Chapter 9
Inclusive or Exclusive Education:
A Case of a Palestinian School District

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ABSTRACT

According to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), most governments must enact laws to ensure that all students have access to education. Inclusive education acknowledges that students come from a variety of backgrounds and have a variety of traits, including varying learning capacities and cognitive development. The goal of this study was to investigate the attitudes of Palestinian teachers towards inclusive education and identify the challenges they face while implementing inclusive education. This study adapted a mixed design; quantitative data were collected from schoolteachers by questionnaire and a qualitative data was gathered by some of these school teachers. Results show positive attitudes of schoolteachers towards inclusion. Challenges included: struggling with the implementation of inclusive education, lack of support for these transformative practices, and parents' cooperation being stated after analyzing the data.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, inclusive education, in a short amount of time has become a field of educational research that has the ability to advise policymakers at many structural levels around the world (e.g., cross-national, national, regional, local and individual) (Ramberg, & Watkins, 2020; Slee, 2018). Social and inclusive education are under

the Sustainable Development Goals that most countries should implement to satisfy education for all students (Butakor et al., 2021). This policy brings out that all children should be treated equally, feel significant and should not left out; the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) that focuses on supporting culturally, socioeconomically and racially diverse school district populations. Public education is a right for all well and disadvantaged children (UNESCO, 2009).

Inclusive education treated learners fairly and with dignity regardless of their race, color, physical ability, learning styles and interests (Beaton et al., 2021). It is a dynamic process where stereotypes, exclusion from education, inactivity, discrimination are terms that will not be tolerated anymore (Rodriguez & Dieker, 2018). The rapid growth evidence based on the foundation of inclusive education, offering education for disadvantaged students might seem a bit challenging job (Rodriguez, 2019). This is due to dealing with different learning styles, backgrounds, interests, requires lots of attention and special care from the teacher's side (Ackah-Jnr, 2020; Fernandez, 2017). Teachers should tailor their teaching strategies and activities to fit the student's needs in equitable forms (Ahmad, 2015). Moreover, teachers should only focus on providing students with knowledge only. They should teach students values such as collaboration, compassion, equality and appreciate others cultural diversity and respect basic human rights (Fernandez, 2017).

As a result of (NCLB) act, a great awareness of the need to sign into law human rights protocols by the Palestinian National Authority so that all children and individuals with disabilities have rights, including the right to an inclusive and equitable education, which must be promoted and protected. However, the Israeli occupation has fractured Palestine's infrastructure, wreaked havoc on the economy, left some countries with little or no government support, and resulted in ineffective regulations and legislation, making it difficult to implement inclusive education in schools. The school system and overall growth in Palestine have been seriously harmed by over 70 years of military rule, and violence has increased significantly since October 2015. (UNRWA, 2021). Violence has a negative impact on the quantity and quality of education that pupils receive, as assessed by a variety of educational outcomes such as school enrollment, school attendance, and school attainment, according to research on the impact of violent conflicts (Fassetta et al., 2020; Pepe et al., 2019; Bruck et al., 2019; Traxler et al., 2019) As a result, the Palestinian territories' economic condition remains negative, with predicted growth levels insufficient to improve living standards. (World Bank, 2020). In such a situation, general ignorance, stigma, shame, and prejudice about disability are significant barriers to inclusive education.

A recent study conducted by Khlaif et al. (2021) confirmed the continued conflict and ongoing restrictions in Palestine negatively influenced the educational system in different aspects including digital inequality and digital privacy. Israeli occupation

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