

## **ADVANCING SPECIAL AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: BEST PRACTICES, RESEARCH FINDINGS, AND EMERGING TRENDS.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This research delves into the effectiveness and complexities of implementing inclusive education in One World International School, a school in Saudi Arabia, dedicated to promoting and implementing inclusive practices and challenges. This study examines how the specific staff effectively implement inclusive practices using observations, surveys, and interviews. This study also explores this from a different lens, how some of the students feel about how well the school implements inclusive education. Inclusive education endeavours to provide access and opportunities for all students by valuing diversity, fostering collaboration and providing support. By examining frameworks and empirical data the literature review offers an exploration of the historical background, theoretical foundations, advantages, challenges, and evolving trends in inclusive education. The study utilises a mixed methods approach that combines observations, surveys, and interviews to examine education practices in a school setting. Observations highlight aspects of practices like tailored teaching methods and cooperative learning tasks. Survey results show agreement among staff on the effectiveness of practices in enhancing student engagement and academic performance. Qualitative interviews provide insights into factors affecting inclusive practices. To conclude, the outcomes emphasise the importance of inclusive education in promoting fairness, accessibility, and excellence for all students. Inclusive strategies impact success, social-emotional growth and attitudes towards diversity. Nevertheless, challenges include the necessity for effective support and resources as well as concerns regarding potential social inequalities. Emerging trends involve taking an approach and incorporating technologies to improve inclusiveness. This research study adds insights to the conversation about inclusive education, offering practical suggestions for improving educational practices and policies. By emphasising inclusivity and fairness teachers, policymakers and other stakeholders can collaborate to establish welcoming, fair, and encouraging learning environments for every student.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive education, student engagement, collaboration, diversity.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of the study**

Inclusive education has emerged as a fundamental framework for educational methods that strive to ensure equitable access and opportunities for all students, irrespective of their varied needs and origins (Graham, 2020). Efficiently executing strategies is crucial in the school setting to establish a nurturing learning environment and attain favourable results for kids (Nilholm, 2021). In a gulf country like Saudi Arabia, the application of inclusive education is new, especially in schools (Gibbs & Bozaid, 2022). While inclusive drills are prevalent in society in institutions and the public, its implementation in schools especially for younger kids is on the very downside (Alquraini & Rao, 2020). The significance of inclusive education in Arabia can only be determined if they can implement the said concept based on equality. Fair opportunities should be available for everyone who is part of the school system (Gibbs & Bozaid, 2022).

Research shows that children's social, emotional, and cognitive growth can be dramatically impacted by schools that actively promote inclusion. Research by Alquraini and Rao (2020) highlights the positive effects of inclusive education on students with disabilities, including improved academic performance and stronger social connections. The research conducted by Alzahrani (2020) emphasises the importance of inclusive practices in creating an environment where learners from diverse backgrounds are acknowledged and welcomed.

Amongst these causes are managers and lawmakers lack information and understanding, resources and help are not adequately allocated, and prejudices might hinder the inclusion of children with impairments or additional requirements (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). Further, inclusive education principles which centre on individualised lessons and supplementary support may clash with Saudi Arabia's traditional method of schooling, which places an emphasis on drill and standardisation (Gibbs & Bozaid, 2022).

The importance of fighting for inclusive education in Saudi schools is being more recognised considering these challenges. The Inclusive Education Program was established by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with other nations to promote inclusive methods in schools and to improve the opportunities for learning for students with disabilities (Aldabas, 2020). The current study aims to contribute to the expansion of inclusive practices in Saudi Arabia and beyond by addressing the challenges faced in their implementation and highlighting the significance of inclusive education.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objective of the research on inclusive educational practices in a Saudi school is to comprehensively assess the present condition of inclusive education and ascertain the obstacles and prospects associated with its implementation. The objective is to analyse the perspectives of students, educators, and staff members regarding inclusive education practices and propose proven methods to enhance these procedures in institutions.

## **Research Question**

1. What are the most effective approaches currently employed in inclusive education, as well as how will such approaches influence students' learning outcomes?
2. What are the attitudes of educators and administrators towards inclusive education and how do they perceive the challenges and the benefits of inclusive education in the school?
3. What are the current trends that are shaping the future direction of inclusive education?

## **Scope of the Study**

This research investigates the implementation of inclusive education at basic and elementary levels at One World International School (OWIS) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The analysis uses a combination of different research methodologies, including inquiries, surveys and interviews as well as observations, to evaluate procedures, gather staff perspectives, and understand the opinions of students. The narrow scope of examining only one school and particular levels of instruction restricts the capacity to apply the findings to other areas or systems of instruction. Therefore, the current study is limited to the cultural setting of Saudi Arabia, and additional research could investigate its applicability in a wider range of geographies and demographics. The research used a combination of techniques to gather data, encompassing a thorough examination of current writing, as well as the administration of questionnaires and surveys. These methods were utilised to obtain insights from pupils, educators, and instructors about inclusive education inside the institution. The obtained findings will provide a comprehensive perspective on inclusive educational practices, offering valuable insights into these critical domains. This will enable subsequent efforts and improvements in inclusive education to be more effectively directed by practical recommendations and thorough examination.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review discusses the concept of special and inclusive education in schools, focusing on the historical context and future advancements in inclusive education. Moreover, it emphasises theoretical concepts like Vygotskys theory and critical pedagogy concepts supporting inclusive education, and existing policies and frameworks promoting inclusivity in education. Finally, the advantages and challenges of inclusive education are discussed with regard to the perspectives of educators, parents and stakeholders.

## **Historical Development of Inclusive Education**

The development of special and inclusive education marks a significant shift from exclusion and segregation towards inclusion and equity. At the beginning of the twentieth century, learners who had impairments were frequently segregated in different schools or completely refused permission to receive traditional schooling (Graham, 2020). During this period, impairment was usually viewed from a medical point of view, which emphasised the need to find "treatments" for those with impairments instead of embracing their uniqueness and

providing them assistance in regular educational settings (Francisco et al., 2020). Fortunately, during the latter part of the twentieth century, significant progress was achieved as a result of the efforts of parent advocacy organisations and civil rights movements (Graham, 2020). These endeavours challenged the separated systems of education, ultimately resulting in the enactment of significant laws, which include the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), in the US. Van Mieghem stated in his research that individuals with disabilities were given the right to have free access to public education (FAPE) according to an act known as IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) (Van Mieghem et al., 2020). The environment of education should be non-restrictive for such individuals. This act laid the foundation of inclusivity in education as it suggested including disabled people in traditional schools whenever possible.

The concept of inclusive education was further supported by the “Salamanca Statement”. It was given in 1994. It signified the importance of equity in education to provide more opportunities for inclusive education (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2022). The resolution, which was supported by leaders from 92 states and 25 global organisations, advocated for inclusive education policies that cater to all children, regardless of their physiological, psychological, mental, emotional, social, intellectual, or other circumstances (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2022). The UN Convention concerning the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) emphasised that equal access to education is a basic human right, thus strengthening the existing concept of inclusive education (Buchner et al., 2021). Over the past several decades, inclusive schooling has progressed by gaining greater awareness and applying inclusive methods and models such as the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and the Index for Inclusion model (Graham, 2020). The successful integration of kids with different abilities in traditional schooling has been facilitated by continuous professional growth, enhanced collaboration among special and general teachers, and progress in technological innovation (Francisco et al., 2020).

Currently, the emphasis transcends the simple physical inclusion of students in mainstream classrooms, guaranteeing their proactive participation and success. Although there has been advancement, the current difficulty is in closing this gap between law and practice to guarantee the successful implementation of an inclusive educational system, which promotes a varied and fair environment for learning for all students (Francisco et al., 2020). Teachers have an essential duty in this process by integrating a more profound comprehension of the concepts, methods, and historical development of inclusive as well as special education. That, in turn, fosters advancement and achievement for all learners (Byrne, 2022). Let us persist in our endeavours to establish genuinely inclusive educational environments that embrace variety and enable everybody to achieve their maximum capabilities.

## **Theoretical Frameworks**

Theories about education come from a lot of different areas, like psychology, economics, and even education itself. Vygotsky's theory and other social constructivist ideas stress how important interaction and cooperation are for learning and growth (Vygotsky, 1978 & Leuwol et al., 2023). In this view, inclusive education is regarded as a way to encourage pupils to get along and respect each other, no matter what their origins are or what skills they have (Ainscow, 2005).

Critical pedagogy, which is backed by theorists like Paulo Freire, also stresses the importance of education in questioning and critiquing existing structures while fighting for justice (Corbett & Guilherme, 2021). Inclusivity gives power and authority to people who are disabled. Inclusivity in education also questioned the way things were getting done in our society.

Educators and teachers can use such models and frameworks to come up with initiatives that will provide equal chances to all students. In this way, handicapped students will be given opportunities to participate and produce equal results. Moreover, employing such strategies will make school a welcoming place for all students. As a result, all students will feel respected and appreciated (Perera & Chandradasa, 2022).

### **Best Practices in Special and Inclusive Education**

To properly address the different needs of students, we need to adopt effective measures in inclusive and special schooling systems. It is important to employ instructional methodologies that are proven to be effective by research to support the learning of students as well as promoting inclusivity in educational system (Francisco et al., 2020).

One idea that aims to make sure that everyone may learn, and grow is UDL or “Universal Design for Learning” (Galkiene & Monkeviciene, 2021). According to the UDL model, several methods of teaching should be used simultaneously so that the concept may become clear to every student. Methods include presentations, practical demonstrations, verbal teaching, giving examples, etc. This model is to provide equal and unbiased opportunities to all students by giving a comprehensive explanation (Galkiene & Monkeviciene, 2021).

Another approach that helps with inclusivity is the Differentiated learning technique. This technique is about modifying the method of teaching to cater to the understanding level of every student (Onyishi & Sefotho, 2020). The modification can be done to the curriculum, the method of teaching, or assessment methods, and it will help to fulfil the requirements of all students learning (Lawrence-Brown, 2020).

The third method for promoting inclusive education is “co-teaching”. According to this method, the teachers that teach in traditional settings collaborate with teachers of special students to come up with methods and strategies to teach and evaluate them in combination (Iacono et al., 2023). This method provides the learners with a teaching experience that is specifically designed for their needs (Francisco et al., 2020).

Direct learning is another technique that is used for promoting inclusive environment in schools. According to this technique, the teachers set some goals. Then students are encouraged to participate in class and achieve those goals and they are provided immediately with feedback on their performance. This method increases the participation of students in the classroom. It also simplifies the teaching process by setting clear objectives and consequences for all students (Alzahrani, 2020). Technology can be used to aid students with disabilities. Different visual and audio software’s can be employed to support and enhance the learning abilities of students especially with impairments. Assistive technology (AT) can help students by personalising education (Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020).

Methods of inclusive education proven by research like UDL, Differentiated and direct learning, and Co-teaching should be used to support the learning of impaired students. The use of assistive technology also enhances inclusivity and promotes justice in learning (Francisco et al., 2020).

### **Impact of Inclusive Education on Students Outcome**

Inclusive education can be a way of enhancing all students' academic performance. By employing the methodologies of inclusive education, teachers can interact better with every student. Then they can address the diverse needs of every student. The results of students will improve when their needs are met (Paseka & Schwab, 2020). Another study suggests that inclusive education has increased the number of graduates as well. When the students are supported and appreciated in schools their will to study increases and leads to long term success of students. They perform better not only academically but also personally (Gokbulut et al., 2020).

An inclusive environment in schools provides students with better chances of acquiring education, as it addresses the problems and gives chances to all students. By creating a welcoming and supportive environment teachers can encourage all learners. In order to create such an environment teachers must employ a variety of teaching strategies that help each and every student in learning and understanding (Francisco et al., 2020). Equitable education not only encourages academic performance of students but also helps in the psychological and social development of learners. In an inclusive environment, students learn better social skills by interacting and socialising with variety of people. They learn to integrate better into the society (Paseka & Schwab, 2020). Moreover, an inclusive environment of education also helps disabled people to feel accepted by other people which fosters confidence and self-respect in them (Alzahrani, 2020).

### **Key Principles and Frameworks**

Educational policies and methodologies are formed by the frameworks and models of teaching. These frameworks are form methods that are diverse and comprehensive to cater to varied requirements of all learners and promote equality in education. One such guiding framework is the UNESCO legislation of education passed in 2009. It ensures that every learner is provided with high-quality education, whether he/she is handicapped or not (Merrigan & Senior, 2023). UDL is another model that makes sure that every learner has equal access to quality education. It does so by removing barriers from education by forming strategies that are personalised and modifiable. Therefore, it accommodates students with different abilities and learning styles (Alquraini & Rao, 2020). UDL model also provides every student with a chance to participate. It encourages individualism and engagement (Galkiene & Monkeviciene, 2021).

Booth and Ainscow introduced an Index for Inclusion. This index helped teachers create a welcoming environment for all students by evaluating the rules, marking criteria and teaching methods of teachers (Booth, 2000 & Ainscow, 2005). This index ensured inclusivity at all levels of education for developing an educational system that is just, equitable and unbiased (Lawrence-Brown, 2020).

The “Salamanca Statement” stated that every school should make modifications required to form an inclusive school environment. (Hernández-Torrano et al., 2022). Mitchell (2008) summarised some of the methods that help in creating an inclusive educational environment such as Co-teaching, differentiated teaching, collaborative learning, and adaptive groups. These strategies help create learning environments in which every student can thrive. Not only students but society as a whole will gain benefits from inclusive educational policies that use these concepts and frameworks to ensure that all students have access to a quality education (Alzahrani, 2020).

### **Advantages of Inclusive Education**

Numerous studies consistently clarify the advantages of inclusion on student achievements, across various realms. In the realm of success, inclusive education stands out for its proven benefits. Research indicates that students, with disabilities who are part of mainstream classrooms tend to excel compared to those in segregated environments (Stenman & Pettersson, 2020). Furthermore, inclusive education is associated with improved emotional growth as well as boosted self-esteem in students with disabilities thanks to increased opportunities for social interaction and integration with peers (Shogren et al., 2016). Moreover, it cultivates attitudes towards diversity and nurtures a climate of acceptance and mutual respect among all students (Rapp & Corral-Granados, 2024).

Inclusive education does not only benefit students but also teachers as it improves their professional development and teaching skills. They learn to employ diverse teaching methodologies and modify curriculum to meet the unique needs of special learners (Moberg et al., 2020). Teachers collaborate with other teachers and special needs workers to share ideas, practices and resources, and create an enriching inclusive learning environment (Ní Bhroin & King, 2020).

Furthermore, inclusive education also benefits parents and the community. Parents of disabled children can rest certain that their child is acquiring the same knowledge as fellow children. An inclusive system improves understanding and creates awareness among society to build a more unified and empathetic environment (Graham, 2020). This awareness may foster supportive community networks and cooperation outside educational institutions, benefiting everyone.

### **Challenges Associated with Inclusive Education**

Amidst the advantages lie challenges and criticisms that need to be addressed. A significant hurdle is the lack of support and resources required for implementation of inclusive practices. Educators often express feeling unprepared to cater to the needs of their students, associating this to lack of training and limited professional development opportunities (Forlin & Chambers 2011). Additionally, there are concerns about the widening of inequalities through inclusive education especially impacting students from marginalised or disadvantaged backgrounds (Gabel, 2013). Critics suggest that if effective support and adjustments are not provided, inclusive education could result in increased segregation and exclusion for students (Tomlinson, 2012). Moreover, the emphasis on meeting criteria may restrict the adaptability of inclusive methods and hinder the overall growth of students (Booth, 2000).

## **Existing Trends and Future Recommendations**

The need for considering personal identities when it comes to inclusive education is becoming more and more important. Scholars advocate a strategy that recognises how race, gender, socioeconomic level, and disability interact to shape students' learning environment (Goodley, 2014). Furthermore, by allowing tailored learning experiences and better access for students with different needs, technology developments have created opportunities for inclusive education (Graham, 2020). To address the challenges and complexities associated with education and ensure that every student has access to major educational possibilities, constant research and creativity are very vital (Alzahrani, 2020).

One notable trend is the increasing use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, which provide a framework for creating flexible learning environments that can accommodate diverse learners. UDL encourages the development of a curriculum that offers multiple means of engagement, representation, and action, thus allowing students to learn in ways that best suit their individual needs (Alquraini & Rao, 2020).

Within inclusive education frameworks, social-emotional learning (SEL) is also receiving more and more attention (Alsalamah, 2023). Emotional intelligence, resilience, and social skills are cornerstones of a student's success and well-being; SEL programs aim to cultivate these. Educators may create an inclusive classroom climate that promotes success for all children by incorporating SEL practices (Hassani & Schwab, 2021). These tendencies suggest that inclusive education initiatives moving forward should keep using new forms of technology and creative pedagogy. Educators should have access to high-quality professional development opportunities so they can acquire the skills and information to successfully apply inclusive teaching practices in their classrooms. Better adaptive learning tools and resources can be made possible by partnerships between lawmakers, digital companies, and educational institutions (Graham, 2020).

Eventually, the effectiveness of inclusive education hinges on the ongoing evaluation and study it undergoes. An ongoing evaluation of inclusive practices will identify areas for improvement and effective strategies that can be replicated and used in various educational environments. By promoting inclusive education, educators, researchers, and policymakers may work together to provide a fair and equitable learning environment for every student (Nilholm, 2021).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data Collection**

The study uses a mixed-method approach for the collection of data (Manzoor, 2020) by integrating qualitative and quantitative techniques to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive education at One World International School. Data was collected through observations, surveys, and interviews conducted across different grade levels and subjects to ensure a comprehensive analysis. The qualitative approach to research provides deep insights related to participants' experiences and attitudes and allows the understanding of complex phenomena (Olaghere, 2022). However, this approach has limitations when it comes to the objectivity of analysis and gathering of information for a larger sample size. The quantitative approach on

the other hand quantifies relationships and phenomena and enables reach to a large sample size. It uses statistical analysis to reach a conclusion which ensures objectivity as well (Olaghere, 2022). By combining both methods this research aims to gain from the positive aspects of both approaches while minimising limitations.

## **Observations**

Observations were conducted in three different grade levels and subjects, involving five teachers (Appendix C). The study used purposive sampling to select teachers who are teaching at least two classes and have a minimum of two years of teaching experience. This is done to ensure that teachers with some experience in implementing inclusive education are selected.

## **Surveys**

Surveys were administered to gather quantitative data about teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, challenges arising during its implementation, and its perceived impact on learners. The survey instrument included closed-ended questions and was administered to all the teaching and administrative staff of the school (Appendix A).

## **Interviews**

In-depth interviews were conducted with the same five selected teachers who were observed in the classrooms. Interviews are aimed to gain qualitative insights into their experiences and attitudes towards inclusive education. Interviews were also conducted with two students to obtain a holistic view of inclusive education practices (Appendix D).

By integrating the diverse sources of data collection, this research aims to provide a more comprehensive view of the effectiveness of inclusive practices and identify relevant themes (Taherdoost, 2022). According to research, the integration of multiple sources also serves to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings (Olaghere, 2022). Data collection instruments used in this study are attached in Appendix A-D.

## **Data Analysis**

The quantitative data from the surveys is analysed using descriptive statistics to quantify patterns and assess the impact of inclusive education practices within the school. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages are used to summarise the results of the survey. For the analysis of interviews and observations, thematic analysis is adopted to identify overarching themes and patterns. This analysis helped in identifying the strategies used to implement inclusive education and understand its effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities (Sardana et al., 2023).

## Validity and Reliability

As discussed above, the integration of mixed methods in research leads to the exploration of findings that are valid and reliable. To improve the validity of the findings, this research triangulates the findings from all three sources to compare and contrast the results of different sources. Moreover, the survey sample was large enough to provide generalisable results at the school level (Sardana et al., 2023). The data collected from interviews also went through several scrutinises as random follow-ups were carried out with participants to verify their responses during interviews (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021).

**Table 1: Illustrates details of participants and data collection**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Surveys</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	3 different grade levels and subjects -5 teachers will be observed	Yes	Yes
<b>Students</b>	Yes	Yes, upper-grade students	
<b>Admin staff</b>	School counsellor	Yes	Yes
<b>Teaching Assistant</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes

## FINDINGS

### Effective Implementation and Success of Collaborative learning

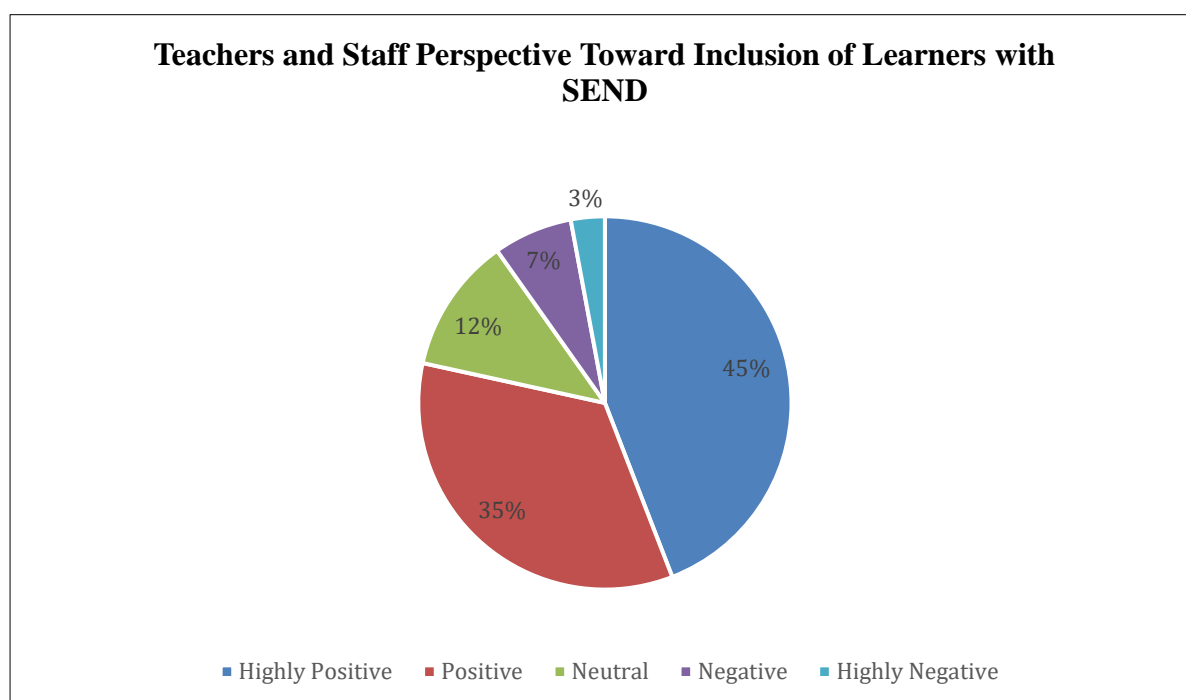
One World International School's approach to inclusive education demonstrates a dedication to addressing the different needs of students by utilising flexible methods of instruction. Empirical evidence demonstrated the adoption of unique instruction, tailored educational strategies, and responsive procedures, corroborating the conclusions stated by Nilholm (2021) regarding the advantages of customised methods.

Differentiated instruction and learning approach is a fundamental approach used in schools to modify ways of teaching based on various approaches to learning and skills, in order to provide every pupil with the appropriate learning support (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). For instance, within a mathematics classroom, pupils were assigned projects that were appropriate for their specific ability range. Teachers were also observed using different means of presenting content including visual and audio content to engaged learners with different learning needs. Teacher T3 said in an interview that tailored instruction prioritises the specific requirements of every pupil, resulting in notable advancements, particularly for those who require more assistance.

Flexible instruction is a crucial tactic implemented at the institution, which entails modifying instructive techniques and assets to accommodate a wide range of pupil inclinations (Lawrence-Brown, 2020). For example, a science lecture incorporated illustrations, practical demonstrations, and explanations in words to cater to students who learn best through hearing and visual means (D'Intino & Wang, 2021). The institution's unwavering implementation of flexible approaches demonstrates its dedication to inclusivity, which is in line with Sailor's

(2009) research indicating that inclusive education enhances both the school environment and learning results.

The institution prioritises learning together, acknowledging its advantages in promoting interpersonal integration and improving pupils' interpersonal skills. Furthermore, the institution's concentration on collaborative educational endeavours has garnered significant endorsement, as seen by 80% of participants expressing agreement or full concurrence with the advantages of inclusive education for kids who have impairments (Figure 1). One staff member A2 expressed in an interview, "Collaboration across subjects is not just beneficial academically; it helps students develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of different perspectives". This feeling reflects the conclusions of Rasmitadila et al. (2020), who highlight the beneficial effects of learning together on interpersonal interaction and interaction abilities.



**Figure 1: Survey Results of Respondents Perception of Inclusion**

Students experienced substantial advantages from engaging in collaborative education activities. A student S1 expressed in an interview "Working together with friends from different backgrounds helps me see things in new ways and made me feel more confident about my ideas". This underscores the institution's achievement in cultivating a varied and encouraging educational setting that encourages intellectual and interpersonal growth.

One World International School, being an IB-accredited institution, places great importance on transversal cooperation, fostering linkages throughout disciplines to promote comprehensive knowledge. Teacher feedback indicated that the act of collaborating facilitated pupils in connecting what they were studying to current events, thus improving their ability to think strategically and fostering an international viewpoint.

## Uplifting Staff Attitude

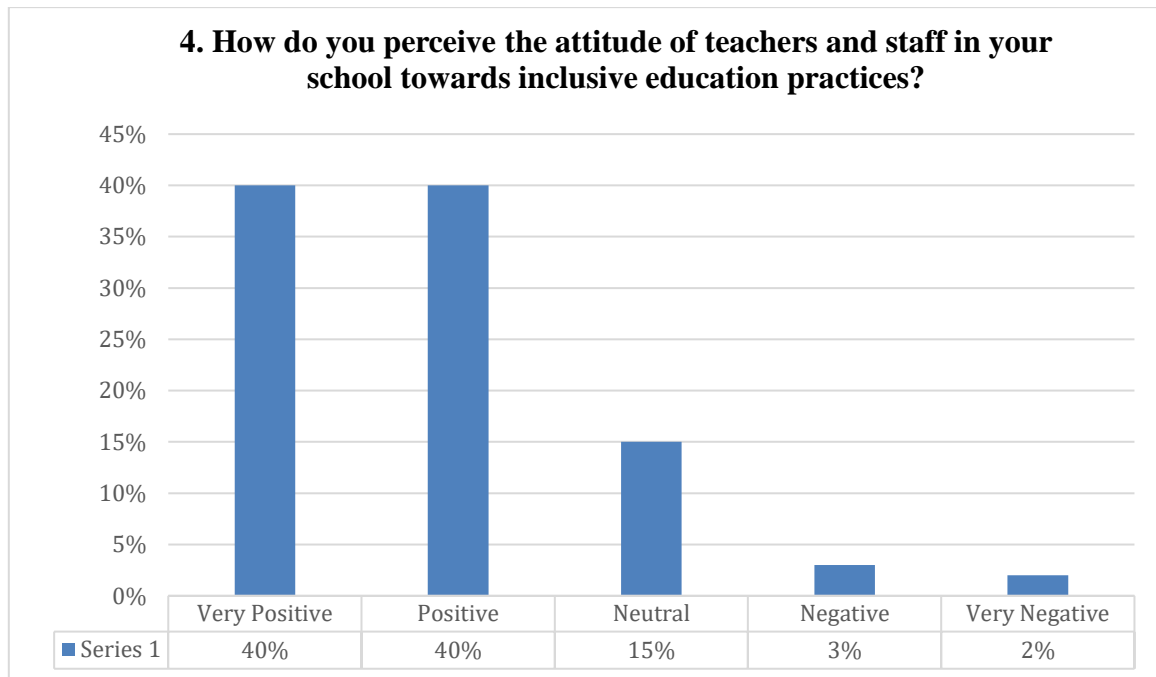
The survey's findings, augmented by discussions and observations, unveiled predominantly favourable sentiments regarding inclusive practices among educators, instructional aides, staff, and pupils at One World International School. The results of the survey conducted revealed that 80% of employees and educators had a favourable response to the adoption of inclusive education. Furthermore, over two-thirds of the participants believed that their fellow employees hold an upbeat view to inclusion, as depicted in Figure 2. The reason for this was the beneficial effects of inclusive education on the education and development of children with impairments (Figure 3). Moreover, a substantial proportion of participants hold the belief that inclusive education is advantageous to both students with special educational needs and those without. However, a minority of participants (10%) expressed the view that students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) should not get an education in regular educational environments, as shown in Figure 1. Various justifications were provided for the exclusion of disabled students, including the requirement for heightened personalised assistance for profound impairments and the difficulty of handling behavioural issues during the interviews with the teachers (Alves et al., 2020). A wide range of these common challenges were also highlighted in the survey where majority of the teachers considered a lack of resources and behaviour management issues as the most challenging to deal with when it comes to inclusion (Table 2).

**Table 2: Common challenges teachers and staff face in implementing inclusive education practices**

CHALLENGES	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
LACK OF RESOURCES	25	65%
LACK OF SUPPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION	15	39%
LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS	22	57%
BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT ISSUES	27	71%
OTHER	10	26%

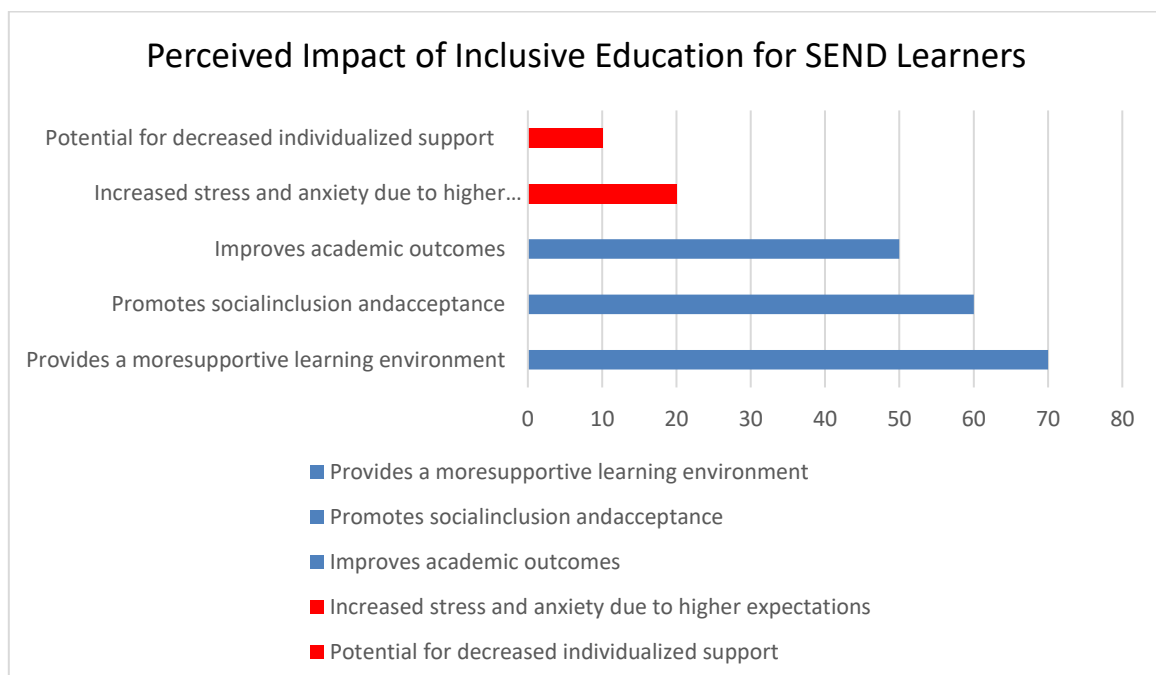
Irrespective of these challenges, the majority of educators, pupils, and employees had a favourable outlook toward inclusion (Figure 2). One teacher T1 said, "Inclusion is not just about having students with disabilities in the classroom; it's about creating a community where everyone feels accepted and valued."

A student S2 also agreed with this idea, stating, "I believe that everyone in this class is accepted as they are, and this holds great importance for me." The experience instils a sense of security and encouragement in students. The institution's comprehensive instruction, supplementary tasks, and cooperative strategy engaging educators, pupils, and families in making choices fostered a feeling of responsibility among all parties, efficiently promoting variety, fairness, and inclusivity.



**Figure 2: Survey Results of Respondents Perception of Others’ Attitude Toward Inclusion**

The chart above illustrates the alleged disposition of instructors and employees to inclusive practices inside the institution. The majority of instructors and employees expressed support for the implementation of inclusive educational approaches in the institution of learning.



**Figure 3: Survey Results of the Impact of Inclusion for Learners with SEND**

The provided chart depicts the perspectives of instructors regarding the influence of inclusive education on pupils who have impairments. The consensus is that it creates a conducive learning atmosphere and encourages social integration, highlighting the importance of continuous advancement in one's career.

### **Investment in Ongoing Professional Development**

Conversations that were conducted with educators and staff members have revealed that One World International School is strongly dedicated to pursuing continuous instruction in order to improve inclusive teaching methods. This dedication is in line with the study conducted by Gibbs and Bozaid (2022), which highlights the significance of offering teachers the requisite support and tools for the successful implementation of inclusive initiatives. The institution's activities for professional growth, such as classes, conferences, and shared learning events, were highly commended by teachers for their diversity. These programs have had a beneficial effect on educators' self-assurance, proficiency, and eagerness to apply inclusive practices in their teaching environments. An educator T3 remarked, "The workshops have significantly enhanced my comprehension of the diverse learning requirements of my pupils and how to modify my instructional methods to address those requirements." Although the results were in favour of inclusive education mainly, but there is still a need to explore ways and strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive practices in education. This was evident from the survey results that showed majority of teachers felt unprepared or under-prepared to practice inclusive education and teach children with special needs (SEND) (as shown in Table 3). Many teachers expressed that they were willing to train for this purpose. Some teachers were confident in teaching children with disabilities like autism and other impairments. This highlighted the need for further research in this area.

**Table 3: Q5. Have you received any training or professional development related to inclusive education?**

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
<b>YES</b>	22	32%
<b>NO</b>	46	68%

### **Strategic Resource Allocation**

When discussed with staff members of the schools, they expressed that more resources need to be allocated to support inclusive educational practices in school. The allocation of resources as a way to boost inclusive education was also stated in the findings of Alzahrani (2020) study. He explained the need of fair distribution of resources for meeting educational demands and needs.

Every institution faces financial limitations and allocates resources towards necessities. The schools also allocate their resources for vital components like rooms, technology, basic equipment, etc. However, OWIS is also spending its resources on designing spaces that are equipped with technology and tactile objects to help learning for impaired individuals and increase their chances of understanding. These resource allocation strategies have aided inclusive policies and initiatives of the school as it makes sure that the needs and demands of every student are met.

Moreover, OWIS is the first school in Riyadh that is powered by Apple and has innovations like the iPad, Apple watches, iMac and Apple TVs. These assistive technologies, as studied earlier, are resources that help support the inclusivity and engagement of students. It plays an important role in improving the participation of learners, which in turn improves their academic performance and results (Salas-Pilco et al., 2022).

As the school allocates funds to promote inclusive education, the school's intention to promote fairness and justice is evident. The school is fostering an inclusive environment for education by focusing its resources on innovation and technology, which will positively influence children's development and learning.

### **Fostering Collaborative Partnerships**

Observation and interview results show that all the teachers and staff members are aware of the importance of inclusive education. They know that to foster an inclusive environment everyone should work together. But the staff also believes that there is a need to dig this deeper and put more effort into it. As one staff member, A1 said, "there are mentions of collaborations and working together, but still there is a need to broaden and strengthen these initiatives to have a bigger impact".

Van Mieghem et al. (2020) study underscores the importance of collaborating and working together to implement inclusivity in education. This was in accordance with the views of the staff and teachers at OWIS. The school urges and arranges collaborations and meetings of parents and teachers as well as teachers from other special needs schools to gain insight and support the learning of SEND individuals. It helps to gain information, learn methods, and design syllabus for such individuals. According to a survey respondent, "Enhancing collaboration among stakeholders will not only benefit students with diverse needs but will also create a more cohesive and supportive school community."

The school psychologist has a key role in promoting collaboration. They collaborate with parents and teachers to suggest methods suitable for every learner. In this way, the institution wants to form a more welcoming and appreciative atmosphere for education by utilising the combined experience and viewpoints of teachers, staff members, parents and children. As another teacher, T2 said, "Collaboration is key to ensuring that every student receives the personalised support they need to succeed academically and socially".

### **Cultivating a Culture of Inclusivity**

The administration of OWIS has been commended for their active role in fostering an environment of tolerance that embraces differences and promotes compassion inside the educational population. This aggressive approach is in line with Alquraini and Rao (2020) study, which highlights the significance of establishing an educational environment that is both friendly and inclusive.

Participants agreed with new inclusion measures such as educational programmes, cultural awareness workshops, and inclusive curriculum. These efforts aim to increase knowledge and understanding of different perspectives, build compassion and understanding

among students and staff, and create a more inclusive educational environment. The institution's support of these programmes showed its commitment to inclusion. By supporting equity and inclusion, the school creates a safe, welcoming, and validating learning environment for all students. Inclusivity improves the educational experience for students with disabilities and improves the health and academic performance of all students (Leuwol et al., 2023).

## **DISCUSSION**

OWIS is an innovative school showing interest in fostering inclusive education by employing strategies like customised syllabus, collaborations, differentiated and UDL learning models, and flexible teaching methods. These methods of inclusive education are supported by research by Paseka and Schwab (2020) and Sailor (2009). These studies state that individuals have diverse needs and therefore, teaching methods should also be varied according to the needs of every student.

Co-teaching is another method used by the school to contribute towards inclusive educational practices. Learning together helps with social and psychological development as well as academic improvement. It also cultivates analytical thinking and teamwork skills. These benefits of combined learning are evident from staff and teachers' remarks as well as Shogren et al.'s (2016) study. Moreover, the school has a system of interdisciplinary collaborations, which links theoretical learning with practical. It enhances the understanding by linking studies and real-life scenarios.

Findings and research also unveil the challenges of inclusive education (Buchner et al., 2021). Many teachers favoured inclusion, but some also believed that kids with disabilities should not be included in mainstream schools, as seen in Figure 1 and Table 2. This revealed a need for more awareness regarding inclusive education, further training for educators to deal with such students as well as continuous assistance such as initiatives technology aimed at catering to various student needs (Table 3). The institution's resource allocated to inclusive practice is praiseworthy, as it is in accordance with Gabel's (2013) findings. Investing in technology, creating peaceful spaces, and prioritising career development are essential for implementing inclusive practices. Still, more cooperation among stakeholders, including educators, assistants, adults, and pupils, is required as stated in a study by Ainscow (2005). Nurturing these collaborations is crucial for establishing a more unified and encouraging educational environment (Gokbulut et al., 2020). One World International School is a successful inclusive education model. To improve inclusiveness, the institution can address issues including employee training and cooperation, fostering educational and social success for all students.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research highlights the efficiency of inclusive education approaches at One World International School (OWIS) in Saudi Arabia, as well as the complexities involved in implementation of these approaches. Significant discoveries have been uncovered on the inclusive education initiatives of the institution and how they affect the performance of

students. These findings were discovered through the process of completing a study of findings from observations, questionnaires, and conversations.

The findings shed light on the value of inclusive education in terms of increasing equity, availability, and exceptionality for all children. The dedication of OWIS to inclusive education rules is demonstrated by the positive outcomes that have occurred. These outcomes include the successful execution of individualised methods of instruction, the success of shared learning tasks, increased awareness among employees, investments in current learning possibilities, a careful allocation of resources, and the establishment of relationships that are mutually beneficial.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the results, it is possible to make many suggestions to further improve the inclusive education methods at OWIS Riyadh:

1. OWIS should persist in allocating resources towards continuous professional development programmes to guarantee that teachers possess the requisite abilities and information to proficiently execute inclusive methods in the educational setting.
2. To support inclusive education initiatives, the institution should prioritise funding for adapted equipment, sensory objects, and specialist opportunities that meet students' unique needs.
3. The educational institution should promote inclusion through training programmes, cultural awareness seminars, and curriculum design to provide a safe, welcoming, and validating environment for all students.

OWIS Riyadh may improve its inclusive education techniques and provide fair access and opportunity for all learners by embracing these suggestions.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Questionnaire

#### **Inclusive Education: The benefits & Challenges**

1. What is your role in the school?
  - Teacher
  - Administrator
  - Support staff (e.g., counselor, special education teacher)
  
2. How familiar are you with the concept of inclusive education?
  - Very familiar
  - Somewhat familiar
  - Not familiar at all
  
3. Do you believe that education should be inclusive, meaning that all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, should be included in the same classroom?
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neutral
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
  
4. How do you perceive the attitude of teachers and staff in your school towards inclusive education practices?
  - Very positive
  - Positive
  - Neutral
  - Negative
  - Very negative
  
5. Have you received any training or professional development related to inclusive education?
  - Yes
  - No
  
6. Do you have any special need students in your class/ Or you have previously taught SEND students in general classroom?
  - Yes
  - No
  
7. If your answer to the previous question is 'Yes', then specify the numbers of SEND students in your class \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Please specify the type of disability/disorders your students have \_\_\_\_\_.
  
9. How do you think the presence of SEND students has benefited your classroom?
  - Benefits for students with disability\_\_\_\_\_

- Benefits for non-disabled students\_\_\_\_\_
  - Any other benefits\_\_\_\_\_
10. What challenges do you think teachers and staff face in implementing inclusive education practices? (Select all that apply)
- Lack of resources (e.g., materials, training)
  - Lack of support from administration
  - Lack of understanding or awareness of inclusive practices
  - Behavior management issues
  - Other (please specify)
11. How do you think inclusive education impact students with disabilities?
- Provides a more supportive learning environment
  - Promotes social inclusion and acceptance
  - Improves academic outcomes
  - Increased stress and anxiety due to higher expectations
  - Potential for decreased individualized support
  - Other (please specify)
12. What are some common behaviour issues faced during inclusive education? (Select all that apply)
- Disruptive behavior
  - Lack of attention or focus
  - Aggression or violence
  - Withdrawal or isolation
  - Other (please specify)
13. Do you believe that inclusive education should be a priority in educational policies and practices?
- Yes
  - No
  - Unsure
14. How would you rate the current level of inclusivity in your school?
- Very inclusive
  - Inclusive
  - Neutral
  - Not inclusive
  - Not at all inclusive
15. What initiatives or strategies do you think could enhance the inclusivity of your school? (Select all that apply)
- Providing more professional development on inclusive education
  - Increasing access to assistive technologies
  - Implementing more inclusive classroom practices
  - Collaborating with parents and caregivers
  - Other (please specify)

16. How confident do you feel in your ability to effectively implement inclusive education practices?
- Very confident
  - Confident
  - Neutral
  - Not confident
  - Not at all confident
17. Do you have any suggestions or comments regarding inclusive education that you would like to share?

### **Thank You for your Response**

### **Appendix B: Interview Guide**

#### **Interview Guide for Teachers**

- **T1:** How do you define inclusive education, and why do you believe it is essential in modern schooling?
- **T2:** What specific strategies or methods do you use in your classroom to support diverse learning needs, and how effective do you find them?
- **T3:** Can you describe how inclusive education has impacted your students' academic performance and social integration?
- **T4:** How does inclusive education contribute to the personal growth of students, and can you share any examples from your experience?
- **T5:** What challenges do you encounter in managing the behavior of students with diverse needs, and what support is available to you?
- **T6:** Do you feel adequately prepared and trained to support students with diverse needs? What additional support or training would be beneficial?
- **T7:** How do you perceive the attitudes of your colleagues and students towards inclusive education, and how do these attitudes influence its implementation?
- **T8:** What adaptive teaching techniques do you employ to support diverse learning needs, and how effective are they in your classroom?
- **T9:** What professional development opportunities are available for supporting inclusive education, and what additional training do you think is necessary?
- **T10:** What are your recommendations for improving inclusive education at your school, and what is your vision for its future?

#### **Interview Guide for Students**

**Q1:** What does it mean to you when everyone in the class gets to learn together, no matter their differences? How have you seen this at your school?

**Q2:** How do you think learning together with all kinds of students has helped you in school and with making friends?

**Q3:** Can you tell me about a time when learning with other students helped you feel good or learn something new?

**Q4:** What hard things have you faced when everyone learns together? How were these problems solved for you?

**Q5:** How do you think your classmates feel about students who need extra help? How does this affect what happens in class?

**Q6:** How do you work together with other students in your classes? What good or hard things have happened because of this?

**Q7:** What extra help do you think you or other students who need more support should get? How could the school help more?

**Q8:** What changes would you like to see to make learning better for everyone at your school?

### **Interview Guide for Staff and Administration**

- **A1:** How do you define inclusive education, and why is it important for the school's culture and values?
- **A2:** What strategies or policies does the school use to support inclusive education, and how effective are they?
- **A3:** What are the main challenges related to resource allocation for inclusive education, and how does the administration plan to address these challenges?
- **A4:** How do you support teachers and staff in implementing inclusive practices, and what additional support do you think is needed?
- **A5:** How do you perceive the attitudes of staff, students, and parents towards inclusive education, and how do these attitudes impact its success?
- **A6:** How do current school policies support inclusive education, and what changes would you recommend to better support these practices?
- **A7:** What are your recommendations for improving inclusive education at your school, and what is your vision for its future?

**Appendix C: Observation Field Notes**

Teacher: T1    Grades: 1    Subject: Maths    Topic: Fractions		
Time	OBSERVATIONS	REFLECTIONS
0-20 minutes	I observed that teacher began introducing fractions using visual aids like pie charts and then students played an interactive game where students matched fractions with visuals.	I noticed that visual aids and interactive games helped students make fractions tangible and engaging for students. The teacher accommodated different learning styles effectively. Grouping students based on their abilities ensured all students were working at a suitable level. The teacher's support for dyslexic student impressed me the most as it highlighted the importance of personalized learning & encouraging participation.
20-40 minutes	After 20 minutes, students were divided into groups and assigned differentiated tasks: Students with better understanding tackled fractions additions & subtraction, while others focused on basic recognition. There was a student with dyslexia, teacher assigned him task and supported him using colored overlays to help them visualize fractions.	I saw that reviewing work as a class reinforced the learning and encouraged open discussion. Praising the autistic student's work helped build his confidence and made him feel valued and respected. All of these approaches align with the principles of inclusive education.
40-60 minutes	The group work was the reviewed and the solutions were shared. The teacher addressed every misconception, ensuring understanding. Another student with Autism was encouraged to share his work, which the teacher praised for its unique approach	

Teacher: T2    Grade: 1    Subject: Science    Topic: Water Cycle		
Time	OBSERVATIONS	REFLECTIONS
0-20 minutes	Science teacher began the class by cheerfully greeting the class and the students responded enthusiastically, setting a positive tone. Then the teacher introduced the water cycle through a short video and detailed diagram explanation. The teacher frequently checked in with a student with autism to ensure he was following along.	I was immediately struck by the positive and inclusive atmosphere. The teacher's warm greeting and student's enthusiastic reply created a welcoming environment. The multimedia approach catered to various learning styles and teacher's attention to autistic student ensured he remained engaged and understood the content.
20-40 minutes	Teacher divided students in pairs and they performed an evaporation, condensation experiment. A student with motor difficulties was paired with a supportive peer and the teacher provided adaptive tools.	I could see that hands-on activity made the science concepts more clear. Pairing students with mixed abilities was impressive as it fostered a supportive learning environment.
40-60 minutes	At the end of lecture, students were given water cycle worksheets in mixed ability groups, followed by a class discussion. The teacher then highlighted contributions of all students, including those with special needs.	Collaboration promoted teamwork and critical thinking, and ensured all students including those with special needs were actively participating and learning together.

Teacher: T2 Grade: 2 Subject: Science Topic: Life Cycle		
	OBSERVATIONS	REFLECTIONS
0-20 minutes	<p>I observed that the teacher started with a brief video about the life cycle of a butterfly, followed by a class discussion. Autistic student was allowed to hold a toy butterfly to stay focused. The teacher said, "Isn't it amazing how butterflies change? Who can tell me the stages of their life cycle?"</p>	<p>The use of video and hand-on toy was inspiring as they helped capture every student's attention and cater to different learning styles. Allowing autistic student to hold a toy to stay engaged highlighted the importance of sensory tools in inclusive education.</p>
20-40 minutes	<p>Then teacher provided students with a hands-on activity by handing them pictures of each stage of butterfly life cycle, that they colored. A student with motor difficulties received larger crayons and extra time to complete the task.</p>	<p>The hands-on activity made the life cycle tangible and engaging for students. The provision of larger crayons and additional time for student with motor difficulties ensured they could participate fully, demonstrating the importance of adapting materials to meet individual needs.</p>
40-60 minutes.	<p>Students then assembled their colored pictures into life cycle wheel and shared it with class. The teacher highlighted each student's effort and creativity, especially praising autistic child for their detailed coloring. Teacher remarked, "Your butterfly looks wonderful, you paid so much attention to each stage."</p>	<p>Creating and sharing life cycle wheel reinforced the students' understanding and celebrated their creativity. Praising autistic students' for detailed work encouraged inclusion and recognition for each student's strengths.</p>

Teacher: T3    Grade: 1    Subject: Eng    Topic: Poems		
Time	OBSERVATION	REFLECTIONS
0-20 minutes	<p>I observed that the English teacher started class by reading a poem aloud, followed by a discussion on its themes and literary devices. English teacher gave student with autism extra time to process the discussion and then contributed a unique perspective, which was acknowledged by teacher as insightful.</p>	<p>Starting with poem helped to gain attention of all students, then discussion allowed for diverse interpretations &amp; engaged all students. I was particularly impressed by teacher's patience and positive reinforcement, that encouraged all students including autistic student to participate.</p>
20-40 minutes	<p>Then teacher asked students to write poems on a theme of their own choice. Teacher provided additional support to student with dyslexia, helping him structure his poem and allowed him to use a laptop for typing.</p>	<p>I noticed the flexibility of choosing their own theme catered to diverse learning styles of each student. The method facilitated more personalized learning experience aligning with inclusive educational practices. The additional support to dyslexic student ensured he fully participated and felt included.</p>
40-60 minutes	<p>Teacher asked students to share their poems with the class, with the teacher highlighting the effort and creativity of each student. Autistic student was also encouraged to present his poem and teacher praised his unique imagery.</p>	<p>Sharing poems built confidence and celebrated individual creativity. All of which are important for inclusive education. Encouraging autistic kid to share his work also demonstrated inclusivity and boosted his confidence.</p>

Teacher: T3 Grade: 2 Subject: Eng Topic: Story writing		
Time	OBSERVATIONS	REFLECTIONS
0-20 minutes	The teacher started the class by introducing a simple poem about animals, reading it aloud with gestures and different voices for each animal. The students were captivated, and teacher invited them to act out parts of poem.	I noted that teacher's expressive reading and engagement with students helped them connect with the material in a fun & interactive way. The use of gestures & voices catered to various learning styles and made the session inclusive.
20-40 minutes.	Then students were asked to work on a group activity, where they drew their favourite animal from the poem and wrote a short sentence about it. A student with autism was paired with a supportive peer who helped him with drawing & writing. The teacher also encouraged saying, "I love how you are working together to create something beautiful!"	The group activity fostered collaborations and allowed students to express their creativity. The support provided to autistic student ensured he felt included and able to fully participate, highlighting the importance of collaborations in inclusive education.
40-60 minutes	Students shared their drawings & sentences with the class. The teacher praised each student's work, emphasizing effort and creativity. Dyslexic student was given additional time to present. Teacher encouraged by saying, "Your story is so unique, I love how you described your animal!"	Sharing the work with the class built students' confidence and reinforced their sense of accomplishment. The teacher's praise and accommodation for the dyslexic student's needs demonstrated a commitment to inclusivity and individual support.

## **Appendix D: Interview Transcripts**

### **Learners' Interviews**

**Learner Code: S1    SEND Status: None**

**Q1: What does it mean to you when everyone in the class gets to learn together, no matter their differences? How have you seen this at your school?** " Yes, I have seen it quite a lot of time in my class and teachers often tell us that everyone should have a chance to learn together no matter what they face and we should support each other in, like in getting our tasks done and, hmmm also it means helping special needs children more in the learning process. So, in activities our teacher make sure that they help every student.

**Q2: How do you think learning together with all kinds of students has helped you do better in school and make friends?** "Learning together has made me more understanding and, and I will say more caring toward other. When I see my friends in problem, like when they cannot move without wheelchair, and some take more time in understanding what teacher is telling, so I feel happy to help them. patient. Working together with friends from different backgrounds helps me see things in new ways, and made me feel more confident about my ideas

**Q3: Can you tell me about a time when learning with different classmates helped you or someone else grow?** "One time, we were working on a science project and my classmate who uses a wheelchair had some great ideas that I hadn't thought of. We combined our ideas and made a really cool project. It showed me how different perspectives can make things better."

**Q4: What hard things have you or your classmates faced when everyone learns together? How were these problems solved?** "Sometimes it's hard when someone needs extra help and we have to wait, but our teacher helps us by giving us other things to do while we wait. Also, we do a lot of group work so everyone can help each other out. Sometimes, some of the friends with special need often become really angry and they stop listening but then teachers give them free time to play and calm down or they get assistant to work with them. "

**Q5: How do you think your classmates feel about students who have different needs? How does this affect what happens in class?** "I think they are kind and supportive because when sometimes when teacher is busy with other students my peers like to help different needs peers and they feel happy about it. I enjoy it too, so yes I think they like to do it.

**Q6: How do you work together with other students in your classes? What good or hard things have happened because of this?** "We do a lot of group projects and pair up for activities. Sometimes, it hard when we cannot agree on one thing or the peer does not like to do what I want to. Sometime we cannot do the activities we want because the teacher has to change the plan for different needs of learner. But out teacher encourage us to talk it out and find solutions and we find a good solution most of the time.

**Q7: What extra help do you think students who need more support should get? How could the school help more?** "I think they need more tools and more resources, like one of my classfellow has really weak eyes and its hard for him to read and teacher need to speak out

everything, so there should be more audiobooks for him, also they can have more assistants who can explain things in different ways.

**Q8: What changes would you like to see to make learning better for everyone at your school?** "I'd like to see more activities where we can all work together and learn from each other. Also, having more teachers or aides in the classroom could help everyone get the support they need."

#### **Learner Code S2 Disability Status: Yes (Dyslexia)**

**S1: What does it mean to you when everyone in the class gets to learn together, no matter their differences? How have you seen this at your school?** "I like this way because it feels like everyone is valued and we all get to learn together. Our teachers ask us during learning if we are learning it well. They ask it from everyone and then help those who are having trouble. When learning we all do activities together and sometimes some learners get more resources to help them learn. I believe that everyone in this class is accepted as they are, and this holds great importance for me "

**S2: How do you think learning together with all kinds of students has helped you in school and with making friends?** "it has made me understand that no one is perfect and sometimes some people have to face problem like I am dyslexic and it is hard for me to read and write like other peers. I get a lot of help from teachers and from my class fellows as well. Learning together has helped me understand different people and make new friends , and I've also been able to help them with things I'm good at, which makes me feel good and more confident."

**S3: Can you tell me about a time when learning with other students helped you feel good or learn something new?** "One time during our math game I was struggling to get an answer and then my friend explained that problem to me in a way I understood I was happy I got the answer right and at that moment it was like I am also good at learning many things. I was very confident that I can still do well in other subjects with a little help."

**S4: What hard things have you faced when everyone learns together? How were these problems solved for you?** "I have dyslexia and it is hard for me to read and write like other peers, I take time to complete reading activities when reading task are long. My teacher helps by giving me extra time and sometimes pairs me with a buddy who reads parts of the text to me. We also use audiobooks, which makes it easier for me to follow along."

**S5: How do you think your classmates feel about students who need extra help? How does this affect what happens in class?** Umm they don't mind when I need extra help and time with reading, and sometimes they even offer to help me. Sometimes some peers make fun when I struggle to read simple lines but my teacher discourage such behaviour and the other peers start to cheer me so I can really do it. So yes it's a friendly place to learn.

**S6: How do you work together with other students in your classes? What good or hard things have happened because of this?** "We do group projects and partner activities a lot. It's good because we get to share ideas and learn from each other. Sometimes it's hard when I can't read something quickly, but usually we use other ways, like by splitting up the reading."

**S7: What extra help do you think you or other students who need more support should get? How could the school help more?** "I, sometimes, feel like I don't want to read or study when I have am struggling a lot so I think I should get relaxation in quizzes because it's not the same for me. My teacher often helps me by taking an oral exam or concept check. I think they should use it more as writing is frustrating for me, Also I think we don't have good resources in audio format. This is a lot challenging for me. So there should be more audio resources.

### **Staff Interview Transcript (Councillor, Code A1)**

**A1: How do you define inclusive education, and why is it important for the school's culture and values?** I define inclusive education as tailoring the learning environment, resources and activities in a way that it offers equal opportunities to learn for all the students with varied learning needs and abilities or disabilities. It's important for our school's culture and values because it promotes diversity, respect, and a sense of care for every student. When students with and without disabilities learn together, they develop understanding, empathy, and a sense of support and acceptance toward each other.

**A2: What strategies or policies does the school use to support inclusive education, and how effective are they?** "We use a range of strategies to implement inclusion and they often vary according to the needs of learners. But most common include differentiated instruction, where teachers tailor lessons to meet the diverse needs of students. We also implement Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students with specific needs. This ensures that SEND learners receive the necessary accommodations and modifications. Additionally, we have co-teaching models where general and special education teachers collaborate in the classroom and we also have teacher assistants in all of the classrooms. Collaborative learning is also one of the most used strategies in our school and it effectively teaches team work to the learner and develops a sense of patience toward their peers with different needs. These strategies have been quite effective, as we regularly review student progress and adjust our approaches to ensure all students are achieving their potential."

**A3: What are the main challenges related to resource allocation for inclusive education, and how does the administration plan to address these challenges?** "I believe there are quite a lot of challenges when it comes to inclusive education. One of the major challenges is ensuring that we have rightly trained educators and special support staff, And it is also highly challenging to ensure the availability of resources to support the special needs of learners. There are times when we face budget constraints and this limits our ability to hire additional support staff or purchase specialized equipment. To overcome these problems our management is working on securing grants and funding from external sources. We're also prioritizing professional development for our current staff to maximize and planning more collaborative efforts among stakeholders to solve these issues. our existing resources."

**A4: How do you support teachers and staff in implementing inclusive practices, and what additional support do you think is needed?** "We strive to support our teaching staff in this process of inclusive education by providing ongoing professional development on inclusive practices and strategies. These have strategies like differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, incorporating technology to diversify resources, behaviour management training, and many more. We also encourage and arrange regular collaboration meetings where teachers can share ideas and resources. But I think we need to do more there are...there are mentions of

collaborations and working together, but still there is a need to broaden and strengthen these initiatives to have a bigger impact. We also need more specialized training on inclusive practices and increased access to assistive technology."

**A5: How do you perceive the attitudes of staff, students, and parents towards inclusive education, and how do these attitudes impact its success?**

"Overall, I think the attitudes of staff, students, and parents towards inclusive education are positive. It is definitely positive. Teachers are proactively learning strategies on their own and are also working together to make it happen. Students generally show empathy and support towards their peers with SEND, which enables a positive learning environment. Parents appreciate the inclusive approach but sometimes express concerns about whether their child's specific needs are being fully met. These attitudes greatly impact the success of inclusive education, as positive support from everyone is required to make it successful. Sometimes there are issues related to behaviour of children with SEND needs which make it more challenging because sometime some learners have severe disabilities which are difficult to handle in the mainstream but apart from this everyone is positive toward inclusion.

**A6: So are you saying severe disabilities are hard to manage in inclusive education?**

Ummm, yes sort off, because they really need everything tailored for according to their own needs and in general classroom it is often not possible which makes me believe they can be supported better in special education environment.

**A7: What are your recommendations for improving inclusive education at your school, and what is your vision for its future?** "As I said earlier, we can improve it with better collaboration among stakeholders and more professional development of teaching staff. This also requires more budget and more investment into assistive technologies. Yes, I believe these are some vital strategies to succeed.