed again to emphasise that there are training needs in these areas for teachers currently working in primary schools in Saudi Arabia. The last topic listed, multi-agency communication and collaboration, is desirable in the light of teachers' expressed need for training in communication with other professionals, and in the importance attached to a multi-agency approach to meeting special needs expressed in, for example, the UK Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a). This topic might be particularly appropriately covered in short workshops or seminars, bringing together not only teachers, but also administrators, school counsellors, health unit personnel and others with responsibilities in relation to special educational needs.

Longer-term programmes held, for instance, on one evening a week for a year, could be offered. These might cover, in addition to the topics mentioned above, such matters as adaptation of curricula and materials for pupils with SEN. Curriculum adaptation was not rated highly as a training need by teachers (Table 7.14), perhaps because of the centrally prescribed Saudi curriculum (see Chapter Two). However, an important principle of inclusion is access to the curriculum, and even within a centralised curriculum, teachers should be encouraged to reflect on how they can help to make lessons accessible to all pupils.

In addition to the above, special topics such as Arabic Sign language, could be offered, depending on identified local need.

**3. A cascade model of training might be considered, whereby one teacher in a school is nominated to attend a training event and then to pass on the information and ideas obtained, to his colleagues.**

The findings of this study suggest that there are large numbers of teachers who may need and wish to receive training. At the same time, many teachers appeared less willing to take on a long-term training commitment, or one that would impinge on their family responsibilities (Table 7.33). Moreover, the widespread dissemination of training has obvious budget and staffing implications, as well as raising the problem of providing teaching cover for teachers who are absent to attend training.

In a situation of wide need and few models of good practice (there are, for example, as yet only two counsellor teacher programmes – Table 2.3), the cascade model of training offers a way of maximising the benefit from limited training resources. Booth (2000) advocates such models as one way of meeting the widespread need for training of teachers in relation to inclusion.

The cascade approach would enable training to be disseminated more widely, to teachers who might otherwise be unable to be reached, for example, those who are unable to attend courses, one of the constraints mentioned by teacher trainers. Teachers themselves expressed a wish for training from colleagues (Table 7.33) and the cascade approach would be a way of forming collegial links among school staff, and reinforcing the idea that inclusion is a whole-school responsibility.

**4. Opportunities should be made available for teachers to observe classes by teachers with experience in dealing with SEN.**

Teachers expressed as their second training preference (Table 7.33) a wish for such opportunities. Since some schools have resource room or learning difficulties programmes staffed by qualified special education teachers (Al-Mousa, 2000), it would be useful to draw on their expertise. Garner (2001) advocates using the skill and background of teachers in special education as a way of advancing conceptual thinking about inclusion, as well as providing hands-on expertise. Such an approach is likely to be welcomed by Saudi teachers, some of whom already try to consult such specialists when they have a problem in relation to a pupil with SEN. Another benefit of bringing mainstream teachers together with their specialist-trained colleagues in this way would be to break down the barriers between special and general education noted by, for example, Catlett (1999) and implied by the comment of some teacher trainers regarding a narrow-minded approach to specialisation. By encouraging communication with colleagues, which was ranked low as a teacher competence in this study (Table 7.18 it might also encourage collegiality, an important characteristic of effective inclusive schools (Stoll, 1991; Ainscow, 1999).

5. Within each region, teachers' resource centres could be set up, which would maintain a collection of information materials and teaching resources which teachers could borrow, to support their teaching of pupils with SEN.

Teachers' third training preference (Table 7.33) was to receive materials such as books and videos. This finding was reinforced by the need for books and journals, expressed by the teachers interviewed (Table 7.42). It is also important for teachers to have access to suitable teaching aids to use with pupils who have SEN, but when asked about strategies used in teaching pupils with SEN, only specialist teachers mentioned such aids (Table 7.37). Indeed, lack of such resources in mainstream schools was one of the issues raised by the exploratory phase of the study (Chapter Five); moreover, resource constraints were mentioned by half the educational supervisors interviewed (Table 7.54). All these findings highlight the need for some mechanism for making resources available to mainstream teachers, as one of the requirements of responsible inclusion (Kidd, 1993).

One possibility would be for such centres to be set up in the universities, since they are likely already to have some resources which would be of interest and value to serving teachers. Moreover, the universities were the first institutions in the Kingdom to be opened to the Internet and would therefore afford the opportunity for teachers to make use of facilities such as on-line journals. Over the longer term, a new role as teacher resource centres might be found for special schools, many of which will become redundant and be closed down as inclusion proceeds (Al-Mousa, 2000).



**6. Schools which have special programmes taught by qualified special needs teachers could act as local resource centres.**

As indicated in Chapter Two (Table 2.3) there are over 300 mainstream primary schools in the Kingdom with resource room programmes, and a further 187 with attached special classes.

Such schools already have resources designed for pupils with SEN, and staff who know how to use them. It would be helpful for teachers more generally to have access to such materials. It may be possible for a cluster of schools within an area to co-operate to share resources, maintaining a communal 'library' on which teachers could draw to enhance their teaching. This approach would be in line with Booth's (2000) suggestion that mainstream schools can be helped towards inclusion by arranging learning centres in clusters, to share knowledge and resources.

**7. Programmes of continuing professional development should be made available to educational supervisors, school principals and school counsellors to raise their knowledge in the area of SEN.**

The interviews conducted in the course of this research indicated that many supervisors are untrained in the area of SEN (Table 7.53) and lack the experience and specialist knowledge to advise and support teachers in their dealings with SEN. Some educational supervisors, however, already have specialist knowledge; one of those interviewed was supervising special programmes. Such experts could be invited to give talks and lead workshops, not only for teachers, but also for their fellow educational supervisors. The aim should be for all educational supervisors to have a basic level of knowledge and awareness, sufficient to enable them to advise teachers on simple strategies and direct them to appropriate sources of information. A limited number of

educational supervisors in each region should have more detailed SEN knowledge, and be available to be called on by teachers and by regular educational supervisors, for help in solving more complex or intractable problems.

Although principals and school counsellors were not an explicit focus of this study, they too should be provided with training as part of an integrated policy of inclusion. The need for principals to be trained in awareness of SEN and the implications of inclusion for their schools emerged in the exploratory phase of this study (Chapter Five). In relation to school counsellors, it was indicated in Chapter Two that these have certain responsibilities in relation to pupils with SEN, and in both phases of this study, referral to the school counsellor was found to be one of the solutions adopted by teachers when they face a problem with a child with SEN. Yet, as indicated in Chapter Two, school counsellors often lack a specific counselling qualification, and for those that have such a qualification, there is little in their training explicitly related to SEN. Involvement of principals and school counsellors in training would facilitate the sort of whole-school response necessary for effective inclusion.

#### **8.4. Critical Evaluation of the Study**

This research has made a useful first contribution to identifying the concerns of Saudi primary school teachers in relation to their perceived competence to deal with pupils with SEN in mainstream classes, and the training and support they may need to help them to cope with the challenge of inclusion.

A particular strength of the study has been the high rate of response obtained from teachers. This has very positive implications for the representativeness of the sample and therefore increases confidence in the validity of the findings. The high response rate is also an important indication of teachers' interest and co-operation. It suggests a

high level of concern and engagement with the subject of the research, from which it may be inferred that any initiatives to provide additional training and support in the area of teaching children with SEN are likely to be favourably received.

As further evidence of the validity of inferences drawn from the findings, it is noteworthy that the numbers of “not sure” responses were not high, except for 13 items, the majority of them confined to the two dimensions of Assessment and Planning. Teachers were giving considered responses, not seeking refuge in the neutral option.

Another strength of the research is its consideration of multiple perspectives. Although the main focus has been on teachers, as the people most directly affected by the inclusion in the mainstream of pupils with SEN, it has also obtained insights from teacher trainers and educational supervisors, which set the teachers’ responses in context and provide insights into the wider training and administrative issues raised by inclusion. These groups will inevitably have key roles to play in any attempt to address teachers’ support and training needs, and it is therefore important, both to raise their awareness of teachers’ perceptions of their needs, and also to take account, in planning any new initiatives, of the understanding gained from such groups regarding resource constraints, areas of responsibility and expertise, and the like.

Nevertheless, this research, like any other, has its limitations, with regard both to its objectives and to its methods, which need to be borne in mind in interpreting the findings, and which point to the need for further research.

A major limitation of the research was that the survey was confined to teachers’ perceptions; no objective measurement of competencies was attempted. Thus, it is not possible to know whether teachers actually have the competencies they think they have, or whether they use them in practice. There were, as indicated in Chapter Five, good



reasons why it was not feasible or desirable in this exploratory study to attempt to measure competencies. Nevertheless, the absence of any such measure raises questions, especially in view of contradictions in some responses, for example, those related to parental involvement, which suggest a need for measurement in future.

There are also limitations related to the nature of the sample. Perhaps the most obvious is the fact that, for cultural reasons, this research was confined to boys' schools and male teachers. It is possible that different findings would be obtained in girls' schools; for example, the distinct gender roles in Saudi culture may influence academic expectations on female pupils, or female teachers' responses to SEN.

The present study was also, due to time and resource constraints, confined to a single geographic region. As indicated in Chapter Two, the Saudi education system is in most respects homogeneous, due to the highly centralised decision-making. However, there may be regional differences in the incidence of pupils with SEN, and in the resources available to schools. Also, special programmes such as resource rooms may not be equally distributed. Therefore, it cannot be known how typical is the sample of this research in terms of their experience of children with SEN or their perceptions of their competencies and the difficulties they face.

It is also important to bear in mind that, although this research encompassed three distinct groups within the education sector, other groups with interests in relation to the education of pupils with SEN were not included within its scope. Because the survey was confined to the public (state) school system, it did not include teachers in private schools. Nor did it include the various charitable institutions and organisations which, as indicated in Chapter Two, have an important role in educational and social provision for individuals with SEN. These were considered outside the scope of the present study, as their provisions are segregated rather than inclusive. Nevertheless, they



constitute an important pool of expertise and experience, on which it may be useful to draw in the future.

Parents of children with SEN were also excluded from the present study. Issues of social stigma and family privacy would make their inclusion difficult and would require great sensitivity, but it is important to recognise that they may have valuable insights to contribute, regarding their perceptions of their children's academic progress and social integration. The parents' voice is important in inclusion, as reflected in the strengthened emphasis on parental choice in the UK Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a).

In the light of these limitations of the research, and other issues raised in the earlier discussion, future research possibilities are identified in the next section.

### **8.5 Possibilities for Future Research**

As indicated in the previous section, there are certain perspectives which could not be incorporated in the present study. Moreover, some issues have been raised by the findings that warrant further investigation. The following suggestions are therefore made, for research to complement and build on the contribution of this study.

1. The discrepancy between educational supervisors' assertions that most schools contain children with SEN (Table 7.51), and the claims by the majority of teachers that they had never taught such children (Table 7.5), raises issues of how SEN is being defined, and how children are identified as having SEN. There is, therefore, a need for research to identify more clearly how many and what categories of children with SEN are actually present in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia, and how far they are catered for in special programmes or are retained in the regular classroom.

2. It would be useful in the future to have some form of measurement of teachers' actual competencies, as demonstrated in their classroom practice, and/or reflected in their responses to simulations and hypothetical scenarios. The written protocols and classroom observation schedules discussed in Chapter Four might provide a useful starting point for such research. Consideration could also be given to the use of information and communications technology to develop new ways of analysing teachers' knowledge and skills, for example by providing computer-simulated alternatives to the hypothetical scenarios of the written protocols, which would incorporate greater interactivity.
3. Given the gender limitations of the present research, studies should also be carried out in girls' schools and among women teachers. The most effective way to achieve this, consistent with Saudi cultural norms, would be for the General Presidency for Girls' Education, in conjunction with women's colleges and women's departments in universities, to encourage and sponsor female researchers to undertake such research.
4. Similar studies should be carried out in other regions of Saudi Arabia, in order to compile a nation-wide picture of teachers' perceptions of their competencies and training needs and to identify any regional variations (demographic, socio-economic, infrastructural, and so on) which may influence the kind of educational provision available and needed. This would provide a firmer basis for the planning of pre-service and in-service teacher training and the provision of material, informational and moral support to teachers working with pupils with SEN.
5. It would be useful to investigate the knowledge and expertise in relation to SEN that exists in the private sector. It would be useful to identify, for example, whether teachers in private schools differ from those in state schools, in the extent to which

they encounter children with SEN, and in their perceptions of their competencies to teach such children, especially in view of the differences that may exist in the resources available to support teachers, for example, with up-to-date educational technology.

6. Although, for the reasons indicated in Chapter Five, children with SEN in Saudi Arabia are most likely to be encountered in primary schools, it is possible that some continue to intermediate schools; it has also been indicated (see Chapter One) that such children are often directed to vocational schools, and even adult literacy programmes. The competencies perceived and used by teachers in those schools, when dealing with pupils with SEN, should therefore be investigated. In particular, in view of the claims by some advocates of inclusion that much 'special need' is socially created as a result of the academic emphasis on mainstream schooling, it would be interesting to find out whether teachers whose work is vocationally rather than academically oriented differ from their colleagues in mainstream academic education, in their attitudes towards pupils with SEN and their competence.
7. Parents' perspective on the education of their children with SEN should be explored. This is especially important and interesting in view of the contradictions found in the present study in teachers' perceptions of parental involvement; on the one hand, they rated highly the importance of such involvement, and rated highly their ability to communicate with parents, while on the other, some complained that the level of involvement is low. It would be of interest, therefore, to know how parents perceive the amount and quality of communication with the school in relation to their children with SEN, and what they think teachers are doing/should be doing to help their children, academically and socially.

8. In this study, the perspective of SEN was very broad; teachers, educational supervisors and teacher trainers were asked about their perceptions in relation to SEN in general. It would be useful in future to explore competencies and training needs in relation to specific categories of SEN. This would help in identifying the need for and developing training programmes for teachers who may wish to develop expertise in a particular area of interest, or who are faced with specific problems, such as a hearing-impaired child who uses sign language.
9. In this research, a specific focus was placed on children with SEN; however, it was indicated in Chapter Three that in the view of many educationists, the competencies required for effective teaching of children with SEN in the mainstream are the competencies required for effective teaching of all children, with or without SEN. It is possible that the low level of confidence among teachers in this study, in their ability to adapt their teaching to children with SEN, is a reflection of a lack of confidence in their teaching competencies more generally, especially if they have little professional autonomy and few opportunities for professional development. It would be useful, therefore, to carry out a survey such as this one, which explores teachers' perceived and/or actual competencies in relation to all children, not only those with SEN. Such research would help to identify whether there may be a need to modify or add to current training, to ensure teachers have the competence and confidence to respond to pupil need in ways that would benefit all children, including those with SEN.

## **8.6. Concluding Remarks**

Saudi Arabia has, in recent years, made great progress in the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream schools. However, there is evidence that teacher preparation and continuing professional development have not kept pace with this trend. Consequently,



mainstream primary teachers lack confidence in their ability to identify children in their classes who may have special needs, and to adapt their teaching accordingly. It is hoped that this study will contribute in raising awareness of this issue, and constitute a first step towards the provision of appropriate training opportunities for pre-service and serving teachers in the Kingdom. Such training is a necessary component of “responsible inclusion” which promotes the greatest possible educational attainment and social fulfilment for all pupils.

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# APPENDICES

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **Interview Guide for the Exploratory**

### **Phase of the Research**

### **Question 1**

Do you have pupils (children) who experience learning difficulties? If yes, please specify the types of difficulties.

### **Question 2**

In your opinion, what are the reasons that might contribute to your students having learning difficulties, e.g. curriculum, IQ, teaching methods, time/pace?

### **Question 3**

What special help or support from teachers, counsellors, and/or the whole school do you believe these children require?

### **Question 4**

How/to what extent is the school able to provide this sort of support? If not, what are the problems?

### **Question 5**

To what extent do you think these children are able to establish meaningful relationships with their peers in school? Please say how.

### **Question 6**

How do you help them in this area?

### **Question 7**

What do you need to help them in this area?

### **Question 8**

What action do you take if you find a pupil has learning difficulties or repeatedly fails a grade? (For example, are they excluded from school? Does school call in the parents? Is there any mechanism for referring the child to medical, social or psychological services for further assessment/help?)

### **Question 9**

What training have you had to help you provide for these children?

- a) In pre-teacher training
- b) In-service training

### **Question 10**

What training would help you now to provide for these children?



## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Teacher Questionnaire**

- A.2.1. Covering letter accompanying teacher questionnaire.**
- A.2.2. Questionnaire, version 1.**
- A.2.3. Back translation of Sections II and III of questionnaire.**
- A.2.4. Reliability values, test retest, and Cronbach's alpha reliabilities of Questionnaire, version 1.**
- A.2.5. Questionnaire, version 2.**
- A.2.6. Reliability: simple correlation and Cronbach's alpha of Questionnaire, version 2.**
- A.2.7. Letter to school teachers from the Manager, Education Authority in Madinah.**

**A.2.1.**

**Covering letter accompanying teacher**

**Questionnaire**

27<sup>th</sup> September 2000

Dear Teacher

The attached survey is part of a doctoral research study to identify the training needs of teachers in boys' elementary schools in Saudi Arabia, to help them to teach children with special educational needs in mainstream classes. The results will provide useful data that will help to develop pre-service and in-service teacher training which, in turn, will benefit the pupils. Your participation would be a valuable contribution towards achieving those aims.

The information obtained during this study will be reported as aggregate data and used only for academic purposes. No information that could identify you will be revealed to any person or organisation.

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers; your honest opinion is all that is required.

Thank you for your assistance with this research. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the Department of Educational Psychology, Education College, Al-Madina, King Abdul Aziz University.

Yours sincerely

**Sayed Boqla**  
**Doctoral Researcher**

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I agree to be involved in this research.

Signed .....

**A.2.2.**

**Questionnaire, version 1**



# Directions

Please carefully read each question and mark the appropriate response.

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**Note:** Pupils with special educational needs are those who “are different from their peers in their cognitive, physical, emotional, sensory, behavioural, academic or communicative abilities”, and who need “adaptations of the learning requirements and school equipment by using methods, techniques and programmes to enable these pupils to make use of the natural education environment” (Al-Mosa, 1999, p. 41).

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## Section I : Formal Training

---

### Directions

Fill in the blanks or circle the answer that best describes your answer.

1. Approximately how many credit hours of training directly related to special needs did you have as part of your initial (i.e. pre-service) teacher training?  
.....

2. Have you had any in-service training related to special needs in the past 2 years?  
Yes  No

If yes, please describe briefly the theme (e.g. integration, lesson planning, assessment), type (e.g. seminar, workshop) and duration of the training.

Theme	Type	Duration
a) .....	.....	.....
b) .....	.....	.....
c) .....	.....	.....

## Section II : Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills in Relation to Special Needs

### Directions:

- Please assume you will be expected to work with special needs pupils in the regular classroom, in the following year.
- Carefully read each statement and indicate at what level you would feel able to work with special needs pupils, and the extent to which you think you need/wish for training in each competency.
- Please respond regardless of how often you may use these skills presently.
- Use the scales indicated.

For the following questions, circle the answer that best describes your views.

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

NS = I am not sure

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

DNA = I don't need at all

DN = I don't need

NS = I am not sure

D = I do need

SN = I strongly need

Knowledge		Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
1	I have a good understanding of child development.										
2	I know about theories of learning and their application to special educational needs.										
3	I know about legislation and policy in relation to special educational needs.										
4	I am aware of my ethical responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs										

	Attitudes	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is . . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
5	I feel that it is appropriate to include special needs pupils in my class.										
6	I am prepared to work with and teach special needs pupils.										
7	I am comfortable in working with special needs pupils										
8	I feel happy to deal with pupils with special learning needs.										
9	It is important to deal with pupils with special learning needs in order to develop their learning skills.										
10	I prefer to work with pupils with special learning needs than working with normal pupils.										
11	I do not feel happy when I work with pupils with special educational needs.										
12	The work with pupils with special educational needs is a waste of time.										
13	Teaching pupils with special educational needs is a very complicated task.										
Any further comments about your attitudes.		Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.									

	Assessment, Evaluation and Recording	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is . . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
14	I can identify potential special educational needs (sensory, physical, intellectual and behavioural).										
15	I feel able to informally assess the pupil's learning needs.										
16	I can evaluate the academic performance of the pupil, relative to my chosen goals and objectives.										
17	I can fairly and accurately assess the overall progress of every pupil, including those with SEN.										
18	I am able to construct a pupil profile based on observational data (formal and informal data).										
Any further comments about your assessment, evaluation and recording.		Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.									



	Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is . . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
19	I can set appropriate educational goals and objectives for pupils with SEN.										
20	I can organise a flexible programme of instruction to meet the needs of all pupils.										
21	I can organise the classroom to facilitate the instruction of all pupils, including those with SEN.										
22	I can create a suitable classroom environment for special needs pupils.										
23	I am able to identify material, equipment, and training that will aid me in teaching special needs pupils.										
24	I have the skills needed to assess the effectiveness of instructional materials and activities for special needs pupils.										
25	I have the ability to plan and prepare specialised materials and lessons for special needs pupils in my classroom.										
26	I can use evaluation outcomes as a basis for devising or altering objectives, methods and organisation.										
<b>Any further comments about your planning, organisation and management of instruction.</b>		<b>Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.</b>									

	Curriculum Adaptation	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is . . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
27	I can analyse curriculum materials to assess their appropriateness for a pupil with SEN.										
28	I can develop appropriate learning materials to meet the individual needs of a pupil with SEN.										

<p><b>Any further comments about your curriculum adaptation.</b></p>	<p><b>Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.</b></p>
--	--

	Instructional Competencies	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is . . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
29	I can perform an analysis of the instructional steps for the tasks I am teaching the pupil.										
30	I can analyse the concepts for the topic I am teaching.										
31	I can develop an appropriate instructional sequence for a pupil with special needs, based on the analysis of tasks and competencies.										
32	I can use varied teaching methods to meet the needs of the pupil.										

<p><b>Any further comments about your instructional competencies.</b></p>	<p><b>Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.</b></p>
---	--

	Management of Behaviour	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
33	I can use teaching methods suitable to attract the attention of my pupils.										
34	I can use behaviour management techniques appropriately.										
35	I can provide appropriate positive reinforcement to motivate pupils with SEN.										
36	I can devise and implement strategies to promote the social integration of pupils with SEN.										

<p><b>Any further comments about your management of behaviour.</b></p>	<p><b>Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.</b></p>
--	--

	Use of Resources (Materials and Human)	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
37	I can access community resources relevant to SEN using my social skills.										
38	I feel that it is important to use parents or guardians as partners in instructional efforts.										

<p><b>Any further comments about your use of resources (materials and human).</b></p>	<p><b>Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.</b></p>
---	--

	Counselling, Communication and Collaboration	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is . . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
39	I can give constructive feedback to colleagues regarding working with pupils with SEN.										
40	I can communicate and co-operate effectively with other professionals, e.g. doctor, social worker, psychologist, to help pupils with SEN.										
41	I can advise parents about how to help their child at home.										
42	I can guide pupils with SEN in the development of positive self-concept.										
43	I can communicate effectively with parents regarding pupils' ability and progress.										
Any further comments about your counselling, communication, collaboration.		Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.									



	Personal Skills	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
44	I have self-confidence because I exhibit a high degree of maturity.										
45	I show empathy, tact and sensitivity in my dealings with pupils.										
46	I am flexible and willing to learn from experience.										

**Do you have any further comments about any of the issues covered in this section?  
Is there anything else that, based on your experience, you think should be included?**

### Section III : Future Educational Opportunities

#### Directions:

Tick the box that best indicates your opinion, using the following scale:

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

NS = Not sure

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

		SA	A	NS	D	SD
47	In the future I would be interested in participating in additional training in the area of special needs.					
48	I would like to receive individual advice from consultants and / or specialists.					
49	I would like to receive teacher training materials (work books, videos, etc.)					
50	I would like to observe experienced special needs teachers.					
51	I would like to attend workshops (1-3 days) in the area of SEN.					
52	I would like in-service seminars (less than once a week) in the area of SEN.					
53	I would like to attend college credit course work (meeting once a week).					
54	I would like to attend professional days with my colleagues and specialists in SEN.					
55	I would like training at weekends.					
56	I would like training during summer holidays.					
57	I would like special release time during school to attend training.					
58	I would attend training after school.					

**Do you have any further comments about training opportunities?**

## Section IV : Personal and Professional Background

---

### Directions:

Please place a tick (✓) in the box by the answer that best describes you, or write your answer in the space provided.

1. How old are you?

- a) under 30
- b) 30 – 39
- c) 40 – 49
- d) 50 and over

2. How long have you been in teaching?

- a) Less than 5 years
- b) From 5 years to 10 years
- c) More than 10 years

3. Your teaching qualification?

- a) Bachelor in Elementary Education (4 years, from Teacher College)
- b) Bachelor in Education (4 years, from University)
- c) Diploma in Education (1 year, after BA or BSc)
- d) Diploma in Teaching (2 years, from Junior College)
- e) Other (please specify) .....

4. Year / Grade level taught (if you teach more than one, tick all that are relevant).

- | Year / Grade |                          |   |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> |



5. Do you have any experience of teaching pupils with special educational needs?

	Yes	No	If yes, for how long?
In a special school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....years
In a special class with a mainstream school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....years
In the regular class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....years

6. Do you think you receive the support you need to help you to teach pupils with special education needs?

	Yes	To a limited extent	No
From outside agencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From school administration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From parents and guardians.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**A.2.3.**

**Back-translation of Sections II and III of  
questionnaire**

## Back-Translation of Questionnaire Items

<b>I. Knowledge</b>	
1	I have a good knowledge of child growth.
2	I have knowledge of learning theories and their implications for special needs pupils.
3	I have knowledge of rules and regulations in relation to SEN.
4	I realise my ethical responsibilities to pupils with SEN.

<b>II. Attitudes</b>	
5	I believe it is appropriate to have special needs pupils in my class.
6	I have the readiness to work and teach special needs pupils.
7	I find it comfortable to work with special needs pupils.
8	I enjoy dealing with special needs pupils.
9	I feel it is important to deal with special needs pupils for developing their learning skills.
10	I prefer teaching special needs pupils to others.
11	I feel uncomfortable when dealing with special needs pupils.
12	Dealing with special needs pupils is a waste of time.
13	Teaching special needs pupils is a very tough task.

<b>III. Assessment, Evaluation and Recording</b>	
14	I can identify the potential special needs (sensory, physical, intellectual and behavioural).
15	I feel able to assess informally the special needs of the pupils.
16	I am able to assess the special needs pupils' achievement of the objectives.
17	I am able to assess precisely the progress of pupils in general and the special needs pupils in particular.
18	I am able to obtain information about the pupils' lives from observations and formal and informal evaluation.

<b>IV. Planning, Organisation and Management of Teaching</b>	
19	I am able to set objectives appropriate for special needs pupils.
20	I can organise a flexible programme, meeting all the pupils' needs.
21	I can organise the classroom activities of all the pupils, including the SEN pupils.
22	I am able to create an educational environment appropriate for the SEN pupils.
23	I can identify the appropriate content of the material, teaching methods and training needed for teaching the SEN pupils.
24	I have the necessary skills for assessing the effectiveness of the teaching material and activities of the SEN pupils.
25	I can plan and organise special materials and lessons for the SEN pupils.
26	I am able to employ assessment results to develop objectives, methods and management.

<b>V. Adaptation of Curriculum</b>	
27	I am able to analyse the content of the curriculum to assess its suitability for the SEN pupils.
28	I can devise appropriate teaching materials to meet the needs of individuals and the SEN pupils.

<b>VI. Teaching Competences</b>	
29	I am able to analyse the teaching procedures of the tasks I do for the SEN pupils.
30	I can analyse the concepts of the subject matter I teach.
31	I can develop teaching series suitable for the SEN pupils based on the analysis of tasks and competences.
32	I can use different teaching methods, meeting the pupils' needs.



<b>VII. Behaviour Management</b>	
33	I am able to attract and maintain the pupils' attention.
34	I can employ behaviour management methods effectively.
35	I can provide the SEN pupils with proper positive reinforcement.
36	I can devise and apply reinforcement strategies for social inclusion of the SEN pupils.

<b>VIII. Employment of Material and Human Resources</b>	
37	I have the knowledge and ability to access the community resources.
38	I believe it is important to involve parents or guardians as participants in education.

<b>IX. Counselling, Communication and Co-operation</b>	
39	I can give constructive feedback to colleagues about work with SEN pupils.
40	I can communicate and co-operate efficiently with other professionals (e.g. doctor (physician), social counsellor or psychologist) for the help of the SEN pupils.
41	I can give advice to the parents to help their child at home.
42	I can advise the SEN pupils to develop their positive self-concept.
43	I am able to communicate effectively with the parents about the pupils' abilities and progress.

<b>X. Personal Skills</b>	
44	I have a high level of maturity and self-confidence.
45	I enjoy sympathy, elegance and consideration of the pupils' feelings.
46	I have the flexibility and readiness to learn from experience.

<b>XI. Further Educational Opportunities</b>	
47	I will be interested to participate in additional training in special education needs.
48	I would like to receive guidance from specialists or consultants.
49	I would like to receive special scientific materials for teacher training (practice books, videos etc.).
50	I would like to observe other teachers while teaching the SEN pupils.
51	I would like to attend training workshops (1-3 days) related to SEN.
52	I would like to attend in-service training seminars (less than one day) on SEN.
53	I would like to participate in college-level programmes (once a week).
54	I would like to participate in the professional days with my colleagues and specialists in SEN.
55	I would like to participate in weekend training.
56	I would like to attend summer training.
57	I would like to have leave for in-service training.
58	I would like to participate in training after school time.

## **A.2.4.**

# **Reliability values, test retest, and Cronbach's alpha reliabilities**

**Table 1****The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
1	I have a good understanding of child development	0.538	.515
2	I know about theories of learning and their application to special educational needs.	0.526	.564
3	I know about legislation and policy in relation to special educational needs.	0.501	.530
4	I am aware of my ethical responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs.	0.600	.565
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.86	0.79
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.96	0.81

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01



**Table 2**

**The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Attitudes</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
5	I feel that it is appropriate to include special needs pupils in my class.	0.382	0.569
6	I am prepared to work with and teach special needs pupils.	0.434	0.441
7	I am comfortable in working with special needs pupils.	0.429	0.521
8	I feel happy to deal with pupils with special learning needs.	0.460	0.534
9	It is important to deal with pupils with special learning needs in order to develop their learning skills.	0.385	0.536
10	I prefer to work with pupils with special learning needs than working with pupils who do not have special needs.	0.440	0.583
11	I do not feel happy when I work with pupils with special educational needs.	0.440	0.671
12	The work with pupils with special educational needs is a waste of time.	0.440	.414
13	Teaching pupils with special educational needs is a very complicated task.	0.455	0.542
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.72	0.63
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.60	0.83

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 3****The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Assessment, Evaluation and Recording</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
14	I can identify potential special educational needs (sensory, physical, intellectual and behavioural).	.472	0.609
15	I feel able to informally assess the pupil's learning needs.	0.480	0.449
16	I can evaluate the academic performance of the pupil, relative to my chosen goals and objectives.	0.493	0.428
17	I can fairly and accurately assess the overall progress of every pupil, including those with SEN.	0.508	0.467
18	I am able to construct a pupil profile based on observational data (formal and informal data).	0.506	0.514
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.69	0.70
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.93	0.58

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 4****The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
19	I can set appropriate educational goals and objectives for pupils with SEN.	0.445	0.520
20	I can organise a flexible programme of instruction to meet the needs of all pupils.	0.550	0.526
21	I can organise the classroom to facilitate the instruction of all pupils, including those with SEN.	0.637	0.427
22	I can create a suitable classroom environment for special needs pupils.	0.549	0.449
23	I am able to identify material, equipment, and training that will aid me in teaching special needs pupils.	0.560	0.602
24	I have the skills needed to assess the effectiveness of instructional materials and activities for special needs pupils.	0.514	0.443
25	I have the ability to plan and prepare specialised materials and lessons for special needs pupils in my classroom.	0.512	0.629
26	I can use evaluation outcomes as a basis for devising or altering objectives, methods and organisation.	0.446	0.574
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.68	0.72
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.64	0.65

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 5****The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Curriculum Adaptation</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
27	I can analyse curriculum materials to assess their appropriateness for a pupil with SEN.	0.439	0.467
28	I can develop appropriate learning materials to meet the individual needs of a pupil with SEN.	0.522	0.560
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.69	0.67
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.57	0.64

- all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 6****The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Instructional Competencies</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
29	I can perform an analysis of the instructional steps for the tasks I am teaching the pupil.	0.537	0.674
30	I can analyse the concepts for the topic I am teaching.	0.502	0.541
31	I can develop an appropriate instructional sequence for a pupil with special needs, based on the analysis of tasks and competencies.	0.661	0.715
32	I can use varied teaching methods to meet the needs of the pupil.	0.580	0.785
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.68	0.69
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.65	0.89

- \* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01



**Table 7****The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Management of Behaviour</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
33	I can use teaching methods suitable to attract the attention of my pupils.	0.654	0.571
34	I can use behaviour management techniques appropriately.	0.426	0.468
35	I can provide appropriate positive reinforcement to motivate pupils with SEN.	0.580	0.564
36	I can devise and implement strategies to promote the social integration of pupils with SEN.	0.689	0.596
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.63	0.67
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.60	0.68

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 8****The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Use of Resources (Materials and Human)</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
37	I can access community resources relevant to SEN using my social skills.	0.529	0.552
38	I feel that it is important to use parents or guardians as partners in instructional efforts.	0.534	0.432
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.69	0.65
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.81	0.69

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 9**

**The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Counselling, Communication and Collaboration</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
39	I can give constructive feedback to colleagues regarding working with pupils with SEN.	0.412	0.411
40	I can communicate and co-operate effectively with other professionals, e.g. doctor, social worker, psychologist, to help pupils with SEN.	0.640	0.518
41	I can advise parents about how to help their child at home.	0.484	0.556
42	I can guide pupils with SEN in the development of positive self-concept.	0.535	0.461
43	I can communicate effectively with parents regarding pupils' ability and progress.	0.521	0.400
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.76	0.74
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.69	0.82

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 10**

**The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Personal Skills</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
44	I have self-confidence because I exhibit a high degree of maturity.	0.457	0.432
45	I show empathy, tact and sensitivity in my dealings with pupils.	0.434	0.517
46	I am flexible and willing to learn from experience.	0.468	0.614
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.64	0.68
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.72	0.69

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 11****The reliability for each item by test retest**

	<b>Future Educational Opportunities</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>
47	In the future I would be interested in participating in additional training in the area of special needs.	0.641
48	I would like to receive individual advice from consultants and/or specialists.	0.586
49	I would like to receive teacher training materials (work books, videos, etc.)	0.538
50	I would like to observe experienced special needs teachers.	0.629
51	I would like to attend workshops (1-3 days) in the area of SEN.	0.435
52	I would like in-service seminars (less than once a week) in the area of SEN.	0.433
53	I would like to attend college credit course work (meeting once a week).	0.645
54	I would like to attend professional days with my colleagues and specialists in SEN.	0.430
55	I would like training at weekends.	0.534
56	I would like training during summer holidays.	0.700
57	I would like special release time during school to attend training.	0.674
58	I would attend training after school.	0.716
The reliability by test retest for the dimension		0.72
The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension		0.78

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**A.2.5.**

**Questionnaire, version 2**



# Directions

Please carefully read each question and mark the appropriate response.

---

**Note:** Pupils with special educational needs are those who “are different from their peers in their cognitive, physical, emotional, sensory, behavioural, academic or communicative abilities”, and who need “adaptations of the learning requirements and school equipment by using methods, techniques and programmes to enable these pupils to make use of the natural education environment” (Al-Mosa, 1999, p. 41).

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## Section I : Formal Training

---

### Directions

Fill in the blanks or circle the answer that best describes your answer.

1. Approximately how many credit hours of training directly related to special needs did you have as part of your initial (i.e. pre-service) teacher training? .....

2. Have you had any in-service training related to special needs in the past 2 years?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe briefly the theme (e.g. integration, lesson planning, assessment), type (e.g. seminar, workshop) and duration of the training.

Theme	Type	Duration
a) .....	.....	.....
b) .....	.....	.....
c) .....	.....	.....

## Section II : Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills in Relation to Special Needs

### Directions:

- Please assume you will be expected to work with special needs pupils in the regular classroom, in the following year.
- Carefully read each statement and indicate at what level you would feel able to work with special needs pupils, and the extent to which you think you need/wish for training in each competency.
- Please respond regardless of how often you may use these skills presently.
- Use the scales indicated.

For the following questions, circle the answer that best describes your views.

SA = Strongly Agree  
 A = Agree  
 NS = I am not sure  
 D = Disagree  
 SD = Strongly Disagree

DNA = I don't need at all  
 DN = I don't need  
 NS = I am not sure  
 D = I do need  
 SN = I strongly need

Knowledge	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is. . .				
	SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
1 I have a good understanding of child development.										
2 I know about theories of learning and their application to special educational needs.										
3 I know about legislation and policy in relation to special educational needs.										
4 I am aware of my ethical responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs										

Any further comments about your knowledge.	Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.
--	--

	Attitudes	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is . . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
5	I feel that it is appropriate to include special needs pupils in my class.										
6	I am prepared to work with and teach special needs pupils.										
7	I am comfortable in working with special needs pupils										
8	I feel happy to deal with pupils with special learning needs.										
9	It is important to deal with pupils with special learning needs in order to develop their learning skills.										
10	I prefer to work with pupils with special learning needs than working with pupils who do not have SEN.										
11	The work with pupils with special educational needs is a worthwhile use of my time.										
12	Teaching pupils with special educational needs is straightforward										

<p><b>Any further comments about your attitudes.</b></p>	<p><b>Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.</b></p>
--	--

	Assessment, Evaluation and Recording	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
13	I can identify potential special educational needs (sensory, physical, intellectual and behavioural).										
14	I feel able to informally assess the pupil's learning needs.										
15	I can evaluate the academic performance of the pupil, relative to my chosen goals and objectives.										
16	I can fairly and accurately assess the overall progress of every pupil, including those with SEN.										
17	I am able to construct a pupil profile based on observational data (formal and informal data).										
Any further comments about your assessment, evaluation and recording.		Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.									



	Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
18	I can set appropriate educational goals and objectives for pupils with SEN.										
19	I can organise a flexible programme of instruction to meet the needs of all pupils.										
20	I can organise the classroom to facilitate the instruction of all pupils, including those with SEN.										
21	I can create a suitable classroom environment for special needs pupils.										
22	I am able to identify material, equipment, and training that will aid me in teaching special needs pupils.										
23	I have the skills needed to assess the effectiveness of instructional materials and activities for special needs pupils.										
24	I have the ability to plan and prepare specialised materials and lessons for special needs pupils in my classroom.										
25	I can use evaluation outcomes as a basis for devising or altering objectives, methods and organisation.										
Any further comments about your planning, organisation and management of instruction.		Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.									

	Curriculum Adaptation	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...					
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN	
26	I can analyse curriculum materials to assess their appropriateness for a pupil with SEN.											
27	I can develop appropriate learning materials to meet the individual needs of a pupil with SEN.											

<p><b>Any further comments about your curriculum adaptation.</b></p>	<p><b>Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.</b></p>
--	--

	Instructional Competencies	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...					
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN	
28	I can perform an analysis of the instructional steps for the tasks I am teaching the pupil.											
29	I can analyse the concepts for the topic I am teaching.											
30	I can develop an appropriate instructional sequence for a pupil with special needs, based on the analysis of tasks and competencies.											
31	I can use varied teaching methods to meet the needs of the pupil.											

<p><b>Any further comments about your instructional competencies.</b></p>	<p><b>Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.</b></p>
---	--

	Management of Behaviour	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
32	I can use teaching methods suitable to attract the attention of my pupils.										
33	I can use behaviour management techniques appropriately.										
34	I can provide appropriate positive reinforcement to motivate pupils with SEN.										
35	I can devise and implement strategies to promote the social integration of pupils with SEN.										

**Any further comments about your management of behaviour.**

**Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.**

	Use of Resources (Materials and Human)	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is...				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
36	I can access community resources relevant to SEN using my social skills.										
37	I feel that it is important to use parents or guardians as partners in instructional efforts.										

**Any further comments about your use of resources (materials and human).**

**Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.**

	Counselling, Communication and Collaboration	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is. . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
38	I can give constructive feedback to colleagues regarding working with pupils with SEN.										
39	I can communicate and co-operate effectively with other professionals, e.g. doctor, social worker, psychologist, to help pupils with SEN.										
40	I can advise parents about how to help their child at home.										
41	I can guide pupils with SEN in the development of positive self-concept.										
42	I can communicate effectively with parents regarding pupils' ability and progress.										
Any further comments about your counselling, communication, collaboration.		Any further comments about your need / wish for training in this area.									



	Personal Skills	Level of Agreement					My need / wish for training in this area is. . .				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD	DNA	DN	NS	D	SN
43	I have self-confidence because I exhibit a high degree of maturity.										
44	I show empathy, tact and sensitivity in my dealings with pupils.										
45	I am flexible and willing to learn from experience.										

**Do you have any further comments about any of the issues covered in this section?  
Is there anything else that, based on your experience, you think should be included?**

### Section III : Future Educational Opportunities

**Directions:**

Tick the box that best indicates your opinion, using the following scale:

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

NS = Not sure

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

		SA	A	NS	D	SD
46	In the future I would be interested in participating in additional training in the area of special needs.					
47	I would like to receive individual advice from consultants and / or specialists.					
48	I would like to receive teacher training materials (work books, videos, etc.)					
49	I would like to observe experienced special needs teachers.					
50	I would like to attend workshops (1-3 days) in the area of SEN.					
51	I would like in-service seminars (less than once a week) in the area of SEN.					
52	I would like to attend college credit course work (meeting once a week).					
53	I would like to attend professional days with my colleagues and specialists in SEN.					
54	I would like training at weekends.					
55	I would like training during summer holidays.					
56	I would like special release time during school to attend training.					
57	I would attend training after school.					

**Do you have any further comments about training opportunities?**

## Section IV : Personal and Professional Background

---

### Directions:

Please place a tick (✓) in the box by the answer that best describes you, or write your answer in the space provided.

1. How old are you?

- a) under 30
- b) 30 – 39
- c) 40 – 49
- d) 50 and over

2. How long have you been in teaching?

- a) Less than 5 years
- b) From 5 years to 10 years
- c) More than 10 years

3. Your teaching qualification?

- a) Bachelor in Elementary Education (4 years, from Teacher College)
- b) Bachelor in Education (4 years, from University)
- c) Diploma in Education (1 year, after BA or BSc)
- d) Diploma in Teaching (2 years, from Junior College)
- e) Other (please specify) .....

4) Year / Grade level taught (if you teach more than one, tick all that are relevant).

#### Year / Grade

- |   |                          |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> |



5. Do you have any experience of teaching pupils with special educational needs?

	Yes	No	If yes, for how long?
In a special school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....years
In a special class with a mainstream school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....years
In the regular class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....years

6. Do you think you receive the support you need to help you to teach pupils with special education needs?

	Yes	To a limited extent	No
From outside agencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From school administration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From parents and guardians.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **A.2.6.**

**Reliability: simple correlation and Cronbach's  
alpha for Questionnaire, version 2**

**Table 1****Reliability for the Knowledge Dimension**

	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
1	I have a good understanding of child development.	0.79	0.77
2	I know about theories of learning and their application to special educational needs.	0.86	0.81
3	I know about legislation and policy in relation to special educational needs.	0.79	0.75
4	I am aware of my ethical responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs.	0.63	0.72
<b>The reliability by Cronbach's alpha for the dimension</b>		<b>0.86</b>	<b>0.85</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 2****Reliability for the Attitude Dimension**

	<b>Attitudes</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
5	I feel that it is appropriate to include special needs pupils in my class.	0.78	0.78
6	I am prepared to work with and teach special needs pupils.	0.86	0.91
7	I am comfortable in working with special needs pupils.	0.88	0.93
8	I feel happy to deal with pupils with special learning needs.	0.89	0.91
9	It is important to deal with pupils with special learning needs in order to develop their learning skills.	0.76	0.83
10	I prefer to work with pupils with special learning needs than working with pupils who do not have special needs.	0.84	0.83
11	Work with pupils with special educational needs is a worthwhile use of my time.	0.70	0.87
12	Teaching pupils with special educational needs is straightforward.	0.83	0.86
<b>The reliability by Cronbach's alpha for the dimension</b>		<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.96</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 3**  
**Reliability for the Assessment Dimension**

	<b>Assessment, Evaluation and Recording</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
13	I can identify potential special educational needs (sensory, physical, intellectual and behaviours).	0.87	0.92
14	I feel able to informally assess the pupil's learning needs.	0.83	0.90
15	I can evaluate the academic performance of the pupil, relative to my chosen goals and objectives.	0.92	0.95
16	I can fairly and accurately assess the overall progress of every pupil, including those with SEN.	0.77	0.93
17	I am able to construct a pupil profile based on observational data (formal and informal data).	0.81	0.86
<b>The reliability by Cronbach's alpha for the dimension</b>		<b>0.93</b>	<b>0.97</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01



**Table 4**  
**Reliability for Planning, Organisation and Management of Instruction**

	<b>Assessment, Evaluation and Recording</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
18	I can set appropriate educational goals and objectives for pupils with SEN.	0.85	0.90
19	I can organise a flexible programme of instruction to meet the needs of all pupils.	0.96	0.94
20	I can organise the classroom to facilitate the instruction of all pupils, including those with SEN.	0.79	0.83
21	I can create a suitable classroom environment for special needs pupils.	0.83	0.93
22	I am able to identify material, equipment, and training that will aid me in teaching special needs pupils.	0.86	0.89
23	I have the skills needed to assess the effectiveness of instructional material and activities for special needs pupils.	0.89	0.94
24	I have the ability to plan and prepare specialised materials and lessons for special needs pupils in my classroom.	0.83	0.95
25	I can use evaluation outcomes as a basis for devising or altering objectives, methods and organisation.	0.84	0.90
<b>The reliability by Cronbach's alpha for the dimension</b>		<b>0.96</b>	<b>0.98</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 5**

**Reliability for Curriculum Adaptation**

	<b>Curriculum Adaptation</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
26	I can analyse curriculum materials to assess their appropriateness for a pupil with SEN.	0.97	0.94
27	I can develop appropriate learning materials to meet the individual needs of a pupil with SEN.	0.97	0.94
<b>The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension</b>		<b>0.98</b>	<b>0.95</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 6**

**Reliability for Instructional Competence**

	<b>Instructional Competencies</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
28	I can perform an analysis of the instructional steps for the tasks I am teaching the pupil.	0.86	0.86
29	I can analyse the concepts for the topic I am teaching.	0.86	0.87
30	I can develop an appropriate instructional sequence for a pupil with special needs, based on the analysis of tasks and competencies.	0.83	0.88
31	I can use varied teaching methods to meet the needs of the pupil.	0.92	0.72
<b>The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension</b>		<b>0.91</b>	<b>0.93</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 7**

**Reliability for Management of Behaviour**

	<b>Management of Behaviour</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
32	I can use teaching methods suitable to attract the attention of my pupils.	0.78	0.86
33	I can use behaviour management techniques appropriately.	0.90	0.87
34	I can provide appropriate positive reinforcement to motivate pupils with SEN.	0.92	0.88
35	I can devise and implement strategies to promote the social integration of pupils with SEN.	0.83	0.72
<b>The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension</b>		<b>0.92</b>	<b>0.91</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 8**

**Reliability for Use of Resources**

	<b>Use of Resources (Materials and Human)</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
36	I can access community resources relevant to SEN using my social skills.	0.79	0.81
37	I feel that it is important to use parents or guardians as partners in instructional efforts.	0.84	0.83
<b>The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension</b>		<b>0.83</b>	<b>0.84</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01



**Table 9**

**Reliability for Counselling, Communication and Collaboration**

	<b>Counselling, Communication and Collaboration</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
38	I can give constructive feedback to colleagues regarding working with pupils with SEN.	0.78	0.80
39	I can communicate and co-operate effectively with other professionals, e.g. doctor, social worker, psychologist, to help pupils with SEN.	0.84	0.86
40	I can advise parents about how to help their child at home.	0.90	0.84
41	I can guide pupils with SEN in the development of positive self-concept.	0.86	0.91
42	I can communicate effectively with parents regarding pupils' ability and progress.	0.91	0.90
<b>The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension</b>		<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.94</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**Table 10**

**Reliability for Personal Skills**

	<b>Personal Skills</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>	<b>My need/wish for training in this area is:</b>
43	I have self-confidence because I exhibit a high degree of maturity.	0.92	0.92
44	I show empathy, tact and sensitivity in my dealings with pupils.	0.96	0.94
45	I am flexible and willing to learn from experience.	0.96	0.93
<b>The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension</b>		<b>0.97</b>	<b>0.96</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01



**Table 11**

**Reliability for Future Educational Opportunities**

	<b>Future Educational Opportunities</b>	<b>Level of Agreement</b>
46	In the future I would be interested in participating in additional training in the area of special needs.	0.82
47	I would like to receive individual advice from consultants and/or specialists.	0.72
48	I would like to receive teacher training materials (work books, videos, etc.)	0.73
49	I would like to observe experienced special needs teachers.	0.80
50	I would like to attend workshops (1-3 days) in the area of SEN.	0.87
51	I would like in-service seminars (less than once a week) in the area of SEN.	0.79
52	I would like to attend college credit course work (meeting once a week).	0.87
53	I would like to attend professional days with my colleagues and specialists in SEN.	0.89
54	I would like training at weekends.	0.66
55	I would like training during summer holidays.	0.67
56	I would like special release time during school to attend training.	0.74
57	I would attend training after school.	0.63
<b>The reliability by Alpha Cronbach for the dimension</b>		<b>0.95</b>

\* all of the correlation is significant at 0.01

**A.2.7.**

**Letter to school teachers from the Manager,**

**Education Authority in Madinah**

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم



المملكة العربية السعودية

وزارة المعارف

الإدارة العامة للتعليم بمنطقة المدينة المنورة  
الشنون التعليمية - التطوير التربوي  
البحوث والدراسات التربوية

الرقم

التاريخ

المرفقات

( تعميم إلى المدارس الابتدائية وفق البيان المرفق )

إلى : مدير مدرسة /

من : المدير العام للتعليم بمنطقة المدينة المنورة

بشأن / تطبيق الاستبانة المقدمة من الأستاذ/ السيد عبدالحميد أبو قلة .

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته . . . وبعد ،

فإشارة إلى خطاب سعادة عميد كلية التربية بالمدينة المنورة رقم ٥٤/ك.ت.  
بتاريخ ٢٢/١/١٤٢٢هـ المتضمن طلب السماح لمبتعث الجامعة الأستاذ/ السيد عبدالحميد  
أبو قلة ، تطبيق الاستبانة الخاصة بالمعلمين في المرحلة الابتدائية حول  
( الاحتياجات التدريبية اللازمة للتعرف على كيفية التعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات  
الخاصة والقابلين للتعلم ) .

نأمل التعاون مع الباحث في تطبيق الاستبانة ، حيث يرغب زيارة المدرسة لتطبيق  
الاستبانات بها على جميع المعلمين ، ونحن على ثقة باهتمامكم الشخصي بمثل هذه الدراسات  
لما فيه مصلحة العملية التعليمية .

ولكم تحياتي ، ، ،

بهجت بن محمود جنيد

- صورة لإدارة التعليم للموازي / التربية الخاصة .
- صورة لإدارة الإشراف التربوي .
- صورة لقسم البحوث التربوية .
- صورة للباحث .
- صورة للاتصالات .

## المدارس الابتدائية

لتطبيق استبانة الأستاذ/ السيد عبدالحميد أبو قلة

- ١- سعد بن عبادة
- ٢- أحمد بن حنبل
- ٣- محمد بن مسلمة
- ٤- البراء بن مالك
- ٥- طلحة بن عبيدالله
- ٦- العزيزية



## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Interview Schedules**

- A.3.1. Supervisors' interview schedule, version 1**
- A.3.2. Supervisors' interview schedule, version 2**
- A.3.3. Teacher trainers' interview schedule**
- A.3.4. Teachers' interview schedule**

### **A.3.1.**

## **Supervisors' interview schedule, version 1**

## Interview Schedule – Supervisors

Name:

M/F:

I am interested in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs in the mainstream classroom. By SEN, I mean those who “are different from their peers in their cognitive, physical, emotional, sensory, behavioural, academic or communicative abilities”.

There is a worldwide trend towards the integration or inclusion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools, and it seems likely that, in time, Saudi Arabia may follow this trend. In any case, it is likely that mainstream schools already contain some children who have SEN, even though their condition may not be severe enough to make them eligible for a place in a Special School. With this in mind, I am interested to know to what extent Saudi elementary teachers are capable of meeting SEN, and what support or advice is available to them. I would like to have your views on these issues, based on your experience as an inspector.

First of all, I'd like to ask you about your background in education:

1. How long have you been working in the general education field?
2. How long have you been an inspector?
3. What subject(s) did you specialise in, at college/university?
4. What subject(s) do you currently supervise in the schools?

Now, about the inspection procedure:

5. How many schools do you inspect?
6. About how many teachers does that involve?
7. About how often do you visit each school?

Turning more specifically to teaching of SEN:

8. On your visits to schools, to what extent have you noticed teachers trying to assist children who have SEN?
9. How well prepared do you think teachers are, in general, to deal with SEN?
10. What sort of difficulties do you think mainstream teachers face in dealing with pupils with SEN?
11. To what extent are you and your colleagues, as supervisors, able to advise and support such teachers?
12. What other sources of advice and support are available to teachers to help them to deal with SEN?
13. How accessible and effective are those sources?
14. Do you think there is a need for teachers to have more pre-service preparation to deal with SEN? If so, in what way?
15. Do you think there is a need for more training, advice or support for in-service teachers, in dealing with SEN? If so, in what way?



### **A.3.2.**

## **Supervisors' interview schedule, version 2**

## **Interview Schedule for Supervisors (final version)**

- Question 1:** How long have you been working in the general education field?
- Question 2:** How long have you been an inspector?
- Question 3:** What subjects did you specialise in at college/university?
- Question 4:** What subject(s) do you currently supervise in the school?
- Question 5:** How many schools do you inspect?
- Question 6:** How many teachers does that involve?
- Question 7:** How often do you visit each school?
- Question 8:** Are there pupils with SEN in any of the classes you visit?
- Question 9:** From your observations in the schools, to what extent do you think teachers try to give special help to such pupils?
- Question 10:** How well prepared do you think teachers are in general to deal with SEN?
- Question 11:** What sort of difficulties do you think mainstream teachers face in dealing with pupils with SEN?
- Question 12:** What training and/or experience have you had in the area of SEN?
- Question 13:** Is your current level of knowledge about SEN sufficient to enable you to advise and support teachers in dealing with SEN?
- Question 14:** Are you ever asked for such advice, or do you ever volunteer it?

**Question 15:** What other sources of advice and support are available to teachers to help them to deal with SEN?

**Question 16:** How accessible and effective are those sources?

**Question 17:** Do you think there is a need for teachers to have more pre-service preparation to deal with SEN? If so, in what way?

**Question 18:** Do you think there is a need for more training advice or support for in-service teachers in dealing with SEN? If so, in what way?

**Question 19:** What do you see as the priorities for training in SEN?

### **A.3.3.**

## **Teacher trainers' interview schedule**



## Interview Schedule for Teacher Trainers

Name:

M / F:

Position:

1. How long have you been a teacher trainer?
2. How long have you worked in the field of SEN?
3. Can you tell me about your involvement with the preparation and delivery of courses related to SEN, whether as a designer, a teacher, or an evaluator?
4. There is an increasing trend worldwide to include pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools and classrooms, and it seems likely that at some stage, Saudi Arabia will follow suit. Even without integration or inclusion, it is likely that mainstream schools already contain some pupils with SEN – perhaps those with a mild to moderate mental or physical impairment who do not qualify for admission to a special school, or pupils with emotional or behavioural problems.  
  
With this in mind, can you tell me what special knowledge, skills and attitudes mainstream teachers need to deal with such children?
5. To what extent do you think current pre-service training programmes prepare mainstream teachers to meet SEN?
6. What role is played by in-service training in equipping mainstream teachers to deal with SEN?

7. In your opinion, could teacher training institutions and agencies do more to prepare teachers to help pupils with SEN? If so, how?
8. Are there any particular problems or constraints in the way of providing such training? Can you elaborate?
9. What should be done pre-service to prepare teachers for teaching SEN?
10. What should be done in-service to prepare teachers for teaching SEN?

### **A.3.4.**

## **Teachers' interview schedule**

## Teacher Interviews

### Questions

- 1) Do you currently teach, or have you ever taught, in the mainstream classroom, any pupils whom you think have special educational needs? Can you give any examples of the sorts of special needs you have encountered?
- 2) What particular difficulties or challenges do you face in dealing with these children? e.g. in relation to their learning needs, their behaviour, their psychological/emotional needs.
- 3) Which aspect of teaching or interacting with children with SEN do you find the most difficult? Can you suggest any reason for that?
- 4) Can you give examples of any particular methods or approaches you use in teaching children with special educational needs?
- 5) Do you think your pre-service training prepared you adequately to deal with children with SEN.  
If yes, in what way?  
If not, why not?  
What were the deficiencies?
- 6) What in-service training opportunities are available to mainstream teachers to help them to teach children with SEN in the mainstream classroom?
- 7) Have you ever attended any sort of in-service training in relation to SEN?  
If no, is that because you have not been given an opportunity or for some other reason?



If yes, can you tell me a bit about that training? (where, when, content).

How satisfied were you with the course?

To what extent did it meet your needs?

8) If you have a problem in relation to a child with SEN, what do you do?

Is there anyone you can ask for advice?

Would you look for ideas in books and journals?

Or do you try to work out a solution yourself?

9) Is there any kind of information that you need, or any skills that you would like to develop, to help you in dealing with children with SEN?

10) What do you think are the priorities in training teachers to deal with SEN? In other words, what should the training most concentrate on?

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Interview Schedules (Arabic Version)**

- A.4.1. Interview for Teacher Trainers**
- A.4.2. Interview for Supervisors**
- A.4.3. Interview for Teachers**

**A.4.1.**

**Interview for Teacher Trainers**

## مقابلة شخصية لمدربي المدرسين

الاسم:

المنصب:

١. كم هي المدة التي قضيتها كمدرّب للمدرسين؟
٢. كم هي المدة التي قضيتها في العمل في الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟
٣. هل يمكنك أن تخبرني عن دورك في إعداد وتنفيذ البرامج المتعلقة بالاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة ، سواء كمخطط أو مدرس أو مقوم؟
٤. هناك اتجاه عالمي نحو دمج التلاميذ من ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة في المدارس العادية ، ويبدو أن المملكة العربية السعودية قد تتبع ذلك أيضا مع مرور الوقت. وعلى كل حال ، فإن المدارس العادية قد تحتوي الآن عددا من هؤلاء التلاميذ ، الذين قد تتراوح أحوالهم بين الإعاقة الجسدية والعقلية البسيطة والمتوسطة - لا تؤهلهم للقبول في مدرسة خاصة بالاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة - أو يعانون من مشاكل عاطفية أو سلوكية. ومن هذا المنطلق ، هل يمكنك أن تخبرني عن المعرفة والمهارات والتوجهات الخاصة التي يحتاجها مدرسو الفصول العادية في التعامل مع مثل هؤلاء التلاميذ ؟
٥. إلى أي مدى تقوم برامج تدريب ما قبل الخدمة في إعداد مدرسي الفصول العادية لتلبية الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟
٦. ما هو الدور الذي يلعبه التدريب أثناء الخدمة في إعداد مدرسي الفصول العادية لتلبية الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟
٧. وفقا لرأيك ، هل يمكن لمعاهد ووكالات تدريب المدرسين أن تفعل المزيد في سبيل إعداد المدرسين لمساعدتهم في التعامل مع الطلاب الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟ إن أجبت (نعم) فكيف؟
٨. هل هناك أي مشاكل خاصة أو مضايقات في طريق تقديم هذا التدريب؟ هل يمكنك أن تفصل في ذلك؟
٩. ما هو الواجب عمله قبل الخدمة لتجنيب المدرسين لتدريس التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة ؟
١٠. ما هو الواجب عمله في أثناء الخدمة لتجنيب المدرسين لتدريس التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة ؟



**A.4.2.**

**Interview for Supervisors**

الاسم:

لدي اهتمام بتدريس الطلاب ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة في الفصول الدراسية العادية ، وأعني بهم أولئك (الذين يختلفون عن نظرائهم في قدراتهم العلمية أو العاطفية أو الجسدية أو السلوكية أو من حيث الإدراك أو الإحساس أو التواصل).

هناك اتجاه عالمي نحو دمج التلاميذ من ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة في المدارس العادية ، ويبدو أن المملكة العربية السعودية قد تتبع مع مرور الوقت هذا الاتجاه أيضا. وعلى كل حال ، فإن المدارس العادية قد تحتوي الآن عدداً من هؤلاء التلاميذ ، وإن لم تكن حالتهم شديدة لدرجة تكفي لقبولهم في مدرسة خاصة بالاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة. ومن هذا المنطلق فإني أرغب في التعرف على مستوى قدرة مدرسي المرحلة الابتدائية في قضاء الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة بالإضافة إلى ما يتوفر لهم من الدعم والإرشاد. وإني أتمنى هنا الحصول على آرائكم في هذه القضايا بناء على خبراتكم كمفتشين.

أولاً: أود أن أسالك عن خلفيتك في التعليم:

١. كم هي المدة التي قضيتها في حقل التعليم؟

٢. كم هي المدة التي قضيتها كمفتش؟

٣. ما هو العلم (أو العلوم) الذي تخصصت فيه في الكلية أو الجامعة؟

٤. ما هو العلم (أو العلوم) الذي تشرف عليه حالياً في المدارس؟

ثانياً: عن عملية التفتيش:

٥. كم مدرسة تقوم بالتفتيش عليها؟

٦. كم عدد المدرسين الذين تفتش عليهم؟

٧. كم مرة تزور كل مدرسة؟

ثالثاً: حول تعليم الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة:

٨. هل يوجد تلاميذ من ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة في الفصول الدراسية التي تقوم بزيارتها ؟

٩. في أثناء زيارتك للمدارس ، إلى أي مستوى لاحظت المدرسين يحاولون مساعدة التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟

١٠. بصفة عامة ، كيف تجد استعداد المدرسين للتعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟

١١. ما هي نوع الصعوبات التي تعتقد أن مدرسي الفصول العادية يواجهونها في التعامل مع الطلاب ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟
١٢. ما هو التدريب أو الخبرة التي حصلت عليها في مجال ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة؟
١٣. هل مستواك الحالي من المعرفة بخصوص التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة كافٍ لجعلك تقدم الإرشاد والدعم للمدرسين في تعاملهم مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة؟
١٤. هل تسأل دائماً لتقديم مثل هذا الإرشاد للمدرسين أو أنك تقدم ذلك تطوعاً من نفسك؟
١٥. ما هي المصادر الأخرى للإرشاد والدعم المتاحة للمدرسين لمساعدتهم في التعامل مع الطلاب ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟
١٦. ما مدى فعالية تلك المصادر وسهولة الحصول عليها؟
١٧. هل تعتقد أن هناك حاجة إلى حصول المدرسين على إعداد قبل الخدمة للتعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟ وبأي طريقة يمكن ذلك؟
١٨. هل تعتقد أن هناك حاجة إلى مزيد من التدريب والإرشاد والدعم للمدرسين أثناء الخدمة في التعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة؟ وبأي طريقة يمكن ذلك؟
١٩. في رأيك ما هي الأولويات للتدريب في مجال ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة؟

**A.4.3.**

**Interview for Teachers**



- هل أنت حالياً تدرس أو سبق أن درست التلاميذ من ذوي الحاجات الخاصة في المدارس العادية ؟
- هل يمكنك أن تذكر بعض الأمثلة عن أنواع الحاجات الخاصة التي واجهتها ؟
- ما الصعوبات أو التحديات المحددة التي تواجهك في التعامل مع هؤلاء التلاميذ؟ مثل ما يتعلق بحاجاتهم التعليمي ، سلوكهم ، حاجاتهم النفسية ، العاطفية .
- ما أصعب مجال واجهك أو وجدته عند التعامل مع أو تدريس التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات الخاصة ؟ هل لك أن تقترح سبباً لذلك ؟
- هل تستطيع أن تذكر بعض الأمثلة لأساليب أو طرق محددة تستخدمها في تدريس التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات الخاصة ؟
- هل ترى أن تدريبك مثل الخدمة أعدك بشكل كافٍ للتعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات الخاصة ؟
- إذا كان جوابك نعم ، فما هي الطريقة ؟
- إذا كان جوابك لا ، فلماذا ؟
- ما هي العيوب في ذلك ؟
- ما فرص التدريب خلال الخدمة المتوفرة لمعلمي المدارس العادية لمساعدتهم في تدريب التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات الخاصة في الصفوف العادية ؟
- هل حضرت أي نوع من التدريب خلال الخدمة يتعلق بالتلاميذ ذوي الحاجات الخاصة ؟
- إذا كان الجواب لا ، فهل ذلك بسبب أنك لم تعط فرصة لذلك أم لسبب آخر ؟
- إذا كان الجواب نعم ، هل لك أن تخبرني قليلاً عن ذلك التدريب ؟
- ( أين ، متى والمحتوى )
- كم كنت راضياً عن ذلك التدريب ؟
- إلى أي مدى لبي ذلك التدريب حاجاتك ؟
- إذا كان لديك مشكلة تتعلق بتلميذ من ذوي الحاجات الخاصة ، فماذا تفعل ؟
- هل يوجد أحد تسأله لإرشادك في ذلك ؟
- هل تبحث عن الأفكار في المكتب والمجلات ؟
- أم أنك تحاول أن تجرب الحل بنفسك ؟
- هل يوجد أي نوع من المعلومات التي تحتاجها ، أو المهارات التي ترغب في تطويرها لمساعدتك في التعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات الخاصة ؟
- ما رأيك ( برأيك ) في أولويات تدريب المعلمين للتعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات الخاصة ؟ بعبارة أخرى ، على ماذا ينبغي أن يركز التدريب ؟

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Questionnaire – Arabic Version**



استطلاع آراء معلمي المرحلة الابتدائية بالمدينة المنورة  
في الاحتياجات التدريبية اللازمة للتعرف على كيفية التعامل  
مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة والقابلين للتعلم

إعداد

الدرييد عبد الدريد أبو قلاه  
بأدب دكتوراه

بعد التقييم

أتشرف بالإفادة بأن استطلاع الرأي المرفق يمثل جزءاً أساسياً من دراسة يقوم بها الباحث للتحصول على درجة الدكتوراه في مجال التربية الخاصة ويهدف إلى التعرف على حاجات المعلمين للتدريب على كيفية التعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة من القابلين للتعلم في الفصول العادية وستوفر نتائج هذه الدراسات بيانات مفيدة لإعداد برامج تدريبية لمعلمي المرحلة الابتدائية بالمدينة المنورة قبل وأثناء الخدمة والتي بدورها ستفيد التلاميذ بهذه المرحلة التعليمية الهامة ويشتمل استطلاع الرأي المرفق على أربعة أجزاء يتناول الجزء الأول منها الخلفية الشخصية والمهنية للمعلم ويتناول الجزء الثاني التدريب على كيفية التعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة قبل وأثناء الخدمة أما الجزء الثالث لاستطلاع الرأي فقد خصصه الباحث للمعرفة والاتجاهات والمهارات للمعلمين ذات الصلة بذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة من تلاميذ المرحلة الابتدائية في المدينة المنورة أما الجزء الرابع والأخير من استطلاع الرأي فقد تم تخصيصه للفرص التعليمية المستقبلية من وجهة نظر معلمي المرحلة الابتدائية .

\*\* هذا وسيكون لمشاركتكم في الاستجابة على بنود هذا الاستطلاع فائدة كبيرة في تحقيق الأهداف المرجوة منه كما يوجه الباحث عنايتكم إلى ما يلي :

- ١- إن البيانات المعطاة في هذا الاستطلاع لن تستخدم في غير أغراض البحث العلمي وستحفظ في سرية تامة .
  - ٢- أنه لا يوجد إجابات صحيحة وأخرى خاطئة والاستجابة المطلوبة فقط هي التي تعبر بدقة عن رأيك الخاص في كل بند من بنود الاستطلاع .
  - ٣- ضرورة استجابتكم على جميع بنود الاستطلاع المرفق .
- والباحث لا يسعه إلا أن يشكركم مقدماً على حسن تعاونكم معه ويسعده اتصالكم به بقسم علم النفس التربوي بكلية التربية فرع جامعة الملك عبد العزيز بالمدينة المنورة في حالة رغبتكم في الاستفسار عن بنود الاستطلاع .

أوافق على إجابة أسئلة هذه الإستبانة .

التوقيع : .....



الجزء الأول :  
الخلفية الشخصية والمهنية

تعليمات :

ضع علامة (✓) في المربع الخاص بالإجابة التي تعبر أكثر عن رأيك الخاص

١- العمر :

(أ) ٣٠ سنة فما دون

(ب) ٣٠-٣٩

(ج) ٤٠-٤٩

(د) ٥٠ فما فوق

٢- الخبرة في مجال التدريس بعامة :

(أ) أقل من خمس سنوات

(ب) من خمس إلى عشر سنوات

(ج) أكثر من عشر سنوات

٣- المؤهل التعليمي :

(أ) بكالوريوس في التعليم الابتدائي ( أربعة سنوات ، من كلية المعلمين ) .

(ب) الدبلوم العامة في التربية ( سنة بعد بكالوريوس )

(ج) بكالوريوس في التربية

(د) دبلوم في التربية ( سنتين ، من الكلية المتوسطة )

(هـ) مؤهل آخر (أذكره) .....

٤- الفرقة أو الصف الذي تقوم بتدريسه ( إن كنت تدرس في أكثر من صف رجاء وضع علامة (✓) )

أمام الصفوف التي تقوم بالتدريس لتلاميذها

الفرقة / الصف

	٤		١
	٥		٢
	٦		٣

٥- هل لديك أي خبرة في تدريس التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة ؟

نعم  لا

إن كانت أجابتك (نعم) فكم مدة هذا التدريب الذي شاركت فيها ؟

أ- في المدارس الخاصة بالقابلين للتعلم من ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة شهر ..... سنة .....

ب- في فصول مخصصة للتلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة بالمدارس العادية شهر ..... سنة .....

ج- في المدارس الابتدائية العادية شهر ..... سنة .....

٦- هل تعتقد إنك تتلقى الدعم الكافي الذي يعينك على تدريس التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية

الخاصة ؟ من فضلك وضح ذلك في الجدول التالي :

لا	إلى مستوى محدود	نعم	جهة الدعم
			من جمعيات خيرية
			من إدارة المدرسة
			من الوالدين وأولياء الأمر

## الجزء الثاني التدريب الرسمي

تعليمات :

ضع علامة (✓) في الخانة التي تتفق ورأيك في كل سؤال من الأسئلة التالية مع استكمال البيانات المطلوبة إن وجدت :

١- هل حصلت على أي نوع من أنواع التدريب في كيفية التعامل مع ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة في فترة دراستك قبل التحاقك بمهنة التدريس ؟

نعم  لا

• إذا كانت إجابتك نعم فما هي مدة التدريب ؟

عدد الساعات المخصصة للتدريب	مدة التدريب	موضوع التدريب
		أ-
		ب-
		ج-

٢- في العامين الماضيين ، هل حصلت في أثناء الخدمة على أي تدريب يتعلق بالتلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة ؟

١- نعم  ٢- لا

\* إن أجبت بنعم فالرجاء إعطاء وصف مختصر لموضوع التدريب ( مثلاً : عملية دمج ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة بالعاديين ، إعداد الدروس ، التقويم) ونوع التدريب ( مثلاً : ندوة ، ورشة عمل) ومدة التدريب في كل حالة .

مدة التدريب	نوع التدريب	موضوع التدريب
		أ-
		ب-
		ج-

## الجزء الثالث

تعليمات :

- افترض جدلاً أن الفصول التي تقوم بالتدريس لتلاميذها قد تم اختيارها لكي ينضم إليها بعض التلاميذ القابلين للتعلم من ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة ابتداء من العام القادم .
- إقرأ بعناية العبارات التالية ثم حدد إلى أي مستوى تشعر بقدرتك على العمل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة والمدى الذي به تعتقد أنك في حاجة أو ترغب في التدريب على كل كفاية تشتمل عليها العبارات سالفة الذكر .
- أرجو الإجابة على كل عبارة بغض النظر عن استخدامك للكفاية أو المهارة الواردة فيها في الوقت الراهن وذلك بوضع علامة (✓) أمام الخانة التي تعبر عن رأيك :

م	المعرفة	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب						
		لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	احتاج	احتاج بشدة		
١	لدي معرفة بمخصائص نمو التلاميذ												
٢	لدي معرفة بنظريات التعلم التي تتعلق بالتلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة												
٣	لدي إلمام باللوائح والقوانين المنظمة للتعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة التعليمية الخاصة												
٤	أعني مسؤولياتي الأخلاقية تجاه التلميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة												

<p>أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بالمعرفة</p>	<p>أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب</p>
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م	الاتجاهات	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب							
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	احتاج	احتاج بشدة			
٥	أعتقد بأنه من المناسب أن يكون في فصلي تلاميذ من ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة													
٦	لدي استعداد للتعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة وتدريسهم													
٧	أجد راحة في العمل مع التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة													
٨	أستمتع بالتعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة													
٩	أشعر بأهمية التعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة لتحسين مهاراتهم الدراسية .													
١٠	أفضل العمل مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة أكثر من غيرهم													
١١	يعتبر الوقت المستخدم في التعامل مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة جدير للإهتمام													
١٢	التدريس للتلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة واضح المعالم													

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بالإتجاهات

م	التقويم والتقدير والتسجيل للمعلومات	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب							
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	أحتاج	أحتاج بشدة			
١٣	أستطيع التعرف على نوع الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة للتلاميذ ( الشعورية ، الجسمية ، الفكرية ، السلوكية ) .													
١٤	أشعر بأنني قادر على تقدير ذوي الحاجات الخاصة .													
١٥	أستطيع تقييم الأداء العلمي للتلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة فيما يتصل بالأهداف والموضوعات الدراسية													
١٦	أستطيع أن أقيم بدقة التقدم العام لكل تلميذ ، بمن فيهم التلاميذ ذوي الإحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة													
١٧	إني قادر على تكوين صورة عن حياة التلميذ بناء على المعلومات التي أحصل عليها من مراقبته وعلى التقويم الرسمي وغير الرسمي له													

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بتقويمك وتقديرك وتسجيلك للمعلومات	أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب
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م	تخطيط التدريس وتنظيمه وإدارته	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب							
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	احتاج	احتاج بشدة			
١٨	أستطيع وضع أهداف تعليمية مناسبة للتلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة													
١٩	أستطيع تنظيم برنامج تدريسي مبرن يتناسب مع إحتياجات جميع التلاميذ													
٢٠	أستطيع أن أنظم الفصل بطريقة تتناسب وتدریس جميع التلاميذ بمن فيهم ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة													
٢١	أستطيع تهيئة بيئة دراسية مناسبة للتلاميذ ذوي الإحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة													
٢٢	أستطيع أن أحدد المادة العلمية والأدوات التعليمية المناسبة والتي تساعدني على تدریس التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة .													
٢٣	لدي المهارات الضرورية لتقوم فعالية المادة والأنشطة التعليمية للتلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة													
٢٤	لدي القدرة على مخطط وإعداد مواد تعليمية خاصة ودروس للتلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة .													
٢٥	أستطيع أن أستخدم نتائج التقييم كقاعدة لوضع أو تعديل الأهداف والأساليب والتنظيم													

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بتنظيمك وتنظيمك وإدارتك للتدريس	أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب
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م	ملائمة المنهج	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب					
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	احتاج	احتاج بشدة	
٢٦	أستطيع أن أحلل محتويات المنهج لتحديد مدى ملاءمتها للتلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة											
٢٧	أستطيع أن أطور مواداً تعليمية مناسبة تتوافق مع الإحتياجات الفردية للتلاميذ ذوي الإحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة .											

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بملائمة المنهج  
 أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب

م	الكفاءات التدريسية	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب					
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	احتاج	احتاج بشدة	
٢٨	أستطيع عمل تحليل للخطوات التدريسية للمهام التي أعلمها للتلميذ.											
٢٩	أستطيع تحليل مفاهيم الموضوع الذي أقوم بتدريسه .											
٣٠	أستطيع إنشاء سلسلة تدريسيه مناسبة للتلاميذ من ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة معتمدا على تحليل المهام والكفاءات .											
٣١	أستطيع استخدام طرق تدريسية مختلفة لتلائم احتياجات التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة .											

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بكفاءاتك التدريسية  
 أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب



م	إدارة السلوك	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب					
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	أحتاج	أحتاج بشدة	
٣٢	لدي القدرة على جذب إنتباه التلميذ والاستمرار في ذلك											
٣٣	أستطيع استخدام أساليب إدارة السلوك بكفاءة											
٣٤	أستطيع تقديم تعزيزات إيجابية مناسبة لتحفيز التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة											
٣٥	أستطيع إعداد الاستراتيجيات وتنفيذها لإيجاد نوع من التكامل الإجتماعي للتلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة											

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بإدارتك للسلوك	أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب
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حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب					درجة الموافقة					استخدام الموارد ( البشرية والمادية )	م
احتاج بشدة	احتاج	متردد	لا احتاج	لا احتاج مطلقاً	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	متردد	لا أوافق	لا أوافق مطلقاً		
										لدي معرفة بالموارد الإجتماعية المتعلقة بالتلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة والقدرة على الاتصال بها مستخدماً مهاراتي الاجتماعية .	٣٦
										أؤمن بأنه من المهم استخدام الوالدين أو أولياء الأمور كمشاركين في الجهود التدريسية	٣٧

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق باستخدامك للموارد البشرية والمادية	أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب
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م	التعاون - التوجيه - الاتصال	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب					
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	أحتاج	أحتاج بشدة	
٣٨	أستطيع أن أعطي زملائي خبرات مفيدة حول العمل مع التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة											
٣٩	أستطيع التواصل والتعاون بفاعلية مع ذوي التخصصات المختلفة (كالطبيب والإحصائي الاجتماعي والإحصائي النفسي) لمساعدة التلاميذ ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة .											
٤٠	أستطيع أن أقدم النصيحة للوالدين في كيفية مساعدتهم للتلميذ في المنزل.											
٤١	أستطيع إرشاد التلاميذ ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة لتنمية مفهوم إيجابي لذواتهم .											
٤٢	لدي القدرة على التواصل بصورة فعالة مع الوالدين حول مقدرة التلميذ وتقدمه .											

أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بإرشادك وتواصلك وتعاونك	أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب
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م	المهارات الشخصية	درجة الموافقة					حاجتي أو رغبتني في التدريب في هذا الجانب				
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	لا احتاج مطلقاً	لا احتاج	متردد	أحتاج	أحتاج بشدة
٤٣	أتمتع بقدر عالٍ من النضج والثقة بالنفس										
٤٤	أتمتع بالتعاطف واللباقة ومراعاة المشاعر في تعاملتي مع التلاميذ										
٤٥	أنا مرن ولدي الإستعداد للتعلم من الخبرة .										

<p>أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بإرشادك وتواصلك وتعاونك</p>	<p>أي ملاحظات أخرى فيما يتعلق بحاجتك إلى أو رغبتك في التدريب في هذا الجانب</p>
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الجزء الرابع :  
الفرص التعليمية المستقبلية

تعليمات :

ضع علامة (✓) في الخانة التي تعبر عن رأيك بشكل كبيرة في المقياس التالي :

م	درجة الموافقة	درجة الموافقة				
		لا أوافق مطلقاً	لا أوافق	متردد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
٤٦	في المستقبل ، سأكون راغباً في الاشتراك في تدريب إضافي في مجال الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة .					
٤٧	أرغب في الحصول على إرشادات ونصائح من الموجهين أو المتخصصين					
٤٨	أرغب في الحصول على مواد علمية خاصة بالتدريب التعليمي ( كتب تمرين ، فيديو ، الخ )					
٤٩	أرغب في الاستفادة من خبرة المدرسين في مجال ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة					
٥٠	أرغب في حضور ورش عمل (١-٣ أيام) في مجال ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة					
٥١	أرغب في حضور ندوات أثناء الخدمة ( أقل من يوم ) في مجال ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة					
٥٢	أرغب في الاشتراك في برامج معتمدة على مستوى الإدارة التعليمية ( لقاء واحد في الأسبوع) في مجال ذوي الاحتياجات التعليمية الخاصة					

درجة الموافقة					م	درجة الموافقة
أوافق بشدة	أوافق	متردد	لا أوافق	لا أوافق مطلقاً		
					٥٣	أرغب في المشاركة في الأيام المهنية مع زملائي وأيضاً المختصين في مجال ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة
					٥٤	أرغب الاشتراك في التدريب أثناء عطلة الأسبوع في مجال ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة
					٥٥	أرغب الاشتراك في التدريب أثناء عطلة الصيف في مجال ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة
					٥٦	أرغب في الحصول على تفرغ خاص أثناء برامج التدريب على ذوي الحاجات التعليمية الخاصة .
					٥٧	أرغب في الاشتراك في التدريب بعد وقت المدرسة

هل لديك أي ملاحظات أخرى حول فرص التدريب ؟