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Evaluation of Physical Condition and Mental Ability of Physically Challenged Pupils in Inclusive Education Centres in Jordan

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ABSTRACT

The study made an evaluation of the physical condition and mental ability of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centres in Jordan. In order to carry out this study, specified research objectives were formulated and used for the study. The research design for this study is a survey design. The target population for this study included all physically disabled pupils in preschools in Amman, Jordan. A simple random sample was made up of 376 pupils with physical disabilities. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire. Data from completed questionnaires was subjected to percentage analysis. The findings demonstrated and conclude that inclusive education development must shift away from a deficit mindset and towards a focus on community collaboration, attention to existing assets, and scaling up successful inclusive education policies and practices. The study recommends that appropriate policies and laws to support inclusive education be made to protect physically challenged pupils against marginalization. that more special education teachers should be employed to cover the deficit and motivate the existing ones.

Keywords: Physical Condition; Mental Ability; Physically Challenged; Pupils; Inclusive Education.

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INTRODUCTION

Everyone, regardless of age, gender, race, economic status, or physical ability or challenge, needs education. Society views physically disabled people, especially students, as disadvantaged Block, (1992) in Waititu, (2013). Thus, they miss economic, political, and social benefits, including the right to quality education. Disabled people struggle to access education. Education is an important facilitator for development, personal growth and poverty eradication, regardless of barriers of any kind, including challenged.

Access to education is the most fundamental aspect of the right to education. It is not enough to say that everyone has the right to education without putting in place mechanisms to ensure and facilitate access, (MoE, 2012). Facilitating access to education for people with disabilities requires removing governmental, legal, and administrative barriers and replacing them with positive measures in accordance with international human rights standards requiring or recommending equal education for people with disabilities.

According to the World Health Organization's World Report on Disability, an estimated 95 million children (5.1%) aged 0–14 years have some form of disability WHO, (2006). Common issues include Autism Spectrum Conditions, Developmental Delay, Behavioral Disorders and Learning Difficulties WHO (2007). In many countries including Jordan, these children have rights to be included in mainstream school Lehohla, Hlalele (2012); United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund(2013). For professionals who work with children this shift towards social and educational inclusion has meant that practices have had to evolve in tandem. Rehabilitation professionals now deliver a wide range of approaches to support early intervention and prevention for children with diverse needs. This includes school-based approaches alongside teachers and families to enable children's full and active participation in school Kramer, Olsen, Mermelstein, Balcells and Liljenquist (2012).

Disability in Jordan is recognized to ensure the equal rights of persons with disabilities and their full participation in learning environment. Thus, physical impairment is one of them and defined as a disability that limits a person‟s physical capacity to move, coordinate actions, or perform physical activities. It is also a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action (Dohrmann, 2011).

Participation or "inclusive education is a key outcome. Inclusive education may take place anywhere. In this paper, we focus on the context of school. Inclusive education is defined narrowly as creating opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in regular schools that are in their local community (Sharma et al. 2017). Empirically, there are still barriers to the successful participation of students with disabilities in regular schools (see, for example, Ainscow & Sandill 2010 and Sharma et al. 2017). In particular, the inability of students with disabilities to participate in

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Volume (21) March 2023 العدد (21) مارس 2023

regular classroom activities has been attributed to thie physical conditions and mental ability. United States Census Bureau, (2012) stated that even if there is inclusion in special educational needs in all levels, the learners with disabilities are still facing many obstacles. The discrimination is still being observed for learners with disabilities, many factors are not sociable for those learners and continue to keep out them from different areas such as school and any other where they need services. Silas Ngayaboshya, a local program manager for Handicap 7 International, says that many families hide their children at home for the reason that being disabled is a shame and burden to the family and in previous years it was considered as punishment from gods (The Guardian weekly outlook on International Development, 2011)

Inclusive education includes unstructured activities (e.g friendships, play), organized activities (e.g. sports, clubs, arts), classroom based activities (e.g. group work, study) and engagement in social roles Maciver, Rutherford, Arakelyan, Kramer, Richmond, Todorova, Romero-Ayuso, Nakamura-Thomas, Ten Velden, Finlayson, O'Hare and Forsyth (2019). Children with disabilities are at significant risk for limited participation in school, such restrictions have significant lifetime consequences for achievement, quality of life and wellbeing Cheryan S, Ziegler SA, Plaut VC, Meltzoff AN. (2014). There are several issues. Attendance for children with disabilities is reduced compared to peers Houtrow, Jones, Ghandour, Strickland, Newacheck (2012). Students with disabilities participate less in structured and unstructured activities, and experience reduced interaction and playground participation. Children with disabilities additionally show less engagement in the wider school world, including clubs and organizations Egilson and Traustadottir 2009).

Whalley (2018) study prompts discussion on the need for schools to have special educators in an effort to promote the participation of students with disabilities in regular classroom activities. While special educators develop policies and learning plans for students with disabilities (Poon-McBrayer & Wong 2013), teachers may provide more attention to developing lessons that take the needs of all students into consideration. Once these arrangements are in place, it is likely that all students will participate effectively in classroom activities. According to Martha and Sheryl (2011) that in United States of America, it was found out that the majority (80-85%) of students with disabilities can meet the same achievement standards as other students if they are given specially designed instruction, appropriate access, supports and accommodations as required by Individual with Disability Act (IDEA)

In addition, Jordan is a signatory to the Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities. We may infer from the current legislative climate in Jordan that institutions of higher education are now expected to proactively assess the requirements of students with disabilities and create adaptations that will be universally applicable, rather than only reacting to the needs of specific students. Even though these are all good things, student case studies in Jordan (Masaedeh, 1995) and other places (Butterwick & Benjamin, 2006) have shown that there are still

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Volume (21) March 2023 2023 مارس (21) العدد

a lot of big problems when it comes to including students with disabilities in regular classrooms. It mandates educational institutions to accommodate disabled students' needs in admission criteria, pass marks, curriculum, exams, school facilities, and class scheduling.

Statement of the Problem

Parents and groups for disabled children have filed several complaints in print and electronic media citing infringement of their right to education, Task Force on Special Needs Education (2003). The complaints alleged that some children with disabilities were denied admission to regular schools, others were expelled or forced out of regular schools because their disabilities harmed the academic or extracurricular competitiveness of the schools, and the Government had refused to fund some special schools started by parents of children with disabilities.

Inclusion and integration of physically and mentally disabled students have been studied. Konza (2008) examined social-cultural issues impacting disabled students' participation in modern times. He identified poor teacher training, huge class sizes, limited resources, and low teacher effectiveness as important issues. Discrimination and seclusion prevent disabled students from learning in mainstream primary schools, according to the study. Mutisya (2014) reports that physically disabled students incorporated into regular schools fight integration, drop out, or regress, but she does not study the reasons. This study evaluates the physical and mental abilities of physically challenged students at inclusive education facilities in Jordan to offer ways to help them.

Purpose of the Study

The study shall be guided by the objectives:

To examine the effect of physical condition of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan.

To examine the effect of mental ability of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan.

Research Questions

The study sought to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of physical condition of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan?

2. What is the effect of mental ability of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan?

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The Concept of Physically Challenged Person

Physically handicapped includes inherited and acquired limitations and health difficulties (Mifflin 2003). Impaired or physically disabled persons have a physical disability that affects their daily life. If given the chance, a moderately disabled student may compete intellectually with non-disabled students. A severely disabled person cannot walk and needs a career (Siebers 2008). Congenital conditions cause physical disabilities in children. Injury or sickness during normal development causes acquired disability. Neads (1999) listed physical problems as paraplegia, quadriplegia, multiple sclerosis (MS), hemiplegia, cerebral palsy, and absent/reduced limb function. Persons associate physically challenged people with paraplegia and quadriplegia. Quadriplegia is neck-related spinal cord damage, whereas paraplegia occurs below the neck. Both conditions cause varying degrees of limb and movement loss. Other physical challenges include,

- **Vision impairments:** A person who is blind has permanent vision impairment.
- **Hearing impairments:** A person who is deaf has a permanent hearing impairment.
- **Mobility impairments:** A person who is paralyzed has permanent mobility impairment.
- **Cognitive impairments:** Is when a person has trouble remembering, learning new things, concentrating, or making decisions that affect their everyday life.
- **Speech impairments:** Speech impairment refers to an impaired ability to produce speech sounds and may range from mild to severe.

Social Justices of Physically Challenged Pupils on Inclusive Education

From a social justice and civil rights viewpoint, education must be addressed for all children and young people, including those with exceptionalities. School and classroom cultures, individual teaching approaches, and teacher-created classroom microcommunities all provide consistent signals about how things should be. In a school system that rejects social justice and civil rights, physically disabled students are prejudiced against mentally stable students in inclusive education.

This limits assistance for outstanding students, making ordinary education courses operationally unavailable and more restricted, at least in policy terms. Due to the quantification of education, many schools' admission and verification policies are

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Volume (21) March 2023 العدد (21) مارس 2023

based on time spent in regular education. Ware (2018) states that state-mandated compliance procedures that require inclusive education in schools to accommodate all categories of students in the admission process develop "inclusion as a calculation" without considering the moral component and needs of educational inclusion. It's as if a physical appearance count could determine the success or failure of such change (p. 154). This viewpoint illustrates the incorrect and growing insensitivity to the dynamic education and learning processes needed by all pupils. The administrations that are supposed to monitor and assist inclusive education are likely to be apprehensive, if not outright resistant, to such reforms. School cultures are transferred covertly in classrooms and among instructors, while central administration policies and behaviours are more visible.

Effect of Social Condition of Physically Challenged Pupils on Inclusive Education

Perceptions of inclusive education are difficult to measure and analyse, therefore studies are inconsistent. Despite varied results, there are constant indicators of both the lack-of-preparedness and the difficulties (if not impossibility, in certain circumstances) of school culture to properly accept the idea of inclusive education as stated by Western nations in the present cultural and educational context. Logistics issues include a lack of financial and material resources and support staff, leadership issues like expanded responsibilities and oversight, increased teaching staff demands, heightened accountability, and community-based issues like the reaction of parents of students without disabilities and the impact of students with exceptionalities on students without them in the classroom (all of which are, though compelling from one perspective, entirely irrelevant under the auspice of civil rights and social justice).

In an increasingly complex educational setting, administrators may avoid such a call beyond baseline compliance with regulations and standards. From a social situation standpoint, school administrators cannot "pass" on an endeavour to equalise social justice to avoid adding complication to their professional lives.

UNESCO (2000): Most schools support inclusion. However, many have doubts about inclusiveness, and even those that try may not have enough support.

Thus, administrators and decision-makers must engage with schools to build on their inclusion trials, overcome their doubts, and establish more successful inclusive policies. Thus, a more internationally sensitive and comprehensive definition of inclusive education based on child civil rights is needed. As it has been clearly established that inclusion is an elusive concept to define, but also accepted that it is necessary to determine some working form of a definition to enable a true proposal and analysis of a treatise, the following elements must be part of a definition of inclusive education for it to be truly based on civil rights of the child (Shyman, 2013):

Inclusive education is a dynamic process by which students with and without

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Volume (21) March 2023 العدد (21) مارس 2023

exceptionalities receive their primary modes of service delivery in the general education environment; (2) All necessary supports, including environmental accommodations, instructional differentiation, and curriculum material modification, can and will be delivered in the general education classroom; and (3) the individual, if able to do so, has shown a clear preference for being included.

Challenges for Inclusive Education among Physically Challenged Pupils

Since a few critical and often-cited studies in the early 21st century outlined the hurdles to inclusive education, professional agreement has not altered (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002; Mittler, 2000; Peters, 2003). Because of this, many researchers now advocate for inclusive education development to go beyond a deficit approach and concentrate on community participation, existing assets, and scaling up effective inclusive education policies and practises (Messiou, 2017; Phasha, Mahlo & Dei, 2017; Schuelka & Johnstone, 2012). The World Bank and USAID cooperation in Africa illustrates the move from barrier-deficit-thinking to enabling achievement and finding "what works" in inclusive education (World Bank, 2017). This is part of a greater movement to regard inclusive education as a systemic change rather than an unique method for marginalised students (Opertti, Walker & Zhang, 2014) Despite new systemic conceptualizations of inclusive education and an emphasis on success, it is essential briefly addressing the biggest barriers to effective implementation. Inclusion education's biggest obstacles are:

- Lack of policy and legal support
- Inadequate school resources and facilities
- Inadequate specialised school staff
- Inadequate teacher training in inclusive thinking and techniques
- Didactic and passive pedagogical techniques
- Rigid curriculum that offers no accommodation, modification, or personalization
- Unsupportive school and district leadership
- Socio-cultural attitudes about schools and challenged

Theoretical Framework

Social Comparison Theory (1954)

Theoretical Framework This study took the social comparison theory (1954) which is centered on the belief that there is a drive within individuals to gain accurate self-evaluations. The theory explains how individuals evaluate their own opinions and abilities by comparing themselves to others in order to reduce uncertainty in these

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www.jeahs.com
Volume (21) March 2023 العدد (21) مارس 2023

domains, and learn how to define the self. It was initially proposed by psychologist Leon in 1954. According to Festinger, individuals are motivated to gain accurate evaluations of themselves by examining their opinions and abilities in comparison to others. Such comparisons provide an objective benchmark against which an individual can compare themselves in relevant domains, providing a sense of validity and cognitive clarity. He hypothesized that people who are similar to an individual are especially good in generating accurate evaluations of abilities and opinions. To this, he added that the tendency to compare oneself with some other specific person decreases as the difference between their opinions and abilities become more divergent. He also hypothesized that there is an upward drive towards achieving greater abilities.

The social comparison theory is therefore very relevant in this study on challenges faced by special needs learners: physically challenged students often face a lot of discrimination from the peers and the society. Their academic performance is mostly poor. As observed the high ranking of pupils challenges the special need education pupils who need extra attention and resources to match up with the others. This theory therefore provided a fertile ground to assess the learning challenges faced by special needs education learner in public primary schools in understanding the challenges that cause the poor performance among them.

Empirical Studies

Mutugi, (2018) study found that most schools did not have adequate physical facilities thus disadvantaging a number of children with special needs in the society. The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education of 1994 emphasized the schools need to change and adapt the diverse needs of all learners. Many parents (82.61%) strongly agreed to the suggestion that there should be increased funding in special need education to cater for the instructional materials used by these learners. Majority of the teachers (44.44%) strongly agreed that they lacked commitment and skills with regard to SNE learning. The findings of the study indicated that teachers lack necessary skills and knowledge to implement inclusion of learners with special needs. The study also found that there were inadequate instructional materials for SNE learning. The findings also found out that schools lacked essential facilities that aid learning of SNE pupils, for example ramps for learners who are physically challenged, hearing aids among others.

Waktola (2018) also study challenges of students with visual impairment in participating physical education practical class however his study did not display challenges of other disabled students. The main reasons that initiated the researcher to conduct the study are there are many students in Awintegegn town in PE program in the school that has physical impairment and not participating in the practical class. In addition, create inclusive environment and awareness for students with disabilities in the school. The purpose of this study is identifying the challenges and problems of students with physical disabilities in physical education practical session and the

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Journal of Educational and Human Sciences
www.jeahs.com
Volume (21) March 2023 2023 مارس (21) العدد

solutions to solve or minimize the problems

Akay et al. (2014) evaluated hearing-impaired fourth-graders at the Anatolian University Education and Research Center for Hearing Impaired Children (İÇEM) and their solutions. Researchers found that the discrepancies between general education and support education programmes, student differences, text difficulty, and general education instructors not cooperating were the main issues. Despite issues, kids improved academically, socially, and communicatively.

Rea et al. (2002) found that special education teachers should be trained on inclusive education law. Special education instructors, general education teachers, and students working together in accordance with legal regulations are crucial to mainstreaming initiatives, but they are few. The poor salary of special education instructors, tough working conditions, high student numbers, and turnover rates cause this long-standing issue.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

Located in the Middle East, Jordan has borders with Syria and Iraq to the north, Palestine and Israel to the west, and Saudi Arabia to the south. One-fifth of Jordan's population, or 21 percent, is young (aged 10 to 19), while the vast majority of the country's 84.4 percent urban dwellers are also under the age of 30. Official development aid accounts for 8% of Jordan's GDP, while the country's per capita GDP in US dollars is $5,160. While estimates vary when looking at different data sets and there is no information available for 2016, they allocate 4.9% of their GDP to education (UNESCO, 2019; World Bank, 2015).

Research Design

A survey design was used for this study. This approach was considered most appropriate because it helped the researcher to describe, examine, record, analyze and interpret the variables that were found in the study. It is also useful because of the relatively large population from which the information was collected.

Population of the Study

Population, according to Omari (2011), is "the sum of all units that have one or more characteristics of interest to the researcher." People, organisations, or entities in the outside world that share one or more traits are the subject of this kind of research. The target population for this study included all physical disabled pupils in preschools in Amman, Jordan.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Ary et al. (1996) define a sample as a subset of a population chosen by a researcher

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Journal of Educational and Human Sciences
www.jeahs.com
Volume (21) March 2023 العدد (21) مارس 2023

for a specific study in order to draw conclusions about that population. In this study sampling was made of 376 pupils with physical disability.

Research Instrument

The research instruments used for the study was questionnaire to elucidate information from the respondents using Likert (1932) modified scale of measurement was used in the study. The research instrument was made up of two sections; A and B. Section A, focused on the personal data of the respondents. Section B measured the constructs of the variables. Each variable was measured with a 4 points level of internal scale of measurement -Strongly Agreed (SA) (4points), Agreed- (A) (3 points), Disagree-(D) (2 points); Strongly Disagreed (SD)- 1 point if the item was positively worded. Reversed scoring was used for items negatively worded.

Methods of Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered to the sampled pupils after obtaining permission from the school authority on presentation of a letter of introduction. All the questions on the questionnaire were read to the pupils to avoid any misunderstanding. The teachers of the selected classes assisted the researchers in the distribution and collection of completed copies of the questionnaire on the spot method. This method adopted by the researchers to ensure that time was judiciously utilized and to avoid missing copies of the questionnaire. At the end, all the copies distributed were collected for subsequent analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical technique

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION

Gender distribution of the respondents

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Male	189	50.26
Female	187	49.74
Total	**376**	**100**

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www.jeahs.com
Volume (21) March 2023 2023 مارس (21) العدد

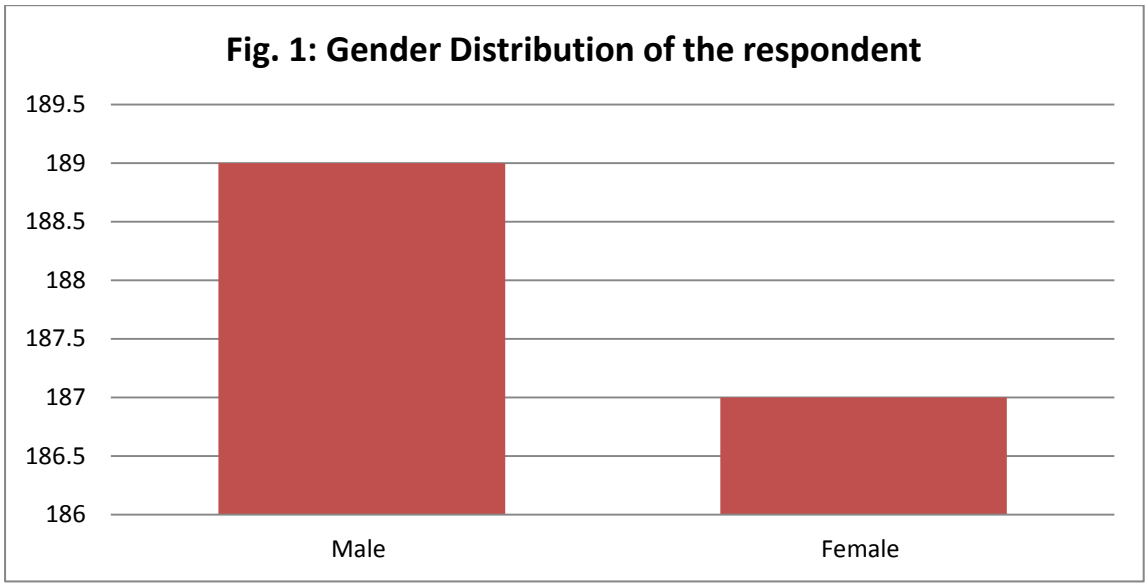

Table 1 shows that one hundred and eighty nine (189) respondents representing 50.26% of the sample population were male while one hundred and eighty seven (187) respondents representing 49.74% of the population were female.

Table 2: Characterization of Physically Challenges

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Vision impairment	66	17.55
Hearing impairment	63	16.75
Mobility impairment	88	23.40
Cognitive impairment	81	21.54
Speech impairment	78	20.74
Total	376	100

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Journal of Educational and Human Sciences
www.jeahs.com
Volume (21) March 2023 2023 مارس (21) العدد

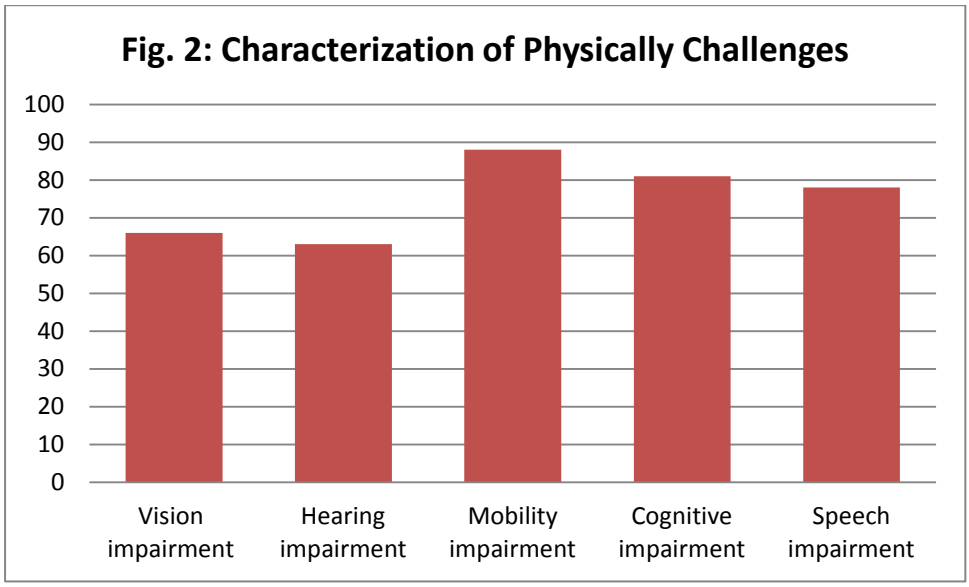

Table 2 shows that sixty six (66) respondents representing 17.55% of the sample population have Vision impairment, sixty three (63) respondents representing 16.75% have Hearing impairment, eighty eight (88) respondents representing 23.40% have Mobility impairment, eighty one (81) respondents representing 21.54% have Cognitive impairment while seventy eight(78) respondents representing 20.74% have Speech impairment. Therefore, the result of the analysis shows that people with mobility impairment have the highest frequency.

Research Question One

What is the effect of physical condition of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan**?**

Table 5: percentage analysis of effect of physical condition of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan

physical condition of physically challenged pupils	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Total
People with disabilities are also more likely to face social isolation.	211 (56.11)	143 (38.03)	12 (3.19)	10 (2.65)	376

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www.jeahs.com
Volume (21) March 2023 العدد (21) مارس 2023

Physical challenges affect a primary sense or ability to move and get around easily.	67 (17.81)	72 (19.14)	132 (35.10)	105 (27.92)	376
Pupils with physical impairments may have difficulty with managing the distance between different learning activities	48 (12.76)	69 (18.35)	156 (41.48)	103 27.39	376
physically challenged children suffer from a lack of coordination, weak muscles, stiff muscles, or no muscle strength at all	205 (54.52)	154 (40.95)	11 (2.92)	6 (1.59)	376
Inaccessible environments, lack of appropriate learning materials, shortage of qualified teachers is just some of the barriers they face	235 (62.5)	114 30.31)	19 (5.05)	8 (2.12)	376
Aggregate	714	675	346	243	
Proportional Ratio	142.5	135	69.2	48.6	

The analysis of respondents regarding physical condition of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan reveals that 714 respondents reflecting a proportional ratio of 142.5 strongly agree that the physical condition of physically challenged pupils affect their enrollment in inclusive education centers in Jordan. This was followed by an aggregate of 675 indicating a proportional ratio of 135 who chose the medium option. 346 respondents representing a proportional ratio of 69.2% disagreed that physical condition of physically challenged pupils affects their participation in inclusive education centers. Only 243 respondents representing a proportional ratio of 48.6 strongly disagreed that physical condition of physically challenged pupils affects their inclusive education centers in Jordan.

Research Question Two

What is the effect of mental ability of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan**?**

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www.jeahs.com
Volume (21) March 2023 2023 مارس (21) العدد

Table 6: percentage analysis of effect of mental ability of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan

mental ability of physically challenged pupils	**SA (%)**	**A (%)**	**D (%)**	**SD (%)**	**Total**
Pupils with mental disabilities benefit in a number of ways from inclusion.	209 (55.58)	143 (38.03)	13 (3.45)	11 (2.92)	376
Teachers feel that learners with mental disabilities benefit educationally and socially from inclusion.	226 (60.1)	132 (35.1)	10 (2.65)	8 (2.12)	376
Pupils with mental disabilities do not have learner support they need for learning in inclusive settings due to unavailability of resources.	245 (65.15)	112 (29.78)	12 (3.19)	7 (1.86)	376
Inclusion of pupils with mental disabilities is time consuming.	211 (56.11)	145 (38.56)	11 (2.92)	9 (2.39)	376
Pupils with mental disabilities are not readily accepted by their peers in inclusive settings	201 (53.45)	137 (36.43)	21 (5.58)	17 (4.52)	376
Aggregate	1092	669	67	52	
Proportional Ratio	218.4	133.8	13.4	10.4	

The analysis of respondents regarding mental ability of physically challenged pupils in inclusive education centers in Jordan reveals that 1092 respondents reflecting a proportional ratio of 218.4 strongly agree that the mental ability of physically challenged pupils affect their enrollment in inclusive education centers in Jordan. This was followed by an aggregate of 669 indicating a proportional ratio of 133.8 who chose the medium option. 67 respondents representing a proportional ratio of 13.4%

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Journal of Educational and Human Sciences
www.jeahs.com
Volume (21) March 2023 العدد (21) مارس 2023

disagreed that mental ability of physically challenged pupils affects their participation in inclusive education centers. Only 52 respondents representing a proportional ratio of 10.4 strongly disagreed that physical condition of physically challenged pupils affects their inclusive education centers in Jordan.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is observed that there are significant obstacles and challenges to successful inclusive education implementation which includes things like, Lack of policy and legal support, Inadequate specialized school staff, inadequate teacher training in inclusive thinking and techniques, among others. Inclusive education development is to move beyond a deficit approach and to a focus on community collaboration, attention to existing assets, and scaling-up successful inclusive education policies and practices.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

- That adequate teacher training in inclusive thinking and techniques to enhance the inclusiveness of physically challenged pupils.
- That appropriate policies and law to support inclusive education be made to protect physically challenged pupils against marginalization.
- That more special education teachers should be employed the cover the deficit and motivate the existing ones.
- The classroom should be conducive and properly managed in a way that will enhance inclusive education.

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