Factors influencing teachers› ideal images on the social inclusion of children who are deaf and hard of hearing in Qassim region, Saudi Arabia

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This study aims to identify the factors that influence on Saudi teachers' ideal images on social inclusion of children who are deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) in Saudi mainstream schools. It specifically investigates the images held by teachers about the social inclusion of DHH children, and explores the elements that created and shaped teachers' ideal image on DHH children social inclusion. The study adopted qualitative methodology, especially interpretive approach. The research methods used to collect data were semi-structured interviews. As there is only one primary school that contains DHH children, the researcher invited all teachers, they agreed to participate in the current study. Six teachers participated, they were interviewed in private places to ensure privacy and confidentiality. The study handled with ethical issues seriously. The study used qualitative analysis. The results demonstrated different types of images of social inclusion. Teachers' thoughts stemmed from their own backgrounds and the ideas that they believe in, according to their experiences. There are a variety of elements that create ideal images in teachers' minds such as community awareness, financial funds, and policies from educational authorities. A conclusion and recommendations for study and how this would affect future research topics were provided.

Keywords: social inclusion, ideal image, teachers, factors, deaf and hard of hearing children, and community awareness.

ملخص

هدفـت الدراسـة إلى التعـرف على العناصـر التـي تشكل الصـورة المثاليـة في عقول المعلمـين حول الدمج الاجتماعي للأطفال الصم وضعاف السمع في المدارس العادية في المملكة العربية السعودية. تحديـداً تستهدف الدراسة التحقق من الصور المثالية التـي يحملها المعلمـون عـن دمج الأطفـال الصـم وضعاف السمع دمجاً اجتماعياً، وتستكشف الأمور والعناصـر التي شكّلت هذه النظرة المثاليـة. تبنّت الدراسة المنهج الكيفي (النوعـي)، وخاصة الاتجاه التفسيري من هذا المنهـج. استخدمت الدراسة المقابلـة شبـه المنظمة لجمع المعلومات حول هذا الموضوع، وبصفة هذا النوع تحديـداً مـن المقابلات يسمح للمشاركين بـإدلاء آراءهم ووجهات نظرهم، ولا يسمح بالخروج عن صلب الموضوع أو القضايا المطروحة، فهذا النوع بين التقييد المقنن وبين الانفلات والعشوائية في الطرح، بمعنى أنه حرية منضبطة لتناول الموضوعات. الطريقة التي اختار بها الباحث عينة البحث كانت الطريقة الملائمة، ومع من تربطهم علاقة مع الباحث. ستة معلمون تم اختيارهم وأُجريت معهم مقابلات في أماكن خاصة وآمنة ضماناً وحفاظاً على سرية المعلومات المقدمة. تعاملت الدراسة بجدية مع القضايا الأخلاقيـة مثل السريـة وإعطاء الحريـة والصلاحيـة للمشارك بالانسحاب متى مـا أراد ذلـك. استخدمت الدراسـة التحليل النوعي. كشفت نتائـج الدراسة أن هناك مجموعـة مـن العناصر التي تخلق وتشكل الصورة المثاليـة في أذهان المدرسين حول الدمـج الاجتماعي للأطفال الصم وضعاف السمع، مثل الوعي المجتمعي، والدعم المـادي والتقنـي، والسياسات من السلطـات التعليمية العليا. قدّمـت الدراسة خاتمة وتوصيات للأبحاث المستقبلية.

كلمـات مفتاحية: الدمـج الاجتماعـي، المعلمـون، الصورة المثاليـة، عناصـر، الأطفال الصم وضعاف السمع، الوعي المجتمعي.

Factors influencing teachers' ideal images on the social inclusion of children who are deaf and hard of hearing in Qassim region, Saudi Arabia

The topic of social inclusion continued to be one of the debatable education subjects amongst educationalists and experts. The concept of social inclusion has become a widespread subject that researchers, experts and parents are controversial about (Hadjikakou et al, 2008). There are different images in teachers' minds about the social inclusion of children who are deaf and hard of hearing (DHH), and these differentiations perhaps have impacts on what is carried on inside schools or outside schools. Furthermore, there are challenges standing against these children in regular school when educators trying to implement social inclusion. Kluwin et al (2002) contend that studies based on classrooms for deaf children in regular schools discovered that these children face difficulties in terms of their social inclusion. So, studying such images is important as it is essential part of the educational environment that is related to thoughts and conceptual contexts. It might be significant to start this research with the question "why we study the ideal image of social inclusion?". Then definitions of social inclusion and that factors that create social inclusion images will be illustrated.

The problem of study

Based on the researcher's experience, it was noticed that ideal image of social inclusion is vague in teachers' thoughts. This has impacts on their teaching practices. Powers (2003) states that there is vagueness and ambiguity in the concept of social inclusion, educators are confused amongst overlapped ideas. Therefore, this confusion needs to be clarified, causes and reasons need to be specified. This is what will this study shed light on.

Why we study the ideal image in teachers' minds

There is much literature reviews that focus on the social development and academic aspects, but little attention is paid on the ideal image that teachers and educators hold about DHH children's social inclusion. Ideal images are thoughts and ideas. For this, if wrong ideas were being held by educators, then educational and social implications would be implemented incorrectly. In addition, teachers are considered to be a vital pivot in the educational environment, so attitudes, beliefs, and images that teachers carry out could influence on several aspects of DHH children social inclusion. Educational experts state that beliefs and attitudes influence on what teachers perform in classrooms, teachers' attitudes are considered by educators to be critical for the implementation of social inclusion (Wamae & Kang'ethe-Kamau, 2004). This means connection between practical work in classrooms and teachers' understandings is influential. For instance, image held by a teacher may influence on teacher's behaviour and his styles of teaching that may connect with DHH child's education.

Secondly, this phase in children's age is sensitive, so images carried out by teachers are likely to effect DHH children's social skills and inclusion. What is implanted in DHH child in this stage may have an impact on later stages of life. Thirdly, studying the ideal image is necessarily identifying for its reasons, causes, and factors that formulate this ideal image, so roots of this image could be controlled by studying such topic of ideal image of social inclusion. Fourthly, knowledge about teachers' ideal images helps in understanding the implications of social inclusion between DHH children and hearing children. So, these factors show the significance of studying ideal images in teachers' minds.

The context of Saudi Arabia (study context)

The inclusion of DHH children in Saudi Arabia started in 1989 (Alturky, 2008). Approximately, 90% of DHH children are included in Saudi mainstream schools (Almosa, 2007). However, this percentage may not reflect the perfect implementation of DHH children's social inclusion. Alshehri (2003) indicates that DHH children usually drop out of mainstream schools because they do not keep up with their hearing peers. Two schools in Unaizah receive DHH children (one primary school, one secondary[1] and one high[2] school). This study is dedicated for the primary school. It aimed to interview six teachers in this school which is all teachers devoted to deaf education, this was a case study to collect different perspectives from these teachers.

Definitions of social inclusion

Social inclusion is defined as "including a wide range of factors, which can influence an individual's education and life-chance. It is relatively new term among educationalists and is used by the European union and new labour to denote a commitment to equity in policy-making. Yet social inclusion is often illusion, high in rhetoric, but low in practice for the concept incorporates not just different types of inequality, but the forces and mechanisms which enhance and detach groups or individuals from the social and economic mainstream. With regard to school exclusions, for example, there is evidence to suggest that there is an over-representation of special needs children, ethnic minorities, boys, looked after children, and

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1   Secondary stage lasts three years after a primary school, it usually contains children of 13, 14, and 15 old ages.

2   High stage lasts three years after a secondary school, it usually contains children of 16, 17, and 18 old ages. This is according to the Saudi system of education.

traveller children" (Parker-Jenkins & Hartas, 2002, p.39). This quotation is significant because it shed light on a fact that social inclusion is not only glamorous logos. It needs real implications. The researchers warn of the "illusion of inclusion", this seems reasonable because if social or educational inclusion was not implanted in reality, these sayings and theories around inclusion would not provide actual treatment for DHH children. East (1994) states that "the concept of inclusion is already embodied in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, I.D.E.A., which stipulates that there should be a continuum of placement options and that appropriate services and auxiliary aids should be available to the child as needed". This is evidence for the individual differences amongst children with special needs. Diversity needs to be embedded in all policies and suggestion that are related to these children. All options and choices need to be accessible and obtainable; this would enhance different skills of children.

Different understandings of social inclusion

There are different considerations and different angles that researchers and educators usually look from to understand social inclusion. This variety of understandings caused confusions around the concept of social inclusion. Powers (2003, p. 230) states that

"There is a confusion over the use of different terms such as inclusion, inclusive education, inclusivity, and social inclusion … there is a confusion over whether inclusion refers to a goal (e.g., ending "educational segregation" through closing all special schools), a state (e.g., all children educated in mainstream classrooms), a process (e.g., of increasing participation for children with special needs), a means to an end (e.g., mainstream education as a way to better academic outcomes for all), or a value system (e.g., one concerned with

the rights of all marginalized groups) … given this confusion, there is an urgent need for teachers to develop a shared language and understanding of what inclusion means at school and at classroom level"

The quotation above shows a number of complicated issues that are related with social inclusion, whether it is connected with conceptual aspects or practical implementation. Concepts and thoughts are indeed related with teachers' minds. The citation started with terms dilemmas, what we mean by inclusion and social inclusion. Is it social development, social skills or social interaction? Then the excerpt mentioned the matters that inclusion refers to. It is goals and aims, condition, process, system or participation? Fields, a deaf writer, (1994, p.168) mentions "I understand inclusion to be a goal, concept, or model for educating children with disabilities in regular classes within their local schools. I also understand that many parents and educators are trying to make inclusion mandatory for all children with disabilities regardless of type or magnitude, with the stipulation that special provisions be added as needed. This they call full inclusion". Here is an obvious indication that inclusion is far goal, not only procedures or rules. After that the author clearly demanded for developing shared language and understanding of what inclusion means? East 1994 argues that "it seems to me that much of the disagreement stems from various understandings of what inclusion, and more particularly, what "full" inclusion means - or ought to mean". These disagreements and different understandings have influential impacts on social inclusion and its implications.

Social skills and the feeling of belonging
Some researchers believe that social inclusion is indeed social skills. Fields (1994, p.168) stated "while I attended the Clarke School for the Deaf, I experienced a different type

of inclusion, that is to say, participating fully in classroom discussion, major involvement in extra-curricular activities and social events, and living with other deaf students". The presumption of inclusion, as a parent, is a deaf child socially interact with hearing pupils, for example the least restrictive environment (East, 1994).

Belonging is another face of social inclusion. It is a psychological need that DHH children ought to feel. It has influences on psychological, social and academic aspects. Osterman (2000) claims that while understanding belongness in different ways, research concluded that children's feelings of acceptance is connected with positive attitudes to school, friends, teachers and class performance, pupils who were found to be accepted by their counterparts and teachers were found to have more interests and enjoyment in their schools. When locating a deaf child in a certain educational environment, psychological and academic capabilities need to be taken into account (Fields, 1994).

Attitudes and acceptance

The literature review reveals that the success of social inclusion is related to attitudes. Attitudes and beliefs are associated with success in a school setting (Osterman, 2000). The hallmark of social inclusion is teachers' attitudes and willingness to work with pupils with special educational needs (Ali et al, 2006). It is argued that one of the key elements that effects the placement of social inclusion is teachers' and students' attitudes. The Board of Directors of the National Parent Network on Disabilities has approved a statement on fully supported inclusive education options which gives us an overarching rationale for full inclusion:

"Inclusion is not a place, it's an attitude, an attitude that fully accepts all children in their schools and communities: that welcomes full participation of parents of children with disabilities in schools and school reform efforts; that fully includes adults with disabilities in all aspects of life and areas of civic responsibility ... Acceptance and inclusion lead to empowerment and independence. Our children have a right to expect nothing less". East 1994, p. 168.

This text has important issues, the first is an emphasis that inclusion is not mere a place or location. It goes beyond body movements. There is an indication here that inclusion has deep meanings, for example, full participation of DHH children. This is main part of social inclusion. The quote clearly concentrates on the issue of attitudes and acceptance. I believe that this is the core stone of inclusion before its implications. It also focuses on the involvement of families and parents in school efforts, and this is another element of successful social inclusion. Feiler (2010, p.138) argues that "if parents feel hesitant about their own knowledge and skills in relation to the curriculum, pedagogy and education in general, this may undermine their willingness to collaborate with teachers and other educational staff". The last point of the quotation above is its attention for the matter of the rights. This means what we, as educators, do and what a school does is not only our responsibility, but also children's rights. This point should be made clear for the community and educational authorities.

Additionally, increasing positive attitudes need a removal for the presumptions made by teachers and students in the educational sittings (Hung and Paul, 2006). It seems that negative attitudes stem from the lack of connection between DHH children in mainstream schools and their peers (Punch, & Hyde, 2011). Martin et al (2011) emphasised that the difficulty

in creating strong relationships between DHH children and hearing children caused negative attitudes towards DHH children. In schools, teachers' attitudes are regarded to be one of the main factors for guaranteeing the success of social inclusion (Ali et al, 2006). In a study made by Vaughn et al (1996), it was stated that the majority of teachers were found to hold negative attitudes against social inclusion. Attitudes are connected with acceptance. Cambra (2002) points out that social acceptance by hearing counterparts is the crucial part in the success of social inclusion in the school settings. Osterman (2000, p. 330) also declares "while students who feel accepted and secure are more likely to evidence autonomy and self-regulation, students who experience rejection often exhibit an unwillingness or inability to conform to norms and appear less able to act independently". The psychological aspect is evidently linked to the social aspect, so the psychological feeling inside a deaf child may have an influence on the social skills and interaction. A school approach to children with special needs where all teachers and administrative staff share duties, it is when a school promotes acceptance for all children with disabilities and respect differences, particularly when positive attitudes towards deaf people and deafness are promoted, when DHH students feel that their memberships in the community are valued (Powers, 2003).

Support

Support is a crucial aspect that is related with social inclusion. Social inclusion would not happen without the questions of support. Hadjikakou et al, (2005) claims that it is my belief that inclusion without proper support where needed causes exclusion inside and outside school, varying individual needs must be met. There are different types of support pertained to teachers, educational tools and aids, in and out classrooms curriculum, and financial support.

Fields (1994) wondered how DHH children managed to be successful with no support system, he doubts the effective practice of social inclusion without support, is it beneficial? The writer believes that inclusion without full system of support services may really mean exclusion for DHH individuals. Concern was raised in East's thoughts (1994) about DHH pupils being left and dumped in regular classrooms without suitable provision or before they are ready to enter schools.

It must be noted that including DHH children depends on several factors such as family condition and parents' ability and willingness, and sacrifices they provide for their children, and the capability of children themselves, and the accessibility of services, it must be also taken into account that a particular work of support for certain deaf children, does not mean it is suitable for other DHH children (Fields, 1994).

In line with the above discussions, it is important to understand teachers' perspectives on the ideal image of DHH children's social inclusion, and the factors that create this ideal image. This is presented in these following research questions.

Research questions

1) What are the teachers' perspectives on the ideal image of social inclusion of DHH children in mainstream schools?

2) What are the teachers' perspectives on the factors that create and shape teachers' ideal image of social inclusion of DHH children in mainstream schools?

Research methodology and methods

Since this study focused on understanding teachers' perspectives on the ideal image of DHH children social inclusion, it adopted interpretive approach. Scotland (2012) summarises different research approaches, arguing that the

main seek of interpretive paradigm is to understand. So, understanding in teachers minds is a main target for this study. I believe that the success or failure of social inclusion is mainly dependent on perspectives around it. It serves as an attempt to discover knowledge constructed by teachers' society (Maykut and Morehouse, 2005). The interpretive framework led this study to answer the research questions.

The method I used to collect data was interviews. This tool is regularly utilised if the participants are few and accessible (Gillham, 2000). The type of interview I implemented was the semi-structured interview, in which the researcher seeks to gather information about a particular subject. His type of interview means that a researcher arranged certain questions, and not restricted to these inquiries, but also open and free to ask other questions that are related to the topics under discussions (Rubin and Rubin, 2011). It can be the richest source of information (Gillham, 2000). Bryman (2012) contends that consistent topics and problems may appear after semi-structured interviews have been conducted.

Sampling

Qualitative studies are not usually carried out with large cases; rather, small number of participants take parts in such studies, insightful points and investigations are often aimed in educational contexts (Gray, 2013). What determine the size of participants is the nature of research, within qualitative inquiries the scope is relatively small (Cohen et al., 2011). Before beginning, an approval letter was obtained from The Local Authority of Education and The School Administration. The researcher selected the school through purposive way, as the school that contains DHH children was targeted. Teachers as well were subjected to purposive selection; the condition was they had experiences in teaching DHH children. Their

number was six, they were all invited to participated in the current study, they agreed.

Teachers of DHH pupils were interviewed in their houses, privacy and confidentiality were prompted and guaranteed. Bryman (2012) argues that interviews are likely to provide valuable information if confidence was ensured. Within this study I could gain insightful understandings of the educational environment the teachers work in (Seidman, 2013).

Interview design

The interview protocol contains twenty-one questions. I had to start with teachers' views on the image of social inclusion of DHH children as a first group of questions. It is always evident that there is vagueness in understanding children's social inclusion due to the different interpretations and contexts that social inclusion is based upon. For this reason, it was significant to explore teachers' views about social inclusion. Then I asked about the suitability of mainstream school as a place for developing social interaction. I think this link is important as it determines the convictions of teachers about including DHH children in local schools. Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) argued that opinions held by teachers constitute a significant part in the successful social inclusion; the achievement of educational environment is fundamentally based on positive beliefs around it. This is what made me keen to recognise their perspectives on the ideal image of social inclusion. Throughout this research, I found this part of enquiries are useful as they reveal teachers' understandings of social inclusion.

As the social inclusion is linked to the severity of hearing loss, some researchers (for example: Kyle and Harris, 2006, Bowen, 2008, Jeanes et al., 2000) argue that the level of hearing loss could play part in facilitating or mitigating social

inclusion for DHH children. It seems logic, and for this reason, I invented questions related to this issue. Another issue is the communication methods. Research published by Bat-Chava et al. (2005), they found that the communication methods a teacher apply in his classroom is very influential in progressing social inclusion, not only between a teacher and DHH children, but also between DHH children and their hearing counterparts. So, a couple of questions pertained to communication were listed in the interview schedule.

Support is associated with the ideal image of DHH children's social inclusion, so as a researcher, I needed to raise questions to identify the availability of support, and where this provision stems from. The last part of the interview was about the factors and the reasons that formed teachers' images on social inclusion and how these are observed by teachers. Teachers were also questioned about how these elements could increase the level of social inclusion. The aim was to improve current and future social inclusion in Saudi mainstream schools. After the interview was implanted, I found these questions really important—teachers mentioned the perspectives and the elements that shaped these views on social inclusion, which was one of the overarching aims of this current research.

I translated the English questions into Arabic to be understood by teachers. I used an audio recorder when interviewing to catch all points and features of talks. The other aim of recording is analysis, it would make analysis easier. Codes and annalistic procedures were made manually to ensure accuracy and familiarity.

Regarding the ethics of research, May (2011) argue that values, behaviours, and principles are shaped by ethics in our life. For this, ethical aspects were strictly regarded in this study.

I dealt with teachers in a respectful manner. BERA Guidelines (2011) advise that participants involved in research have to be treated with respect and fair. The purpose of this study was clarified for them, including title, time of interviews, privacy of data, and the freedom to withdraw (Tracy, 2012). Next, all six teachers were provided with informed consent letters to be assigned (Lichtman, 2012). In the part below, I will explain how analysis was conducted.

Analysis of findings

The data was totally subjected to qualitative analysis. Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis was applied, it included six stages; familiarising with data, generating codes, looking for themes, revising themes, naming themes, and producing a report. This type of analysis is commonly used in the field of social research (Pope et al., 2007). It goes beyond collecting similar words and sentences. Further, it is responsible for meanings and participants' perspectives, thematic structure is helpful in producing and organising insightful data and patterns Gibbs (2008). The Table 1 below describes how analysis went through.

Table 1: Data extract taken from teachers' interviews.

An extract from the teachers' interviews	Codes made
There are no systems established from the Ministry of Education. They did not legislate that the headmaster should deal with the teachers; they did not give teachers the rights and permission to carry out a wide range of activities	- The lack of supportive legislation. - The lack of social activities.

The data demonstrated seven themes which are related to ideal images of social inclusion. The results showed different images for teachers' understandings about social inclusion

of DHH children. Teachers argue that social inclusion is an interaction with learning, teachers and materials of lessons. One image emerged is that social inclusion is how DHH children interact with their hearing peers inside schools. Another image, however, from the teachers' data was that social inclusion is beyond school sittings, it includes how DHH children participate in local communities.

In addition, teachers distinguished between children who are profoundly deaf and those who are classified as hard of hearing, and according to the teachers, the severity of hearing loss can make a difference when communicating with teachers or hearing counterparts. Essentially, in the teachers' views, the lack of social awareness of local people, the lack of financial support and the lack of teaching aids constitute factors that impact on the ideal image of social inclusion, In the following passages, themes and quotes are listed in detail.

Theme 1: the importance of including DHH children in social activities

The data indicate how the teachers view the image of DHH children's social inclusion. For example, Teacher 2 reported that social inclusion *'it is how a child who is deaf or hard of hearing can play, interact, and join in with sports and games. Hearing children should ideally consider him as one of them and include him in their concerns and activities'*.

Teacher 3 stated that *'my view of social inclusion consists of effective participation in all daily activities. A deaf person's participation must be identical to that of a hearing person. There should be no difference in the way a deaf or hearing child is regarded or treated, whether in educational, social or cultural terms'*. He adds that *'it is from school that DHH people learn*

effective participation with peers…. The DHH pupils can then move more easily both inside and outside school, e.g. visiting clubs, social centres, etc'.

Teacher 2 also presumed that *'there should be a programme or social activities, entertainment, or sport to achieve the aim of social inclusion'.* He argued that social inclusion could be enhanced by different forms. For example, *'it is possible to increase inclusion through social games, or they could be asked to participate in school assembly.* Another informant claimed that *'the community, with its all diversity, should participate in the same kind of inclusion and activities that hearing children receive in daily life and must then make the neighbourhood and relatives aware'.*

Teacher 1 claimed that *'you cannot see the success of social inclusion if deaf people are included within the Deaf community, because they are the same. We see their success if they are included in the hearing community, in their daily lives, while shopping, visiting places and going to hospitals, etc.'.* Teacher 4 sees that *'the ideal image is when they mix with the segments of society with no barriers, may be social participation, whether you talk about inside school or in general … this is the ideal model in all fields, in job chances or social mixing, or participation in any activities in city … I would really see them appointed in jobs that face audience, I mean job empowerment, the job he sees people I think it will be helpful for them and for the community as well, he will become bolder … what we see is less confidence and less boldness because he only mixes with his own family, but when he mixes with the community his confidence will raise'*

Regarding the ideal model of social inclusion, Teacher 1 added, *'the best model is when DHH children are involved*

in sitting with a group of hearing children and they interacted and communicated normally.' Teacher 3 commented that *'the ideal model starts with the parents and hearing peers. It also starts with the families of hearing peers'.* Teacher 6 stated that *'the social inclusion is when they [children who are deaf and hard of hearing] mix with the different categories of people in community educationally or practically, this is generally, this could happen in a school or job'.* Teacher 5 clarified that *'the concept of social inclusion in my perspective is entering DHH children with hearing children in all fields, including them together so that barriers are broken, and differences are removed … so they [DHH children] do not feel that they are differences between them and others … and the same time hearing people look at DHH children as ordinary human being'.*

These extracts above show positive images held by the teachers towards the principle of social inclusion of DHH children. However, one teacher did not suggest including DHH children in mainstream classrooms. Alternatively, he believed that the appropriate place for them is in isolated units inside mainstream schools, believing that including DHH children in mainstream classes would frustrate them, mitigate hearing children's performance and waste their teachers' time. Teacher 3 reported that *'there is a point where we put deaf and hearing children together in one class, but it is very difficult'.* According to the teachers, DHH children need extra care and extra focus. Below, some excerpts are presented.

Teacher 3 reported that *'I do not suggest that hard of hearing children should be included in mainstream classrooms; they should be in separate units or separate classes inside mainstream schools …. the inclusion should not take place in ordinary classrooms'.* According to him, negative repercussions are likely to occur with inclusion. He stated that *'a negative effect*

on both DHH children and hearing children could happen. ... The general teacher will lose either DHH children or hearing children, or he will even lose both. ... General teachers cannot use sign language'. Similarly, Teacher 1 mentioned that *'I support that they should be included in separate classes within mainstream schools. It is difficult for them to be in the same class with hearing pupils; they will have problems delivering and receiving information'*. Teacher 2 also claimed that *'it will take longer than 45 minutes, and it may reach one hour or more because of the interpretation and repeated lessons'*.

Still, they were of the view that social inclusion has to start from an early age for DHH children to be successful. Teacher 3 stated that *'if we want to include them, it has to be from the beginning to enable them to interact properly ... there will be good and positive influences; they will build friendships, they will be able to work together, and consequently social life will be better'*. He also added that *'they should start from primary or even reception in order to familiarise themselves; they will see each other, get to know each other, and hearing children will see their behaviours. This is how ordinary people become more aware'*. He explained that educating DHH children in primary special school and then moving them to a mainstream classroom at the stage of secondary school would lead to failure in social inclusion because they would not have been included from an early age with hearing children in a mainstream school. He commented that *'it is going to be very bad and negative because they were not included from the beginning. Therefore, we need early intervention; we should start from the beginning of childhood in mainstream school'*.

Teacher 2 supported this point by claiming that *'from the reality of experience, the inclusion of DHH children gives a better indication and better idea that they can be included with*

hearing children and can interact with them. Hearing children could even learn some signs. They can become familiar with them; they can go and play, go around together'.

Theme 2: the general lack of awareness about DHH children

Through the data, the teachers argued that the community urgently needs to develop social awareness about DHH children. Teacher 3 stated that *'there should be awareness, at least once a month. It is about disability; we should start with the teachers and administrators, e.g. what is disability? What is the correct name for it? What are the attitudes to disabled people?'.* Teacher 2 reported that '*people should be aware that deaf child is able, and can participate; that he can receive the information'.* Teacher 3 indicated that *'there is a lack of awareness on the part of the community; they are not aware of disabilities and its various forms, whether deafness, hearing impairment, visual impairment, learning difficulties, or autism ... There is an urgent need for increased awareness in society. If parents have a disabled child, society should see no problem'.* Teacher 6 contended that *'the community probably does not have the full picture of their characteristics ... some individuals may avoid them, and do not give and take with them within speech and conversations'.*

According to Teacher 3, awareness should start from people who are in the school milieu. He stated, *'we should start with the teachers and administrators, e.g. what is disability? What is the correct name for it? What are the attitudes to disabled people?'* Teacher 1 declared that *'from the administrative point of view, the head teachers and deputies do not usually have the academic or scientific backgrounds to deal with DHH children and only want the higher salaries'.*

Teacher 2 emphatically suggested that *'our community needs greater awareness'*. When questioned on whether the community has negative attitudes or not, he answered that *'the community has negative views towards disability in general'*. According to Teacher 3, *'the first barrier is negative attitudes; some people see deaf people as inferior and so avoid them. They may pretend that they care and then deal with them carelessly. This is one of the barriers that hinder deaf inclusion in the community'*. Teacher 1 pointed out *'the community adheres to the culture of defect and this is fundamentally wrong'*. In order to make the local people aware, Teacher 3 suggested that *'you may create an activity at least once in the term about disability and give information'*.

Theme 3: the concern about the lack of financial and technical support

In respect to financial support, Teacher 1 complained of the shortage of funding in relation to social inclusion. To illustrate this shortage, he commented that *'special education and its programmes are not financially supported. There is no money dedicated to them'*. Further, *'they [teachers of deaf students] have to pay for them from their own money'*.

In relation to resources, Teacher 2 clarified that there is a dearth of teaching aids. For instance, he answered that *'it is simple support that comes to our school; they do not give us things we need like TV; they do not provide educational equipment'*. He also believed that *'it is difficult to work with limited possibilities'*. Teacher 3 said that *'the support may be based on using technology; it saves teacher's time, such as a projector, smart boards, DVDs or programmes which interpret sign language, or if it includes sign language or educational equipment, this will absolutely help the teacher.... they are not*

available in our schools. They only have traditional, primitive teaching aids, especially in the sciences. This subject is hugely dependent on teaching aids. Teacher 1 mentioned that *'there is no support; it is only certificates of appreciation'.*

Teacher 6 sheds light on another type of support which media support. He commented that *'the support I hope starts with the head of pyramid, I mead the governmental support ... also, the media support, we need concentration on them in the media, support them with the community, encourage them, and show their talents and their personal achievements, the community needs to know about them'*

Theme 4: the concern about limited policy initiatives from the Ministry of Education

At the level of ministerial legislation, it seemed that the teachers of DHH children did not have advantages or particular motivations. Absence of policies from the higher authorities, such as the Ministry of Education, may have had a negative influence on the functioning of social inclusion. For this reason, Teacher 2 asserted, *'there are no systems established from the Ministry of Education. They did not legislate that the headmaster should deal with the teachers; they did not give teachers the rights and permission to carry out a wide range of activities'.* Teacher 1 also stated that *'in general, it is limited support, it is weak'.*

Teacher 3 linked the Ministry of Education with awareness, he argued that *'in the Ministry, they should ensure there is an open day at least once every month in order for people to become more aware'.*

In the context of officials in educational authorities, Teacher 4 mentioned that *'I would reach stage that he [deaf child] is included inside classes with hearing children, this is not available now, this is the most important, this is the best image ... the person who is responsible for this category [DHH children] should have boldness to take actions and make decisions and laws to protect their social rights'*.

Theme 5: the concern about the severity of deafness

The teachers reported that the severity of hearing loss could make a difference in terms of social inclusion. They believed those with mild hearing loss could be included socially better than those who are profoundly deaf. Teacher 3 claimed that *'they [children with mild hearing loss] have a high percentage of social interaction; they interact more than deaf children'*. He also thought that *'if the deafness is mild or moderate, then hearing aids may support and enable ordinary interaction'*. Teacher 2 points out that *'the level of hearing impairment plays a role because hearing children communicate with hard of hearing children via speech. However, if the programme is to include completely deaf pupils within an environment of hearing pupils, there will be a problem.... we could say that a hard of hearing child is better off in terms of their educational situation'*. Teacher 2 also reported that *'you could say that the hard of hearing children might be helped by some words or residual hearing. For example, if a hard of hearing person goes to the supermarket, he will be able to say some words and be understood, but not the deaf person'*.

Teacher 6 mentioned that *'there is difference between those who have complete deafness and those who have mild deafness. If it is educational inclusion, profound deaf children have not been considered, they do not receive proper teaching'*.

Theme 6: the need for adapted curriculum for DHH children

Curriculum is a crucial issue within the data of this study. It could make difference in implementing social inclusion. Teacher 5 would see that *'the first support starts with curriculum, it is ignored, they deal with DHH children as hearing children … they [DHH children] have limited cognition'*

Teacher 6 contended that *'currently, in terms of curriculum and teaching methods are not ideal. Based on my perspective, it needs work, it needs practical experiences that he [the child] could see, better that theoretical speech he receives … our curriculum for the ordinary students is not different from the curriculum of DHH children, so DHH children face difficulties in scientific terms and concepts, so it is not beneficial and useful for them when I explain to them, they do not understand, so we summarise the lesson to them [DHH children] to be suitable for them … I am as science teacher I take them to the lab or I use scientific videos or scientific experiences in order for them to understand … I try to avid theoretical terms and concepts … so this curriculum is not suitable to the social inclusion, and I suggest to link this curriculum with the practical aspects, they love it, so it could increase their confidence, they could learn more, and be more confident and he believes more in his abilities and sees indeed no differences between himself and others'*

Theme 7: the need for teachers' training

The data discovered that training for teacher is an important factor that could participate in shaping teachers' ideal image of social inclusion. Teacher 6 indicated that *'it [training] is so important, they are all in need of it, they should study deaf children characteristics, this is the most important thing, how to deal with them, how to educate them this is the first thing, you should have the knowledge on how to deal with them at the*

beginning, how to study his health case and to communicate with him after that, and how to give them information so that he could receive information differently ... some words he receives and understands differently'.

Teacher 4 believed that 'training is significant especially at the beginning of new study year ... as a teacher you will have better picture, you will have full imagination of the situation of DHH children, it is better than attempts'. Teacher 5 describes the current training by saying 'it is so weak, until the extent we could say it is individual efforts ... training is important for their dealing, delivering information and sign language'

The themes above showed different images held by teachers about social inclusion. They claimed different factors that may shape these ideal images. These included awareness in community, support on different levels, and teachers' training.

Discussion

The findings demonstrated different data regarding how teachers look for the ideal image of social inclusion. This seems normal as people are different in terms of their understandings on educational and social issues, including social inclusion. This result is consistent with the claim made by Powers (2003). The different understandings that the teachers held may refer to different backgrounds and environments that the teachers came from. Those who see social inclusion should include outside school setting are in line with the bringing up of Saudi community. This seems logic as the social inclusion is not only how DHH children interact with their hearing peer, educational materials or their teachers, but also contains local people, friends, shopping and visiting social centres. Social inclusion is the condition of taking part in social activities and relationships and making friends and connections

The results mentioned the lack of support. This conforms with the demands raised by Fields (1994), when he claimed social inclusion without support causes exclusion! The issue of support seems fundamental in social inclusion, especially financial support. Social programmes that enhance social skills are correlated with money and funds. Another support that the interviewees focused on is family support. This was mentioned in Gravel's and O'Gara's study (2003) when they claimed that while there is an argument about the communication methods, questions are raised about the language development of DHH children in early times, and that communication facilities are needed between family members and a deaf child.

The difference between those who have complete deafness and others who have mild deafness and residential hearing was clear in the data emerged. This result came similar to what was found in (Brackett and Zara, 1998; Nikolopoulos et al., 1999). They found that earlier cochlear implantation, meaning in the first two or three years of child's age produced greater overall vocabulary development better than those who implanted in later years, they could fill the gap between the chronological age and the language age of DHH children and their hearing friends. This differentiation between profoundly deaf and mildly deaf children may refer to the difficult communication profound deaf children may face in life. This challenge is related to other issues such as teachers training on dealing with severely deaf people, or sign language and its issues, including concepts and practices.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study explored the factors that shaped teachers' ideal images on social inclusion. After discussing this topic and addressing its parts, the researcher has reached recommendations. The results demonstrated different types

of images of social inclusion. Teachers' thoughts stemmed from their own backgrounds and the ideas that they believe in, according to their experiences. The researcher's belief is that social inclusion would not be implemented successfully if proper ideas and images were not drawn thoughtfully and correctly. The data indicated that participation in social activities, community awareness and attitudes, different sorts of support, adapted curriculum, teachers' training, and policies and laws from the highest educational authority (the Ministry of Education).

Based on the above, this study recommends that; 1) unifying the image of social inclusion could be helpful in saving efforts and time, and could avoid personal random efforts and struggles. So, education authorities have the ability to draw what social inclusion means for teachers, so all staff attempts could be based on as they directly deal with DHH children and enhance their social development in the educational field. 2) policies should be made on the educational and social rights of DHH children, this would give power for their rights' protection. 3) financial and technical support ought be available from the highest top of educational authorities for social inclusion. 4) it is clear that whose children with profound and severe deafness are affected more than those with mild hearing loss, this means that courses on sign language, and communication methods in general, need to be offered for teachers and administrative staff in Saudi schools.

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